MAGAZINE 2025

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Get to Know the Communities of ABBOTSFORD & AUBURNDALE & CHILI & COLBY GRANTON & GREENWOOD & LOYAL & MARSHFIELD MILLADORE & NEILLSVILLE & PITTSVILLE SHERRY & SPENCER & STRATFORD

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Abbotsford: Wisconsin's first city



ocated north of Marshfield, and residing in both Clark and Marathon County, Abbotsford is fondly known as Wisconsin's First City. Technically, Green Bay has earned the title of Wisconsin's oldest city, however in the alphabetical listing Abbotsford sits on top of that state's long list of places to live. Those who live in Abbotsford may argue that their town is the best place to live, as well.

Nestled at the junction of Highways 29 and 13, Abbotsford homes 2,275 residents with 1,665 living in Clark County and the remaining 610 in Marathon County. Founded in 1872 what was once forest land was then cleared for the Wisconsin Central Railroad. The first white settlers arrived in Abbotsford in 1873, where Chippewa and Potawatomi indigenous people already resided.

The next few decades of Abbotsford's infancy saw great success for those seeking work with the railroad business offering many



jobs. However, by 1909 the railroad business was sold to Soo Line Railroad Company. This caused a mild depression in the town with property value significantly decreasing.

Abbotsford's depression only lasted a handful of years with residents turning from railroad work to the dairy industry. With the only method of transportation for milk deliveries being by foot or horseback, cheese factories were built within four to five miles of each other. The first milk plant in the Abbotsford area was Wiggins Creamery.

One resident from small town Abbotsford achieved well known fame. Galen Laack, born in Abbotsford on April 3, 1931, went on

to become a player in the early years of the National Football League. While an average athlete in high school, Laack excelled physically while in the service and while playing football at the College of the Pacific. Laack may have once played as an outfielder for the Marshfield Rollers, but his professional athletic career began in 1958 with the then known Washington Redskins (now known as the Washington Commanders).



Galen Laack

Laack continued on to play for the Philadelphia Eagles and found success with each team he joined. However, Laack devastatingly lost his life at the young age of 27 years old when he died in a car accident on New Years Eve of 1958. Laack's vehicle failed to turn a corner and struck a tree in California.

Also in 1958, Abbotsford tore down their original town hall and replaced it with the building that still stands today. Then in 1965, Abbotsford incorporated into a city. Today, Abbotsford is home to over 160 local businesses. The city celebrates yearly traditions such as their Christmas Parade, held since 1971, on the first Saturday of December. With a strong sense of community pride in their work and livelihoods, Abbotsford is proudly home of the "largest ice cream cone" which resides at Hawkeye Dairy Store. In addition to their Wisconsin made cheese and sausage, Hawkeye Dairy Store has recently celebrated serving over one million cones of ice cream.

Abbotsford, titled Wisconsin's first city, may be due to its' alphabetic spelling. However, its residents will tell you the city wins first place for places to live in the state. With a rich history spanning back over a century Abbotsford is still well known for its' roots: a lively social scene, a booming dairy industry, and a strong, welcoming community.

Events Calendar

Abbotsford First City Days: Aug. 8-10 Red Arrow Park Christmas Parade: Dec. 6 Downtown, 100 1st Street



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Auburndale:

ucked away eight miles east of Marshfield, with a population barely reaching 700, Auburndale and its inhabitants embrace the farming tradition much of the town has become known for. With annual events like Drive Your Tractor To School Day, community members celebrate their shared history of farming. Richard Merkel, of Berryland Farm, is no exception.

Berryland Farm has been an Auburndale staple for decades, and owned by Richard and Nancy Merkel since 2002. Nancy Merkel had been boarding a horse for some time, which can be costly, therefore Richard told her if she were to buy another horse that they would move to a property where the horses could live to cut down the expense of boarding. Sure enough, Nancy's love for horses grew as her pack expanded to two and then three horses.

Richard was driving one day when he passed the Berryland Farm



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property, then owned by a man named Dennis. Richard thought it looked like a good place to keep Nancy's horses after seeing the sale sign, so he walked inside and made an offer to buy the property on the spot.

AUBURNDALE

Maintaining the U-Pick business started by the prior owners, Richard and Nancy saw endless customers in the early years picking from their variety of crops including apples, blueberries, pears, plums, pumpkins, cherries, and more.

"Before Highway 10, the road used to be by our front door. We'd get people stopping by coming and going from everywhere." Richard says.



The Berryland Farm family who makes the operation at Berryland Farm possible. Berryland Farm



In their early years





of owning the business, Richard explains that they used to host 30-40 schools a season. Busloads of excited students from all over central Wisconsin would arrive eager to pick their own fruits and visit the Merkel's horses.

The Merkel family all have a hand on the farm and the work that it requires. With their Arabian horses, the Merkel family would travel all across the country to compete. Horse show season happens to align with peaks of berry picking season, however, help from others in the Merkel family would allow Nancy and her children to pursue horse shows.

Richard explains this is still true today, with help from his children he is able to enjoy winters in Florida while they watch the farm back in chilly Wisconsin. Nancy Merkel passed away in 2023.

Today Berryland Farm is primarily an apple orchard. With over 500 apple trees and 14 varieties of apples, customers have a wide array of options to choose from. For \$1 a pound, customers are welcome to pick.

"In the busy season, we usually have someone manning the store, but if no one's there we just leave a place for customers to leave money after they are done." Richard explains. Tasting, Richard says, is a part of the picking process. However, sometimes it isn't always the picker who tastes the product, but rather their two horses on property.

Laughing, Richard says. "There was this three year old, and like a baseball pitcher, she was throwing these apples into the pasture. And I started to wonder, how many apples can a horse eat?" Richard cautions customers from feeding too many apples to the horses, but encourages pickers to taste their product before purchase.

The business and family tradition continues without Nancy, and in recent years has expanded past apple picking. Berryland Farm's backdrop of apple trees and scenic Wisconsin nature has become a popular spot for wedding pictures, graduation pictures, and more, something Richard welcomes and encourages all to take advantage of.

"All through the year it makes for good pictures," Richard says, "from pink blossoms on trees, to bright red apples, it always makes for a cool photo."

Richard is optimistic about a more bountiful apple season in 2025, after a 10 year pruning limited the 2024 crop. With 500 trees and typically 500-2000 bushels per tree (a bushel contains 42-48 pounds of apples), there are plenty of apples to go

around the Auburndale community and those who come to visit.

"I've just been so fortunate to live in a state where apples are for sale and can make such a neat experience for families and kids. I can't wait for the years to come, I'll be doing this as long as I can." Richard says.

Events Calendar

Auburndale Music Fest: June 20-22 Auburndale Memorial Park



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Chili:

A warm, welcoming town with a "cool" name

his small Clark County town, located westsouthwest of Marshfield, is home to 333 community members year round, as of 2022. With origins beginning in the late 19th century, Chili was founded in 1890 when the Chicago and Northwest Railway was built, and even earlier by Michigan settlers Ira and Sydney Fike in search of logging opportunities. Rumors of Chili's quaint name come from two different stories. The first being the early settlers' empathy at the time with the people of Chile in South America who were fighting for their independence, therefore naming their midwestern town in honor of the country, with a slight misspelling occurring in the process to Chili. The second story involves two railroad officials who traveled to the new town one winter day looking to give it a name. Upon stepping off the train, one of the men is rumored to have said, "Let's just call it Chili, because it's really chilly here!"

While the origins of Chili's name may remain unclear, one thing is certain: Chili offers something for everyone from locals to tourists.

One of the town's most popular events includes the annual Chili Street Dance, held on the first Saturday of August. This event features bounce houses, a kiddie tractor pull, coin scramble, Loyal Mini Rodders, live music and a beer tent, so there is something for everyone at this family-friendly community event, which serves as a fundraiser for firefighters and EMT's of Chili's Fire Department.

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



Chili Corners Club



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Chili's Fire Department organizes many local events for the community, including a chili cookoff each year titular to the town's name, along with a Trunk or Treat Halloween event, Santa at the fire department the second Saturday in December and an annual Easter egg hunt.

If you can't make it to any of Chili's year round events, stop by Chili Corners Club. A local establishment to the town, Chili Corners Club is known for their Friday Fish Fry and warm, welcoming service.

Located just left of the state's center, Chili Wisconsin is a small town overflowing with local events, businesses, and warm welcoming community members (despite the town's cool name).







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Colby: the birthplace of colby cheese

ocated in both Marathon and Clark County, small town Colby is known to its population of 1,852 for its scenic nature, June Dairy Breakfast, and rural arts museum. However, to the rest of Wisconsin, at first glance Colby is known for its namesake: colby cheese.

In 1885, Joseph F. Steinwand developed a new kind of cheese at his father's cheese factory in the Colby area. Joseph named the new cheese after the township in which his father, Ambrose Steinwand, Sr., had built northern Clark County's first cheese factory three years before. Colby's name came from Gardner Colby, whose company built the Wisconsin Central railroad through the town.

Joseph Steinwand made the cheese in the same manner as cheesemakers do today: with a separated solid portion of milk, called curd — which became the cheese — from the liquid portion of the milk, which is called the whey.

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



THE HOME OF COLBY CHEESE

At his father's cheese factory about one mile south and one mile west of here, Joseph F. Steinwand in 1885 developed a new and unique type of cheese. He named it for the township in which his father, Ambrose Steinwand, Sr., had built northern Clark County's first cheese factory three years before. The town had taken its name from Gardner Colby, whose company built the Wisconsin Central railroad through here.

Colby is a mild, soft, moist cheese. Its taste became known in the neighboring areas and an 1898 issue of the Colby *Phonograph* noted that "A merchant in Phillips gives as one of the 13 reasons why people should trade with him, that he sells the genuine Steinwand Colby Cheese."

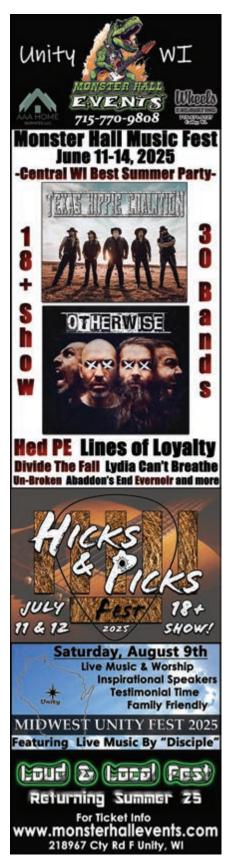
After the turn of the century this area became one of the great cheese producing centers in the nation and Colby cheese a favorite in countries the world around.

Erected 1968

Events Calendar

Cheese Days: July 18-20, Downtown 211 W. Spencer Street **Colby Pullers Club Truck & Tractor Pull:** Aug. 15 & 16, Colby Industrial Park Industrial Dr, 211 W Spencer Street





>> COLBY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

To begin the cheesemaking process, the milk was warmed. A substance called rennet was added to the warmed milk. This caused the solids, or curds, to separate from the whey. This custard-like mixture was cut into small pieces, allowing the curd to separate from the whey. The mixture was then heated to firm the curd and then the whey was drained away.

It was at this point that Joseph departed from the procedure of making cheddar cheese to give this new cheese the high moisture content that makes colby cheese unique.

After he drained the whey, he washed and cooled the curd in cold water. Then he drained the water, slated and mixed the curd, pressed it into forms and aged it one to three months. In contrast, cheddar cheese is molded into slabs after the whey drains. Repeated turning of the slabs expels any excess whey adhering to the curd. This makes cheddar sharper and drier than the mild, soft colby.

True to the town's origins, dairy is a large staple in the Colby community. On the fourth Sunday of June, Colby celebrates a June Dairy Breakfast in honor of dairy month. However, the celebration of cheese and dairy isn't limited to the month of June, with July honoring Colby Cheese Days. Originating in 1965, Colby Cheese Days was first organized to celebrate colby cheese as the backbone of the local community. Colby Cheese Days have something for everyone to enjoy from ATV pulls, Main Street Parade, street dances, tractor pulls, amusement midway and free colby cheese.





n the shoreline of O'Neill Creek, mapped between Marshfield and Neillsville is the slight yet charming Village of Granton, Wisconsin. There is no shortage of history stretching back to 1856, Eli Williams was the first to settle within the town and his ancestors still reside in Granton. Flush and vibrant farm fields continue to provide jobs and keep the long list of

Granton's ancestry alive. A family of four by the last name of Sternitzky have become a part of this list. Tim grew up in Chili, about twenty minutes outside of Marshfield on a dairy farm. Although farming takes up a large part of Granton, geographically and economically, Tim's lineage (six generations) started tapping Maple trees for syrup in 1858, just two years after Granton became part of Wisconsin.

"It's true that on the property where I grew up is where I started tapping trees with my grandfather. Going through the years, maple production in the rural areas was a tradition passed down from families. Many decades," Tim said. When Tim followed his grandfather through the forests, the process of tapping trees was much more tedious and couples or families who want to make maple syrup as a hobby continue this practice by drilling a hole around two to three inches deep with a slight angle, usually south side facing the tree. Next, a spile is stationed into the hole where the sap is collected and drips into containers. Now that Tim has turned his hobby into his career, production has gone up, calling for a modern vacuum tubing system. "We use the harvest sap with the vac system. In the woods (others may call it a sugar bush) we set up the tubing like tributaries in rivers. From tree to tree to tree that feeds into a main line that might feed into a larger one. It stays up year round. It is a lot of time and work to put it back up. But after that you gain back that back in production. It is a lot more efficient and yields twice as much as the drip method," Tim explains.

Switching out the tubing doesn't happen often, the entire system lasts between ten to fifteen years and The Maple Dude has five spots set up around Clark County, tubes connecting

between one-hundred to a thousand trees. In fact, Tim's team is currently working on taking down and setting up a new system, when the weather permits. Products like their maple shots (similar



to Gu energy gel, made for athletes) aren't just sold at the store in Granton. They have used social media such as Instagram, Youtube, X, and Facebook to reach a bigger clientele. You can purchase their goods in multiple grocery stores across the state, Amazon, and off their website. Once Tim got his foot in the door with bigger companies, (Meigher, a grocery store in Chicago) building and

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



>> GRANTON CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

maintaining those relationships are integral and with Tim's effortless midwestern charm, there is no question that The Maple Dude will remain a high competitor in a niche industry.

Tours are available, ranging from agricultural college majors to retirement homes. Maple syrup isn't the only featured item when touring Sternitzky's business. A small cabin, built by Jonas Yoeer, a highly skilled Amish craftsman, stays on his property as a model for interested buyers. Tim and Jonas work together to market them as vacation homes and for families who are looking to down size. Once purchased and built, the cabin is moved to the buyers preferred location.

The Maple Dude looks forward to hosting events in the future. Until then, Tim and his family remain active on social media where you can watch quirky videos where Tim's personality really shines through. In his free time, Tim enjoys the comedy he mixes in with the maple syrup production process on social media and outdoor activities with his wife and two children. Tim closed the conversation with community affection, "We appreciate the people that have supported our growth and see the value of purchasing from a small local business that helps us grow and get the word out there to tell other people about it. It really does support us in growth and keeps motivating us to do better."

Events Calendar

Dairy Breakfast: June 1 from 7 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Schilling Farm W3514 Tree Road

Park Picnic & Softball Tournaments: June 26-29 - Granton Park

Picnic Lunch Sunday: June 29 starts at 11:30 a.m.

Fall Fest: Sept. 5-7 Downtown Granton







Greenwood: Wedges Creek Hideaway

f you are thinking about relocating, Greenwood,

Wisconsin, is the place to consider. Next to the Black River, Greenwood provides easy access to prime fishing spots where a family can end or start their day at a safe, playful, and nearby park. Still seeking more recreational activities? Greenwood has accessible hiking, hunting, and ATV trails. The Banister Museum is one of many attractions, built in 1980, visitors can reflect on Greenwood's history by exploring 170 nostalgic photographs and antique displays. Whether you're looking for a bed and breakfast, campground, or hotel; lodging is easy to come by. Exceptional restaurants are spread throughout Greenwood. However, the hidden gem of this friendly village combines all attractions into one business: Wedges Creek.



The Volovsek family's roots run deep in Greenwood. A third generation resident, Jeff Volovsek is a one man band who keeps Wedges Creek alive and festive through all seasons (summer being peak season). His family and staff members lend a helping hand layered by the variety that Wedges Creek offers. Before Jeff launched the idea of Wedges Creek, he left for



engineering school in the Twin Cities for two years. Upon his return in 2006, he started working weekends to save for his family farm. At the time there was little interest in the woodland grounds to gain income. Three years later, in 2009, the Volovsek's made a milestone decision to add a pizza kitchen, include more of their cabins and campgrounds, and restore the family barn for weddings and festivals; changing Wedges Creek into a destination spot. "When it was raining there was nowhere to go. The barn kept the pizza nights going. We've created an atmosphere where people can unwind and *SOCONTINUED ON PAGE 18*



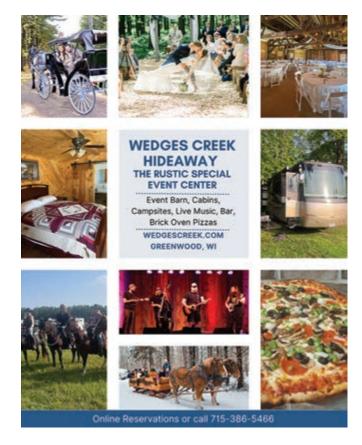




>> GREENWOOD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

enjoy the green space. After the music is done, people go home or back to their cabins, refreshed and ready for the weekend," Jeff informs, We Are. Pizza nights can host up to 300 customers.

The music festival, Log Jam, is a new addition to the Wedges Creek calendar and will take place around the same time in August, this coming summer. Attendees can expect to see live music from popular blue grass bands such as Armchair Boogie and Dig Deep while sipping on Wisconsin craft beer or a glass of wine. If you're a newly engaged couple looking for a rustic outdoor venue, Wedges Creek is the place to consider. The entire venue is blocked off for the booked weekend so large groups can enjoy their space privately.





Jeff includes, "Our uniqueness is we encourage big group gatherings. I want to be known as a destination camp ground. There is plenty of lodging. We use fresh ingredients on our pizza and the dough is made from scratch. Our hopes are for the music festival to pick up and being able to heat the barn makes it more comfortable year round for fun events like sleigh rides." To book a group event, wedding, details on Log Jam,



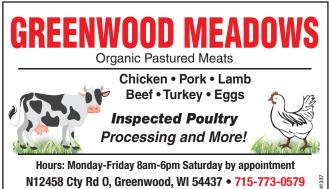
or have any questions about special events, you can find Wedges Creek on their website or Facebook.

Events Calendar

Abate of Wisconsin-Summer Hummer: June 19 - 22, Abate Acres, W8742 Capital Road

June Dairy Breakfast: June 29, Phillip and Eliza Ruzic's N9031 Sidney Ave

End of Summerfest & Car Show: Sept. 5 & 6, Downtown, 212 S Main St



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Loyal: Loyalty in Loyal





ike many of the towns, cities, and villages featured in We Are, logging and pioneer farming was the starting foundation of Loyal, Wisconsin. Established in 1870, Loyal has blossomed into a peaceful community with citizens loyal to the name of their residence. There are three parks within the city, but The West Side Community Park brings the most traffic. With two baseball fields, a golf course, volleyball court, and pavilions to provide shelter against harsh weather. Loyal is known for an annual Corn Festival which is held in August. A small key to the city and why the name continues to fit is due to Loyal's Historical Society.

We Are spoke with Donna-a leader of LHS. "I've lived in Loyal almost all my life, since I was 12. My husband was a contractor and I was his gopher girl, doing all the book work. We raised four children, remained active in the community, and both received the citizen of the year award. He passed away in 2015. I work hard at LHS, American Legion Auxiliary and volunteer at St. Anthony's Catholic Church."

The Loyal Historical Society formed in 2004 by the nonprofit work of 24 charter members, now there are 60. The office is a 1920's replica of the original Soo Line





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Depot, which holds a lot of memorabilia. To name a few: Antique farm equipment and a telegraph machine. Similarly there is a museum, gas station, and Mack school for visitors or tourists to explore. Class reunions have been held, tours are free, and they are always available to set up private events. Donna tells We Are, "Just set up a date with me or any of the officers. Several hundred people come through if I try to add them all up. It's a wonderful history of our city and our area. If you are interested in history, Loyal is the place to visit. We are a farming community, especially if you are in this area. I've watched people take hours to go through our keepsakes."

Staying true to their Mission Statement: Loyal Area Historical Society is a nonprofit educational institution whose purpose is to collect and preserve, interpret, promote, and share knowledge of the history of the Loyal area. Cash, Donna's grandson, loves history. He's right by her side, anxious for more knowledge and looking forward to the new addition LHS is working on. Grambsch Candy Kitchen is on the horizon as an addition to the museum. In the late 40's and 60's, Ben Grambsch made candy and his grandson is working with the committee to make it happen. He sustains his father's tradition during Loyal's holiday event, Home for Christmas by passing out bags of candy. Attendees mark your calendars! It falls on the first Sunday in December. Loyal is loyal with the customary goods provided. Hot cider, bond fires, Santa, and donated toys.

With diction, Donna ends the interview by sharing the LHS committee's goal, "Our goal is to make the Loyal area a great place to live and to visit and to preserve the area's history for future generations."



Events Calendar

Clark County "Spring Into The Arts" Studio Tour: April 25-26

Dairy Breakfast: June 15, Ken Horn's farm on Hwy K south of Loyal

Loyal Corn Festival: Aug. 21-24

Car & Motorcycle Show: Sept. 7, American Legion Parking Lot, 302 S Union Street

Candy, Cookie, Craft & Vendor Sale & Children's Christmas Shop: Dec. 6, Loyal American Legion Post 175, 302 S Union Street

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Upham Mansion.

Photo by North Wood County Historical Society.



arshfield, a city in Wood County, geographically lands smack-dab in the middle of Wisconsin, catering to a population of just under 20,000. While it is a hub for one of the most exceptional healthcare clinics-Marshfield Clinic Health System, drawing patients from counties all over the state; This city has more to offer than the typical midwest landscape of cows producing cheese for gifts to relatives over the holiday season or an all organic ingredient restaurant to boast about to out of town friends. Apart from caring for patients, Marshfield has the Wildwood Zoo-free to the public, a technical college that feeds into the University of Wisconsin system, and Upham Mansion (previous home of governor William H. Upham; now museum). It's clear that Marshfield has a vast variety of opportunities ranging from environmental aesthetics to a sound educational system. But there is an avenue that stops right off of US Highway 10, tucked on the outskirts of Marshfield that is filled with untapped marvels that you would only expect to find in big cities such as Chicago or New York-

antique books, rare ones. Owner, Kent Genteman,

of KG's Unique, Rare, and Antique Books LLC, was not planning on what started out as a hobby to turn into a fullblown specialized antiquated career. Like most bibliophiles, being surrounded by

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 26



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>> MARSHFIELD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

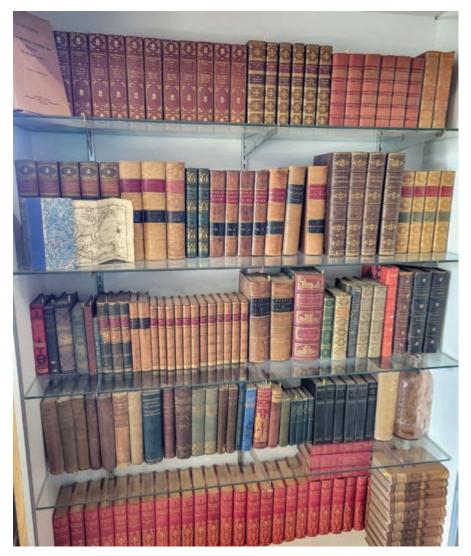
books is a similar warmth to a midwesterner supper club aficionado searching for the best old fashioned to pair with a top-notch Friday night fish fry. The copy shown in the photo to the right of Lewis Carroll's, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, is just one example of Kent's deep passion for rare books, but most of all the respect he has behind the many hands involved with creating a piece of literary art. This particular version of Alice, is a first edition, published in 1872.

"Well, I grew up in Granton, Wisconsin. Which is about 30 minutes away from Marshfield. I wanted to



be a vet at first. So, I'd go to these auctions to purchase vet stuff. But, I'd also buy boxes and boxes of old books," Kent says.

"Kind of like thrifting or finding boxes people don't care about at garage sales?" I ask. Kent confirms. It is much more work than auctions. Garage sales were and are some of the most unbeatable venues to find editions others would overlook. Even your well versed reader might miss a copyright page that can make a price jump from tens to thousands. Or rather, it is a unique hobby. "I switched to a business degree and kept buying old books. I would sift through them, looking for the ones worth money," Kent continues. "The majority of my





income is not from the store, it comes from selling on eBay. I started out just selling on eBay out of Neillsville. For nine years, a total of twelve." For the original gem that KG's Unique, Rare, and Antique Books LLC book store is—this does not surprise me.

"What are your favorite genres to collect?"

Kent laughs a little bit—like we both already know the answer, "Classics of course and American History. Anything old."

"Out of all the classics you've collected, which one sold for the highest price and what is the range of prices you have in the store?"

Kent didn't need to pause, "Jane Austen's, *Pride & Prejudice*. It was an 1895 Peacock edition and sold for \$3500. At the store and on eBay I still hold a first edition of *Little Women*. Classics like these can sell for thousands or used paperback children's books for a buck or two."

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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>> MARSHFIELD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

With one last question, I ask, "What drives your love of reading? And what makes you think we can keep the passion of the humanities alive and respected in a world where artificial intelligence and attention spans are dwindling?"

"12 years in the industry has shown me that people want a break from their smart phones and technology," he responds.

For all readers: if you find yourself in Marshfield, either passing through or to visit family, take time out of your day to stop at KG's Unique, Rare, and Antique Books LLC for a warm and welcoming environment. Or take a scroll through Kent's eBay page, even just to fawn over not just the decades of publications—some centuries—but to see that big city aspirations can be accomplished in the small town of Marshfield, Wisconsin.

Events Calendar

Cultural Fair: Feb. 22, UW Stevens Point at Marshfield, 2000 W. 5th

Marshfield Area Empty Bowls: March 8, Eagles Club #624, 1104 S. Oak Ave

Dairyfest 2025: May 30-31, downtown Marshfield

Dairyfest Breakfast: May 30, Central Wisconsin State Fairgrounds

Picnic In The Park: May 30, Columbia Park

Dairy Fest Parade: May 31, Main Street 11:00AM

Center City Fun Day: May 31, Wenzel Family Plaza

4th of July Firework Show: Independence Day Central Wisconsin State Fairgrounds, 513 E. 17th

Parish Pulls: July 11, Central Wisconsin State Fairgrounds, 513 E. 17th

Dairyland Balloon Jubilee: July 11-12, Seehafer Acres, 202612 Hwy 97

Hub City Days Car & Bike Show: July 24-26, Main Street

Central Wisconsin State Fair: Aug. 19-24, Central Wisconsin State Fairgrounds, 513 E. 17th **Central Wisconsin Draft Horse Pull:** Aug. 22, Central Wisconsin State Fairgrounds, 513 E. 17th

State Bank Financial Draft Horse Show: Aug. 23-24, Central Wisconsin State Fair

Maple Fall Fest: Sept. 13-14, Wildwood Park & Zoo, 1800 S. Roddis Ave.

Alpine Holidays: Nov. 14-15, Columbus Catholic Schools, 710 S Columbus Avenue

Turkey Trot: Thanksgiving Morning, Marshfield High School

Jurustic Park: Open most of the spring, summer and fall, 112021 Old Sugarbush Ln

Main Street Marshfield Holiday Parade: Dec. 4

Christmas In The Barn: Dec. 5-6, Live Nativity and Bethlehem Experience, Memory Lane Farm, 8638 Heritage Dr.

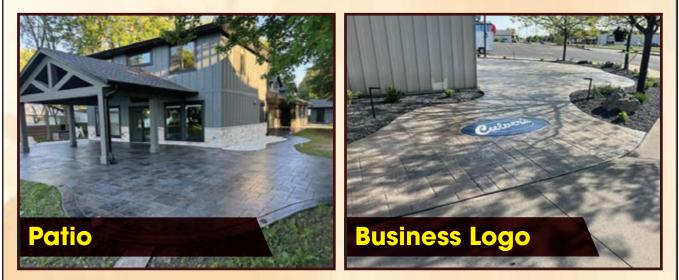
Rotary Winter Wonderland: Runs the day after Thanksgiving thru New Years Eve Wildwood Park & Zoo, 1800 S Roddis Ave.





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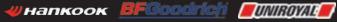
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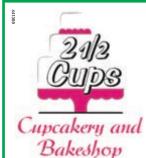




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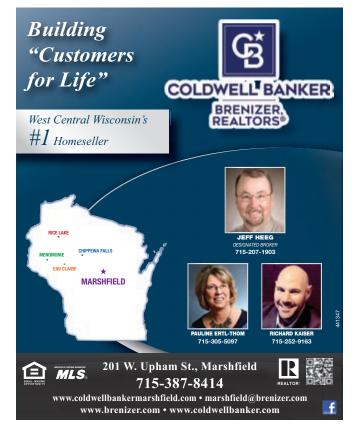


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Milladore:

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illadore, a village between Wood and Portage County is known for The George W. Mead Wildlife Area. Hunters, hikers, and bird watchers embrace the radiant changes of seasons, observing the migration in the marsh or simply just to enjoy nature. Not far from nature's bounty, Lonely Oak Farms strives to stay true to the circle of life. Joel Kuehnhold is the owner of Lonely Oak. Apart from being an experienced farmer, Joel has a background in education. During the off season, he continues to teach-this winter in Alaska. Totaling fifteen years as an educator, his passion for farming interconnected into the classroom. "When I was teaching full-time in Wood County, we got a five-million dollar grant to feed students healthy farm to table food. My students learned how to grow spinach. We went through about five-hundred pounds a month," Joel said. "But I got burnt out. I couldn't do both. Teach full-time and farm full-time."

In December of 2011, Joel bought Lonely Oak and closed on



the farm a year after. Purchased from family friends, Burnard and Gertrude, the sale felt more like a passing of the torch where both families continue to share the land for special gatherings. Joel has been working on the soil he purchased since childhood. "They were happy I was able to buy it because the land was part of the family for me and I knew Burnard and Gertrude's traditions.



There is an emotional and physical connection to the land. When people see farms being sold, they don't understand the history or connections behind that," Joel said, sharing the history.

Joel links his multi-faceted skills beyond his family and extends it toward his employees. "For the past four years, I have had all female employees. Which I am really proud

of. There isn't a lot of turn over. When people come to work for me they stay. They are family, not just employees. We socialize and work together. The success of the farm is due to my amazing crew. I don't make any decisions without consulting with them first."

Joel's harvest is bountiful. From eggs to butternut squash to sheep, Lonely Oak sells their produce at markets, offer community supported agriculture (CSA boxes), and brunch on the farm. This year prices will raise a dollar for brunch on the farm and sixty spots are open for the CSA. Brunch on the farm can seat around 125 people, with a changing menu every week according to seasonal harvest. Quiche, coffee cake, and free refills on liberation coffee are popular.

Planting in the green house begins the first week of March. Sheep have their lamb in April and cows have their calves in May. If necessary, Joel is ready for weather changes. "There are things we can do to combat it and work with it. I have worked in Kenya and seen the changes in equatorial climates and rain patterns. Seasonal changes affect when we can plant. We can cover our crop, prevent erosion, keep things from drying out, and worry about water. We are pretty much guaranteed to have a drought in July and August and figure out a way to irrigate that. Even though America's harvest zones are changing we can't really change our crop that much until we know when," Joel said. Part of the mission for Lonely Oak Farms is encouraging eating what is harvested during each season and reducing their carbon foot print.

I asked Joel what separates Lonely Oak Farms from other rural farmers. His answer: "We make family farming and agriculture exceptional. It truly is a family farm with family labor. Whenever you invest in a business in rural America, that money is staying right there in that community. The way of life we have become accustomed to is changing fast and we need people to support local and small farms. That doesn't mean you need to eat organic. We provide an opportunity for people to see how the system works together, eggs-crops-table." Atmus Filtration Technologies is a global leader in filtration solutions for on-highway commercial vehicles and off-highway vehicles and equipment. We design and manufacture advanced filtration products that enable lower emissions and provide superior asset protection. We combine our culture of innovation along with deep industry experience to deliver superior filtration for our customers. Founded by Cummins in 1958, but independent in 2023, Atmus continues

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hen driving through Clark County, the city of Neillsville may come across as just another tranquil, lush, beautiful city in Wisconsin, but if you take the time to stop and become present in your surroundings it is quite the opposite. Neillsville is a bustling city with a population of over twentythousand residents encompassing a list of restaurants, recreational activities, museums, and parks tourists can take advantage of. One of the main attractions that should not be overlooked is The 1897 Clark County Jail Museum Incorporation. I spoke with the curator and treasurer, Natalie, who has held this position for twenty years. At sixty-four, Natalie works tirelessly to keep the historic Jail intact. Historically, it is indispensable.





Each jail cell inside the museum features an exhibit that showcases the history of small town Neillsville, from exhibits about schools, libraries, doctors, and more.

In front of the jail stands a Victorian style home. The third floor is so large it resembles a ballroom. As you walk through the back of the old warden's home, the kitchen of the jail is the first thing you see. A holding cell from 1881 stays preserved. But there are pieces of both the home and the jail that are falling apart. Humidity is contributing to the collapse of the ceiling. Pipes that need to be rewrapped and sealed. Electrical. Plumbing. The architecture of the jail is called Richardsonian Romanesque, a Romanesque revival dating back to the early 1800's. Masonry has been one of the



Sheriff Robert Eunson, 1909-1910, with three year old son John Dale Eunson photographed in Neillsville in 1907.

biggest challenges. "Worth its weight in gold to find a good mason. You might get one in England or Europe because it seems to be a dying art," Natalie says.

All the ins and outs of restoration is dependent on more volunteers, grants, and getting the word out. Currently, the county is responsible for the exterior and the committee is responsible for the interior. They are staying afloat with funds. "There is a limit you can do to a building you do not own," Natalie states. The jail is registered at a national historic level. "You cannot replace it. You knock it down. Try and salvage pieces of it, but once it's gone it's gone. If someone who loves history wants to restore a building, this could be a bed and breakfast or community space. Someone with money or working in a tax role could step up and take charge." Visitors from all over Wisconsin, even a choir from Germany have come to tour and visit the space. Community meetings that address contributions and the restoration needed for The 1897 Clark County Jail Museum Inc. have dropped from two-hundred to eight. "If you don't know or remember where you came from, how do you know where you are or what's important? The one thing you can't change is history. You have to guard it and respect it. History is very personal," says Natalie.

Neillsville has so much to offer. During your stay, try and weave in a tour and contribute to a piece of national history.



Photos courtesy of 1897 Clark County Jail Museum

Events Calendar

Winter Carnival: Feb. 21-23

Sweaty Yeti Winter Festival: March 1, Levis-Trow Mounds Recreational Area, N1589 Fisher Ave

Midwest Rockbouncer Shootout: May 10, Clark County Fairgrounds, 1121 E Division St

Dairy Breakfast: June 8

Neillsville Heritage Days: July 11-13, Schuster Park Clark County Fair: Aug. 6-10, Clark County Fairgrounds, US Hwy 10

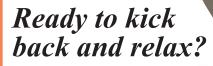
Autumn Festival: Oct. 11 Downtown Neillsville



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Pittsville:

Splash of Red Cranberry

Pittsville lands exactly in the middle of Wisconsin with a supportive community where the small town prospers from an array of downtown businesses. Stay for a weekend and you'll find unique places; from local clothing stores to taverns with exceptional service. If you cross Pittsville's path between the middle of September through the end of November, Splash of Cranberry is an award winning business for their cranberry crop: The Wisconsin State Cranberry Association Growers. They have also been featured on several news stations around Wisconsin, Chicago, and South Dakota. What makes Pittsville's cranberry farm distinct from others is that it is run by high school students, headed by agriculture teacher and Future Farms of America advisor, Lindsay. We Are had the pleasure of speaking with Lindsay about the details of her class and how it entwines with the cranberry farm itself.

"This is my 8th year teaching at Pittsville High School. I teach agriculture courses (plant and animal sciences) to almost every student that comes through the school. For seniors, they have an opportunity to take my capstone class where they work at Splash of Cranberry, getting experience in the work force and enhancing their skills," Lindsay said. She has a set curriculum for her students. The class follows history, technology, sustainability, and economics. Local producers and growers come in to help teach according to what the industry is going through. Similarly, Lindsay also brings in guest speakers to touch on hot topics Wisconsin cranberry growers are facing and how the industry is developed from prior generations. *S* CONTINUED ON PAGE 66













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>> PITTSVILLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 64

Collaboration comes easy for Lindsay as her goal is to get as many people involved as possible, provided that it pertains to reaching the education of her students.

"These are five to six generation family growers. I see my students come back after college to work on cranberry farms," Lindsay shares. Annually, her capstone students that keep a high GPA are eligible for a scholarship. This year, Lindsay anticipates two-thousand dollars will be spread out between a number of students. At the end of a Splash of Cranberry tour, visitors are served pound

cake with a cranberry sauce made at their location.





Events Calendar

FFA Dairy Breakfast: June 14 at The Lippert's **Pittsville Heart and Sole Run/Walk:** July 3 at 7 p.m. **Fourth of July parade:** Kiddie Parade at 11 a.m. and the Big Parade at Noon







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Sherry: Keeping our farms alive



ike many towns in Wisconsin, the people within our communities find solace in modest towns like Sherry that contribute to one of the biggest industries in America; farming. Charming aesthetics compliment Sherry, such as a little free library nestled near the Town Hall and a family friendly barbeque hosted by St. Luke Lutheran Church, including pie and ice cream dishes every November. What makes the small town of Sherry unique is the antique tractor show and the importance that it instills in the aspiring future generations of agriculturalists: education and respect for tractor antiquity.

The set date for the annual 2025 antique tractor show and picnic begins at 10:00am on July 26, ending at 11:00pm. Community members attending the event can expect dishes such as sauerkraut, dumplings, and pork to be served. Engaging activities will be offered, along with a raffle, and a parade. The heart of the Sherry Tractor Club picnic is found in the fundraising it generates for their safety classes. Last year, 24 students from Sherry and neighboring towns completed the Auburndale tractor safety class and were provided with the proper equipment to ensure longevity in an agricultural career: safety glasses and earmuffs.

In addition to the contribution from Sherry and the surrounding communities ensuring the safety of future farmers, scholarships are awarded to a number of seniors invested in an agricultural,

HNEDE

or similar careers,

continuing on to a higher education. This year's presenter was Sandy Lobner. Her speech was nothing short of zeal and drive. These were the words spoken by Sandy to the Sherry Tired Iron Club scholarship winners, "Have you heard the quote from Winston Churchill? "There is no doubt that it is around the family and the home that all the greatest virtues... are created, strengthened and maintained." "Woven together by choice, strengthened together by love, tested by everything, and each uniquely ours." "Family isn't always blood. "It takes a village to raise a child" is a proverb that means that an entire community of people must provide for and interact positively with children for those children to experience and grow in a safe and healthy environment.

As part of this community, the Sherry Tired Iron Tractor Club consists of old tractor enthusiasts that promote the interest and education in the preservation and restoration of antique tractors, their accessories, lore, literature, and memorabilia. Some people collect stamps, baseball cards or comic books, but locals have their own ideas about collectibles. A drive through any small town is sure to reveal a rusted old tractor, a plow share or milk can sitting in someone's yard. For one day each year, an antique tractor show rolls into Sherry. It brings a sense of nostalgia for a way of life that has passed and a glance toward the future. You are the author of your own future, every minute of every day. It is your responsibility to yourself, to the future of agriculture and your village to do us proud."

If you are interested in donating to the Sherry Tired Iron Tractor Club please make checks payable to "Sherry Tired Tractor Club, Inc.," addressed to 7988 County Road HH, Arpin, WI 54410. Penny Shanks takes care of raffle baskets or auction merchandise. The deadline to donate raffle baskets and auction merchandise is July 22. To schedule delivery or pick up, Penny can be reached by phone and email: 715-650-0962, sherrytirediron@gmail.com





he village of Spencer thrives off of a committed community to keep nobility and engagement in local events to fulfill the community's wholesome spirit. Only fifteen minutes away from major highways, STH 29, and US 10, this allows easy access to other major towns in central Wisconsin. Outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, snowmobiling and skiing are popular. Less than an hour's drive, Rib Mountain is a notable spot for snowboarding and skiers. Spencer is near two universities: the southwest campus of North Central Technical College and the University of Wisconsinextension. These universities provide a flourishing education that flows into the economics of Spencer; businesses and industries lend a hand in training students for future employment. NCT offers courses on wood technology, but Dan Anderson is an exceptional wood craftsman who began woodworking his junior year (1984) in high school.

What was first a passion and hobby starting out in his parents garage, has now turned into a career.

Found on State Highway 13 and County Road V, Dan's Outdoor Furniture is a family run business. Born and raised in Spencer, Dan has passed on his love of woodworking to his two sons. Levi works



full-time while the younger of the two, Noah, works part-time and plans on taking over the business someday. "I've always loved this and it's not really work," Dan told We Are. Starting out, Dan strived diligently to achieve his goal. "There isn't much income in outdoor furniture," he continued. While crafting, he also worked part time







at Fleet Farm and helped his brother with side jobs. Now, Dan has reached a level of success where he has traveled the states and sat at his own picnic tables. After forty-one years of business, Dan's Outdoor Furniture ships to all 50 states, including Canada and Italy.

"Here's a good story," Dan said, "Once, I got a call from director Woody Allen's assistants and she asked if I could craft a picnic table for one of his films." You can watch a clip of the 2017 film, *Wonder Wheel*, on his website where actress Kate Winslet is seated at one of Dan's octagon picnic tables.

In 1989, the majority of the furniture was made out of Pressure Treated Pine and Western Red Cedar. Pine is no longer used. It's not as rot resistant and copper chromated arsenate holds the pine in place. CCA is a chemical that Dan wanted removed from his Bakery Items Cinnamon & Raspberry Rolls, Breads, Cheese Breads, Sweet Breads, Cookies, Bars, Cake Rolls, Muffins, Scones, Fry Pies, Gutten-free Goodies, Take & Bake Pizza, plus much more ...



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>> SPENCER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 69

designs. "You don't want people eating off tables like that. And I care about my customers. Western Red is all natural, there are no issues with chemicals, and naturally resists rotting for thirty years. If it's a kept finish, sometimes up to eighty. It's beautiful—lots of different colors. Our furniture is stout, another plus is that cedar is light weighted," Dan explains. There are three patio designer lines customers can choose from: Adirondack, Hillsfield, and Ozark (the most popular). Western Red is more prevalent and niche. Whichever line the buyer chooses, they can expect a freshly sanded and appealing product to match a rustic style.

To place an order from Dan's Outdoor Furniture, it's not necessary to drive to Spencer. Although the store has its own midwest rustic charm, Amazon, Etsy, eBay, along with his website are easily accessible. A wish list (found on the website) can be used to set aside items to buy at a later date. "I'm livin' the dream, no matter how big the slice of the pie is."

Events Calendar

Dairy Breakfast: June 13 Lions Park Spencerama: June 13-15 Village Garage Sales: July 31-Aug. 3 Music In The Park: Aug. 6, 13, 20 & 27



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Stratford:

How passion runs the Stratford Area Historical Society



The original American Legion cabin flags.

Stratford Area Historical Society photos

arathon County contains one of the most collective, collaborative, and supportive communities in Wisconsin. Founded in 1891, Stratford capitalized off the logging industry pulling from the Big Eau Pleine and Little Eau Pleine Rivers. The rivers flowing near Auburndale, depleted the neighboring towns business and was taken over by the Connors family who built the historical saw mill, keeping jobs in the logging business active and supplying jobs to the citizens in Auburndale while creating new ones in the Stratford saw mill. The village of Stratford keeps their history rich and alive throughout the year by hosting events like Christmas in the Park, Music in the Park, Sawmill Days, and an annual car show. But what really ties the abundant passion together in Stratford's history is the board of directors that run the Stratford Area Historical Society.

At times it can be enigmatic to try and grasp how easily an entire town can put together such meaningful events, linking as one big force that started out as a logging town, now a place in Wisconsin that is an essential place to visit. While it was difficult for the SAHS to choose one aspect that sets them apart from the rest of Wisconsin, The Little Red Cabin, built in 1932, became the epicenter of the interview. "It took a couple years to get it incorporated and came to be in conjunction with The American Legion Post 307 (the nation's





The "Little Red Cabin" close to the time of its' completion in the 1930's.

largest veterans service organization). It was donated in 1991, now owned by the village. There are 30 charter members that really take on the passion of collecting information, putting them on display, along with preserving them," one Historical Member starts out, with a clear sense of pride.

"What do you think the purpose of the red cabin is?" I ask. Her energetic tone shifted from a normal interview process where bullet point questions are answered and began to feel more and more like an easy flowing conversation.

"It's specifically used as a museum. The purpose is educational and the displays are changed every year. As the cabin is not insulated or able to hold heat, we utilize it during the summer months. During historical days tourists have the option of doing a self-guided tour with a pamphlet or groups can sign up to have a tour guide."

The village—chamber of commerce, is responsible for keeping the cabin along with other historical landmarks like the Well House up to code. As the cabin is built completely out of logs placed by the American Legion and it's vital to ensure preservation. The Well House is a bit more complex and requires a special set of hands during the restoration process; tuck-pointing (removing the mortar out between the crumbling bricks) being one of them. The adjustment of the brick





A Fourth of July Parade in Stratford in the early 1920's. Stratford Area Historical Society



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>> STRATFORD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 73

framework needs to match the original architecture. The Stratford Building Supply was a huge donor for this.

Passing the south end of the little red cabin is Klemme Park, which has been in the center of the town since 1901. This is where all the main events are held. Running these events are seamless with help from the VFW, chamber of commerce, and a large number of volunteers from Stratford and surrounding towns. Memorial Day is celebrated by Music in the Park. On clear days bands are organized to play at their bandshell and the museum is set up with artifacts pulled together by the VFW, post commander Tom as the lead. Free food is available for attendees such as brats, hot dogs, and ice cream.

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>> STRATFORD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 74

When winter hits, Christmas in the Park takes on a similar atmosphere: a bounce house, sled rides, and of course—Santa!

"This event is also free. It's meant for families to come out and share stories. I've run into people who have lineage back to the Connors. That's what makes this town and its history so special. I am in awe. The volunteerism and community giving back keeps evolving. They see how everything connects, but each group has their own missions and purpose. They just happen to know their own history," another Historical Member says.

The list goes on and on with what brings passion and pride to Stratford. The Lions Club, public displays from the Little Red Cabin move to the library during winter months, and a digitization project allowing the centennial books to be more accessible, which contain the town's genealogy. Keeping the history intact calls for advertisement and you can find consistent posts on the Stratford Area Historical Society Facebook page, Channel 7 and 9 News, and of course if any reader finds themselves interested in their own roots, the best course of action is to take vacation time to stay in Stratford.

Stratford Area Historical Society ends our conversation with a summary of what Stratford represents, "If I could put a bow on the hidden gem, it would be the community organizations."



Events Calendar

Rummaging Around Stratford: May 1-3 (first Thursday, Friday and Saturday of May) June Classic Car Show: Second Saturday in June Christmas in the Park: First weekend of December (Various events with Santa and Mrs. Claus in the Community Hall)





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