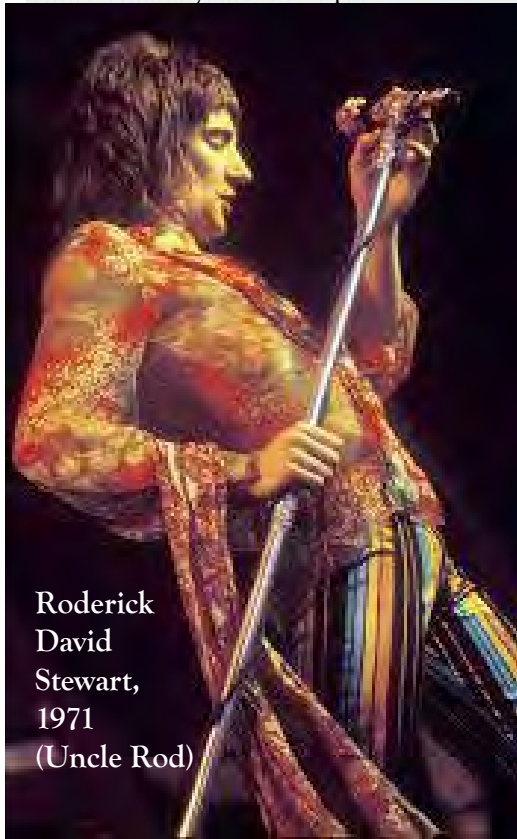


## ARTIFACTS



Cover: Robinson Park benefit, 1971. Inside: Rod Stewart, *Tribune* photos, rock concert, voter registration, p. 2; Zakons '71, Milladore picnic, LaChapelle for D.A., 3; Stephen Benish memoirs, Polack jokes, 4; Alphonse Benish, *Scope*, 5; Living Music Day '64, John Doe, 6; Ray Lecy 7; Lincoln teachers, Reuben, 8; 60-year reunion, Judy Kolstra, Louie Kolstra, Philleo Nash, Marvin Maire, 9; Idelle Baughman Kolstra memoirs, 10-31; Rudolph map, 13; Mongan road crew, 16-17; Edith Liebenstein McConnell, 31; Rudolph train stuck, 32.

What story does this picture tell?



Roderick David Stewart, 1971 (Uncle Rod)

*\* Every picture tells a story, don't it? \**

English rock singer Rod Stewart posed the above question in 1971, about the time of the cover photo by an unnamed Daily Tribune staff photographer.



One of these Tribune photographers, Dave Rude or Max Carpenter, shown in January 1971, probably took the Robinson Park photo.

1970-1971

22 stories inspired by the cover picture

Following pages are by Uncle Dave



Daily Tribune, June 11, 1971

Hot Line Benefit

Robinson Park Wisconsin Rapids



An attendance of over 1,000 persons at Thursday night's nine-hour benefit rock concert in Robinson Park netted \$530 for the proposed drop-in center. The event was sponsored by the Wisconsin Rapids Hot Line, Inc. Fifty per cent of the concession profits, not yet tabulated, will be used to pay transportation costs of the musical groups which donated their talent. Above, Harley Pryne, drummer, and David Thedens, guitarist, members of Itch, a local rock combo, start off the event in the afternoon. Right, Steve Irwin of Wisconsin Rapids, one of the event's organizers, gives the peace symbol in an apparent reference to the current John Doe hearings, requested by Dist. Atty. Harold La Chapelle. The gesture brought clenched-fist salutes from a few members in the audience. Policing the event was a group of 45 "marshals" that included 20 adults. (Tribune Photos)

YOUTHFUL VOTER REGISTRATION \*

Julie Granza, left, secretary in the Wisconsin Rapids city clerk's office, supervises voter registration Thursday of six young men who appeared at City Hall in conjunction with a Drop-In Center project of community involvement. Left to right are William Burt, 18; Timothy O'Day, 19; Steven Irwin, 20; Larry Steinke, 18; Thomas Steinke, 20, and Larry Ewell, 18. O'Day was informed he could not register at City Hall, as he is a town of Grand Rapids resident. Voter registration is required in municipalities over 5,000 population under laws granting voting rights to 18-year-olds. (Tribune Photo)



Daily Tribune, Aug. 27, 1971

No. II "ZAKONS '71" — 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
(Greatest Band in the Land)



### Zakons '71



Though I never met the younger Steve Irwin shown on the cover, I knew Gerry Irwin, the Zakons rock band drummer and impresario.

Memory has it that I met Gerry in 1955 when I moved on from Two Mile school for fifth grade at Grove and took up cornet with the school band, where Gerry was—or had been—a drummer, considering he was a freshman at Lincoln that year.

Gerry was a welcoming elder—the same at his Terrace Gardens, one of many venues of the Zakons 59, 60, 61 and 84, when, at the Whiting Hotel, Stevens Point, on a blind date with my later-to-be wife, Kathy, “Only if the Zakons play ‘Johnny B. Goode’ will I dance,” and darned if they didn’t.



Gerald Allen Irwin  
1959 Ahdawagam

### Grassroots Campaign

Why was I, an instructor at Western Illinois University for two years, at the Milladore Centennial Picnic on Aug. 8, 1970?

Because I was back home, about to start teaching at UWSP and that day was with residents of nearby Rudolph township.

And why would I run into my more urbane LHS classmate Harold LaChapelle of Riverwood Lane? Because, I learned, “Butch” had just got a law degree and was campaigning for Wood County District Attorney at age 25.

It would be a stepping stone to a life in politics, or so he thought.



### LaChapelle wins race for district attorney

The only Democratic challenge for a Wood County office was turned back Tuesday when Republican Harold J. LaChapelle defeated Democrat Robert P. Bender for the district attorney's post by a close but still comfortable margin, 10,048 to 9,429.

LaChapelle picked up more than two-thirds of his 619-vote margin in Wisconsin Rapids, getting 3,434 votes here to Bender's 2,948. Both candidates are residents of this city.

In Marshfield, LaChapelle took a 423-vote lead, with voters in that city's 10 wards casting 2,530 votes for the Republican and 2,107 for the Democrat.

LaChapelle polled 730 votes in the town of Grand Rapids to Bender's 599; carried Port Edwards, 425 to 321; led in Biron, 171 to 139, and in Pittsville, 127 to 108.

Bender showed strength in Nekoosa, where he ran up a 248-vote margin, 479 to 331, and in the town of Saratoga, where he led his opponent 401 to 277.

Bender, who is 51, tried but failed in a previous attempt to win the district attorney's office, and also met defeat in contests for Circuit Court judge and state representative.



Harold LaChapelle

LaChapelle, 25, will begin his new duties with some experience, since he currently serves as assistant district attorney under Walter G. Wefel Jr., who declined to seek reelection.

A 1963 graduate of Lincoln High School, LaChapelle also is a graduate of Stevens Point State University and holds a law degree from the University of Miami.

Incumbent Wood County of See—LaChapelle—Page 2



Daily Tribune, Nov. 4, 1970



# Stephen Benish Milladore Memoirs, 1970

Published in Daily Tribune at time of Centennial and partially reprinted here



The Milladore community will be celebrating its centennial this weekend, the festivities to center in a new community park.

An interesting account of early days in that vicinity has been preserved, and gives one an idea of the hardships that must have been the lot of many of the early settlers.

It is taken from the autobiography written by Stephen Benish of Milladore, who came from Bohemia to Wisconsin at the age of 19 with his parents and three sisters. They arrived at Manitowoc in July, 1880, and lived at Casco through the winter. His account follows.

In the spring of 1881, my father decided to visit a family who had settled in the vicinity of what is now Milladore, Wood County. This was a very heavily wooded place, beautiful pines, hemlocks, stately maples and other hardwood and the future of this area looked very promising.

My father bought 120 acres

of the heavy timber land and sold 80 acres in Casco. We always felt that he made a mistake with this deal because the Casco area was settled whereas the Milladore community was only at its beginning.

It was the first part of May 1881, when we moved to Milladore. We traveled by train on the Wisconsin Central Railroad (now the Soo).

Milladore at that time consisted of a small depot, a dwelling which was the home of the depot agent, and a shed where the section car and tools for railroad repair were kept.

Our first stay in the Milladore community was at the John Hofman home, about one half mile east from the depot. After a few days rest, Mr. Hofman offered to take us to our new home about three miles west. Preparations for the trip began.

My mother was patiently waiting for Mr. Hofman to bring the wagon so we could load up our belongings, but when she asked about it, he told her that he couldn't use the wagon on this trail because it was too swampy. He began constructing something that looked like a flat bottomed boat with two sled runners. It measured about four feet in width and about 19 feet in length and the sides were boarded up part way.

We loaded our stove, three sacks of potatoes on top of it and two sacks of flour on the potatoes. Our big trunk, which

we brought from Europe, was put by the stove along with some smaller articles. My mother and three sisters sat on the trunk while my father, Mr. Hofman, and I prepared to walk along side.

Invoking God's help and protection, we started on our journey. For a ways the trail led us along the side of the railroad until we had to cross the tracks and follow a very narrow swampy trail, a logging road used in the winter time. Huge trees on both sides prevented the sun from penetrating so that we traveled as if in a tunnel.

The swamp was getting wetter and deeper. The water was creeping up on the floor of the raft, higher and higher, until my mother and sisters had to move to the top of the sacks of flour so as not to get their feet wet.

Mother cried and lamented that we would drown but Mr. Hofman assured her that we would get through safely. With a "Giddup Boys", the oxen continued plodding through the swamp, slowly but surely. Water rolled away from our raft like waves from a boat, but we kept going. The driver, my father, and I had to jump like rabbits to keep from sinking and although we wore high boots, the water reached over the tops.

Finally we reached higher ground where the going was easier and we soon came to

a little clearing where stood a small log cabin, our new home.

We unloaded the cargo but what a sight. The trunk was soaked, all the clothes, feather beds and everything else had to be taken out and spread around to dry. The only dry thing was the flour for which we were grateful.

In spite of all this grief we were happy to see our log house built on a small knoll. The stove was set up after the swamp water was cleaned out of it, a fire was started and we all appreciated the warmth of it because we were wet and chilled. Mr. Hofman stayed with us until the next day.

Here our family was left alone, surrounded by giant trees; like hermits in a secluded cave. My father stayed home with us for about two weeks, helping to get settled and even trying to spade the dirt around the stumps in order to plant a few potatoes, cabbage, and cucumbers. (Later on the rabbits ate the cabbage.)

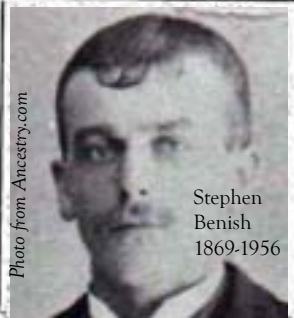
My father was fortunate to get work at a place near Milladore where he helped clear the land. He came home every Sunday, spent a few hours with us and went back again. I can remember one particular weekend when our flour and potato supply was almost used up and he suggested that I go with him to Milladore where a small supply of flour was kept. This was brought in from Stevens Point, sometimes by the

railroad section car. When we got there, my father measured off a small amount of flour into a sack and put it on my back so I could carry it home which was a distance of over three miles.

I was only 11 years old and this was hard work. Part of the road was along the railroad but the last part, about a mile and a half was through heavy timber land and swamp. I kept trudging along a narrow deer path with the heavy pack on my back and the thought of my mother and sisters gave me courage and strength to keep going because I knew we needed the flour.

Finally I reached the little clearing by our home and what a joyous welcome! Tear stained faces and sighs of relief greeted me and this described the fear they had experienced while I was gone. On another occasion I had to walk nine miles (one way) to a store in Junction City for a gallon of kerosene and some matches and carry them home.

Soon we became accustomed to our surroundings and even ventured to walk down some of the unknown paths. We notched trees along the path so as to find our way back. Sometimes near a wet spot we had to cut down a tree which served as a bridge to walk over. As summer was getting along and our appetites became keener, we searched for wild berries in



Stephen Benish 1869-1956

Photo from Ancestry.com



The second installment from the autobiography of Stephen Benish concerning the arrival of his family in the Milladore area in 1881, picks up where he enrolls in school that winter, and covers the experiences of these early pioneers during the following four years.

These two articles are being run in conjunction with the observance of Milladore's centennial this weekend.

A small log schoolhouse had been built about two miles from home, so it was my privilege to attend classes during the winter. The trail led through heavy timber and I often saw strange tracks in the snow but I can't remember of seeing any wild animals along the way.

The following February my father bought a pair of young oxen and stayed home to work in the woods. The huge trees were not easily handled and

when it was my turn to use the crosscut saw with my father, he would add an extension to the handle on my side. Because the logs were so big and I could not reach the top, he would turn the handle downward so I could keep sawing with him. Sometimes he tied a short piece of light rope with a block or handle and my nine year old sister helped pull the saw with me. Many of the logs were cut, piled and burned because there was no market for them.

One time in the summer of 1883, two strange men came to our home and told us that a sawmill was to be built in Sherry, about two miles away. They made a deal to buy all our nice logs and also employ my father at the mill. This was welcome news and I believe it was the first bright ray of hope for a better future.

direction, sometimes four and five in a heap.

We were worried about my father. We felt sure he could not possibly find his way home through this tangled woods. Thoughts for his safety were uppermost in our minds. Did he get caught in the storm? Was he alive? Was he safe?

These terrifying questions raced through our minds as well as those concerning the safety of our neighboring families. I

so were waiting for daybreak. There was water and mud everywhere but with my father's help and the light from the lantern, they managed to find some pieces of stovepipe and set up the stove and started a fire. My father stayed with this family until morning and then started for home.

Another sad remembrance I have is of the forest fire of 1885. The summer was hot and very dry so that our crops

**'Polack' jokes aren't funny as ethnic pride increases**

**By Ralph Novak**

Above byline: The 1971 columnist's surname Novak is common in the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia and around Milladore, Wis., where Stephen Benish married Katarina Novak in 1893.



Son of a Benish: Uncle Dave's Debut Year

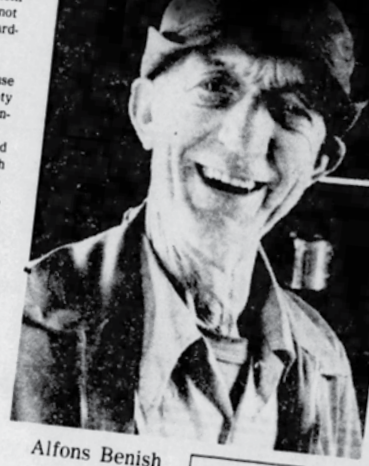
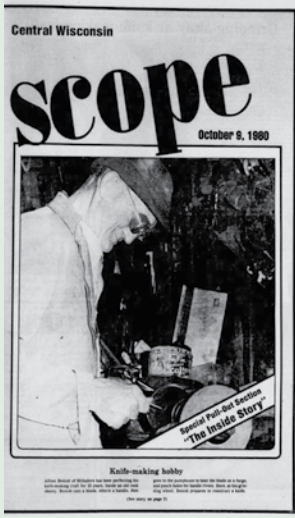
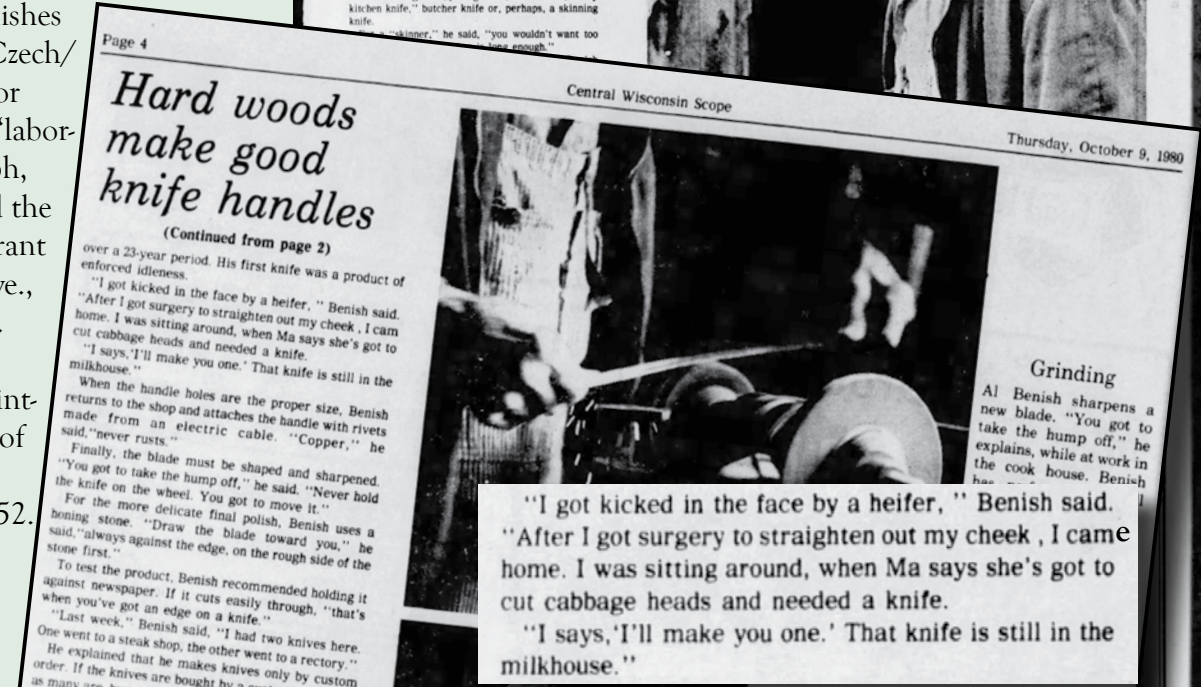
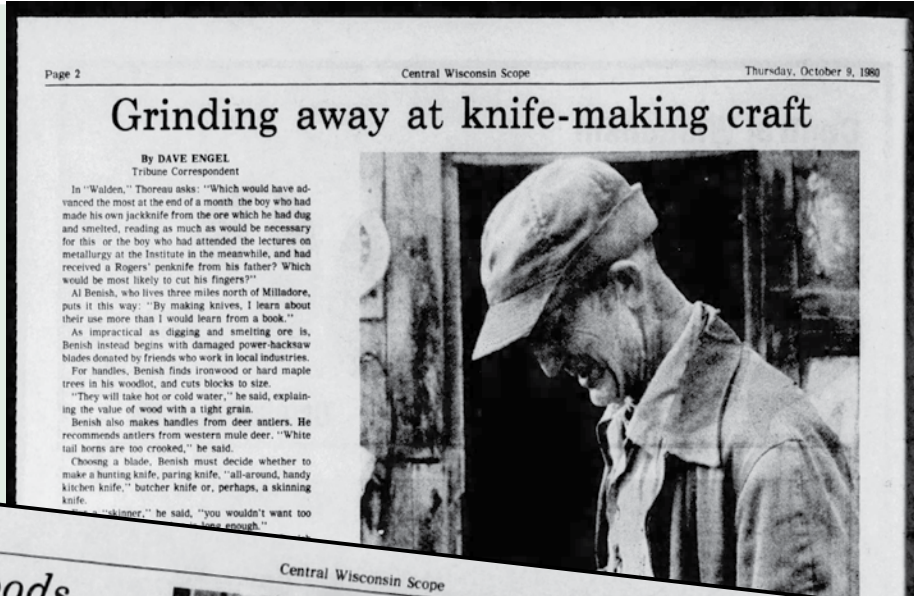
1980



Alphonse Benish (1909-1984), son of Stephen at left, was a subject of Scope, the Daily Tribune's special section—early in Uncle Dave's introduction to the rigors of writing, photographing and designing a publication similar to Artifacts.

Sharing a census page in 1900 with the Benishes of Milladore was Czech/Bohemian neighbor Joseph Nuhlicek, "laborer," father of Joseph, who later operated the Chatterbox restaurant on West Grand Ave., Wisconsin Rapids.

Joe's son, James, LHS '63, was a Point-college roommate of UD and was eulogized in Artifacts #52.



Alfons Benish

Bowling Leagues NOW FORMING. Sign up Now! Once a month Saturday Nite Couples League 1 FREE Drink each week Starting Nov. 1st-8 p.m. Coming Soon Scotch Doubles Saturdays once a month. Call for information 423-4350 Bowlmor Lanes 3141 8th St. So.

Congratulations



Daily Tribune, June 29, 1964

Rock 'n' roll bands, also performing from 2:30 to 11 p.m., are the Psychos, Triumphs, Vigrans and Chandola.



(The Vigrans aka Zakons)

### Living Music '64

After a hard week in the pea fields of Milladore, Bob Bord (not his real name) and I, unfastened ropes that held the doors shut on my '57 Ford and disembarked for the exquisite combination of beer and dancing girls at Robinson Park. As dusk fell over River City, the two West Side teenyboppers we had been courting excused themselves at the bathroom, leaving Bob and I waiting under the big pines, sucking Old Milwaukee and entertaining one another with ironic witticisms.

And we waited. Waited a while. Too long, so we took a look around and came to a realization. There was a back door on the john and the girls had the good sense to use it.

MUSIC FESTIVAL—Hundreds of persons attended the second annual "Living Music Day" festival at Robinson Park Sunday, listening to an hour-long concert by the municipal band and dancing to their favorite music as provided by 15 different orchestras. Silhouetted against the evening sky are three of the members of Local 610, American Federation of Musicians, as they cut loose in their own private jam session. From the left are Don Chenebra, Ray Konkol and Fred Shaffer. Tribune Photo



### 11-30-72

### John Doe Does River City

Seventeen persons were arrested this morning in South Wood County drug raids staged by about 30 officers from the Wood County Sheriff's Department and Wisconsin Rapids and Port Edwards Police Departments.

More arrests were expected today as the raids continued. Also this morning, at least 12 arrests were made in Portage and Marathon Counties on drug or related charges.

Eleven persons have been charged with sale of drugs or encouraging violation of drug laws, one with possession of marijuana, three with lewd and lascivious conduct and two juveniles with sale of marijuana

*LaChapelle and others are profiled in Artifacts #38, August 2013 50-Year Reunion Issue.*

The purpose of "John Doe" investigations is to find if a crime has been committed and, if so, by whom. Example: a 1974 John Doe here probed the killing of 34 blue herons in our area.

Earlier in the '70s, the Wisconsin Department of Justice sent us an undercover "narc," resulting in the arrests of numerous young persons for possession or sale of marijuana and other drugs, including hashish, pills and LSD.

To some of the Robinson Park crowd on the cover, this was a foray by an imperialist state into the Rapids 'hood, an overreach that may have contributed to LaChapelle's defeat after two terms as DA. In his later years, Butch defended many a drunk driver, of which I witnessed one example from the jury box. It was a hapless case with no strategy available except attacking the competence of the arresting officer and the credibility of the breathalyzer.

At the mercy of throat cancer no doubt exacerbated by his own indulgences, LaChapelle, before his 2007 death, told *Artifacts* editor he had mellowed since the 1970s and in retrospect may not have pursued his anti-pot crusade with as much vigor—said with the regret that comes of decades passed while defiantly sipping clear cold vodka in a pink palace by the dark river that flows by us all.



Can you find Ray?

November 1970



Grove school gym where a long shot would hit the ceiling. Photo from Eileen Keating

As shown above, Ray Lecy was campaign chairman for Harold LaChapelle's successful 1970 run for District Attorney. In 1974, Lecy co-chaired LaChapelle's State Senate try, a loss to Democrat Tom Harnisch, Neillsville, also a lawyer.



Earlier, supported by LaChapelle, Lecy had lost his own 1964 bid for a State Senate nomination to Gene Rowland, a Rapids architectural engineer. Lecy had been a teacher for 12 years and coach of the Grove basketball team for which Little Uncle Dave and Lafe Enkro each scored one basket.

Grove (55)			St. Vincent (17)		
	fg	ft	fg	ft	f
Kramer	4	3	0	4	4
R. Grimm	5	3	3	0	1
G. Zimmerman			Miers	1	3
	7	3	1	Hell	0
Spaulding	1	1	2	Mitchell	0
E. Grimm	2	0	0	Pogarty	0
D. Zimmerman			Mahner	0	1
	2	0			
Enkro	1	0			
Engel	1	0			



### Raymond Lecy

1927–2018

B.S., UW-Stevens Point; M.S., UW-Madison; teacher and coach, Grove School; principal, Woodside; assistant principal, West Junior High; retired in 1987 as Principal, East Junior High.

	Rowland Lecy
Wood (67 pct.)	2546 3403
Portage (38 pct.)	1047 676
Waushara (28 pct.)	1475 1275
Gr. Lake (28 pct.)	1532 633

### Working for the Principal: 1964

Ray could get people to do things. Running in the primary for State Senate, he enlisted a couple Woodside students, my brother, Gary Engel (LHS '68) and schoolmate Pat Marsh, who were dropped off in Plover with a bundle of leaflets to distribute along Highway 51 until the campaign worker picked them up. That "until" took a while as the weary youths trekked on up old 51 as far as the Blue Top motel at the south edge of Stevens Point—finally relieved by that same guy that had dropped them off: college freshman Harold "Butch" LaChapelle.



“Bloody Bloody Battles”  
(Wm. Miller’s take on the Civil War)



In William Miller’s (1961) sophomore American history class, Butch LaChapelle daily excoriated the Kennedy administration for misadventures in Cuba, while disinterested peers looked on.

This publication might not exist without the same “Wild Bill” Miller, one of few to notice young Uncle Dave-to-be—frequently sending him to the school library to peruse *American Heritage* magazine.

Also on board the 1961 *Ahdawagam* yearbook page at right were Dave’s English teacher, Corinne Andreasen Otto (1912-2007), formerly of Bloomer, Wis. Married to one of the local Earl Ottos, she was sister-in-law to Genevieve and Beulah Otto, frequent donors of items to SWCHC.

Last, not least, the vivacious Barbara Santapaolo (1935-2017), who appointed Little Dave “president” of her freshman speech class, to demonstrate parliamentary procedure via Robert’s Rules of Order.

Like Ida Lee (Chiappetta) Siewert (2010 Rapids Citizen of the Year), Barbara was a Kenosha Italian and a grad of UW-Madison. After leaving Lincoln, the much-beloved “Mrs. Gensler” taught theatre, speech and English while developing the Shorewood, Wis., high school drama program.



✱

Where’s Reuben?

Iconic as the Zakons, he is included in every issue of *Artifacts*, though you have to look carefully.

In 1971, he was foot-loose in Baraboo, Wis.

Photo and story at right have not been previously published here.



1969 photo

At 73, Reuben  
Decides to Take  
Life Easy

By RON BRAYER

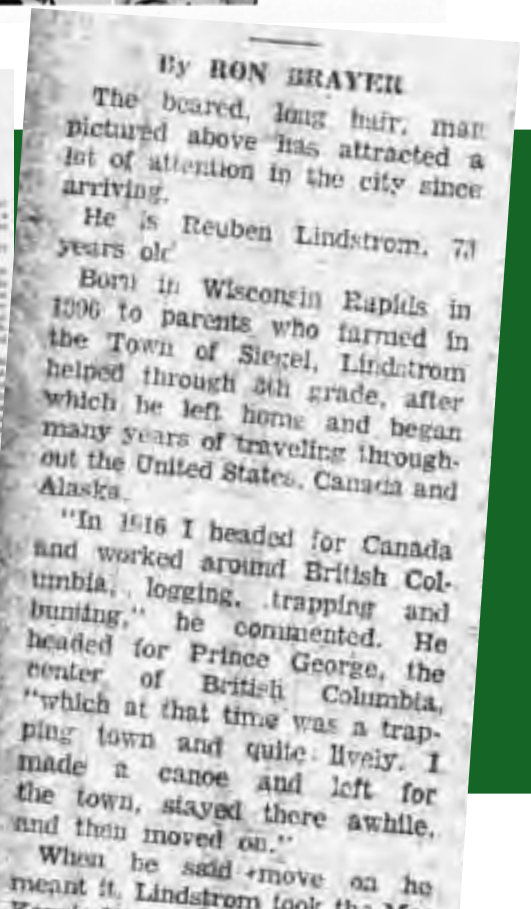
The bearded, long hair, man pictured above has attracted a lot of attention in the city since arriving.

He is Reuben Lindstrom, 73 years old.

Born in Wisconsin Rapids in 1906 to parents who farmed in the Town of Siegel, Lindstrom helped through 8th grade, after which he left home and began many years of traveling throughout the United States, Canada and Alaska.

"In 1916 I headed for Canada and worked around British Columbia, logging, trapping and bunting," he commented. He headed for Prince George, the center of British Columbia, "which at that time was a trapping town and quite lively. I made a canoe and left for the town, stayed there awhile, and then moved on."

When he said "move on he meant it. Lindstrom took the McKenzie River...







Artifacts #19, November 2008, included "Class of 1963" by Chuck Hinners and the scrapbook of Mary Beth Habel Rokus, who helped organize the 2023 60-year reunion.



### Diamond Jubilee Doubles Up

"That's why you didn't spill the beans when we walked past Lincoln," classmate Lafe Enkro reminded me at the 60-year reunion Assumption had invited us to. "You were involved."

True enough. At the time of the 1962 investigation, newly-arrived Principal Maire, had said, more or less, "That's why you didn't spill the beans. You were involved and now...you are suspended."

"We need to do something to remember," classmate John Farrish urged—and off with Lincoln's head went he and others, including foreign exchange student Henny Van de Harst. (See *River City Memoirs II*.)

This year's reunion was not my first geriatric rodeo.

\* In 1986, Philleo Nash, Class of '26, Lincoln's most-distinguished grad, invited me to his 60-year event. A likewise-underage guest in attendance was Judy McGowan with her mother, Idelle Kolstra.

Judy's father, Louie Kolstra (1905-1985), had been a 1926 classmate of the same Philleo Nash. Much of Louie's story is included in Idelle's memoirs that follow in this issue.

UD



JUDITH EILEEN KOLSTRA, Ahdawagam Staff 2,3,4; Band 1, 2,3,4; Belle Cantos 1,2,3,4, President 4; Chemistry Club 4; Choir 3,4; Dramatics Club 1,2,3,4; Forensics 2,3,4; Gamma Sigma 2,3, 4; G.A.A. 1,2,3,4; Lincoln Lights 1,2,3,4; Operetta 3,4; Orchestra 3, 4; Pep Club 3,4; Prom Committee 3.



Judy, who contributed her mother's considerable archives to SWCHC, wrote for *Lincoln Lights*, below.



KOELSTRA, Louis Henry  
Junction City  
English  
Boys' Glee Club '25, '26;  
Lincoln Times Staff '25, '26.  
*A constant worker.*



Class of 1926 Ahdawagam yearbook  
Louie Kolstra & Philleo Nash

Notes to Louie by Arvilla Mindak

After longtime principal Aaron Ritchay (1898-1961) died in office, Marvin Maire (1928-2000), who notably abhorred "tittering" in assembly, made history when he called Sally Engel and told her to pick up her errant son from school. Maire later returned to Iowa for a prolific and lucrative administrative career.



1907 ad

Photo by Uncle Dave for *Daily Tribune* two-part series May 18, 1991



1911, Monroe, Wis.



## *Idelle*

### *Farm girl to schoolmarm*

My mother, Idelle Baughman Kolstra, was a natural writer of generous and well-written letters to a wide variety of correspondents. Adding documentation to family pictures and photos was also an important part of her role as self-appointed family historian. Her life stories were passed on to her daughters, grandchildren, young students, publications and anyone who showed interest in her 88 years of life in Central Wisconsin. This is the story of young Idelle, with her memories as true as she remembered them.

*Judy Kolstra McGowan*  
Fremont, Wis.



Judy



**SCHOOL DAYS**—When the school bell pealed out today, calling the students of Wisconsin Rapids to classes for the coming year, it summoned many youngsters for their first encounter with formal education in kindergarten. There was much preparation and many good-byes before these tots arrived for class. Judy Kolstra, (above) daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kolstra, 141 Fourteenth avenue south, sits patiently as her mother begins the task of fixing her child's braids before she goes to school. (Tribune Photo)

*By Idelle Baughman Kolstra (1906-1994)*  
*Written 1985-1994*

I was born on March 26, 1906, to Earl and Lillie Krueger Baughman at my grandparents' rambling farm house in a beautiful hilly section of southern Wisconsin, eight miles west of Monroe, the "Swiss Cheese Capital of the World."

My aunt Maud was attending Whitewater Teacher's College and had become friends with another student whose name was Idelle. Nellie Holland was my Grandma Baughman's maiden name so I was named Nellie Idelle Baughman.

### **Monroe**

The house where I was born was a large white building with a porch that was open underneath. My grandmother's hens would go back into the farthest dark corner, lay a nest full of eggs, then sit on them until they hatched.

My grandmother, who needed those eggs for her family to eat and to sell, was a large woman, and could not maneuver under the long porch to find the nests. She would bribe me, a little four-year-old girl, to crawl under the long dark porch, full of cobwebs and insects. For each nest I found, she would give me a stick of gum plus a lot of praise, which I always craved.

Every evening was milking time. With no gate to keep the cows in the cowyard as they were turned out after milking, I was to keep them from straying until all were milked and they were taken as a herd to the night pasture.

After the morning milking, farmers delivered their milk to the neighborhood cheese factory, where cheese makers worked all day. About 7 p.m., the farmers came again. Then the cheese makers spent half the night working with that.

My grandfather, Mathias Baughman, had served in the Union Army during the Civil War. When the war was over, the army brought the Wisconsin soldiers by train to Madison. From there they had to find their own way home. Grandfather walked from Madison to

his farm home west of Monroe, about 50 miles. During my childhood on that farm, my grandfather's war musket hung on the woodshed wall.

Mathias always wore a long white beard. When I went up to the big house, I would usually end up on his lap with a comb and I'd comb that beard.

My grandmother, Nell, was the conversationalist of the two. They used to say that Mathias would be sitting reading and not saying anything for several hours. Finally, Grandmother would get up, put her coat and hat on, and he'd quickly glance at her and say, "Where 'ya goin'?"

She'd say, "Nobody talks to me here. I thought I'd go somewhere they did."

When I was three or four years old, if my mother was shocking grain, she would set me on the shady side of a shock with my doll and a book and tell me to sit there until she came for me. I was a very obedient little girl and always did as I was told. I watched the clouds and birds sailing by and all the insects flying about, even an occasional gopher or bunny wandering past. When my mother finished that area, she moved me to a new section of the field.

I was only four years old when Aunt Maud invited me to visit the school where she was teaching. We had to walk 1 1/2 miles but that didn't worry me. I think I would have crawled if necessary. The older girls entertained me in their free time at recesses and noon, took me for walks in the woods. We watched the birds and picked flowers. They gave me a lot of loving attention and I basked in it.

### **Rudolph**

Uncle Leon and Uncle Rollie Baughman were both farming in Central Wisconsin. Uncle Rollie was three miles east and Uncle Leon about a mile south of Rudolph. I guess that was why my father decided to buy a farm 2 1/2 miles south of Rudolph in the fall of 1912.

Uncle Rollie had stayed on the home place and helped grandpa for a while after he was married to his first wife, Josephine Rhinehart [1878-1903]. She and Grandma raised ducks to sell. One time, they had a

big storm and the creek was flooded. Josephine came up to the house to tell Grandma, “There are 10 ducks missing, five of yours, and five of mine.”

We always laughed about how she divided up the loss.

My dad paid \$7,500 for the farm and some machinery and livestock. We had to pack all our furniture, household goods, tools, machinery, livestock and chickens, on sleds and hayracks. We drove eight miles to Monroe and loaded it into a box car for Rudolph.

The freight agent said, “You mean Randolph.”

“No, I mean Rudolph,” replied my dad.

They had never heard of Rudolph and still thought he should go to Randolph. Finally, he convinced them. So, he arrived in Rudolph, unloaded it all on sleds again and took it to the farm in the middle of winter. While unloading, a heifer became very frightened and escaped from the men helping to unload the boxcar. They chased her to the point of exhaustion and she died.

My mother and I arrived on the 6 p.m. passenger train a couple of days before Christmas. It was very cold, there was lots of snow and it was dark when we got off at the depot. I was looking around to see what I could of Rudolph, walked into a ditch filled with snow and had to be “fished” out. We walked across the street to Kujawa’s store to telephone Uncle Leon to come and get us. While in the store I saw the cutest little broom which I would have loved to play house with. Needless to say, I did not get it.

## The Baughmans

When we got to Uncle Leon’s, there were children. Theresa [see Artifacts #65] was the oldest, probably about ten. Earl was about eight, Caroline was my age, six. Alice was a baby. They had her sitting on a fur robe on the floor with toys all around her. The robe protected her from the cold floor of the log house.

On Christmas Eve, Theresa, Earl, Caroline and I were sent to bed early in the one room upstairs. The

first one awake woke up the others and we all sneaked downstairs to see if Santa had come. Sure enough! The tree was up and decorated, many exciting packages piled under it. In our excitement, we woke up Uncle Leon and Aunt Carrie in the adjoining bedroom, and were promptly sent back to bed and told to stay there until daylight.

It was always my hope that sometime I could stay overnight with my cousins. I almost made it one time.

We teased and teased my mother to let me stay until my mother and father left at chore time and I stayed. But after chores, my mother got to worrying about the trap door in Aunt Carrie’s bedroom closet used as an inside entrance to the basement. She was afraid someone would leave it open and I would be the first one to fall in the “open pit.” She convinced my dad to hitch up the team, go back to Uncle Leon’s and bring me home. So that is as close as I ever got to having an overnight visit with cousins.

At some of the Baughman brothers’ gatherings, oyster stew would be served at midnight before they all went back home.

I had a small table with broomstick legs. My grandfather had made it for me and some little wooden chairs to go with it. I had a cute little kerosene lamp which my mother would light and set on my little table. A dish towel for a tablecloth, two little bowls, and Caroline and I would sit at my little table and eat our stew.

## Rudolph Sites

**Circled on atlas, left to right: property of Henry Koelstra, Louie Kolstra’s father; farm of Leon Baughman, Idelle’s uncle; farm of Earl Baughman, Idelle’s father; Rudolph village school and Moravian church; Lone Birch school and residence of Uncle Dave (formerly Jack Monson’s); farm of Idelle’s uncle Rollie Baughman; Hill View School.**

38

1928

MAP OF  
**RUDOLPH**  
 TOWNSHIP  
 Scale 2 inches to 1 mile

Part of Township 23 North, Range 6 East of the 4th P. M.



Earl, Idelle, Lillie Baughman



Idelle Baughman's childhood home

Lillie Baughman obscured by oats north of the house about 1920





*Ben Hansen farm at Rudolph, Iowa - 1917.*



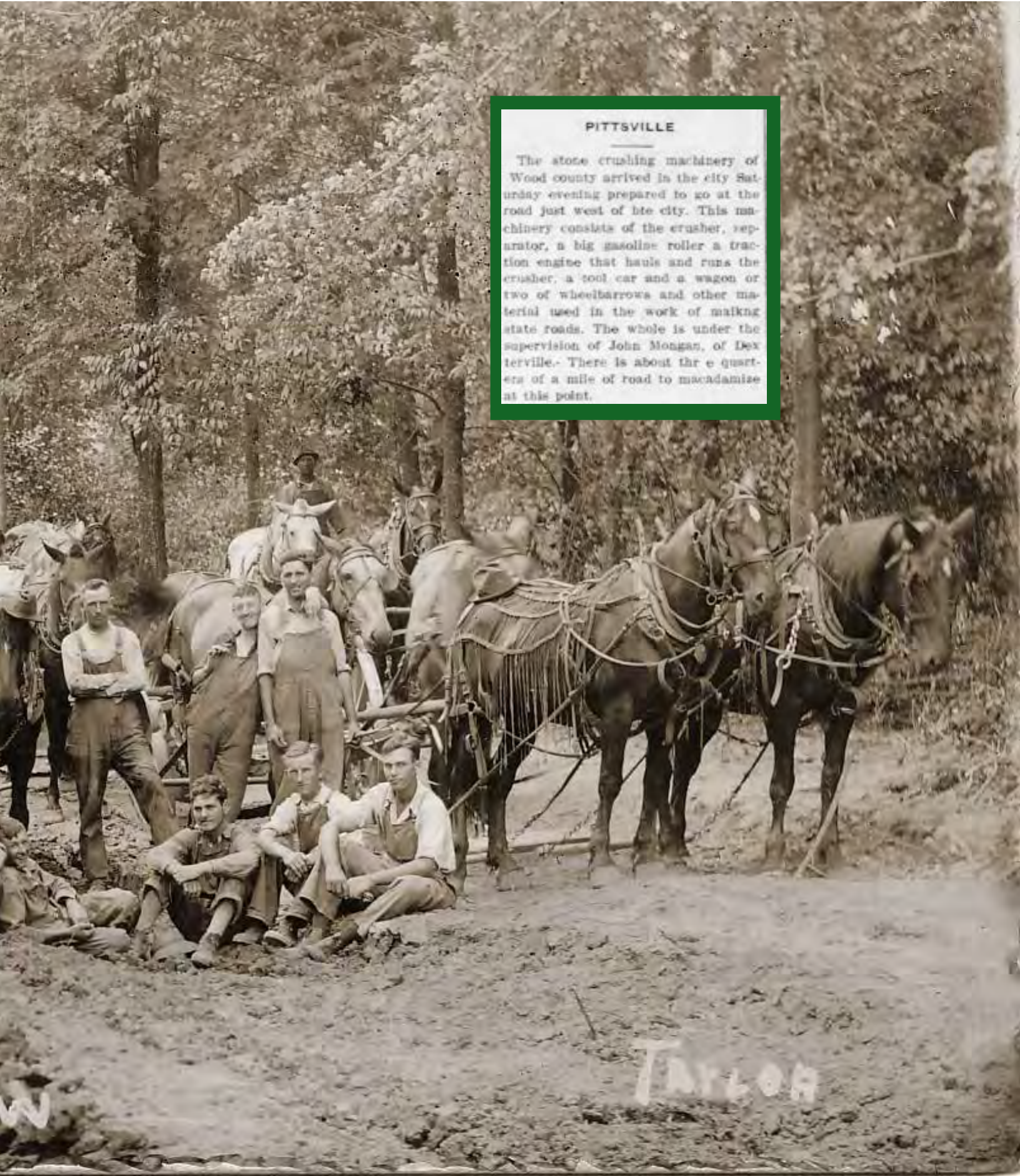
Earl & Lillie Baughman farm, looking north

Included in photo are 1. Tony Peters, 2. Bill Scott and 3. Earl Baughman.

1921







**PITTSVILLE**

The stone crushing machinery of Wood county arrived in the city Saturday evening prepared to go at the road just west of the city. This machinery consists of the crusher, separator, a big gasoline roller a traction engine that hauls and runs the crusher, a tool car and a wagon or two of wheelbarrows and other material used in the work of making state roads. The whole is under the supervision of John Mongan, of Dexter ville. There is about three quarters of a mile of road to macadamize at this point.

TAYLOR

Idelle  
1913



Earl Baughman farm, Rudolph, Idelle  
and Lillie, center

## Lone Birch

In January 1913, when I was 6 years old, I was in the second grade. For my first day at Lone Birch School, Rudolph township, my father took me with a horse and buggy, because I didn't know where the school was located [see map, corner of Oak Road and Third Avenue, just north of where this editor's home office].

I found out I had over 2 1/2 miles to walk to get there. I had no one to walk with the first 1 1/2 miles and by the time I got to the first houses of other children, they had already left for school. I usually walked the entire distance alone in the mornings. But in the afternoon, I enjoyed their company the first mile.

One afternoon during a blizzard, it was getting dark when Bill Kuter [northwest corner DD and Third Avenue], on his way to the barn to do his evening chores, saw me all alone wading through deep snowdrifts with 1 1/2 miles to go yet to reach home. He came out to the road and walked with me part way across the field to my farm buildings.

When we could see the lights in the barn where my parents were doing evening chores, he said, "Keep your eyes on those lights and head for them. You will soon be home with your folks."

Then he turned around and went back over a mile to complete his chores. I never forgot Bill Kuter's compassion and aid to a little seven year old girl trudging through a long trip home from school in a Wisconsin snowstorm.

Another winter day, the mailman, driving a team of horses and a light sleigh, caught up with me that last mile. He lifted me into his cab and covered me with a warm fur robe. I rode in great comfort until I had to get out and cross the field to our farm buildings.

The next day at school, I was the envy of all my playmates when I told them the mailman gave me a ride in his cab.

Another time, I was walking up the railroad track and I felt someone was following me. There was a noise in back of me. I'd look around but couldn't see anybody. I'd walk on and the noise would start. I'd stop

and the noise would stop. I'd run a little ways and the noise would be just that much worse.

Finally, I discovered what it was. I had a little hat on with a streamer, a ribbon that ran down the back. The wind was blowing that and making it flap and making the noise, and that was the mystery.

The rural school in those days was the social center of the district during the long winters. Home talent plays were popular. The winter (1912-1913) when I started school at Lone Birch, a play was chosen that required a part for a little girl. My teacher chose me. As I lived far from school, transportation would have to be provided, so my teacher, Miss Aileen Lindahl, and her boyfriend, Mr. Wilbur Warner, called for me with the horse and buggy for evening rehearsals. That was something different and exciting in my quiet life.

I also remember a few rehearsal nights when I stayed overnight with Bill and Katie Kuter [interviewed by UD in 1979], both talented actors in the school's plays. This was in the day before indoor bathrooms. I can remember a surprising sight in my bedroom that night. Bill and Katie had no children and evidently few chambers (or potties). But for my use in my room that night, there was a brown kitchen crock.

Teacher Bertha Severtson brought a *Bible* to school and we could hold it and read it if we were able to read. Another time we had Bernadette Gaffney. She wasn't any taller than some of us fourth graders. Then I had Leona LeMay. We were afraid of her, but I think she was a nice person and a good teacher. My last teacher was Leona Fritsche, for 8th grade. Leona lived on a farm south of ours. When I first started school, she was one of the upper grade girls.

There were five girls in the class that graduated from eighth grade. She drove us all to town and we went to a photographer and had our picture taken with her. She gave it to us as a gift for graduation. I still have it.

[Leona Elizabeth Fritsche, wife to Warren Beadle of Biron, mother to Ardith (Kubisiak) who is mother to Elizabeth Kubisiak Stern, whose family history contributed to *Artifacts #47*.]

Back: Mabel and Ellen Lundgren, Bessie Konkol, Idelle and Caroline Baughman. Middle: Hildur and Agnes Lundgren, Crystal Dobs, Edith Lundgren. Front: Cashmere Konkol, Ethel Dobs.



The Lundgren girls were my friends at school. When I had birthday parties, I always invited them. I usually invited Caroline, a cousin, too. I have a picture of five or six of us [11!] girls, Caroline and two or three Lundgren girls and Chrystal Dobs, who lived down the road a ways. I went to school with her, too.

I didn't get to go places very often. Our home was way back in the field, by itself. We didn't have any real near neighbors. Those we did have didn't have any children my age. I suppose that was one reason I was so crazy about school. I knew I'd have nine months of other children to be with and play with and walk with.

### Parents

I grew up pretty much alone, except for the company of my mother and father.

I think I was always kind of afraid with my mother. If she pressed her lips tightly together and shook her head negatively, that was a warning I was not doing something right. I had better stop or she would use a switch on me when we got home.

My dad would play checkers at night when his work was done. He didn't have the work ethic as much as my mother. My dad would get it done and get it done well, but it took him a little longer to do it.

### Bandoneon

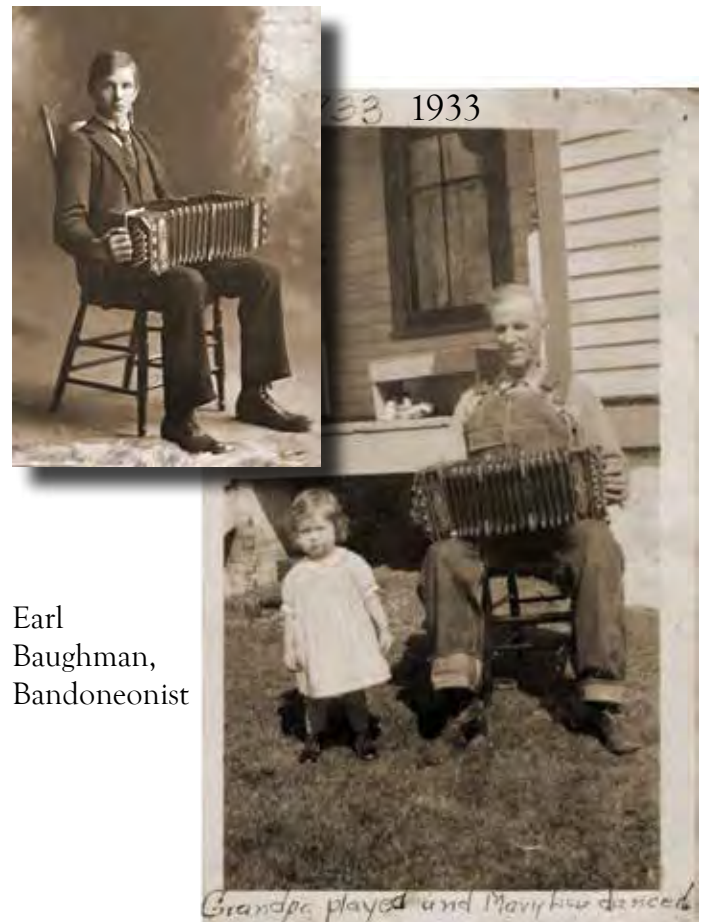
My dad played the bandoneon [concertina] and was very much in demand at barn dances, weddings, and parties. He'd hurry with the chores on nights when he'd have to go and play.

By 9 p.m., everybody else had their chores done and got to the barn dance and Dad played till all hours of the morning.

The one thing my mother, "Tee," loved was dancing with neighbors and doing square dances. I was eight or nine years old and would just sit and nod my head. Occasionally she'd take me out to dance to keep me awake.

While Dad sat up on the stage and played, if it was cold weather, they'd put all the coats there. When it was time to go home, the coats would be covered with kids, all of them asleep.

In summer, there would be a heavy electrical storm about time we had to go home. The three of us would go with horse and the buggy with a top on it. It would be so awful dark, the horses would have to feel their way. Except for the lightning flashes. Then you could see where you were going. I can recall being frightened.



Earl Baughman, Bandoneonist

Idelle, Nick Fritsche and “Pete” (Charles) Juneau, 1919. About 1980, neighbor Fritsche was interviewed by UD.



My dad would get home at three or four o'clock in the morning, change clothes and go after the cows. Then he probably would work on the hay if it was haying time, or whatever they had to do.

### Leprosy

One summer when I was about eight years old, I broke out with a rash. It was haying time and my parents were both very busy in the field. They could not identify my ailment so it was decided I should walk to Rudolph to the village doctor. As I walked, a great fear overtook me. I remembered stories of the poor lepers, how they suffered and were shunned by the general

public. The closer I got to the doctor's office, the more sure I was that I had leprosy. The good, old, doctor examined me and said, “You have chicken pox. You'd better go home and stay there.”

### Sunday School

In 1913, I was seven years old when my parents decided I must start because Grandma was coming from Monroe to see us. The first thing she would ask would be, “Are you going to Sunday School?”

My father took me to Rudolph to see the little church on the west side of the village where the lumberyard was situated later. It was Moravian, which we had never heard of but it was the nearest Protestant church, a one-room building with no balcony and no basement. It had roughhewn pews, probably handmade.

Every Sunday afternoon I walked up the railroad track alone, 2 1/2 miles to Sunday School. My first teacher was Mrs. John Granger. I learned to sing the children's hymns and tell little *Bible* stories, so when Grandma came to visit, we sang hymns and told stories.

In a few years, the congregation bought a brick Methodist church on the hill at the east end of the village, where I went to Sunday School and church every Sunday.

At the age of 14, when I was a sophomore at Rudolph high school, I was asked to teach a primary Sunday School class and I did. There was one complaint.



Share's new Hudson: Earl Baughman, Andrew and Vica Share (later interviewed by UD), Lillie Baughman

One dear old lady said, “I think a teacher should be confirmed first.” I was baptized and confirmed later by Rev. John Hoesman, but I taught classes all the years I attended the Rudolph church. I also sang in the choir and was a member of the Ladies Aid.

### The Piano

When I was nine years old, my dad bought me a piano from [W.T.] Lyle, a furniture dealer and funeral director in Grand Rapids, probably the biggest thrill of my little life. I could hardly wait to get to school to tell the kids. Of course, they didn’t believe me. Nobody had a piano in those days on the farm.

Valentines Day came along and I was going to take Valentine cards that day, but I left them at home. Two or three of us girls, a Lundgren girl was in on that, got the teacher cornered to give us permission to walk clear back to my house to get my Valentines. She let us go. I bet we walked six extra miles. But it was worth it to show off my new piano!

The dealer gave 25 lessons by correspondence with the purchase and that was my musical education. I got a lesson every week and I was supposed to master that before the next one came.

Grandma Baughman wanted hymns when she came. I was quite proud when I was able to play several hymns and she would sing. Her favorite was, “When the Roll is Called up Yonder, I’ll Be There.”

### RHS

After eighth grade, in fall of 1919, I went to Rudolph high school. I had to milk eight cows before I went to school so I walked on the railroad track because it was closer. When I was late starting up the track, I would walk one distance between telephone poles, and run two.

Ruth Bennett was my first high school teacher and the best. She resigned and was elected Wood County Superintendent of Schools. When she married Mr. Corey, he was Superintendent for a while.

Miss Bennett had done a little traveling and was an interesting person. Her parents had a cranberry marsh south of town [Cranmoor] somewhere.

It wasn’t too long ago that we had a reunion of Wood County [Normal] College. I went, and Mrs. Corey was there. She was in her 90s, I think. As I came up to shake hands, she said, “Well, Idelle, it’s so nice to see you.”

The following Monday, we had a retired teachers’ meeting and she came to that. I was fortunate to be able to sit right next to her at the table. It was amazing to both Louie and me how many students from school she asked about by name.

If we should all be able to do that when we’re 90, wouldn’t that be something?

[See interview with Ruth Bennett Corey in *River City Memoirs V.*]



I helped with the chores all during high school. In the summer I drove the team on the haywagon in the field and on the hayfork for unloading. My mother would set the fork and my dad worked in the mow.

During grain harvesting, my dad cut the grain and Mother and I shocked it. After a long day in the field, she used to say, “then we have to spend the best times of the day, morning and evening, under a sweaty cow.”

During my high school years at Rudolph, I met my future husband, Louie Kolstra. The Kolstras were farmers west of Rudolph: Edna, Henry and children—Grace, Louie, Bess, Margaret, Rosella, and Dorothy.

Like me, Louie attended Rudolph Moravian and we were in the Youth Sunday School class. He encouraged his parents and sisters to attend church. His younger

sister, Rosella, had a lovely soprano voice. I sang alto and the two of us were often called upon to sing duets at church and at funerals.

### LHS

At that time Rudolph had only three years of high school after which we had to go to the Rapids for the last year. For me that was 1922-23.

When we went to Lincoln, we drove as long as we could in the fall so we could be home to milk cows and feed chickens. Earl, I and the Scotts changed off driving. The first time we came home from school they had put up arterial signs. We didn't know what an arterial sign was.

It said, “Stop.”

We didn't want to stop.



## AMERICANA 1926

Leon and Carrie Baughman's 25th wedding anniversary, 1926, current state highway 34/13 about a mile south of Rudolph village



1920



Below, back: George Coenen, Bill Scott. Bernard Rivers, Earl Baughman, Jack Marvin, Dick Dorshost, Alrick Jensen, Herbert Baughman, Florence Albert, Edith Lundgren. Front: Donald Dickson, Tony Peters, Maurine LeMay, Beatrice Share, Idelle and Caroline Baughman, Clara Kujawa, Frances Hierl, Helen Keyzer, Alma Johnson, Hilda Share.



1919

Rudolph High School +919 20-21 (over)



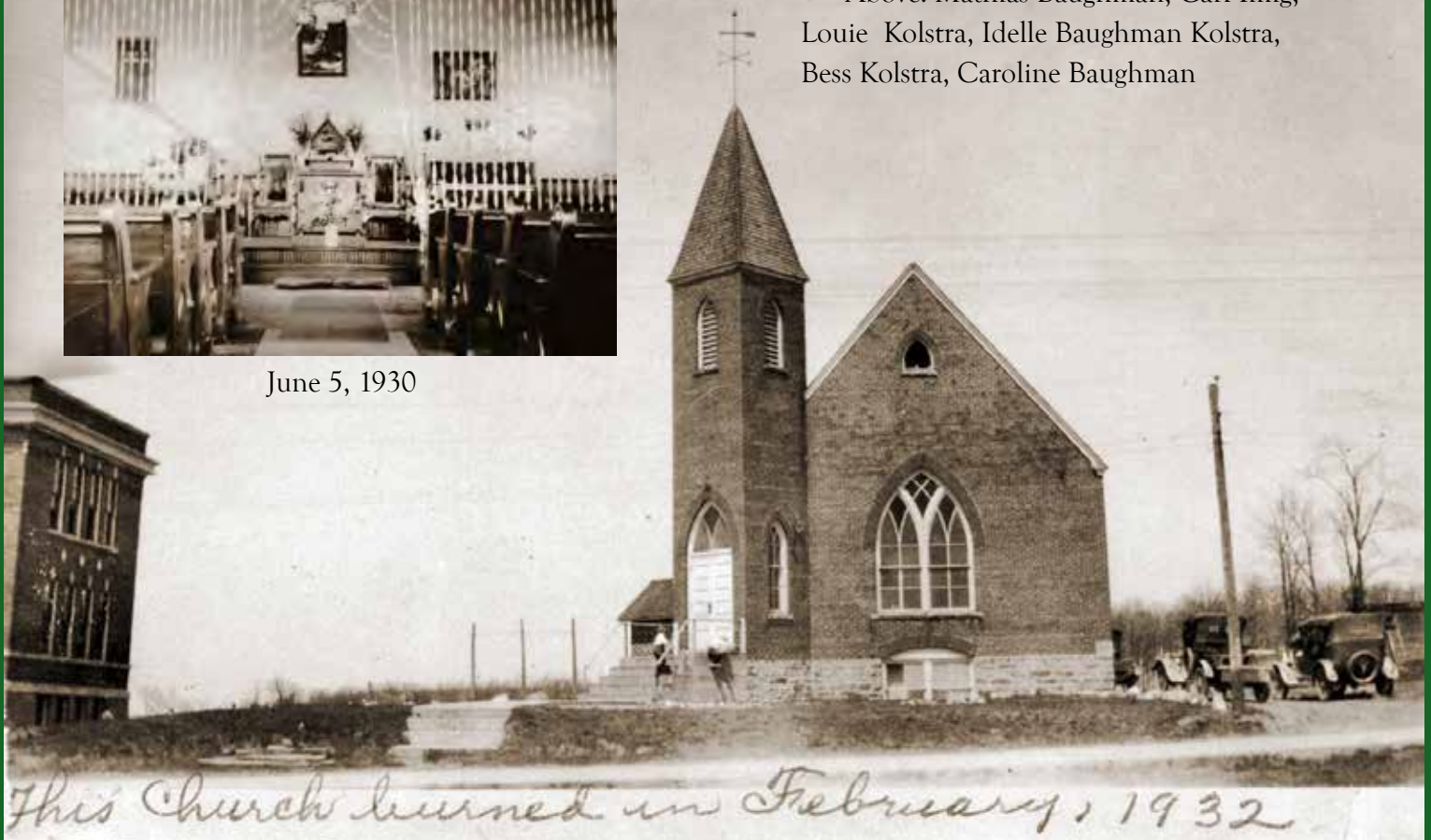


June 5, 1930  
Rudolph Moravian Church

Above: Mathias Baughman, Carl Imig,  
Louie Kolstra, Idelle Baughman Kolstra,  
Bess Kolstra, Caroline Baughman



June 5, 1930



*This Church burned in February, 1932*



We drove all over town trying to avoid those for a few days.

When it got cold and snowy, we couldn't drive anymore so [cousin] Caroline and I did light housekeeping at a home up on 9th Street about two blocks from Lincoln. A family formerly from Rudolph by the name of [prob. Lawrence and Effie] Omholt lived there. They gave up their living room so that we could have an oil stove in there, and a table to do our own cooking.

We would return home on the weekends and load up with food to take back. My dad hauled hay to town to sell to pay for my rent. Those were tough years on the farm. Every year my mother would say, "Well, now, you study hard; maybe this will be the last year."

My last semester I took five subjects and I had five Es on my report card, for excellent, given instead of As. If I had gone there all four years, I probably would have been on the honor roll.

We couldn't enter into any of the extra-curricular things, so I didn't really get to know a lot of people. I was shy and would rather write a three-page theme than get up and speak before a class.

### County College

The year after Lincoln, 1924, I drove again, this time to Wood County [Normal] College [Wisconsin Rapids]. I was alone then because my cousin Caroline and Florence [Albert, married Caroline's brother, Earl] went to Stevens Point [Normal, now UWSP]. I presume Wood County was cheaper so this was where I went.

I drove as long as I could in the fall. In winter, I was able to stay at the Omholt house again with a new partner, Arvilla Piltz [later Strozensky], a niece of Mrs. Omholt, so she and I roomed together. In the spring I drove again.

I graduated from Wood County College in 1924, and started teaching in the fall at the Hill View School, about seven or eight miles northeast of Wisconsin Rapids [corner County O and Gumz Road].

I started out with 35 students, all grades. That first morning when I faced the group there was one boy who was much bigger than I was.

I thought, "Oh, dear, what am I going to do with him if he gets mean?"

But Steve was a very nice farm boy. We got along fine.

The following year I had 50 in all eight grades, 22 in the combined first and second grade language class. Two long recitation benches were tightly packed and they still slopped over the edges. I had to have little chairs to catch the extras. I sometimes wonder how I could keep their attention, even for only 15 minutes, which was about the average period.

### A Scary Story

In the past few years [1990s], I have become a storyteller at some of the city schools and the Nekoosa school. One of the favorite stories is of the day the children came in at recess and said, "Teacher, come quick, come quick! Clem fell off the swing and is all blood!"



**RUDOLPH FARM- KOLSTRAS AND FRIENDS: Idelle & Louie, Dorothy, Edna, Mary, Bess, Marie VanLoo (friend of Bess), Margaret, and Harold Akey [about 1933]**



I followed them on the run out to the swing, picked up Clem and ran back to the schoolroom with all the children following. They were frightened and so was I.

I washed Clem but the blood was still coming from a big cut in his cheek. I could see the wound needed a doctor's care. I had no first aid materials, only Band-Aids. I had no telephone and the nearest neighbor was a half mile from school. What a decision for an 18 year old teacher to make.

Fortunately, I had my father's car that day. My students were standing around me very frightened. I told them I must take Clem home and they must promise to be good boys and girls while I was gone.

They nodded their heads "yes." I couldn't go all the way to Wisconsin Rapids to a doctor, leaving 34 other students alone at school. I appointed a couple of upper graders to watch the group, left them standing by the schoolhouse door and carried Clem to my car.

I prayed all the way that his parents would be home. Fortunately, they were and took him immediately to the doctor and had stitches put in his cheek (When Clem died recently, he still had the scar.) Back at the schoolhouse, all my students were standing rooted to the spot with fear, it seems. But they were good children, knew

it was an emergency, and they must help their teacher by being good boys and girls.

Another time, I made a trip down that same road but it was not as serious a situation. As the children came into the schoolhouse after the first recess that morning, they reported to me, "Eddie went home."

I said, "Went home? Why?"

"He always goes home when he gets mad."

"Well, he can't do that. He will miss almost a whole day of school."

I looked out the window and I could see him a short distance down the road. I told the rest of my students, "You be good boys and girls and I'm going to go and bring Eddie back."

As they stood by the schoolhouse, I got in my car and drove down the road the half mile or more to where Eddie was. I stopped the car and told him to get in. He did. I turned around and returned to school. When I drove in the yard, the students clapped their hands and cheered. I had won that battle.

One morning, some of my upper graders came into the school room and said excitedly, "Teacher, someone's pigs all got out. The ditch along the road by school is full of pigs!"

Of course, I had to go and see if they were a menace to our safety. I could see no pigs anywhere but the air was filled with student voices, "April fool, Teacher!"

### Hill View

When I started teaching at Hill View in 1924, old Grandpa [Joseph] Reimer was on the school board. He said, "We will pay you \$75 a month. If you work hard, we might give you \$80 after Christmas."

To get my check, I walked a mile to the treasurer's house. He made out my check and signed it; then I walked to the clerk's house, another mile. He signed it. Then I took it to the director's home and he signed it. Then it was mine to take home.

I had to pay board where I stayed but it wasn't a great deal. They were a very nice family and did everything they could for me with what little bit they had. I had their children in school, too.

Not only did I have to teach all eight grades but I was expected to put on a program every month. They had a very active community club and liked to put on home talent plays. The teacher was supposed to direct or be in them. At the school, I built my own fires and did all my own janitor work, which included mopping the floor every week and washing the chimneys of the kerosene lamps on the walls so they were nice and bright for the next community club meeting. There was no electricity.

While I was there, we earned enough money in our community club so that we could buy a second-hand piano. After that, my method of dismissing for recess and noon was impressive. I played "Napoleon's Last Charge" from memory as all 50 marched out to the playground.

In spite of the things I had to learn in a school with 50 students, I must have done something right because in my second year at Hill View we were

chosen as a demonstration school. Eight or ten teachers from other rural schools came and spent the day observing our classes, quite an honor when I look back on it. I was 19 years old.

I taught two years there before Rudolph graded school hired me as principal of the graded department, and to teach grades fifth through eighth. Word got around that I could direct music and plays, so the high school principal asked me take charge of that for the high school kids. I had the glee club, club plays and all my own work. By then, I was 20 years old..

### Rudolph Symphony

We had a little community orchestra. Mr. [Emil A.] Lambert was director of the city band in Rapids and came out once a week to direct us and work with us. He brought his daughter, Dorothy, and her girlfriend, Ruth Potts. She played a trombone.

I borrowed Uncle Rollie's violin and learned how to play it. I was the manager of the orchestra and Louie Kolstra was assistant manager. We gave little concerts and earned a little money that way.

I had known Louie before through Sunday School and church and was ahead of him in school at Rudolph, not any fault of his. He had to stay home and work in the fall until the ground froze up. And he had to plow in the mornings before he could go to school.

Earlier, he had been put in the wrong class. When his family moved from Lake Villa, Ill., to Tomahawk, Wis., he followed his sister, Bessie, into the third grade room and there he stayed, although he should have been a grade ahead of her. Some of his credits weren't relayed to schools, either.

He had difficulty all the way along. You have to give him credit sticking with it and staying in school when he could go. He went Lincoln, worked for his board, and finally graduated in 1926 when he was 21 years old.

While I was teaching [1927], he and Carl Imig entered a contest and wrote articles entitled, "Why I Want to Be a Farmer."



1925



Rudolph Community Orchestra, 1929: Manager, Idelle Baughman, Principal, Rudolph Graded; Asst. Manager, Louie Kolstra, Short Course Student, UW; Director, Emil Lambert of Wisconsin Rapids City Band. Back: Ruth Potts, Walter Pospisiel, Louie Kolstra, Carl Imig, Warren Ratelle, Herman Kath, Juanita Smith. Middle: Earl Denniston, Charles Korn, Karl Schmidt, Dorothy Lambert, (?) Eddie Joosten, Edith Liebenstein. Front: Paul Landon, Floyd Jacobson, Idelle Baughman, Emil Lambert, Rosella Kolstra, Richard Dobs.

They each won a scholarship to the short course and had their themes and pictures printed in the local newspaper. The scholarship was \$100! The short course was in Madison. He had no money, disappointing because he was elected president of the short course class for the second year.

Working together in the orchestra was really the beginning. Our first date was when he took me home from [cousin] Earl and Florence's [Alberts] wedding dance. That was on the 12th of June, 1928.

### Western Interlude

We couldn't date that summer because the next day, Edith Liebenstein, who taught primary grades

at Rudolph, and I left [by train] for Colorado for the summer. We spent time in Denver with my Grandma Baughman's sister, Aunt Jen, and Uncle "Mac" Walters. He was a contractor and built homes. We also visited Edith's uncle in Colorado Springs and her cousin and family on a ranch near Limon, Colo.

So my relationship with Louie was cut off kind of short. I thought he was a pretty nice guy, even though I wasn't too keen on him, when he went to high school, running around with kids who were "roustabouts," and not very good company. I judged him at that time as being like the others. Besides, I was a senior and he was only a sophomore. But he did write to me and I wrote to him.

## Louie

Edith and I started teaching again at Rudolph in the fall of 1928. Louie and I went “steady” that year and he wanted to get married the following summer. However, things didn’t look too good in the economic picture, so I said we’d better wait and I would teach another year. (They didn’t hire married teachers at that time.) So we waited. Then the stock market crashed in the fall of 1929 and the depression had a good start.

In February 1930, Louie started shopping. His mother said he nearly wore out a Sears Roebuck catalog (and himself) trying to decide on a diamond ring for me. But he finally sent for one and when it came he couldn’t wait. We had a school program at Rudolph one Friday evening in February and I was invited to spend the weekend at the Kolstra home.

Louie came to the program with the team and sled and had a lantern for a light. On the way home, the ring was “burning a hole” in his pocket. When we were about half way home, he dug it out of his pocket and by the light of the kerosene lantern he put it on my finger. It was a little too large so I wound string around it inside my hand and wore it anyway until I could get to a jeweler in town and have it made smaller.

We were married in the Rudolph Moravian Church on June 5, 1930, on Louie’s 25th birthday. I was 24 in March. We had the reception in the home of my parents. We had planned to have it outside on their lawn but it rained all day. The men congregated in the upper drive of the barn, visited and played cards. The women found places to sit and visit upstairs and down in the house. Food was prepared in the kitchen basement. Neighbor ladies had worked several days before, cooking and baking. A large table was set in the living room, another in the kitchen. We served 125 people from 4:00 until finished. In the evening we had the usual wedding dance at the Rudolph Community Hall.

When we returned to the Rudolph Kolstra farm, we found our cornfield flooded as it had rained all the while we were gone. The corn crop drowned out and

had to be replanted. This was Jolt No. 1 of many that first summer. The rest of the summer was very hot, very dry, full of hard work, and very discouraging. Louie and I were both experienced farmers but we had not experienced depressions like the one beginning in 1930.

*A couple of men, members of our Moravian Church, were former students of mine at Hill View. One Sunday I had been requested to read the scriptures for the morning service. After the service, Everett and Glennon came to me and shook hands. They said, “It seemed like old times to have you stand up in front and preach to us!” They are two of my best friends, but like to kid me—their teacher of over 60 years ago!*

See *River City Memoirs VI, The Home Front*, for more of the Kolstra family story.

## Edith Liebenstein McConnell

Idelle Baughman’s friend and colleague Edith Liebenstein (1904-1996) was daughter of Mary Hamm Liebenstein of Sheboygan whose husband died in 1907—and stepdaughter to Mary’s second husband, William C. Ferk, Pittsville, Wis.

Edith graduated from Pittsville high school in 1921. Unlike the Moravian Idelle, Edith was an active Catholic and a Secular Franciscan. Not until 1947 did she marry Francis McConnell (1904-1978) a Consolidated paper company employee.

Edith and Francis were early supporters of the South Wood County Historical Corp. and developed the Country Store and Blacksmith Shop at the Museum, where she was a board member and secretary for many years.

Idelle Baughman (Kolstra), Principal, Rudolph graded school; Edith Liebenstein (McConnell), teacher, 1928.



South Wood County Historical Museum  
540 Third Street South  
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Rudolph

Idelle Baughman Kolstra collection



SWCHC Museum  
**2023 Christmas Tree Walk**

*December*

2-3 (12-4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday)

4 (12-4 p.m., Monday)

8 (5-8 p.m., Friday)

9-10 (12-4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday)

*Stuck in snowdrifts.*

*About 1916-17*

2023 Museum season ends Sept. 30. 2024 begins Tuesday, April 2.