

# THE BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORIAN

Spring 2019

A Blue Earth County Historical Society Publication

Vol. XXV No. 2



Prohibition re-enactors keep a close eye on their moonshine.

## MOONSHINE STORIES: MAKING HEADLINES

By Danelle Erickson

One of the challenges with the history of the Prohibition Era is that some of the best stories were never recorded, or at the very least, can't be proven. The very nature of moonshiners, bootleggers and gangsters was to avoid getting caught; leaving stories untold.

Take the life of Isabelle "Belle" Born of South Bend. We know from newspaper accounts she was connected with gangster Charles "Big Fitz" Fitzgerald and was a witness in a famous kidnapping trial out of St. Paul. But what about the rumors she knew John Dillinger or the tale of a tunnel under her house used to store moonshine? [For more about Belle Born, *The Shady Lady from South Bend*, see the Summer 2010 issue of *The Historian*, available on the BECHS website, Research Center and Gift Shop.]

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**R.D. Hubbard House**

606 South Broad Street, Mankato  
507-345-4154  
Open weekends May-September

**The Blue Earth County Historian**

Spring 2019

The Blue Earth County Historian is published quarterly for the members of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

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**DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

Jessica Potter, Executive Director

Birds are chirping, daffodils are poking up through the once frozen ground and spring is in the air. Which for those of us at the History Center, signals it's that time again for our Spring fundraiser *Surrounded By History* and for another season at the Historic R.D. Hubbard House.

I'm so excited for this year's *Surrounded By History* on Friday, April 26th! We are stepping back to the Prohibition Era, when hemlines were raised, jazz music filled the air, saloons turned into soda parlors and the "Charleston" was the bees knees. One hundred years ago, Andrew Volstead, a Minnesota Congressman, authored a bill to regulate the manufacture, distribution and sale of alcohol. The Volstead Act was enacted by Congress as the 18th Amendment on October 18, 1919 and went into effect January 29, 1920. The Prohibition Era lasted from 1920 to 1933.

*Surrounded By History: A Night at the Speakeasy* will be a nod to the Roaring Twenties. This year's event is being held at the Capitol Room in St. Peter. Why are we crossing county lines for this event? It could be due to the more lenient Prohibition enforcement in Nicollet County (*wink wink*) or it could simply be because the Capitol Room is THE perfect venue for this event. Thank you to all who purchased tickets, donated items for the live auction, wine grab and gift card wall, and our sponsors!

Changing gears, the beautiful Hubbard House opens for another season on May 4. We are looking forward to a season of great events and walk-in tours. I personally feel this year will be extra special at the Hubbard House. This summer the silos that stand at Ardent Mills (aka Hubbard Milling Company) will be the canvas for a larger-than-life public art project. Australian artist Guido van Helten will be coming to our fair city this summer to create this one-of-a-kind art piece showcasing the "story of how communities were built by the agricultural industry and how that informs our American identity" ([www.twinriversarts.org/silo-art-project](http://www.twinriversarts.org/silo-art-project)). How exciting that one of our oldest manufacturing companies and industries will be the canvas for this project! I'm sure R.D. Hubbard and George Palmer never imagined that their idea to process flour in Mankato would still be operating 140 years later and that their mill would be the site of public art. A beautiful mix of the past, present and future!

We hope you celebrate this beautiful spring after this very long winter with a stop by the History Center to say "hi." Happy Spring!

## MOONSHINE STORIES Continued from page 1

While we may never know the full story of people like Belle Born, newspapers from the 1920s and 30s can still give us memorable stories, unique to the time of Prohibition. Here are just a few stories ripped from the headlines.

### “Carp on Drunk Gave Clew to the Stills”

Authorities can thank a carp and an observant farmer for alerting them to two large stills south of Mankato, near Woods Ford on the Blue Earth River. In the spring of 1921, a local sportsman killed a large carp that had attacked him. Thinking the fish’s odd behavior needed a closer look, the carp was presented to Hiram S. Goff, judge of the Mankato municipal court. Upon examination, it was decided the fish was inebriated. It had blood shot eyes and a stomach full of what appeared to be mash, used for distilling alcohol.

Hoping the fish would lead them to an illegal still, Judge Goff, a secret service man out of St. Paul along with some Mankato officials made a search of the hills around Woods Ford. They searched the hills for miles, but couldn’t find the suspected moonshine operation.

A few months later, a farmer from the same area discovered he was missing around 100 bushels of corn. Noticing a few kernels leading from his corn crib towards the river, he followed the trail and soon came upon a moonshine still. There were oil stoves, copper boilers, crocks and strainers, empty sugar sacks and corn mash in kegs and barrels, not to mention a half empty sack of the stolen corn.

Word of the still was sent to the authorities. Because of the operation’s location and closeness to the Blue Earth River, they realized it was probably the same setup the carp had alerted them to months before. A large group set off to deal with the still. County Sheriff Anton Osten was joined by the police chief, deputy sheriff, county attorney, district court judge, court reporter, Free Press reporter and Judge Goff.

The still was located and seized. Then there was the question of what to do with what remained of the mash and utensils. It was

decided the mash should be dumped on the ground and the vessels destroyed. The *Free Press* reporter shared the proceedings “The sheriff handed the rock to Judge Goff, the Hercules of the party, and told him to put his



Re-enactor Am Kind and a moonshine still

own court order into execution...Judge Goff brought the stone down on each barrel with a mighty bang.”

In the elaborate words of 1920s reporting, the events were summed up in the August 1, 1921 article in *The Free Press*:

Had the carp up at Woods Ford on the Blue Earth River not acted as foolishly as their human superiors do when they get too much booze abroad, perhaps the 150 gallons of mash captured at the ford would today be brewing and the mists rising from the same be rapidly turning into “mountain dew” in one of the most secluded spots in Blue Earth County instead of moistening the parched earth.

### “Sheriff Ario Declares Jail Door Does Not Open to ‘Moon’ Peddler”

Blue Earth County Sheriff Edward Ario was certain he knew who started the rumor that liquor was being brought into his jail. On February 20, 1924, the *Minnesota Daily Star* printed an article and cartoon that painted Ario and the county jail in a bad light. The Blue Earth County Jail was home to a number of bootleggers from the Twin Cities. An unnamed source told the *Daily Star* about a metropolitan

visitor who visited the jail every Sunday. The stout man in his large fur coat and silk hat visited his incarcerated friend. When he exited the jail, he weighed considerably less than when he entered and left some thankful prisoners in his wake.

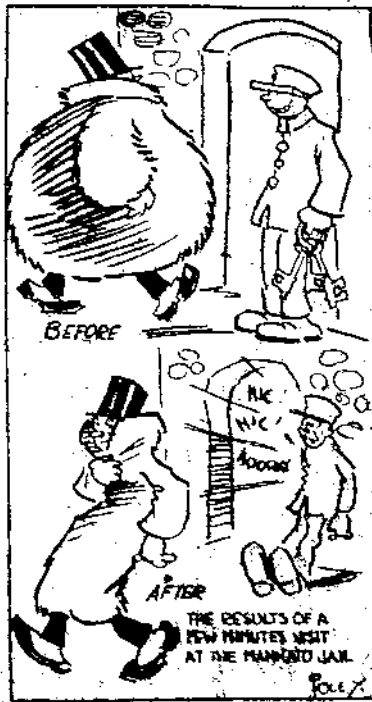
In the days that followed, the *St. Paul Daily* and *Fairmont Daily Sentinel*, as well as the *Mankato Free Press* caught wind of the story. Sheriff Ario was asked to clear up these accusations.

Ario declared there was "absolutely no truth or foundation to the allegations" and there had never been a drop of alcohol allowed in the jail. He wouldn't even allow bay rum face lotion inside and the visitors are always searched. The sheriff had previously helped apprehend robbers of banks in Cleveland and Klossner. Knowing how dead set he was against booze, Ario believed the robbers had started this rumor as a form of revenge.

### "Agents Swoop Down on Mankato: Four Soft Drink Parlors Are Raided Simultaneously"

For the dozens of saloon operators in Blue Earth County, the start of Prohibition meant the end of life as they knew it. Some of these men took jobs with the railroad or as mechanics, others tried their hand as grocers or in cigar stores. Some local saloon owners took, perhaps, a shorter route to soda fountains.

Unfortunately, some of these new beverage business ventures were short lived, making only a brief appearance in later business listings. Others made a success with the new guidelines Prohibition brought to their door, however distasteful they might have found them. One model citizen was George Grabowenski. Prior to Prohibition, he operated a saloon at 229



"The results of a few minutes visit to the Mankato Jail" *Minnesota Daily Star*, February 20, 1924

North Front Street. When Prohibition arrived, his business changed to serving soft drinks, and, from all appearances, he followed the letter of the law. Once Prohibition ended, Grabowenski returned to selling alcohol.

Other saloon-turned-soda-parlor proprietors, however, weren't quite so law abiding. Long-time bartender, Ernest Wester, of Good Thunder, was arrested for a second time within a few months in January 1923. Thirteen gallons of alcohol were found in his soft drink parlor. The arresting officers "were of the opinion that nothing 'soft' was sold in the place." Wester pled guilty and was sentenced to 90 days in jail plus a \$300 fine.

Similar stories and verdicts can be found scattered throughout the local newspapers, but on March 12, 1930, a much bigger booze story was making headlines. After a month of planning and gathering evidence, twenty-four federal Prohibition agents, with the help of Mankato officials, launched simultaneous raids on multiple locations in Blue Earth County, including four Mankato soda parlors.

Frank J. Mettler's soda parlor, along with the Club, Jumbo and Oleander "parlors" were all found to have alcohol on the premises. The



Northfield police officers and illegal liquor seized in 1930. Courtesy of the Northfield Historical Society

newspaper reports didn't indicate if the establishments were caught serving the illegal beverages, but it didn't matter. According to the 1922 ordinance, any establishment found with alcohol was seen guilty of serving it.

By the end of the day, twenty-two arrests

were made between the soda parlors, a private residence, garages and a restaurant, ranging from North Mankato to Amboy. The county jail was filled to capacity with every cell and cot in use. Five

more arrests were made the following day in Mankato, Lake Crystal and Good Thunder.



Mettlers, 1940s

One method the soda parlors used to circumvent the law was to hire a “bottle man” to distribute the liquor. The soda parlor would dispense the soft drinks and the “bottle man” would add the “hard” drinks and keep suspicion away from the business. But this didn’t fool the Prohibition enforcement officers and was one of the reasons for the synchronized raid.

In the months that followed, the names and businesses from this soda-raid were often found in the newspapers. Some individuals were given sentences of jail time and fines. Licenses were suspended. The proprietor of the Jumbo, a former policeman who had promised to run a clean shop, was released under bond, only to have the Jumbo raided again a few weeks later. Jail time was given to the proprietor and the parlor’s permit was revoked for the second time.

In the case of Frank Mettler, his court appearance was delayed, in part due to illness. When he was charged in February 1931, he was handed a \$1000 fine and sentenced to eight months in the Winona County Jail; however, because of his poor health, he was allowed to serve his time in the Blue Earth County Jail where his physician could tend to him. As to his soda parlor, the U.S. Prohibition Department ruled it be closed for ten months, but it could reopen after just two months if a \$500 fine was paid along with the posting of a \$1000 bond. All of the establishment’s stock, however innocent, was destroyed.

In July 1932, soft drink parlors were again in the headlines. The city council expressed its concern to Mayor Frank J. Mahowald. It seemed a number of citizens had reports of illegal activities in some of the soda parlors. Mayor Mahowald assured the council that he and the police were keeping an eye on the parlors. No alcohol was being served and the parlors were following the law, which included having no obstructed views from front to back of the business and no serving of soft drinks between the hours 1:00 and 6:00 a.m. “I think a whole lot of this talk that has been going around town is more imagination than anything else,” the Mayor said.

Whether imagined or not, by the end of the following year, Prohibition would be over and people could go back to drinking and serving their beverages of choice.

The Prohibition Era has captured the attention of many with its tales of bootleggers, gangsters and speakeasies. Just imagine how many stories have gone untold!

*You might have noticed something missing from this article and that’s historic photos of Blue Earth County during the Prohibition Era. While BECHS may have 18,000 photos in our collection, Prohibition is one topic not currently included. Please contact us if you have photos of this or any era that you would like to donate.*

#### Sources:

Various articles from the *Mankato Free Press*.

Cords, Betty, “A Still in the Night,” compilation of newspaper articles.

Photograph courtesy of Northfield Historical Society, reflections.mndigital.org, identifier 1999.8.36.

Photographs courtesy of Arn Kind.

Special thanks to BECHS volunteer Betty Cords for the work she put into creating “A Still in the Night” available in the Research Center.

Thanks also to Arn Kind for sharing his prohibition photographs. Arn presents living history experiences for all ages. Visit [HistoricalExperiences.org](http://HistoricalExperiences.org) to learn more.

# BECHS SPECIAL PROGRAMS

## Book Talk and Signing with Senator Dave Durenberger

Thursday, May 9, 6:30 p.m., History Center  
Dave Durenberger, Minnesota native and U.S. Senator (1978-1995), will talk about his latest book *When Republicans were Progressive*. Free.

## A Closer Look at *100 Years & A Million Stories: The History of the American Legion*

Saturday, May 11, 1 p.m., History Center  
Learn more about the creation of this exhibit from Curator/Archivist Shelley Harrison. Free.

## Young Historians

Second Saturday, September – May  
10 a.m.-Noon, History Center

*Young Historians* is a free, monthly, hands-on history workshop for school-age children. This year's theme is "Explore the Dakota" learning about the historical and cultural highlights of the Dakota from the past and present. Free.

### Upcoming Topics

May 11 - Circle Celebrations

*Special thanks to MinnStar Bank N.A. and Xcel Energy for their support of Children's Programming in 2019.*

## Remember When Coffee Club

First Tuesday, 10 a.m., History Center  
Love history? Love to swap stories of the good old days? Looking for a place to connect with other history enthusiasts? **Come to the History Center for *Remember When Coffee Club*.** There is no formal program, just a conversation topic to get the group started. Coffee, tea and light refreshments are provided. Free.

### Upcoming Topics

May 7 - Memorable Weddings

June 4 - Things My Dad Taught Me

July 2 - Errands Your Mom Sent You On

## \*NEW\*

## Talking Ancestors Genealogy Group

First Saturday, 10 a.m., History Center  
Genealogy is a great hobby, but sometimes it helps to talk with others and share successes, tips or brick walls. **Come to the History Center for *Talking Ancestors*.** There is no formal program, just general topics. Free.

### Upcoming Topics

May 4 - How Did You Get Started?

June 1 - What To Do with This Mess

July 6 - Yes, But Can You Prove It?

## Behind the Scenes: Photographs

Thursday, May 23, 6 p.m.

Take a step into the archives with Curator/Archivist Shelley to learn more about our Photograph Collection. BECHS

Members get a unique look at photo cataloging, storage and preservation of the Collection. Space is limited. Contact BECHS to reserve your spot.



BECHS Members only, \$20/person.  
Light refreshments provided.

Blue Earth County Historical Society's

## HISTORIC PUB CRAWL

*Walking Tour with a Twist*

Friday, June 21, 2019, 6:00 p.m.

\$20 for Historical Society Members

\$25 for Non-Members

*Additional details to come*

Visit [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com) for more details



## Historic R.D. Hubbard House

*Where 1900s History Comes to Life*

The Historic R.D. Hubbard House will open for its 23rd season as a Historic House Museum. The House will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m., starting May 4.

Stop by the Hubbard House for a guided tour or attend some of these special events.

### Victorian Lawn Party

**June 8, 1-4 p.m.**

The annual lawn party features Victorian lawn games like croquet and three-legged races, refreshments and a doll tea party. Free and open to the public; admission charged for house tours.



### Hubbard House Gaslight Series

See the Hubbard House in a different light! 7 p.m., 2nd Wednesday, June-August \$10/adult, \$7/member, \$5/child (5-17)

**Moonshine, Speakeasies and Temperance Ladies, June 12, 7 p.m.**

Take a step back to the time of prohibition and meet some memorable characters.

**Votes for Women, July 10, 7 p.m.**

Join suffragettes as they fight for an equal voice!

### Historic R.D. Hubbard House Hours of Operation

May and September

Saturday, Sunday 1-4 p.m.

June - August

Friday, Saturday

10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday 1-4 p.m.



For Hubbard House updates and tidbits, follow "Hubbard House, Mankato" on Facebook

# Twilight Garden Club Plant Sale



**Saturday, June 8, 2019**

8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Hubbard House Gardens

### Celebrate spring and the blossoming of the Hubbard House Gardens!

Plant sale with hardy Minnesota perennials grown by Club members, including annuals and hostas, plus garden décor.

Visitors can learn more about the Twilight Garden Club, enter for a door prize, and receive \$1 off Hubbard House tour admission with each purchase.

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

The BECHS 2018 Annual Report is now available is on our website at [BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/About](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/About)

The report, along with full financial information, is also available by contacting the History Center.

# COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

Shelley Harrison, Curator/Archivist

The Blue Earth County Historical Society presents our newest temporary exhibit *100 Years & A Million Stories: A History of the American Legion*. The American Legion was organized in 1919 after World War I. It became an influential, congressionally chartered veterans' organization which benefit those who had served in the military. The exhibit reflects on 100 years of service and 1,000,000 stories.

The exhibit features photographs and six military uniforms dating from World War I and ending with Operation Enduring Freedom. The uniforms represent the different conflicts over a 100-year span.



The uniforms on display all belonged to Blue Earth County servicemen who were also proud Legion members.

A focal point in the exhibit are the paintings of Wendell and Leo Lorentz, World War I Servicemen and brothers from Mankato. They were both killed in action in 1918 and are for whom Post 11 is named after. The paintings were a gift from the boys' parents to the Post. The Leroy Jennings Post 276 in Amboy was also founded in 1919 and named after Blue Earth County soldier Leroy Jennings who died during the war. Did you know, no Post can be named after a living individual?

The Legion is the nation's largest wartime veteran's service organization. Blue Earth County currently has eight American Legion Posts with close to 900 active members. At its height, the Mankato Post had 1400 members. With the support of their members, the Legion was and is at the forefront of change, assisting in the creation of the Veteran's Administration in 1921 and the G.I. Bill in 1944. The local Legions are heavily involved in community service and charitable projects such as

supporting Legion Baseball, the "77" Lancers, Legacy Scholarships and many flag poles throughout the Blue Earth County were donated and dedicated by a Legion Post.

Camaraderie shared by Legion members was also shared in the creation of this exhibit. Lorentz Post 11 and John Roth Post 294 along with both Auxiliaries have helped with the exhibit, including lending some artifacts. Post 11 even loaned a 28' mural that once hung in their building on Second and Walnut street. Now that's a big piece of history! Both Posts are celebrating their 100-year anniversary this year.

This exhibit explores the history of the



This 28 foot long mural includes all branches of military service.

American Legion, from the elite "Forty and Eight Club", to the Auxiliaries and the Sons of the American Legion. If you have something or know of a Post that has items to share, we would love to add those stories to the exhibit.

A special program "A Closer Look at 100 Years & A Million Stories Exhibit" will be held on Saturday, May 11 at 1 p.m. Also, small road trips may be coming to a post near you. Please check back for more details. This exhibit will be on view

throughout the summer. Here's to the first 100 years of service to our veterans, the community and a million stories strong!



Sharing Legion stories and memorabilia at the exhibit opening.



# EVERY OBJECT HAS A STORY...

In the Blue Earth County Historical Society's collections, we have objects that tell the stories of Blue Earth County's past. These objects are quite diverse, with only about ten percent of the collection on display at any given time. Taking inspiration from the current exhibit, *100 Years & A Million Stories: A History of The American Legion*, here are some items from other military service organizations.

## Garrison Cap from the Veterans of World War I of U.S.A.

This navy and white wool garrison cap features the emblem of the Veterans of World War I of U.S.A. on the side along with the group's emblem in gold.



The Veterans of World War I of the U.S.A., Inc. was organized by World War I buddies in 1948, as they united in fraternal, civic and social comradeship. This cap is from 1956.

## Flag from the Veterans of World War I of the U.S.A. Ladies Auxiliary



The Veterans of World War I of the U.S.A.

Ladies Auxiliary, Kato Auxiliary No 530, was organized in 1957. This purple silk flag includes the emblem of the Veterans of WW I embroidered on one side.

## Walter H. Strand VFW Post 950 Token

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) was established in 1899. Mankato's Walter H. Strand VFW Post 950 formed on May 15, 1922. Recently, Walter H. Strand Post 950 and Morson-Ario VFW Post 9713 voted to consolidate.

The front of this bronze token is engraved, "Walter H. Strand V.F.W. Post No. 950. 121 So. Front St. Mankato, Minn. 56001." The back reads "Good For 50 cents in Merchandise."



# 100 YEARS & A MILLION STORIES

## A History of the American Legion Honoring the Veterans of Blue Earth County and Lorentz Post 11



### Free Exhibit Through Summer 2019

Blue Earth County  
History Center  
424 Warren Street, Mankato

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Starting in June, the History Center will be getting a new roof! Business hours will remain the same, but we apologize ahead of time for any inconveniences the construction might cause.

# BECHS DONORS, MEMBERS AND SPONSORS

January–March 2019

## Donors

Kevin and Shelli Allen  
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## Sponsorship

Xcel Energy

## In Memoriam

*In Memory of*  
**Mary Dooley**  
Betty Cords  
Ken & Julie Schrader

*In Memory of*  
**Jerry Gulden**  
Jane Haala

*In Memory*  
**Gene Klutschka**  
Randy Zellmer

*In Memory*  
**"Koke" Jerry Little**  
Jane Haala

*In Memory*  
**Dr. Bill Nelson**  
Michael Frederick  
Pamela Showers

*In Memory*  
**John Votca**  
Randy Zellmer

Thank you for memorial gifts to the  
Blue Earth County Historical Society.

## SURROUNDED BY HISTORY

A NIGHT AT THE SPEAKEASY

Thank you to the following Surrounded By History:  
A Night at the Speakeasy Sponsors!

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# BECHS VOLUNTEERS MAKE HISTORY HAPPEN

## Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for something new to do? Consider volunteering with BECHS! There are many ways you can get involved; below are just a few. Call or visit the History Center to learn more or to get started, sign-up online at [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/volunteer](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/volunteer)

- **Hubbard House Tour Guides and Assistants** are needed this spring and summer to give tours and/or assist in the Carriage House. New guides are welcome! Training is provided.
- **Gardeners** to help in the flower beds at the History Center. Help is needed with weeding and general upkeep. Flexible schedule and all gardeners are welcome.
- **History Writers** to research and write articles on local history. Resources are available in the Research Center and topics are often left open to the writer.
- **Archives Processor** to catalog and number items such as photographs. Must have small, precise handwriting. While the hours are flexible, BECHS asks you commit to a minimum of 2 hours a week, for at least six months.
- **Technology Assistant** for 5-15 hours per week to help at the History Center with computer maintenance and problem solving. Experience with hardware and software, Windows 10 and Windows Server 2016 is preferred.
- **Rental Hosts** to assist meeting room evening and weekend rentals, stay on-site during the event and lock-up when done. Schedule varies.
- **Visitor Services Attendant** to tend the front reception desk, greeting visitors and answering general questions. Training is provided.

## Welcome to BECHS Newest Board Members



Left to right:  
Kirby Hurd,  
Lisa Wolf and  
Will Brueske

**Will Brueske** possesses over 14 years experience in financial services and eight years experience as an Officer in the U.S. Army (Captain). His non-profit experiences include Team Red, White and Blue, BECHS, Mission 22 and Junior Achievement. He is married and resides in Mankato with their five children.

**Kirby Hurd** is the Director of Development at the Mankato Family YMCA. She is passionate about community health, nonprofit leadership, philanthropy, and sustainability issues. In her free time, she enjoys reading, yoga, cooking, curling, and adventures with her dog, JuJu. She feels proud and fortunate to call Blue Earth County her home.

**Lisa Wolf** is no stranger to the Mankato and the Blue Earth County area. She was born and raised in Mankato and has deep roots in the area. This explains her passion and dedication to preserving local history. (Her Grandfather had a cigar shop at the Saulpaugh Hotel!) She and her husband, Dave, raised their children in the Mankato area. She has more than 30 years' experience in business, working for various Taylor Corporation companies and is currently a Business Data Analyst.

**THANK YOU Dan Bruss, Randy Dinsmore and Sandi Garlow for your years of service on the Board.**

# RESEARCH & GENEALOGY CENTER

Heather Harren, Communication & Archives Manager

Historic photographs are great for showing how places change over time, but they can also help put a face with a name you may have only “met” in your research. That’s why it’s important to label photographs with whom is in the photo, where it was taken and a date. Without this information, the image can mean very little. But if you discover a photo of your great aunt and uncle on their farm, you are instantly connected to the image and are more likely to appreciate and cherish it.



An unidentified wedding photo from Eldridge Photo, Mankato

digital images, there are apps and other programs that can help organize and identify your photos.

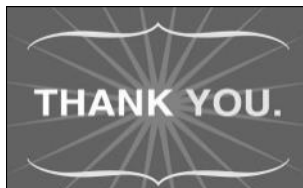
With digital photos, it is easy to take a picture and forget about it. How many of us (myself included) have an old cell phone with forgotten photos? How many digital images are still on cameras tucked in a closet? We have the great advantage that we can now pick and choose which images we like best while deleting blurry or accidental pictures, but often that is where people stop. Go ahead and print some of your favorite pictures. As for the rest, ensure they are safe for future generations by creating backups and checking on these backups yearly. Technology is constantly changing and what you do with your digital photos will need to change too.

And remember, if you have any original (and identified) images from Blue Earth County that need a good home, look no further than BECHS!

Labeling photos has become harder in the digital age because people aren’t printing them like they used to, but it’s still important! For

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR LOCAL MEDIA PARTNERS

Watch KEYC News 12 at Noon the first Thursday of each month for “Throwback Thursday with BECHS” and at 6:45 a.m. on the third Tuesday for “History To Go.”



Listen to KTOE 1420 AM Pete Steiner’s Talk of the Town the 4th Thursday for an update with BECHS

Check out The Free Press for regular updates including Sunday’s *Glimpses of the Past*.

## Visit BECHS re-designed website!

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



INSPIRE. ENGAGE. CONNECT.

[www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com)

Same address, new look!

# GIFT SHOP & ART GALLERY

Danelle Erickson, Operations Manager

For a while now, the BECHS' Gift Shop has been looking for ways to add fun local items to our inventory. And recently, we've been able to do just that!

**Sota Cracklers** are soy candles, made by a Mankato native! The candles are hand-poured, burn for hours and have wood wicks that make a soft crackling sound as they burn. They come in fun Minnesota-themed scents including Mosquito Bite, Lake Superior Splash and Sexy Lumberjack. Stop by and pick out your favorite! Visit [www.sotacracklers.com](http://www.sotacracklers.com) to learn more.



**Lakota Made Products** are made and distributed by Megan Schnitker as a fundraiser for her Mahkato Revitalization Project that teaches cultural education and preservation. You might



remember Megan from her "Dakota 101" program at BECHS back in February. Visit the Gift Shop to see the different salves and soaps we have in stock and follow "Lakota Made" on Facebook.

## Marian Anderson Fine Art Prints

Artist Marian Anderson is recognized for her diverse subjects that come from a natural ability, not only to create a beautiful painting, but to breathe spirit and soul into her work.

Marian Anderson Fine Art Prints are available at the History Center and online. All sales benefit BECHS.



Visit the new website at [www.MarianAnderson.com](http://www.MarianAnderson.com)

# AROUND BLUE EARTH COUNTY

## Rapidan Heritage Society

The Depot will open on June 2 and will be open on Sundays from 1 – 4 p.m. until Sept. 1.

Memorial Day events in Rapidan, on May 27, will begin with a service in Memorial Park at 9 a.m., followed by coffee and donuts. At 10 a.m., Adam

Lindquist, portraying Theodore Roosevelt, will recall the famous election of 1912. A sloppy joe lunch will conclude the morning.



Congratulations to Aileen Just Luther on her induction into the MN High School Basketball Hall of Fame. "Point a Minute" Just, as she was known, graduated in 1930 from Rapidan High.

## BECHS WISH LIST

A few things BECHS could use, new or used or cash to purchase.

- **Solid black (preferred) or white cotton sheets** for covering objects in storage
- **DVD Player & remote** for use in Museum
- **Speakers** with micro SD slot
- **Canister Vacuum**, newer model such as Eureka NEN200C
- **Blue Earth County School Yearbooks** for BECHS archives—specifically all Mankato East or 1980 and newer from any school

## CALL FOR ARTISTS

BECHS has openings for local artists to be featured at the History Center Art Gallery. All mediums are welcome; work must be able to be hung on a wall and be family-friendly.

Contact Shelley at 507-345-5566 or [Archivist@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](mailto:Archivist@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com).

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April-July 2019

## APRIL

26 **Surrounded By History: A Night at the Speakeasy** 6 p.m., The Capitol Room, St. Peter

## MAY

2 **Watch KEYC News 12 at Noon** for "Throwback Thursday"

4 **Talking Ancestors Genealogy Group: How Did You Get Started** 10 a.m. History Center, Free. *First Saturday.*

4 **Hubbard House Opens for the Season**, 1-4 p.m.

7 **Remember When Coffee Club: Memorable Weddings** 10 a.m., History Center, Free. *First Tuesday*

9 **Book Talk and Signing: Senator Dave Durenberger** 6:30 p.m., History Center, Free.

11 **Young Historians: Circle Celebrations** 10 a.m., History Center, Free. Last meeting of the school year.

11 **A Closer Look at 100 Years & A Million Stories Exhibit** 1 p.m., History Center. Free.

21 **Watch KEYC News 12 This Morning** at 6:30 a.m. for "History To Go"

23 **Tune to KTOE 1420-AM** at 1 p.m. for BECHS Update on *Talk of the Town*

23 **Behind the Scenes: Photographs** 6 p.m. History Center, BECHS Members only. \$

25-26 **Memorial Weekend:** History Center Closed; Hubbard House Open 1-4 p.m.

## JUNE

1 **Talking Ancestors Genealogy Group: What To Do with This Mess** 10 a.m. History Center, Free. *First Saturday.*

4 **Remember When Coffee Club: Things My Dad Taught Me** 10 a.m., History Center, Free. *First Tuesday*

6 **Watch KEYC News 12 at Noon** for "Throwback Thursday"

8 **Twilight Garden Club Plant Sale**, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., Hubbard House

8 **Victorian Lawn Party** 1-4 p.m., Hubbard House, Free.

11 **Presentation by John Biewen.** Biewen is the audio program director at Duke University and speaker on NPR's This American Life: Little War on the Prairie. Watch for more information.

12 **Hubbard House Gaslight Series: Moonshine, Speakeasies and Temperance Ladies** 7 p.m., Hubbard House, \$

18 **Watch KEYC News 12 This Morning** at 6:30 a.m. for "History To Go"

21 **Historic Pub Crawl** 6 p.m. Watch for more details.

27 **Tune to KTOE 1420-AM** at 1 p.m. for BECHS Update on *Talk of the Town*

## JULY

2 **Remember When Coffee Club: Errands Your Mom Sent You on** 10 a.m., History Center, Free. *First Tuesday*

6 **Talking Ancestors Genealogy Group: Yes, But Can You Prove It?** 10 a.m., History Center, Free. *First Saturday.*

16 **Watch KEYC News 12 This Morning** at 6:30 a.m. for "History To Go"

10 **Hubbard House Gaslight Series: Votes for Women** 7 p.m., Hubbard House, \$

### Three easy ways to stay up-to-date:

- Check out [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com) for full event details and updates!
    - Sign-up for our free monthly e-news to receive updates between *Historian* issues at [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Contact](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Contact)
      - Follow BECHS on Facebook and Instagram
- \$=Admission Charged

# MEMBERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

As a member-supported organization, BECHS knows transparency with our members is important. This is YOUR Blue Earth County Historical Society. Please know our doors are always open to questions or concerns.

Transparency is also one of the reasons BECHS started Members-Only Behind the Scenes tours. It provides you with a unique opportunity to see and experience some of what BECHS does everyday - things that are only possible because of your support. Thank you! (See page 6 for more on these tours.)

**Not a member? See below and join today!**

**Member Referral Program** - One of the best ways members help BECHS grow is by telling family, friends and neighbors about the Historical Society. Now, when current members refer a new member, you will both automatically receive 2 extra months added to your annual membership!

Share a copy of *The Historian*, bring someone to an event or personally invite them to become a member. All they need to do is include the name of who referred them and you both get two additional months of membership.



## BECHS Annual Membership

The Blue Earth County Historical Society is a member-supported, non-profit organization. Membership dues make up a growing portion of the annual operating budget. Thank you for your support.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I'm a new member referred by \_\_\_\_\_

### **Membership Levels**

- Individual Senior (62+) \$30
- Individual \$35
- Household \$50
- Contributor \$75
- Supporter \$100
- Booster or Business \$250
- Advocate \$500
- Benefactor \$1,000

Please send this form and check to:

**BECHS Membership**  
424 Warren Street  
Mankato, MN 56001

**OR**

Complete your membership form online at  
[www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/membership](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/membership)

*Affiliate Membership levels are available for Groups or Organizations, call for details.*



**SURROUNDED BY HISTORY**  
**A NIGHT AT THE SPEAKEASY**



Friday, April 26 | The Capitol Room  
[BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Speakeasy](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Speakeasy)

## CURRENT EXHIBITS

**100 Years & 1 Million  
Stories: A History of The  
American Legion**  
Through Summer 2019

**Art Gallery**  
**Art: Another Tool in His  
Toolbox**  
Through June 30

**Celebrating GMG's 150  
Years**  
*Hallway exhibit*

**BECHS**  
BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
424 WARREN STREET  
MANKATO, MN 56001

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56001  
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Membership  
Expiration Date