

# KEWAUNEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## HISTORICAL NOTES



Jerry Abitz, editor  
Rhonda Hanson, production editor  
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www.rootsweb.com/~wikchs  
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**Winner of the Governor's Archives Award 2005**

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rhanson@doorpi.net with your email address

### SVOBODA ALTARS

By Jerry Abitz

One of the early companies founded in the City of Kewaunee was the Jos. Svoboda Company. Svoboda had come to America from his native land, Bohemia, today's Czech Republic. They manufactured church furniture and also decorated churches. Two notable employee artisans were Robert Pettscheider who was recruited from Austria and Louis Schrovnal who was recruited from Bohemia.

With the 2007 centennial celebration in the Town of Montpelier and the Cemetery Walk that occurred at St. Paul's Cemetery, KCHS president, Tom Schuller saw the interior of their church with its beautiful altar. Having seen the Svoboda blueprints we have at the Jail Museum, he was convinced he had seen the blueprints for this altar. Conversing with Pastor Battinsila, he was told the Svoboda Co. had produced that altar. It had originally been designed for another church, which had rejected the design because it was too small for its intended location. Double-checking our blueprints did not reveal any evidence that it was actually produced in Kewaunee. However, our collection is only a partial set. I did find, however, a plan for the pulpit for an unnamed Lutheran in Luxemburg in 1921. This can only be

**St. Paul's Lutheran  
Montpieler**



**St. Paul's Lutheran--Algoma**

19th-early 20th century. It reminded me very much of the one in the church in which I was baptized and confirmed in downtown Appleton. It also set me to wondering, is that also one of the Svoboda altars as well?

Judy Srnka, a KCHS director, informed me that the carving of the Last Supper on the base of the altar at St. John's Lutheran in Algoma is also a Svoboda production.

It had been commissioned in memory of Pastor Toefel in 1963 upon his retirement. More recently Jill Dopke E-mailed me that she had found a reference in the early newspapers that the Catholic Church altar in Francis Creek also was done by the Svoboda Company.

Just the other day I stopped by St. Mary's Catholic Church in Algoma. The church has a huge, beautiful main altar. Our records show that it was carved by Father Ciprin, The same records indicate that the side altars were remodeled by Joseph Svoboda Company in 1922 so they matched the main altar.

Additional searching of records on file at the KCHS Research Center indicate that the altar at St. Lawrence in Stangelville was also done by Joseph Svoboda.

Which sets me to wondering how many other churches in the area can lay claim to a Svoboda altar? Having toured many of the churches in Green Bay, I do know that First Methodist has a Robert Pettscheider carving of the "Last Supper." Grace Lutheran appears to have a carbon copy of the same carving, but they are unable to validate that it came from the Svoboda Company.

If you are aware of other altars or church furniture from the Svoboda Company, please contact me. My address is found on the last page.

### "OLD WORLD" GERMAN METTWURST

By Jill Dopke

The German settlers brought much to Kewaunee County from the "old world". Along with their skills, a solid work ethic, and strong Christian values, they brought their recipe for mettwurst.

I first tasted mettwurst when I moved to Kewaunee County back in the 70's and rented ½ of a 2 story country farmhouse in the Town of Montpelier from Marvin and Muriel Gruetzmacher. They lived in the other half. Every December they made mettwurst, and I got to help. I couldn't believe how rich and flavorful it was. Fresh from the smokehouse, a little warm and a little greasy, I think I ate too much, but I have never stopped wanting more.



**Gruetzmacher Smokehouse  
a painting by Marilyn Secor**

I recently stopped by to ask Marvin and Muriel about making mettwurst and the recipe they used. They don't make it anymore, but said everyone used to make it, and everyone had a smokehouse. Smokehouses were a common and important structure on early farms. The early settlers depended on them to cure their meat in order to preserve it as refrigerators and freezers were not yet available.

### Mettwurst

#### Meat

(½ beef & ½ pork, coarse ground) – 120 lbs.

Curing Salt – 2-3 lbs.

Pepper – 9 oz.

Mustard Seed – 2 boxes



**Marvin and Muriel Gruetzmacher**

As we talked, Muriel went over to a drawer in her kitchen, and retrieved a small worn and tattered recipe booklet. All the pages were loose, but she seemed to know exactly where the correct page for mettwurst was. Since many people in this area made mettwurst, and some still do I'm sure, there are probably many recipes out there, but this is Marvin and Muriel's recipe.

We used to mix all of this in a huge vat by hand. At first I was hesitant to mix it without a spoon, but there was so much of it and there wasn't a spoon big enough anyway, so mixing it by hand made sense. It was a gooey, sticky task, and sometimes our arms got stuck, but we usually ended up laughing which made it more fun than work. Then, using a large cast iron sausage stuffer, we stuffed the mixture in long, slippery beef casings, tied off small sections, and gave them to Marvin to hang in the smokehouse.

Marvin placed the mettwurst on rods, hung them in the smokehouse, and started a fire. He said the best wood to use was apple wood when it was available, but a good hard wood like maple worked well. He kept the fire going for 4 or 5 days tending it every morning and evening and sometimes again during the day. "The fire shouldn't go out, but it shouldn't be too strong either." Marvin said. "Otherwise, the whole building could burn down! That's happened before to people." When the smoking was completed, there would be about 80 rings of 1 ½ to 2 lbs. each.

As we talked, Marvin leaned forward with a serious look on his face and said, "Making mettwurst was work", and Muriel quickly agreed with that same serious look. Then they both laughed and I knew they remembered how much fun it was too!

In my daily travels throughout the countryside I sometimes see smokehouses on local farms and wonder . . . How many still make their own mettwurst, what recipe do they use, and is it as much fun as Marvin, Muriel, and I remember? ▪

## HISTORY OF BRUEMMERVILLE

By Jill Dopke



*Bruemmerville Circa 1880's*

*Sketch By Jan Jablonski -from a flour sack*

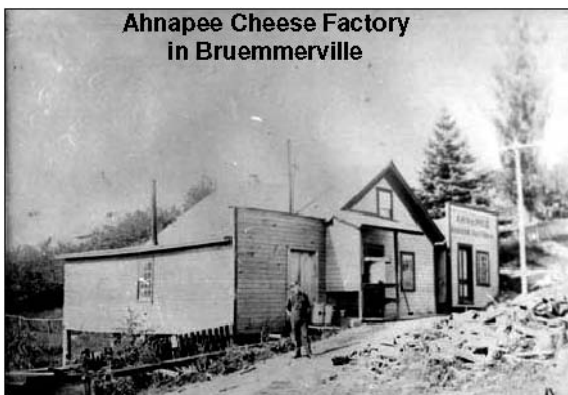
Bruemmerville is located just west of Algoma on a branch of the Ahnapee River called Silver Creek. Abraham Hall purchased the land patent on 80 acres in 1856, and then sold it to Charles Griswold Boldt and Frank Swaty who built a flour and gristmill. In 1866 Henry Bruemmer arrived in Ahnapee and bought the mill. He also planted an orchard and started a brick manufacturing business shortly after the Peshtigo fire of 1871 when brick was in great demand. Henry and his sons began many businesses and Frank Elliot, publisher of the Algoma Record Herald from 1907-1918, named it Bruemmerville.

The Bruemmer mill was a busy place in the late 1800's with farmers from Kewaunee and Door Counties bringing their grain to be ground up for dairy feeds and their wheat in the fall for their year's supply of flour. Often farmers were lined up and sometimes had to wait 2 days for their flour. To accommodate the farmers while they waited, Henry's son, Rudolph, built a tavern in Bruemmerville in 1876 with an addition in about 1900 that included a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor dance hall. Farmers could discuss local affairs and do business in the tavern while they waited for their flour and the dance hall provided a gathering place for social, wedding, and anniversary dances. Brault's Canadians, Romy Gosz, Rio Creek Brass Band, the Polka Dots, and many others played there. In the 1950's professional wrestling matches were also held in the dance hall. The tavern has changed hands many times and is now owned by Sherry and Lester Tebon. Sherry is the daughter of Elmer and Esther (Correy) Dart who also ran the tavern at one time.

Henry's sons, Louis and Ernst, joined their father in the mill business and became partners after their father retired in 1910 naming it the Bruemmer Bros. They also built a saw and planing mill on Silver Creek where a dam was built in 1866. It washed out twice and finally a cement dam was built in 1923. By 1944 competition had put the mill out of business. Ernst Bruemmer's son, Stanley, was the last Bruemmer to operate it. Wm. Stoller purchased the mill in 1943 and tore it down for wood for his barn. The Algoma Hunting and Fishing Club then built a Club House on the site. The dam site and mill pond were purchased by the county and the area is now a park.

To the west of the tavern John Busch built the Ahnapee Cheese Factory and Store in 1891 then sold it to neighboring farmers in 1893. It became a cooperative stockholders' venture with Jacob Roth, president, August Fenske, secretary, and John Busch, treasurer. In 1944 it was sold to the Casco Cheese Company and milk was trucked to Casco. Rufus Ruhnke purchased the building and remodeled it for a home, which is now rented. In addition to the homes, mills, tavern, brick yard, and cheese factory, Bruemmerville also had at one time an ice house and two livery stables that were capable of holding up to 300 horses.

Henry Bruemmer built the house on the NE corner of Fremont and Willow in about 1870 where Kim and Don



Gagne now live. His son, Louis, built the house on the NW corner where Diane and Phil Steffen live, and in 1908 his son, Ernst, built the house where Ann and Larry Schmitz now live. The last Bruemmer living in Bruemmerville was Ella who lived in the house her father, Louis, built. She never married, and died in 1973.

As the influx of immigrants to Kewaunee County continued into the early 1900's, new businesses were established and the once active settlement of Bruemmerville passed into history. By 1944 the mills and cheese factory had closed down or been torn down, and by 1973 the last Bruemmer was gone. The only reminders of this once vibrant community are the homes, the tavern, and the dam. ▀

## FUND DRIVE

An envelope is included for the annual fund drive. The KCHS would like to thank all who have given so generously in the past, and we look forward to your continued support. ▀

## FIRST HOSPITAL IN KEWAUNEE CMEJLA HOME

By Linda Vogel



**Cmejla Hospital - Kewaunee**

The first hospital in Kewaunee was located in the home of Bozena Skala & Joseph Cmejla. Bozena was born in West Kewaunee in 1882. Joseph was born in Pierce in 1878. They married in 1905 and lived in West Kewaunee for a number of years raising 2 sons, John and Pat, before moving to Kewaunee and building a home on the corner of Dodge and Dorelle Streets in 1916 (Micoliczyk home).

Bozena had considerable training as a nurse, a loving, caring heart, and had long felt a need for a community hospital. With her giving nature, she opened her family home for a hospital in 1924. Her husband, Joseph, worked for the city of Kewaunee as the Superintendent of the Municipal Light Plant.

Dr. Frank Wochos and Dr. Wenzel Wochos, brothers, were the backbone of the hospital and Bozena was the head nurse. Over the years, babies were born, farm accidents tended to, surgery was performed, and scrapped knees looked after.

In the summer of 1930 the hospital suffered a setback. On a sunny afternoon while Bozena was working in her flower garden, she suffered a paralyzing stroke. The hospital was stunned. It would be days before anyone knew if she would recover. Her left side was paralyzed, and she could no longer perform her duties as head nurse. As time passed, though, Bozena grew stronger and eventually she could participate in the administrative duties of her hospital.

The Cmejla Hospital operated from 1924 until Dr. Wenzel Wochos died in 1950. Dr. Frank Wochos died in 1947. Joseph Cmejla died in 1936 and Bozena in 1944.

Joseph and Bozena's son, Pat, became a doctor serving in WW2 in the Philippines and later practicing in Sioux Falls, Iowa. Their son, John, who had been his father's assistant at the Municipal Light Plant, took over as Superintendent when his father died. He married Martha Proctor in 1944. It is interesting to note that in order for Martha to inherit the Proctor Orchard in Door County, John had to change his last name from Cmejla to Proctor. John and Martha had two children, Nada and J.P. Proctor. Nada (Proctor) Graves now lives in Colorado and provided information for this article. ▀

## DISAPPEARING BARNs

By Jerry Abitz

Many are concerned about disappearing farm buildings with the changes in America's Dairyland. With the formation of mega farms covering huge acreage and thousands of milk cows being milked three times a day, small farm holdings are disappearing. Even if you haven't noticed the visual change, it is hard to miss the obnoxious odors as one cruises down the country roads.

But one cannot outlaw change. If one could do that, Wisconsin might still be producing wheat and farm buildings would have much different configurations. Efficiency is in numbers and the days of the family farm have gone by the wayside. What does one do with buildings that have become obsolete? A building can stand empty for long periods of time, but once the roof starts to leak, its days are numbered. How many people do you know who just happened to have \$30,000 or more dollars laying around to invest in a new roof for a building that is standing empty.

There are organizations dedicated to saving barns, but there has to be a reuse for the building, which will pay for its maintenance. There have been success stories in reusing such buildings. I have eaten meals in Wisconsin and in Ohio inside a restaurant housed in a barn. Locally, we have the former Duvall Barn on the north side of Kewaunee which houses the Barnsite Art Studio while the owners live in the twin silos. In some areas they are remodeled into living quarters. But can one find a usage for every one of them?

The best we can ever hope for is to preserve the best. Over in the Town of Chase in Southern Oconto County a stone barn has been restored, placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and will become the centerpiece for a town park. However, that is not yet an accomplished deed.

Look around. Do you see outstanding barns that should be preserved? On the eastern edge of Green Bay on Humboldt Road is a "round" barn. The Fontaine Family would love to have someone come forward to preserve this 1908-vintage building. In my area of Northwestern Kewaunee County, there is a brick barn that should be preserved. When the 4-lane highway project was built, the Wisconsin DOT purposely avoided that property and moved the project into land across the road on the fringes of Bayshore Park. The same thing has happened with the right-of-way in Southern Door County to avoid the National

Register's Belgian Farm Historic District between Namur and Brussels. Getting the building on the National Register does not guarantee saving such a building.



Here, in our county the Pilgrim Farmstead in the town of West Kewaunee was placed on this list in 1976. It had a unique set of farm buildings, which included a square silo built with local stone. The barn had a windmill on the top with a 16-foot wingspan. This mill could pump water, grind feed, convey silage into the silo, produce electricity, and propel a feed cutter. It was the latest technology when built by a prosperous family. But as things age, the cost of maintenance increases. What happens when wind damages the windmill and there is not enough money to fix the problem? Modernity also brings obsolescence. Why do it the old way when new developments work faster and better.



**The Pilgrim Farmstead today**

The lack of maintenance began to take its toll on the Pilgrim barn. In 1997 I nominated this property to the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation's "Most Endangered List" hoping that someone or some group would come forward to help save the barn. The Green Bay newspaper did an article on this farm. It did not help that the reporter/photographer could not follow directions and snapped a photo of an old house across the road. This was printed in the paper with the wrong photo. No one ever came forward to say, "Yes, this is worth saving!"

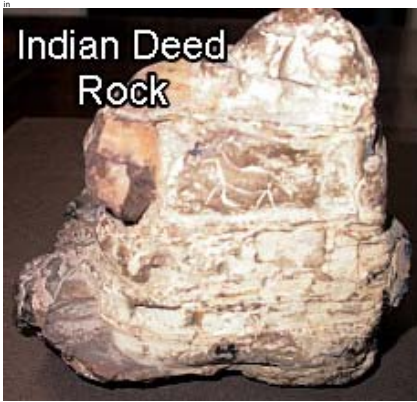
The property was sold to a Green Bay resident, Marty Gantenbein, who was interested in saving the barn. Having contacted James Hayward, a building preservationist, he discovered the barn was too far gone. The accompanying photo will attest to the fact the building collapsed in a storm.

Brian Rasmussen, the son of the former owner, did rescue and restore the windmill. He spent thousands of dollars on this project. Some of the moving parts had to be custom made. In the summers of 2004-2005 it was on display in the threshing barn at the Heritage Farm south of Kewaunee. The manufacturer, the Monitor Company of Evansville, Wisconsin, has used this restored windmill as the centerpiece for a new museum in this small city just south of Madison. ■

## NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM IWEN FAMILY LOANS "INDIAN DEED ROCK"

By Jill Dopke

About 1910, Emil Iwen discovered a unique rock on the Iwen farm just west of Algoma. Emil was only 11 years old, and found it while picking stones. It caught his attention because it was heavy and oddly shaped, but he put it aside at the time and used it as a doorstop on the milk shed.



Years later, about 1920, as Emil prepared to plant gladiolus, he looked at the rock again and notice some carvings on it. Four figures could plainly be seen carved into the rock. He showed the rock to his brother, August, who knew Chief Simon Kahquadas.

Simon was born in 1851 in the Pottawatomie Village of Black Earth in Carlton and was the grandson of Chief Ketoose. August drew a sketch of the rock and asked Simon if he knew anything about it. Simon told him it was a deed to Indian property. He went on to say that everything owned by a Pottawatomie tribe was owned by its chief. The rock and its four inscriptions, he explained, meant that the chief had given the brave a wigwam, a bow and arrow, and a horse.

One of the figures on the rock is a cross that represents the bow and arrow. Just above a ridge are two other figures, the figure of a man, and a wigwam. On another side the outline of a horse can be seen. According to Simon, the figure of the man on the rock was used to identify the owner of the stone identified by four fingers clearly carved out.

The "Indian Deed Rock" story appeared in the Green Bay Press Gazette and the Algoma Record Herald Jan. 1938, and it is making news again 2008. Emil Iwen's sons, Frank, Keith, and Ken have loaned it to the Jail Museum. The KCHS would like to thank the Iwen family for this unique addition to the museum. ▀

## NEWS FROM THE RESEARCH CENTER

By Virginia Johnson

**Thank you** for making our winter Local History series the success that it was. Pictures are found elsewhere in this newsletter. Planning is underway for next year's series, which includes the trials and tribulations of our German, Czech and Belgian ancestors and those "juicy tidbits" which helped mold the county.

**May is Preservation Month** in Wisconsin and on Friday, May 16 at 1:00, Hans Nell, Ken Wolske and Virginia Johnson will present the history and architecture of downtown Algoma. The free 1-½ hour program will be held at the Research Center.

**Research Center hours** are expanded to Saturday afternoons beginning May 31.

Center staff invites browsers to look through the bound newspaper collections, old maps and tax record books and over 23,000 pictures, hard copies or on video. Audio tapes dating to the Federal Writer's Project, videos and DVDs covering just about every aspect of Kewaunee County are available. Church and school histories evoke memories and there are over 2,000 vertical files to peruse.

**We need help!** Our photo collection needs descriptive titles enabling us to put the index online. The job needs to be done in the Center but computer skills are not necessary. Jim and Jean Foshion Lindeke's World War II letters are a book waiting to happen. A digital camera and a copy stand await someone willing to photograph irreplaceable, one-of-a-kind collections. Special skills are not necessary. Photographing the barns and farms of the county, compiling histories of service men and your own family history are only a few of the projects available.



Local History Series 2008  
Prehistoric people and artifacts drew a crowd in spite of weather conditions. Bruce Vandervest and Jill Dopke spoke of history over 1000 years ago.



Local History Series 2008  
Jerry Abitz used a multi-media approach in his presentation on barns and silos. Buildings of early ethnic groups remain in some parts of the county.



Local History Series 2008  
Following storyteller Tom Schuller's presentation, some of the attendees said they felt they knew the ghosts of Kewaunee County personally.

**For further information**, or to suggest ideas, call Nancy Kratz or Virginia Johnson at the Center, 487-2516, on Thursday or Friday afternoons. ▀

**YOU'RE INVITED  
TO OUR HOME'S  
100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY PARTY**

Larry and Ann Schmitz

Our home in Bruemmerville will be 100 years old this year, and we would like to invite you to join us and help us celebrate this milestone.

**Sat., July 12th, 2008  
1-4 p.m.**

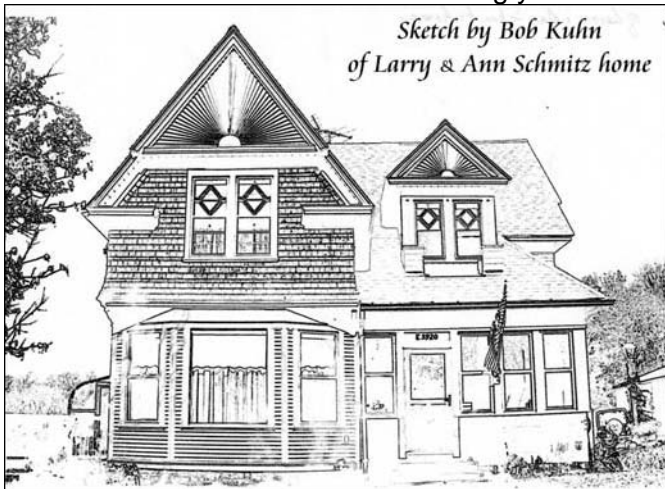
**E5920 Fremont Rd., Algoma, WI.**

There will be a birthday cake, coffee, punch, and entertainment. The kids are coming home, and previous occupants will be there along with KCHS members.

Our 2 story Victorian was built in 1908 by Ernst Bruemmer, son of Henry Bruemmer. In 1940 Otto and Tina Dopke purchased the home, and it stayed in the Dopke family until 1968 when the Buss family bought it, living there a few months. We purchased it in 1969.

**Come celebrate with us.**

Learn about or share your memories of our home and Bruemmerville. If you have any historical pictures of our home or Bruemmerville, bring them along and share them too. We look forward to seeing you.



**THANK YOU**

From Jerry and Jill

We, the editors, would like to personally thank all of our readers for the positive feedback we received this past year regarding the KCHS Newsletter. We enjoy researching and writing about Kewaunee County's past and present and keeping you up-to-date on the activities of the KCHS.

We would also like to thank those who have contributed articles this past year including Virginia Johnson, Roxanne and Mary Reckelberg, Bruce Vandervest, Joyce Lampereur, Linda Vogel, and Karen Kinstetter. We hope more readers will contribute stories in the future.

The KCHS is an ongoing organization that continues to need community support and involvement. We would like to extend an invitation to anyone interested in promoting and preserving the history of Kewaunee County to join KCHS as a board member or become a volunteer at the Research Center in Algoma or the Jail Museum in Kewaunee. We need to continue to look to the future for

new members willing to give of their time, talents, and energy to keeping Kewaunee County's history alive.

If you would like further information on becoming a board member or volunteering, please contact one of us or a board member listed on the back page of the newsletter. ▪

**DONOR LIST**

**Family \$25.00 to \$49.00**

Lorraine Abitz	Chris & Marge Bouche
Jerry & Mary Guth	Virginia M. Kostka
Jim & Joyce Lampereur	Carl & Rena Olsen
Captain M.J. & Nancy Stoffel	

**Individual \$10.00 to \$24.00**

Lloyd & Carol Allan	David Chada
Nellie P. DeBaker	Almyra Havenhill
Sally Matyshak	Marie Miller

**LUXEMBURG CENTENNIAL**

By Jerry Abitz

While Luxemburg has been around for much longer than 100 years, it is celebrating the 100th anniversary of becoming a village. Promotional materials have been produced and are being sold. The \$25-package includes a video, a calendar, and a centennial book. Each item can also be purchased separately at various businesses. The following is a schedule of events:

**Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>** Dairy Dash

**Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup>** Free corn roast and the Bob Rivers Band will entertain for the entire evening in the Bank of Luxemburg parking lot.

**Saturday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>** Dedication of the Village Park will take place. A time capsule will be buried, and prizes will be awarded for essays and shirt designs. From there the festivities move to the nearby Luxemburg Fairgrounds. Rides will be provided, the food stands will be open, and various displays will be shown. There will be antique cars and tractors on display and activities will be available for children. A petting zoo and pony rides will be provided. At noon the Community Band will play. In the afternoon cemetery walks will take place at both St. Mary's and St. John's Cemeteries. Ray Rollins' Polka Band will play in the afternoon and Haze/Southern Gypsy (Classic & Country Rock) will perform in the evening. There will be a fireworks display in the evening.

**Sunday, August 24<sup>th</sup>** A heritage parade is scheduled for 11:30, the displays will be open at the Fairgrounds, and various demonstrations are scheduled. Displays and events from Saturday will be continued. The Dorf Kapelle will perform the entire afternoon. The festivities are scheduled to end at 5:00 p.m. These plans are subject to change. ▪

**KCHS ANNUAL MEETING**

By Jerry Abitz

The Kewaunee County Historical Society will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, May 3rd at Knudson Hall, also known as the Dugout located in Algoma.

The meeting will begin at 11:00 a.m. and will include a short business meeting and the election of directors. The guest speaker, Doug Zillmer, is a well-known farmer from Ahnapee Town with a vast knowledge of farm machinery. He has a collection of about 100 tractors at his farm and probably has a sample of every type of farm equipment ever produced in Kewaunee County. When his children were still at home, the Zillmers scheduled an annual haying event using old-fashioned equipment to which the public was invited. One could also tour his large display of tractors and other farming equipment.

Secretary Julie Bloor, a talented chef, will provide a lunch. While the menu is subject to change, plans are to serve chili. The public is invited to attend. ■

## BOOK REVIEW LAKE MICHIGAN ROCK PICKER'S GUIDE

By Jill Dopke

Do you have rocks you've collected along the Lake Michigan shoreline, and you don't know what they are? If you do, then the "Lake Michigan Rock Picker's Guide" (2006) by Bruce Mueller & Kevin Gauthier is for you.

Previously I had to reference numerous sources to find out what I was looking at as I collected rocks along the shoreline, but here was one book that I could reference for so many of my finds that I couldn't believe it. With brief descriptions and color photographs, this book makes identifying the numerous rocks and fossils easy and fun.

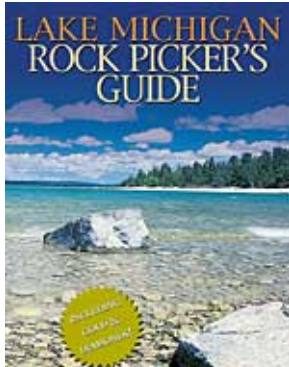
The book includes a brief history of the geology of Lake Michigan, tips on craft and jewelry uses, and where to find specific rocks and fossils. It even points out where one can find diamonds in Wisconsin and how to pan for gold. It is a basic book that can be read and used by kids and adults alike - a book the whole family can use for adventures along the Lake Michigan Shoreline.

"ROCK PICKER'S GUIDE" is worth the \$15.95 I paid for it at Waldenbooks, though I found it less expensive online.

## HUNTER OF KEWAUNEE AN ACCOUNT OF AN EXCITING ENCOUNTER WITH A WILDCAT

By Ransom A. Moore

*RANSOM ASA MOORE wrote a series of articles titled "The Hunter" in the 1920's for "Hoard's Dairyman" about his early years in Kewaunee County. Ransom was born in 1861 in Footbridge and grew up there tending his father's limekilns and hunting and trapping. These stories tell of the hard life on the frontier, even brushes with death, but an exciting life as well for a young lad.*



Used with permission  
from Kevin Gauthier



*The following hunt takes place about 1882 when Ransom Moore was teaching school. The wages were extremely low - \$24 a month, and he said, "I remember distinctly that the money received by trapping and from bounties on the scalps of wildcats killed on Saturdays and vacations amounted to more than my wages. Four or five years of continuous hunting practically cleaned the wildcats out of the county." This article is edited for the newsletter.*

Lying nearly in the center of Kewaunee County was a large tract of wasteland, called the Dikeman Swamp (Northwest corner of West Kewaunee Town) some three miles wide and six miles long. The major portion of this swamp was scrub cedar which grew so thick that one could scarcely penetrate it. The catamount had practically taken possession of this swamp. Commonly called the catamount, but more specifically identified as a lynx cat in this region's fur trade, they lived quite largely upon partridges, rabbits, and deer. As the area around the swamp became settled, the catamount came out of the swamp at night killing calves, sheep, chickens, and anything they could lay their claws upon.

One early winter morning I set out for this swamp with my hound and a shotgun which was deadly at close range. I usually hunted the lynx cat with a .44 Ballard rifle, but I felt that I could not keep the sights of my rifle open going through the snow-laden cedars, so I decided to use my new double barrel shotgun. I felt by loading it quite heavily with buckshot it would be just as deadly at close range as the rifle.

Entering the swamp about sunrise, I soon found it an impossibility to keep my gun dry. We did not have breech loading shotguns at that time, and had to depend upon the ordinary cap lock muzzle loading gun. It had stopped snowing only about an hour before, and in going through the dense cedar growth, the snow fell down upon me to such an extent that it moistened the tubes and locks of the gun.

Heading up an old logging trail, my hound immediately showed signs of nervousness. I unbuckled her collar and let her go. She went off like a bullet. In a few moments I heard her barking sharply. I waited for her to drive the catamount to me with my gun ready for action. My plans were to let the animal get within fifty feet of me, then fire the first shot, and if the animal was only wounded to have the other barrel in reserve. As the animal came within the given distance, I fired. With one great howl the animal bounded up into the cedars but fell down from the snow-covered branches. I noticed the flashing eyes of the animal, and it didn't seem to take it a quarter of a second to make up its mind what to do. With one leap it cleared about twenty feet of space toward me.

As the animal struck the ground, I pulled the trigger, but the cap was wet and did not explode. The animal made another leap and would have come directly into my face except for the fact that I had turned the gun. Grabbing the end near the muzzle with both hands, I struck the catamount when it was no more than three feet from me. The force of the blow broke the direction of the animal.

As the animal passed, one of its huge paws went into

my face, digging a claw into my upper lip. This did not tear out readily, and swung both the animal and myself around. The sharp claw cut through my lip like a knife, and the animal dropped only two or three feet from where I stood. The locks, stock, and guards of the gun went scattering off into the cedar swamp, and I was left with nothing but the two empty barrels.

As the animal crouched ready to spring, I struck a sledgehammer blow with the barrels, which caught him in the center of the head just as he was coming up. The force of the blow was sufficient to crush his skull, and the animal lay quivering at my feet.

On account of the smoothness and freshness of the snow, I was quite successful in finding the locks and guards that had been dashed from my gun at the first blow. I collared my hound and started for home with a firm determination never again to venture forth after a catamount with a shotgun.

**Note:** Catamount is a general term used to refer to various cats – lynx, cougar, puma, mountain lion, panther, and bobcat. Other terms include screamer, painted cat, and wildcat. ■

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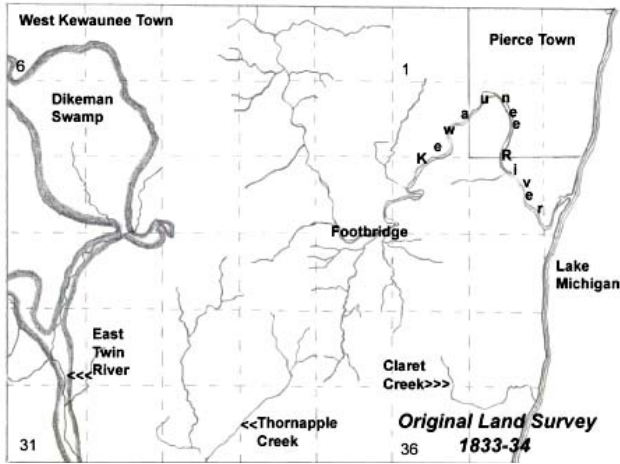
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