

# THE REPORTER

Waupaca Historical Society, 321 South Main Street, Waupaca, WI 54981  
Open Wednesdays, 12-3, Thursdays, 10-2, Fridays, 12-3

VOLUME 23 – NUMBER 1

Winter 2019

## Relive the “Glory Days of Wisconsin Gas Stations” in February



**Jim Draeger**

Years ago, the city of Waupaca was dotted with gas and service stations — one seemingly on every corner. In fact, in 1949, the city of Waupaca boasted 11 filling stations.

Today, the iconic and memorable gas stations are gone, but their memories still live on in

Waupaca and other communities around Wisconsin. Author Jim Draeger will bring us back to those days at his upcoming program, “Fill ‘Er Up: The Glory Days of Wisconsin Gas Stations” on Thursday, Feb. 21 at 6 p.m. The program will take place in the lower-level meeting room of the Holly History and Genealogy Center.

Since their unremarkable beginnings as cheap shacks and curbside pumps at the dawn of the automobile age, gas stations have taken many forms, from castles and cottages to teepees and gleaming porcelain buildings. At this event, Draeger, co-author of “Fill ‘er

Up: The Glory Days of Wisconsin Gas Stations,” will provide a glimpse into the days when full service and free oil changes were the rule and the local gas station was a gathering place for neighbors.

The program and refreshments are sponsored by Joseph Bauknecht and F. Thomas and Hope K. Olson.



***The Czeskleba office and filling station was located on Mill Street. The Czeskleba filling station on E. Fulton Street remains today as RE/MAX Lyons Real Estate.***

## Shop, Save and Donate to WHS Throughout the Year

If you shop on Amazon.com or have a Thrivent account, you have access to new ways to donate to the Waupaca Historical Society!

Amazon.com operates AmazonSmile, a website with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation donates 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the

charitable organization of your choice. All you have to do is visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and choose the Waupaca Historical Society!

Thrivent policy or account holders can also direct their Thrivent Choice dollars to WHS. Members are eligible for Thrivent Choice dollars based on insurance premiums and contract values.

**Continued on p. 4**



## At the Depot: Seibert and Wurzbach Legacy Lives on at the Depot

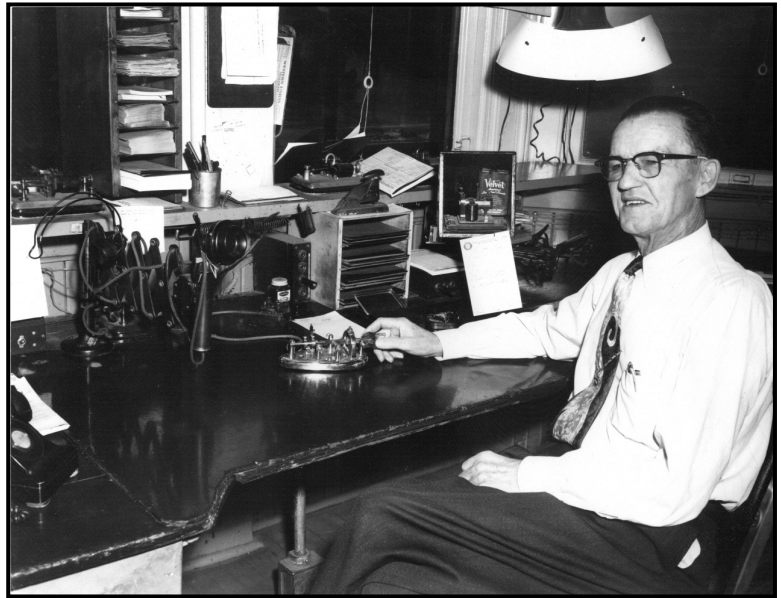
By Mike Kirk

Those of you who have visited the Depot have likely seen the retirement picture hanging on the office wall of long-time depot agent Louis Seibert with his hand on his telegraph key. Louis spent much of his career working in the Waupaca Depot before retiring. His family members have been very happy to see WHS restore the Depot.

Louis' son, Douglas Siebert, followed in his father's railroad footsteps and became a Soo Line agent, ending up in Waukesha. He and his wife Phyllis liked to visit the Depot when they came up for the Grand Reunion. Doug would usually bring along things to donate to the Depot. Over the years, he has donated his telegraph key, Soo Line crystal, many railroad forms and maps and much more. On his September 2018 visit, he donated a collection of HO scale model railroad cars and locomotives. Sadly, soon after his visit, he passed away from a heart attack at age 86. We will miss visiting with Doug and his wife on their annual trips to Waupaca.

Louis' grandson, William Wurzbach, and his wife Mary have been instrumental in the success of the Depot and the historical society as a whole. Until 2010, we were working on the depot with limited funds, using all our own labor and what donated money and materials we could get. At that time, William and Mary donated \$20,000, giving us some much needed working capital and allowing us to purchase new entrance doors and refinish the floor.

In 2011, the Wurzbachs donated \$2,000 for the purchase of PastPerfect, a museum cataloguing system for our collections. Two years later, they donated an additional \$30,000 to the Depot fund and an equal amount to the



*Louis Seibert, shown here in the Waupaca Depot office in about 1952, was the long-time depot agent in Waupaca.*

historical society's general fund. Among other things, the latter donation allowed us to pay off the loan on the purchase of the Holly Center. It came at an especially critical time, coming shortly after the City of Waupaca was unable to make their usual annual contribution and WHS was faced with some difficult financial decisions.

Since this generous donation, the Wurzbachs have also donated various railroad items and a Shopsmith wood working machine. We cannot thank them enough for their support and continued interest in our efforts.

Without their help, the Waupaca Historical Society would not have been in a position to make the Depot and Holly Center what they are today. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude. Of course, we can never thank enough all of the other people who generously help the historical society with financial donations, artifacts, and their time and talents. Thank you!

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### Waupaca Historical Society Wish List

The Waupaca Historical Society is thankful for in-kind donations of new or gently used items. If you can donate or sponsor a Wish List item, contact Tracy at (715) 256-9980 or [director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org).

Slate chalkboards for children (\$30)  
Legos (\$50-\$100)

iPad for historic photos (\$200)  
iPod stand (\$100)

## Thank You for Your Support in 2018!

In November, the Waupaca Historical Society mailed its annual fundraising letter to its members—and we are so thankful for all of your support! Thanks to your generous donations, the Waupaca Historical Society raised more than \$5,300. We are incredibly grateful for all of the support. This money will go toward several projects in 2019:

- Continue offering our free monthly programming at the Holly Center
- Purchase archival storage supplies to properly store and preserve Waupaca's history
- Improve the lower level of the Holly History and Genealogy Center

We want to thank each and every one of you for your generous donations, whether it was at the beginning of 2018 or for our annual membership fundraising letter at the end of the year. With the help of donors like you, we maintain our four historic buildings—the Holly History & Genealogy Center, Hutchinson House Museum, King Cottage and Waupaca Railroad Depot—and work to preserve the Waupaca area's history through collecting, programming and research.

### **Donations for Annual Fundraising Appeal**

Sue and Evan Abrahamson  
Lois Alfsen (in memory of Sophelia Kurkowski and Louis and Douglas Seibert)  
Joseph Bauknecht  
Andy and Tracy Behrendt  
Don and Sandra Behrendt  
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Jeffrey Brown  
Paula Botan (in memory of the Barnhart and Buck families)  
Chris and Peg Burington  
David Dresia and Michelle Peterson (in memory of Jerry Chappell)  
Farmers State Bank  
Christine and Robert Faulks

Steven and Deborah Fenske (in memory of Mayor Jim Boyer)  
Jack and Joanne Fulcher (in memory of Bob Kessler)  
Brian and Sharon Godfrey  
Mary Gordon  
John and Karen Hebbring  
John and Julie Hintz (in Memory of Bob Kessler, Don and Vera Duesterbeck, Cynthia and Roy Holly, Earl Spangler, Jerry Chappell, Joyce Woldt and Don Writt)  
Patricia Hollenbeck (in memory of Warren Hollenbeck)  
Holly Funeral Home  
John and Gretchen Kelley  
Shelley Kloczko  
Charles Larson  
Dennis and Laurie Lear  
Fredrick and Pauline Lueders (in memory of Christen Harrington)  
Little Fat Gretchen's  
Wendell McHenry  
Arline Nell  
Robert and Lynn Nimmer (in memory of Bob Kessler)  
Mary Jane Nispel  
Bob and Anita Olson  
Marilyn M. Olson (in memory of Bob Olson)  
F. Thomas and Hope K. Olson  
Trudi Hahn Pickett  
Rex and Linda Pope  
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Neuville Motors  
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Jack and Glenda Rhodes (in memory of all veterans of the Korean Conflict)  
Bill and Peggy Riemer  
Gregory and Betsy Russell  
Tom Shambeau  
Richard Townsend  
Ken and Judy Trudeau  
John and Ellen Trummer  
Waupaca Foundry  
Dr. Robert Wubben  
Marge Writt  
Lillian Ziebell (in memory of Edward Ziebell)

## Historical Society Announces Winter/Spring 2019 Programs

Tired of the cold temperatures and anxious to get out of the house? Come to one of our upcoming programs and enjoy the warmth of a hot cup of coffee and refreshments at one of the historical society's upcoming programs!

On Thursday, March 28, the Waupaca Historical Society will present, "The Civilian Conservation Corps in Wisconsin" with Kerry Bloedorn, historian at Pioneer Park Historical Complex in Rhinelander. The program will focus on the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps throughout Wisconsin and the work that many Waupaca County workers did throughout the state. Bloedorn will also touch on improvements made in Waupaca and the county through other New Deal policies under President Franklin Roosevelt.

The March program is sponsored by Stephen and Barbara Laedtke.

The Chain Skiers will be the subject of the next program on Thursday, April 18 with several members of the local water skiing group. The program, "40 years of the Chain

Skiers" will celebrate the group's anniversary, tell the story of the club and show off some of the skills needed to ski with the group!

On Thursday, May 16, Michael Telzrow, director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, will present, "From Cottages to Commandants: The History of the Wisconsin Veterans Home in King." Telzrow's program will feature the early years of the Veterans Home, the unique idea of cottages and the Home today.

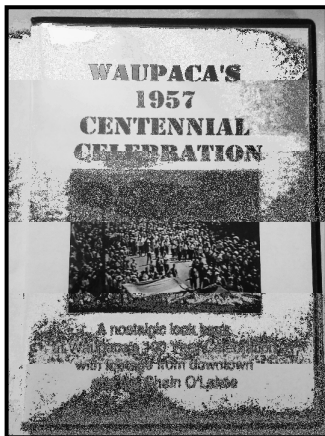
All programs will take place at 6 p.m. in the lower level of the Holly Center. Refreshments will also be served.

The Waupaca Historical Society is also looking for individuals, families or businesses to sponsor our April and May programs. Those interested can sponsor a presenter and/or refreshments each month. Sponsorships range from \$50 for refreshments to \$150 for a program speaker. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor and making a tax-deductible donation toward an upcoming program, please contact us today!

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### New DVD Hits Shelves at WHS

Looking for something new to watch on a cold, winter's night? The Waupaca Historical Society, with the help of Todd Mallasch, has edited and put to music Waupaca's 1957 Centennial Celebration!



The 24-minute film, made in 1957, costs \$20 and tours the Waupaca area on the city's centennial and includes film of the Hutchinson House, boats and life on the Chain O'Lakes and parts of the Centennial parade on Main Street.

The film, copied from the original reel, offers a glimpse of Waupaca life in 1957 and is a great gift or addition to your movie shelf!

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### Thrivent Offers Options to Donate (Continued from p. 1)

Members then obtain Choice dollars that they can direct to certain organizations. Those interested should contact their Thrivent representatives or log in to their accounts and visit <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/>.

Thrivent members can also apply for Thrivent Action Team grants. Members can apply for either one or two Action Team grants per calendar year. These grants provide \$250 gift cards for you and your organization of choice to put on a one-time fundraiser, service activity or educational event. Last year, WHS was able to hold its 4th of July Fundraiser and December program with Laura Ingalls Wilder with the help of Thrivent Action Teams!

If you have Action Team grants available to you and would like to work with the Waupaca Historical Society on an upcoming program, please let us know!



## Boxing in Waupaca

By J.J. Johnson

In 1945, boxing was called Waupaca's newest sports venture.

It was in January of that year that Mike "Mickey" Dundee took over as manager of the Kroger store on Main Street. Besides his new duties at the store, Dundee planned to bring his passion for boxing from Chicago to Waupaca.

As a boy, Dundee had been raised in an orphanage in Ladysmith, Wis. When he was 15 years old, he began boxing. Eventually, under the sponsorship of the Windy City Catholic Youth Organization (CYO), he participated in a number of competitions held in Chicago. Through these competitions he earned a place in the Golden Gloves tournament and, in 1938 and 1939, became the bantam weight champion of the world.

Dundee turned "pro" in 1940 and fought such men as Bummy Al Davis, Chivo Carvajal, Chester Novak, Jimmie Harrison, Slugger White, Henry Armstrong, Richie Leaman, Chino Lopez, Danny O'Brien, Junior Mickey Walker, Lou Jenkins, Benny Cordova, and Joey Archibald. He participated in these bouts in hundreds of places, including Madison Square Garden in New York City. It was the contest with Joey Archibald that won him the title in 1940.

Additionally he had a role in such movies as "We Americans," "The Prize Fighter and the Lady," and in "In Old New York" with James Cagney.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Dundee answered the call for volunteers in the military. He joined the Marines and became an instructor in combat conditioning. He served in this capacity until July 1944 when he was given a medical discharge.

It was noted in January 1945 that in the lightweight division, with 237 punches, Dundee held the record for the number of punches delivered to his opponents. He was then fifth in



***The staff and students at the Waupaca High School (pictured above) were interested in starting a boxing program in 1945.***

the list of contenders for the lightweight crown and was hoping to win the lightweight title.

When he came to Waupaca, Dundee indicated an interest in coaching boys in both Waupaca and Shiocton in his spare time. Judge A.M. Scheller, Dr. W.G. Rudersdorf, Harry Rawson, Harold N. Cannan, John Hanson, Ira Christoph, Elmer Dushek, Attorney Tom Browne and Sheriff Duncan Campbell met with Dundee about starting a boxing program in Waupaca's high school. They decided that Dundee would train the boys one or two nights per week with one of the other men present in a supervisory capacity. A request went out to the community asking for donations of boxing equipment such as gloves for both boxing and for use with punching bags, punching bags and shoes.

On the evening of Wednesday, Feb. 7, nearly 200 youngsters, along with their parents, met in the high school gymnasium. The crowd learned about the advantages to Waupaca in having a boxing program and how the classes would be divided into appropriate age groups for their training. Dundee told the group that boxing could be a great part of physical education. He also said he felt that, if handled correctly, boxing could put Waupaca on the map in this section of the state.

**Continued on p. 6**

## Store Manager Brings Boxing Briefly to Waupaca

(Continued from p. 5)

It was announced that lessons would begin the following Monday evening at the school gym.

About 55 boys showed up for the new adventure. Dundee took charge of the lightweight and heavyweight classes and Elmer Dushek, who had boxed while attending the University of Wisconsin, oversaw the bantamweight group. Even with the limited equipment at this first session, each boy was shown how to use the gloves and given a chance to spar with one another. During this time they were taught how to move in the ring while watching for an opening to let them get past their opponent's defenses.

On Friday, March 16, Dundee and three other sponsors of the boxing program drove 38 members of Waupaca's boxing squad to watch a boxing contest between Dundee's Shiocton team and one from Peshtigo. The program consisted of three exhibition tilts and 11 contests. Dundee's team won the meet by taking six of the bouts. The following Monday night Dundee officially registered the Waupaca boys, noting their weight and grade in order to classify to which division to assign them.

Looking forward to competitions with other schools, Dundee began a series of elimination bouts between the boys on March 26. These contests were open to the public to attend. While Dundee began this process, others were busy trying to secure a regulation ring and other equipment that would be needed when the program got underway.

Within a short time, everything seemed to be in place to move the boxing program to the next step. However, the plans for the amateur boxing matches were quickly put on hold when it was learned that the ring and equipment had to first be inspected by the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic

Association. It was anticipated that the approval would come in time to begin an interscholastic program when school started up in the fall of 1945. The boys continued their boxing lessons while waiting for the WIAA's approval, although they also started spending time on track and field and baseball.

Then, on June 28, representatives of the Kroger food chain reported to the Waupaca County Post that Dundee had just been notified that he was being transferred to an undisclosed location within their southern district. It was noted that when Dundee took over the management of the Waupaca store from Gordon Anderson that the company had also refused to disclose where Mr. Anderson was being relocated.

According to an employee who was working at the Kroger store on that date, the representatives had come into the store with Theodore Larson, who was introduced as the new manager. They then held a meeting with Dundee in the back office. The meeting was described as being very loud and, at the end, Mr. Larson was the manager of Waupaca's Kroger store.

With Dundee's departure, the boxing program was quickly suspended at the high school.



*Mike Dundee served as manager at the Kroger's grocery store on Main Street in 1945. This photo of the store's interior was taken in 1932.*



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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All programs are held at the Holly History and Genealogy Center, 321 S. Main St., unless otherwise noted.

<b>Thurs., Feb. 21, 6 p.m.</b>	“Fill ‘Er Up: The Glory Days of Wisconsin Gas Stations” with author Jim Draeger
<b>Thurs., March 28, 6 p.m.</b>	“Civilian Conservation Corps in Wisconsin” with Kerry Bloedorn
<b>Thurs., April 18, 6 p.m.</b>	“40 Years of Chain Skiers” with the Chain Skiers
<b>Thurs., May 16, 6 p.m.</b>	“From Cottages to Commandants: The History of the Wisconsin Veterans Home in King” with Michael Telzrow, Wisconsin Veterans Museum
<b>Thurs., June 14<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m.</b>	“Waupaca’s Eddy Hanson” with Michael Koehler

### Staff:

**Director:** Tracy Behrendt **Hutchinson House Curator:** Katharine McArthur

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