

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Fall 2017



As we express our gratitude....we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. John Fitzgerald Kennedy Thank you Veterans, we are grateful for your service.



The following have passed away since our last newsletter:

Dr. Albert L. Pumilia	79	June 2017
Tom Donovan	74	July 2017
Richard H. Anderson	88	August 2017
Gary L Hague II	47	Sept 2017

The way I remember it...by Richard C. Cordonnier

I was born September 9, 1937 at St. Anthony Hospital in Rockford. I am the only child of Rene and Pauline Cordonnier, who were immigrants from Alsace Lorraine, a Provence in France. My mother worked at Contour Hosiery Mills in Rockford, and my father worked as a die maker at Rockford Clutch Co. I attended CV Grade School for the first two years. We didn't have kindergarden in those days: grades 1-8 in grade school, no middle school...seemed much simpler! When I began third grade I went to St. Mary Grade School in Rockford for grades 3-8. At nine years old I boarded a school bus (not the yellow ones), but an old rickety one. It stopped at East High, and then on to Lincoln. I got off that bus and took a city bus across the river to St. Mary's. After school I walked downtown to the Greyhound Bus Station and caught the bus to go home. Cost \$0.25. I attended St. Thomas High School in Rockford, then on to Loras College. After college, I went into the U.S. Navy for 9 years; 2 years active duty, and 7 years in the Reserves. I loved the Navy.

We weren't dirt poor, but close to it. We lived on a farmette in the Valley, located at the end of W. State St. about a mile from school. Growing up during and after WWII, we always had enough to eat, because we grew most of our needs on the farm. Mom was a great cook, she could make soup out of a stone!

We raised chickens as supplemental income. We had three large hen houses. It was my job as I grew older, to gather eggs, feed the birds and clean the hen houses. We had rats because of the eggs. I would stick them with the pitchfork, throw them out one of the windows, and my dog Teddy, would take care of the rest. He was a mutt, part rat terrier, and part bull dog and my constant companion.

In those days, mid 1940's, we sold eggs for \$.50 cents a dozen and live weight chickens for \$.50 a pound. Along with gathering and feeding, it was my job to kill the chickens that were ordered. There was a stump with two nails driven in to wedge the chicken's head. I used my trusty hatchet to dispatch them. Then after a dunk in hot water, I plucked the larger feathers off. Next I used rolled up newspaper to burn off the pin feathers. I can still smell that stink in my mind, no wonder as an adult I've never cared for eating chicken!

The Newman family lived 3 places east of us. Their children were Donna, John, Carol and Mike. They had a lot of property, including some woods. Mike and I would set up camp sites, and did everything our imaginations could think up. I still miss him! When I was around 10, Mike, sister Carol and I decided to build a fire out in the field. We took some straw from the haystack near the old corn crib, and lit it. It got out of control, and we ran to the house to get some water. When we returned, the whole haystack was on fire, and it quickly spread to the corn crib. The old Cherry Valley fire truck with the soda ash extinguisher mounted in the bed of the truck tried to put it out. We got a stern lecture from the Police Chief.

Every July 4th we had a huge picnic at our house, with relatives and friends in attendance. Mom would cook the meat and everyone would bring a dish to pass. Uncle Victor and Dad got tables and chairs from St. Rita Catholic Church. I would guess we had upwards of 100 people. I remember they would always get 2

barrels of beer. Mid afternoon, Uncle Victor would say to Dad, “Rene, do you think we should tap that second keg?” And dad would say, “I don’t know, but if we tap it, we’re going to drink it!” I remember a photo of me at 4 or 5 holding a stein of beer next to Uncle Harvey. I’m sure it was a publicity stunt, but I did get to taste it.

As the only child, I had a lot of jobs to do. We didn’t have running water or inside plumbing until I was 14...WOW! My Sunday job was to pump water from the well outside, rain or shine, cold or hot, and carry enough to the basement to fill the boiler, 2 galvanized wash tubs, and the ringer washer. Then make sure mom had enough kindling to heat the water, when she did the wash on Monday. After which I carried all the grey water out and dumped it in the gardens. We had about a half acre of lawn which I mowed with an old hand push lawnmower. What a chore, but it got done weekly. In the spring we would hire Roy Buck to bring his mule and walk-behind plow, to till the garden. Thereafter, hoeing was another joyful task for me.

Dad decided to put running water and plumbing in the house in 1951. He used a cold chisel to cut through the foundation to get to the well. What a chore, it took about 2 months work! He and I dug the septic tank hole, built the tank out of cement blocks and soldered all of the 4 inch cast iron pipe connections to allow for the drainage from the house to the septic tank. I used to say to him, “can we take a rest?” He would reply, “You can rest when you’re dead.” I always found that funny.

I remember one Halloween we thought we would pull some pranks. Of course we were ALWAYS doing that, but this particular day we were out pushing over outhouses. This was a common prank in those days, because everyone had a “two holer”. Anyway, we pushed over the Sheriff’s outhouse, but didn’t know his wife was in it. She screamed, and we ran away as fast as we could. They never found out it was us, and only her pride was hurt. Another time we were doing the same thing at the town Barber’s house, Carson (Mac) McFall. Much to our surprise, he had already moved it away from the hole. When we ran to push it over, Doug Offenhiser didn’t see it soon enough and went right into the hole with crap all over him. Mac was standing on his porch laughing his head off.

Another story comes to mind...Bob Ronnenberg, the town cop, had a 50’s green Olds in mint condition. Some of my friends took straw and scattered it over the road on the west end of the CV bridge. As “officer Friendly” crossed the bridge, we lit it on fire, then scattered straw across the other end behind him, and lit that too. Now he was stuck between the fires, or risk the car crossing the burning straw. Naturally we all scattered, and no one could ever prove it was us. We were a bit prankish, but never did any real harm.

As time went on, I worked for a few farmers in the area. When I was about 10, Mr. Olson hired me to clean out his loafing shed. There must have been 3 feet of compacted manure in there. Using a pick axe, shovel and wheelbarrel, it took me a full week to get it finished. He paid me \$1.00 a day, which I was happy to get. The next year I got to drive tractor in the fields, earning \$1.00 an hour. I thought I was rich, and loved every minute of it. Guess you could call me a farmer at heart.





CV Library Scarecrow Contest

The Library once again launched it's adopt a scarecrow event. This year saw the most ever scarecrows appear around town—53! Here are the first place winners.



Cherry Valley
Scarecrow
Contest
Winners

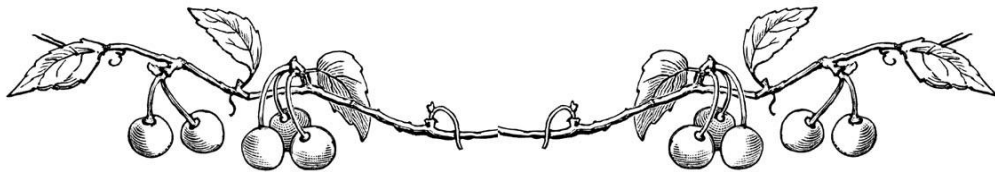


Individual/Organization Category
“Lumberjack”, Kari Eskew

Business Category
“Homebuilder” Cook Construction

OTHER AWARDS

- Library Staff Pick—“Michael Jackson”, Karr Farms Homeschool Organization
- Best Scarecrow from New Adopter—“Haunted House for Sale”, Rebecca LeClaire-Century 21
- Best Use of Theme (Occupations)—“CVS Pharmacist”, Tawny Decorie




Editor.... Pam Jeske (golfnsew@aol.com)

Please feel free to drop a line, add some content, share some stories either to my e-mail, the Historical Society's e-mail (cv.historical186@frontier.com)

Or stop by, leave a note ...have a chat with a member!

Cherry Valley Historical Society, Box 266, Cherry Valley, IL 61016



A Place for Space
815 874-7552 *Making Self Storage easy*

Rockford	Belvidere
5112 Linden Rd.	1821 Chrysler Dr.
1619 Meridian Rd.	
3722 Baxter Rd.	
5315 Sandy Hollow Rd.	aplaceforspace.com

**24/7 Self Rental/Payment Station
at all Locations**



RawsonTM
Custom Woodworks LLC

**Kitchens • Furniture • Cabinetry
Decks • Stairs • Trim • Hardwoods**

Brian & Rachel Rawson 815 **332-9222**
www.RawsonCustomWoodworks.com

**Countertops • Millwork • Repairs
Finishing • Custom Stains • Top Coats
Wood Signs • Gift Boxes • Custom Guitars**

Hours 10 am - 4 pm and By Appointment

Shop: **4337 South Perryville Rd, Suite 110
Cherry Valley, IL 61016**
*1-1/2 miles south of Harrison Ave, south of CherryVale Mall
Near I-39 & I-90 Interchange - Rockford exit*

Email: info@RawsonCustomWoodworks.com

Cherry Valley
Methodist Women




815-332-2103
7295 Harrison Ave.
Rockford, IL 61112
www.peppercreek.com

"A natural for plants, gifts, and flowers!"



Fitzgerald SINCE 1914
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY LTD.

Family Owned & Operated
www.fitzgeraldfh.com

	
Riverside Chapel 3910 N. Rockton Av (815) 654-2484	Mulford Chapel 1860 S. Mulford Rd (815) 226-2273



Thank you to the Cherry Valley Village Hall for their wonderful support and assistance. Please let our sponsors know you saw their advertisement in the newsletter, we appreciate them!

Cherry Valley Area Men's Club

Lifelong Cherry Valley resident Terry Murphy had always wanted to form a men's club in Cherry Valley with the purpose of helping Cherry Valley area kids and the community in general. In 2011 he put his ideas into action and the Cherry Valley Area Men's Club was established. We are a small non for profit organization that raises money through various events, company sponsors and membership dues. The club donates to various community needs and offers five \$500 scholarships per year towards continuing education. The club meets at 6:30 p.m. the third Monday of every month. Check us out on Facebook "Cherry Valley Men's Association" for meeting locations.

What the Cherry Valley Area Men's club has done?

1. Petitioned and got the speed limit reduced from 55 mph to 45 mph on Harrison (Bypass 20) and Mill Road.
2. Established an educational scholarship program
3. Donated uniforms and equipment for the 4th and 5th grade boys and girls basketball teams at Cherry Valley School
4. Donated Cheerleading uniforms for the 4th and 5th grade Cherry School Spirit squad.
5. CVAMA members assist with the yearly food and paper shredding drive at Village Hall.
6. Raised funds for uniforms for the Goldie B. Floberg special athletes.
7. CVAMA worked with the Winnebago County Forest Preserve to design, produce and install rules of the river signs at six county forest preserves.
8. Donated to the 2011 and 2012 downtown Cherry Valley Christmas lights
9. Donated over 2500 Frisbees for the Cherry Valley 4th of July parade 2012 thru 2016.
10. Sponsored the Oscar Meyer Weiner Mobile at the 2012 4th of July parade.
11. CVAMA annually sponsors the Cherry Valley Family Night Ice skating at Carlson Ice Arena.
12. Sponsored Cherry Valley 4th and 5th grade basketball players to youth basketball clinics.
13. Mini Golf and silent auction sponsor 2017 Cherry Valley Public Library fundraiser.
14. Sponsoring Wild Time Animal Education Show Cherry Valley Public Library 2017
15. Donated a defibrillator to the Cherry Valley Police department.

If you would like to donate to the club please send your donation to:

Cherry Valley Area Men's Club

1343 Temple Circle

Rockford, Il 61108