



PRINCETON WI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER 2024

NEWSLETTER



Left: PHS members at the Heidl House after a boat tour of Green Lake.

Above: Our float for Princeton's 4th of July parade.

Join us for another year of preserving and promoting local history!

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Digging History



Buried treasure was dug up here this spring. The Princeton Historical Society and Princeton Public Library collaborated to bring a professional metal detector, Jim Winter, to the Princeton area from April 25th - 27th. "I actually don't like the word treasure hunter, though," said Winter, during a presentation of his finds at the library on April 27th. "My mission is to conserve history, not to take and hoard valuable stuff." Mr. Winter, known as the "Driftless Digger," detects areas for no charge in order to help individuals and non-profit groups find and preserve artifacts. He detected several areas, including private homes in Princeton and Berlin, and the site of the former town of Saint Marie.

Mr. Winter found many items at St. Marie: pieces of copper, which may have been a part of early Native American trade; an early Mason jar lid; a toy gun from the 1930s; early ceramic and pottery pieces; a metal tube from the 30s or 40s which once contained "deodorant cream;" a brass drain cover; a piece of metal which may have been a decorative concho; old shotgun shells from the 1890s to 1930s; the head of a riveted hoe; spoon bowl; an oil lantern piece; harmonica reeds; a 1934 penny; a tiny handmade copper spoon which may have been a baby spoon, a child's toy, or a snuff spoon; and a Baldric brass belt buckle dating from 1800-1830. "Probably the shotgun shells came from weddings," joked historian Jerry Disterhaft. Mr. Disterhaft was present to talk about the history of Saint Marie, including early fur trappers and Native Americans. He showed attendees a stone axe he found in an area near his home.



Mr. Winter detected Jerry Disterhaft's property as well, but didn't find much. "My metal detector's coil can sense items about a foot deep. Normally that's up to 300 years in the past, but flooding from the Fox river may have put down layers of sediments that has pushed items deeper, out of reach," he said. Winter went on to explain that there are many reasons that one might not find items on a site, including corrosive soil conditions, the poverty of residents who wouldn't have had much to lose, and previous (unlawful) metal detecting. Winter himself follows a strict code of ethics in metal detecting, and always has permission from landowners. Property owners always have the option to keep anything Winter finds, and can sign a short waiver of liability, ensuring that they won't face legal issues if Winter is hurt while detecting.

Other finds from local sites include a pulley wheel, enamelware pot cover, iron spike, bits of lead (often used in repair work and to make bullets), small caliber shell casings, a cow's ear tag, and more 1930s pennies. Taken together, the assemblage might look like junk. However, each artifact represents a small story, which, together with other stories, makes up the tapestry we call history. "You hold this tiny spoon and

think about who held this last," said library director Laura Skalitzky. "Was it a mother feeding a baby? A small child playing with a doll? This wasn't junk to them. This was something they valued, and lost."

"I am definitely coming back here," said Winter.

"The history is amazing, the sandy soil is easy to dig, and the people are great." Thank you to Naomi and Ernie Pulvermacher for sponsoring Mr. Winter's stay at their Air BnB, Huckleberry Hideout.



PHASE II MUSEUM PROGRESS

Thanks to the untiring effort of our construction crew, work on Phase II of the museum progressed very rapidly this spring. So much so, that we felt able to hold an impromptu meeting to give members a “sneak peek” at the new developments on April 22nd. If you haven’t “liked” us on Facebook or given us your email address, please do, so that we can give you updates and special invitations like this.

Heading into summer, we have completed nearly all of the heavy construction. The entire floor was sanded by David Kuglin and sealed by Susan Gorr, Vickie Wielgosh, and Jim and Chris Frasier. Piles of barn boards have been turned into an extremely lifelike “barn wall” by Mark Lind and Mike Goulet. Statuary from St. Patrick’s church donated by the Mashuda Family, an organ, and a stained glass window have been moved in for the church exhibit. We can almost see the finish line!

We’ve had plenty of help from wonderful volunteers, like the high school’s National Honor Society and the Class of 1977 alumni volunteers.



We still have a long way to go to finish our exhibits.

We are still looking for sponsors.

Please contact us if you could help with artifacts, gathering history, or purchasing equipment!

PHASE II MUSEUM PROGRESS (CONTINUED)

Many thanks to Mike & Chris Goulet, Mary & Mark Lind, Rick & JoDee Megeath, Vickie Wielgosh, Chris & Jim Frasier, Norb Wianecki, and many others who have helped us so much recently.



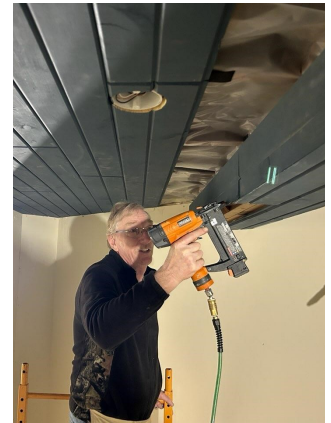
Above: Dave from DRS Sound demonstrates that people without T-coil equipped hearing aids can use portable devices to help them hear too.

Chris Goulet has also been writing grants for us, and succeeded in getting one from the Green Lake Basic Needs Foundation.

This nonprofit donated \$5,750 towards a hearing loop, recently installed throughout the Folklore Museum by DRS Sound. This device will allow anyone with a T-coil equipped hearing aid to “tune in” to our presentations, helping them hear much more clearly!



Above: National Honor Society student volunteers.



Above: Mark Lind nailing ceiling boards.

Below: PHS Board member Chris Goulet paints every nail she can reach, one by one.



WANTED!

- Sturdy shelving to hold artifacts, books, and supplies.
- Info on your Century Farms (working farms that have been in the same family for 100 years or more).
- Vintage and antique communications equipment, preferably from the Princeton area. Examples: switch board, early crank type wall phones, a telegraph, early cell phones, etc.
- Vintage fishing equipment, and anything to do with sturgeon

Donations Gratefully Received

We are so appreciative of all those who contribute to our cause! Did we miss you here? Tell us! Longtime Historical Society supporter Marj Mlodzik recently donated \$10,000! **THANK YOU!**

Shirley Sauter Frieler gave us \$500– thank you!

The Princeton School District gave us a sign they recently replaced.

Mike and Chris Goulet sponsored the cost of fabricating lamp posts to hold several of Princeton’s historic glass street lights.

Omro Public Library cleaned out their archives and gave us 5 historic postcards and a 1898 copy of “The Reformer,” an early Princeton German-English newspaper.



Native American Artifacts Donated

We were generously given several dozen Native American stone tools this spring. These artifacts were collected on properties between Green Lake and Princeton for several generations.

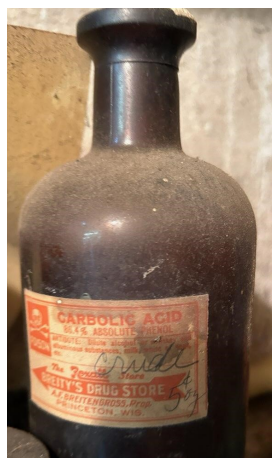
There are plenty of arrowheads, but also items which appear to be broken spear points, hide scrapers, and narrow-pointed “drills” for making holes in hides, bone, and wood. We are extremely grateful to have these for our coalescing exhibit on early Princeton history, and we hope to have them evaluated by an expert sometime soon so that we can properly label them.

Many thanks to the donors, Karl Stewart (a retired Princeton history teacher) and the family of Eldon Radtke (Sharon (Thomas) Esslinger of Green Lake, Carol (Michael) Hecker of Germantown, Kathleen (Brian) Ninneman of Green Lake, Kristin Radtke of Green Lake).



BENTLEY'S: PHARMACY & FAMILY LEGACY

Many longtime Princeton residents have been going to Bentley Pharmacy their entire lives. Now the business has been purchased by another local pharmacist, but the Bentley name and legacy will be preserved in our museum. So will many artifacts, generously donated by Pat Bentley, who invited us to take what we wish from his basement treasure trove. We found many interesting artifacts dating back into the early 1900s!



GOULET GOES AFTER GRANTS, SUCCESSFULLY SNAGS SOFTWARE

Thanks to the hard work of our grant writer, PHS Board member Chris Goulet, we just received a grant from Microsoft. The company is giving us the Microsoft 365 software package for our historical society computers. This will enable us to use tools like PowerPoint and Word instead of relying on Google's free tools. Chris is also pursuing a grant from the Green Bay Packer Foundation which we hope will pay for a mural in our Pre-Princeton history display. We would like to hire artist Kelly Meredith to paint a landscape showing the Fox River, canoes, wild rice, wildlife, and other picturesque scenery as a backdrop for exhibits about Native Americans and French fur trappers. Ms. Meredith has completed many dozens of murals in Wisconsin and is tentatively scheduled to start painting for us in January or February 2025.



MAY/JUNE MEETINGS & SPEAKERS

Thank you to all who attended our last two meetings! We had a blast.
Due to ongoing construction in the Folklore Museum, we have been meeting at the library.



On May 20th, Marjorie Mlodzik gave us a wonderful account of her childhood and days gone by in Princeton. She also celebrated her 95th birthday with us.

On June 17th, Charlie and Pat Wielgosh gave us a rollicking depiction of Princeton in the 60s and 70s, admitting to more than a few youthful hijinks in the process!



Left to right:
Pat Wielgosh with his childhood Roy Roger's lunchbox.
Princeton's Mayor Leonard "Charlie" Wielgosh.
PHS President Mike Goulet acted as interviewer.

Join us at our monthly meetings to hear from more fascinating local speakers!
We meet at the public library (424 W. Water St) at 6pm on the third Monday of each month, May - October.

NEW: PHS CASH RAFFLE FUNDRAISER!



630-632 W. Water St.
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princetonwihistoricalociety.org

1st Prize \$5,000
2nd Prize \$2,500 3rd Prize \$500
Three Prizes of \$100 Five Prizes of \$50

ONLY 400 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD

TICKETS \$50—Buy at the Princeton Library, at
Stone House Museum on Saturdays 11-3
or from a PHS board member any time!
Call 920-295-9008



Drawing held Sat. Nov. 30
at the Christmas in Princeton
craft fair at Princeton's school.

FUNDRAISERS

We had a ton of fun selling Princeton and sturgeon-themed souvenirs at the Public Library's Sturgeon Celebration on April 13th. Vickie Wielgosh and Chris Frasier created hand-molded soaps, Chris Goulet brought magnets, micro puzzles, mood rings, and etched tumblers she had made, Mary Lind created stickers and magnets, and there were several different T-shirts to choose from. (If you missed out, you can buy these at our museum gift shop!) Elizabeth Ladwig did the most good by selling the shirts down by the river to impressed sturgeon-watchers, bringing in over \$400 all by herself. Thanks Betsy!



On June 23rd, our Meat Raffle at the Western House brought in \$572 from donated raffle baskets, \$120 from a 50/50 cash raffle, and \$610 from the meat for a total of \$1,302. Thank you to all who supported us at this event, especially the Western House! Our next meat raffle will be September 28th at Beer Belly's Bar.

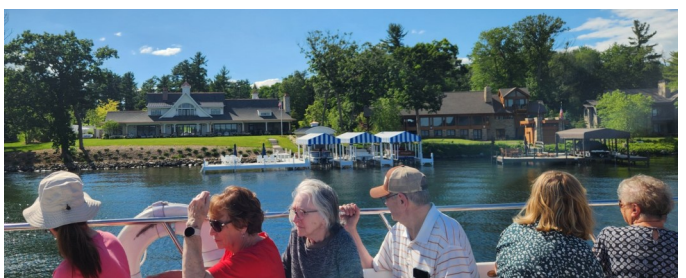
ALL ABOARD!

We were recently delighted by an unexpected opportunity. Despite a very busy season on Green Lake, Mike Lehner, captain of the yacht *Escapade*, offered to provide a private cruise for members of the Princeton Historical Society and Princeton Senior Center. With enough RSVPs from our combined memberships, he was able to offer the trip at a reasonable cost, and for double the normal amount of time! That's how many of our members found themselves sailing off into near-tropical waters on Wednesday, June 26th. We were given a history of Green Lake (our state's deepest natural body of water), including stories from the Ho-Chunk/Winnebago people, and a "tour of the stars." Mr. Lehner pointed out the lakeside houses of Green Bay Packer's coach Matt LaFleur, Craig Culver (of the famous restaurant chain), an oil pipeline company's mansion retreat, and others.

At our January meeting, Captain Mike had pledged to give the Princeton Historical Society all of his boat tour tips this year. He has now collected about \$600 in tips, and the season isn't over yet! This fantastically generous donation will be matched up to \$500 by the Princeton Chamber of Commerce, Tank Technologies, and Sondalle Law Office, and up to \$10,000 by Mashuda Construction. We thank them and Captain Mike Lehner from the bottom of our hearts.



Above: The *Escapade* is Green Lake's largest boat, powered by twin 180 horsepower Mercury diesel engines, and sporting a huge top deck as well as below deck seating. Below: PHS members gaze out at Craig Culver's palatial lake house, with its copper-sheathed roof and triple pier.



Upcoming Events

Museum Open Saturdays 11am-3pm May—October

We need help staffing the stone house museum! Can you sit and talk with folks?
Call 920-295-9008 to pick a Saturday.

PHS Member Meetings

Until further notice, meetings will be held at the Princeton Library, 424 W. Water St. at **6pm on the third Monday of each month, May through October.**

We will continue our tradition of having a local guest speaker at each meeting who will talk about their lives and memories in Princeton. These are recorded for posterity.

July 15th, 6pm: Mike Jacobi

August 19th, 6pm: Dave Resop

September 16th, 6pm: John Bednarek

October 21st, 6pm: Tom Kuehn

Flea Market Food Booth

Saturday, August 24th

Make sure you have lunch with us today! We'll be serving up brats, burgers, R-line hot dogs, and other great options.



Volunteers are wanted for this fundraiser!

Please sign up for a shift:
call 920-295-9008

**CANCELLED,
SORRY**

With everything else going on, we feel we just don't have the manpower to put on a summer dinner lecture this year. Let's hope for 2025!

Meat Raffle

Sat. Sept. 28th, 1PM

at Beer Belly's Bar



Join us for a great time!

This is your chance to get some great cuts of meat (and other prizes) for a very low price.

Want to donate a raffle basket or prize?

Please contact us!



October: See us at the HalloWINE Sip'N'Shop and Trick or Treat on Water St.

Once again we are participating in the Princeton Chamber of Commerce's fall events. Sample beer, wine, and cider at many downtown Princeton locations on Saturday, October 12th.

Get your tickets online at Eventbrite or at the Princeton Library by October 5th and make sure you visit our stop at the Folklore Museum for snacks, a museum tour, and cash raffle tickets! We'll also have candy and games again for little spooks on Fri. October 25th from 3-5pm.

Become / Remain a Historical Society Member!

- ___ \$2 Annual Student Membership (high school and lower grades)
- ___ \$10 Annual Individual Membership
- ___ \$15 Annual Family Membership (parents + children under age 18)
- ___ \$100 Lifetime Individual Membership
- ___ \$250 Lifetime Family Membership
- ___ \$500 Charter Membership
- ___ \$1,000 Donor Membership
- ___ \$5,000 Patron Membership
- ___ \$10,000 Founder Membership

**DON'T FORGET
TO PAY YOUR
MEMBERSHIP
DUES**

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Apt. # _____

City, State _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Cut out this form and send in your membership today! Make checks payable to the Princeton, WI Historical Society, and send them to PO Box 71, Princeton, WI 54968. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you!

Contact Us!

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630 West Water Street
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Princeton WI Historical Society

VISIT OUR GIFT SHOP



Coasters, pens,
USB chargers, cheese
boards,
T-shirts, tumblers,
beer and wine glasses,
and MORE!

If we're closed,
call 920-295-9008
and we'll let you in!

**8X10"
prints of historic
Princeton
photos
are only \$5.00**

Volunteers Wanted

WE NEED YOU!

Please call 920-295-9008
for info on volunteering to staff our
museums, help with raffles
and food booth fundraisers,
construction, and more!