

THE EAGLE SPEAKS

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2023



www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

"OLD ABE"

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"The Mill Pond at Marshall Park is the place for us rink rats to practice skating. For me, the more I skate, the more I love to skate."

The Warming House

JANE SCHULTZ *(Written in the voice of her son, Chippewa Falls, 1970)*

Take your skates to school and you can walk to the rink from there. Dad or I will pick you up when it gets dark. That's about 5:30 and supper will be ready," Mom said. She probably wishes she could join us.

I know she likes to skate. She skates backwards, too, and does turns. She says, "that was a long time ago and now I take care of you guys so you can skate." Dad loves it that we skate, too. He tried to a long time ago but his ankles were weak. I guess ankles are important to skating. Mine must be okay 'cause I can skate.

It snowed this morning. That's another thing. I love snow. I think of it as "My Snow." I want to be the first one to go out in it and truck around making tracks and angels and snowballs. Of course, I love it when my brothers come out and, if it's good packin', we make snowballs and snowmen. We go sled-riding over at Conley's Hill. All the kids go there. It's a way high hill and the snow covers it all winter. Our sliding makes a perfect surface. We wax the runners so they don't stick. I think it's an alleyway but no cars use it in the winter because it is very steep. Perfect for sled riding. My mom hasn't seen this place. Neither has Dad.

Continued on page 3



New History Center Program: Lunch & Learning Series

Presented on
First Wednesdays of the month
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

See page 2 for details



CALENDAR

1ST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

Lunch & Learning Series

at the Chippewa Area History Center

Jan. 3 | 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tracks & Trains of the Chippewa Valley - Part 1 The Early Years (1870's - 1930's)

Presenter: Tom Larson

COST \$15. Lunch will include a sandwich, beverage, chips and a cookie.

Call 715-723-4399 to register in advance to be added to our reservation list.

Feb. 7 | 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Life in Chippewa Falls During the Roaring 20s. (1920-1929)

Presenter: Tom Larson



Meetings will be held at the Chippewa Area History Center unless listed elsewhere.

Feb. 12 | 6 pm

CCHS Semi-annual meeting

Mar. 6 | 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Lunch & Learn Series

May 10-12

The Past Passed Here, Marshal Park, Chippewa Falls

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

Jim Schuh Author/ Editor
Anne Keller..... Author / Proofreader
Dave Gordon Author
Frank Smoot Author
David Jankoski Author
Wendy Sullivan..... Author
Dave Raihle Guest Author
Jane Schultz..... Guest Author
Elly Rochester Design / Layout



Marketing Committee Update

JIM SCHUH

A committee was formed in 2022 to promote the grand opening of the Chippewa Area History Center. Since then we have met eight times to focus on communications with members and media marketing. We have compiled a list of Chippewa Valley media that news releases can be sent to. A new CAHC brochure has been designed and distribution plans have been made. A new letterhead was designed. Newsletter content and potential sponsors were identified and contacted. Annual community events that we can participate in were identified. We recently participated in Oktoberfest at the fairgrounds with an exhibit and the Halloween Trunk or Treat event at First Presbyterian Church parking lot. A motor coach step-on historic tour, coordinated by the Heyde Center for the Arts, was given by Jim Schuh. ❦

▲ ABOVE PHOTO: Jim Schuh provided a historic tour of downtown, the West Hill Historic District and Irvine Park on October 27th to a group from Marshfield, WI. Here's how the tour was promoted: "Chippewa Falls History Tour - Learn about the 1869 origins of Chippewa Falls and the people, places and products that have not only changed the Chippewa Valley but influenced lives around the world. From the Ojibwe people who lived in the area before the incorporation of the city to Seymour Cray's invention of the supercomputer. This history tour is led by an experienced guide from the Chippewa County Historical Society. This guide will join your group for an hour-long tour of the historic Chippewa Falls area and will end with a stop at the new Chippewa County Historical Society."



The Warming House *continued from cover*

They always want us to be safe. We take turns and no one tries to do stupid stuff. No one ever gets hurt. There are no hills back in Mount Prospect, Illinois. Here in Chippewa Falls, there are hills everywhere and the snow! Once it comes it stays all winter long. One snow fall, and another and another. Then cold cold temperatures. Outside games can be very, very cold and toes hurt when they get cold. None of us want other kids to see us cry but yes, it hurts that much!

This morning was a dusting kind of snow, harmless light feathery flakes. There will be shovels at the warming house and we can clean off the ice quick, quick. Sometimes I shovel in my paces while my socks are still warm. I bring other socks for my skates and warm them up while we clean the ice. They — some guys from the city who help Mr. Cohoon — flooded the rink last night. They use the hoses from the fire house and pump the water out of the creek. It's a little bumpy but good enough. Our shovels kinda smooth it out.

I make my way sliding down the cliff and across Duncan Creek to the outside of the hockey rink. There is snow packed up around the rink's board fence and our walking on it has made a path around to the warming house. There is a wooden ramp from the door of the warming house onto the ice. There is a wooden railing on both sides for kids and people to hold onto, because once you have your skates on, those blades slide and falling down happens a lot. Good thing you have lots of clothes on for padding when you fall. Especially on ice that's kinda bumpy.

Mr. Cohoon is already there. Smoke is coming from the chimney. There isn't much wind so the smoke is curling upwards and I can smell it too. The warming house is all wood, rounded logs layered together with, I guess, cement. Those logs are smooth and rounded inside and out. The floorboards are wide.

They are all choppy and saw-dusty from the skates damping on them all the time. There are benches on three sides of the room just right for sitting and putting on your skates. The stove is in the center. It's like it was there first and then they built the shack around it. It's really warm in there — even hot when the fire gets to roaring. The cracking and spitting is a great sound. The surface of the old black stove is hot. You can get close and warm up. But don't get too close. Mr. Cohoon always takes care of the fire. We warm our gloves and mittens on racks — just 2x4 saw-horses kinda close to the stove, but not too close. Skates thunk and clink. All the kids are shouting, teasing, laughing. There's good-natured jabbing by the big kids at the little kids. There are socks of all sizes and colors on the drying racks. Some of the big kids put their mitts right on the stove just to hear them sizzle. I am thinking they could burn up.

Sometimes a kid gets wet in Duncan Creek and has to dry more than their socks. Is there a word for the smell of wet woolen socks? It would be a combination of wood fire, mud, tannin, and body odor. You know — stinky feet. I would know this smell anywhere for the rest of my life.

Some kids spend a lot of time in the warming house but not me. I want to be out there on the ice . . . skating. I love the feeling of the cold air on my face. The smooth sound of the blades across the ice. I feel strong, in control. There are fun things to do on skates, moving backwards, spinning, getting up speed and jumping over a log, stopping fast, turning, changing directions. It is exhilarating to feel your body do this stuff. ♣



CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2023

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President – Dave Gordon*
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Treasurer – vacant

CCGS representative – Diana Germain

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*Indicates directors who serve as
CCHS representatives as directors on
the CAHC board.

CURRENT AS OF AUGUST 16, 2023



COUNTY NEWS

Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVID JANKOSKI, PRESIDENT

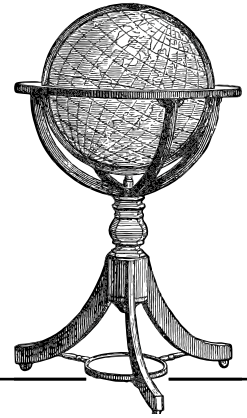
Beginning where I left off last time, Betty Plombon completed our programs this year with another presentation on the Ku Klux Klan's Operation in the Stanley Area. Her presentation on Sunday, Sept. 17, included more facts she had discovered during her research about local history. This is a subject that has little information on its local operation and no artifacts related to its membership.

The Stanley Museum is closed for the winter months, except for opening by request. We are getting a considerable number of requests for information via Facebook. Our volunteers do continue to work, and in the course of the past summer and fall, there has been a lot of work put into reorganizing and cleaning spaces that now have new shelving or cabinets that have been installed.

Our Long Range Planning Committee has held three meetings and now is concentrating on putting its work and recommendations into written form. It has been invited to make a presentation at our Annual Meeting that will be held on Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024.

As we close out the year and reflect back, we have concluded that we have had another successful season. With 52 docents who volunteered once or twice during our open season, we have been open on all Saturdays and Sundays 1- 4 pm, June-September.

As we move into 2024, we are looking forward to the publication of a 160 page book of early Stanley postcards that have been colorized and reveal more than they do in their original black and white. The project is being edited and lead by member Dave Plummer, a former graphic artist, with text assistance from Museum Director Betty Plombon and I. We also anticipate an additional revenue source from the expected sale of the book. 🐾



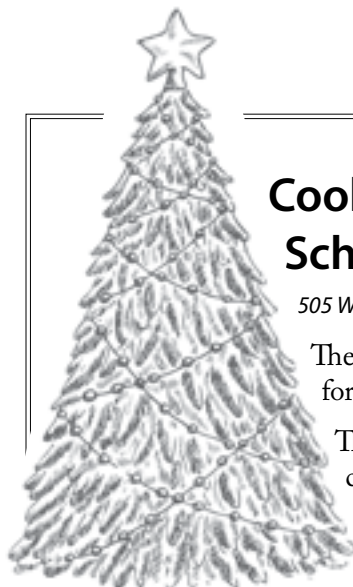
Message from the President

DAVE GORDON

As I'm writing to you, the beautiful fall colors are gone and we've had one small snow. Winter in Wisconsin is approaching. It doesn't seem possible that the Chippewa Area History Center has been open for ten months. We have had visitors every day and continue to receive compliments. I'm pleased to report we have had 7,000 visitors and 200 new memberships in the Society. For comparison, during past years visitors, there were about 1,000 visitors a year. Our Museum exhibits are now all complete and we have started planning for new exhibits that will continue to tell the rich history of the Chippewa County. Chippewa County Genealogical Society is enjoying its new Research Library and is also seeing increased use of the facility.

I am now fully aware of what Frank told me several months ago that we are not at the finish line with the new Center, but the starting line of the future. What happens when you move 6,600 artifacts from the old location where you knew what room they were in, to a new building? Back to the database of our collection information to record the artifact's new location. How do we handle a museum that is open five days a week, six hours a day? Do we know how many volunteers that takes? With all of the changes we do have to look at the by-laws and committee structure which date back to 2008 so we can effectively handle our new world.

We'll be contacting you, our members, to help enter our new world. *Dave* 🐾



Cook-Rutledge Mansion Schedule of Events

505 W. Grand Avenue, Chippewa Falls

The Cook-Rutledge Mansion is open year around for tours. Schedule a tour by calling 715-723-7181.

The mansion is now decorated for Christmas and can be rented for private parties.



◀ Sunday, Aug. 27: The Chippewa Area History Center hosted the West WI Railroad Club. They staged the Railroad Crossing sign on one side of our entry doors and the warning bell on the other side. As museum guests approached the doors we were able to ring the bell announcing their presence.

FROM THE DIRECTOR — FRANK SMOOT

Settling In

For quite a while, the staff and volunteers of the Chippewa County Historical Society concentrated their efforts on getting the History Center ready to open: producing exhibits, arranging artifacts in cases, finding homes for (or at least places to store) artifacts that aren't presently in front of the public.

One of the great pleasures of getting the History Center launched is that, after that flurry, we have time to sit down and think.

Where do we want the Society to go from here? What new stories will best help the public understand our area's history, and what object or document can help us tell that next cool story? And where is that object or document anyway?

In the rush to make a safe and meaningful journey through the History Center's exhibit halls, we tucked a lot of things away.

Some of them were well-organized when they arrived — photographs are tended by volunteer and board member Donna Bourget, and documents are sitting neatly on shelves in the office of Elizabeth Peterson, our staff collections manager.

But a lot of the artifacts were, at best, simply grouped with their close peers (photo equipment next to other photo equipment; kitchen utensils next to other kitchen utensils; military uniforms all together on long, rolling racks). Now, Elizabeth and volunteers can take a closer look at what things belong where, and document where things are so we can find them later.

One group of volunteers that helped in that effort for a day included more than a half-dozen energized volunteers from Royal Credit Union who went shelf-by-shelf, documenting what we call "accession numbers" (kinda like parts-numbers for artifacts) so that their locations could be added to a database.

In a completely different exercise but in the same vein, board and staff members have been going through our policies and by-laws, line-by-line, preparing to declare who we are now that we're in a different phase of our organization's existence.

All this feels good. It feels like we're settling into our new home. ♣

MEMBERSHIP FORM

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE / ZIP

TELEPHONE

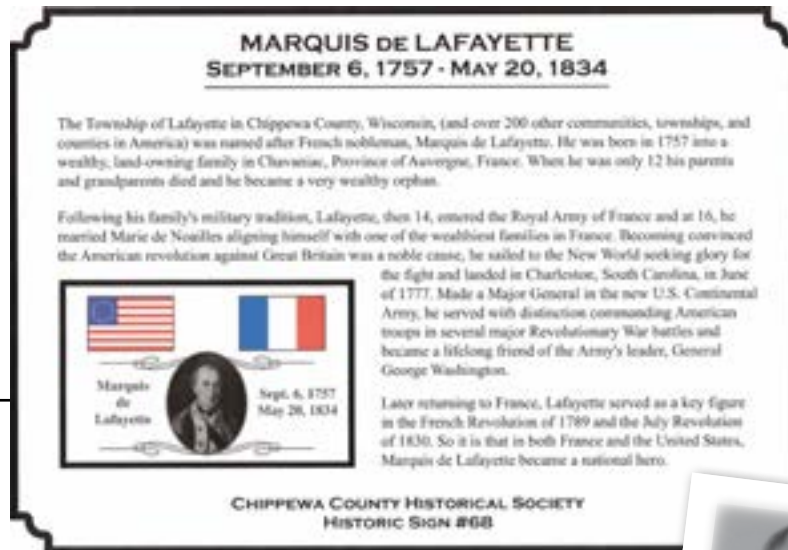
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- Copper Business or Household \$250/year
- Silver Business or Household... \$500/year
- Gold Business or Household.. \$1000/year
- Lifetime Membership
Household \$5000/year

MAIL TO:

Chippewa County Historical Society
12 Bridgewater Ave.
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

The Marquis de Lafayette marker, #68, was installed during November at the Town of Lafayette Recreation building east of the Town Hall.



Marker Committee Update

TOM LARSON, MARKER COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Here's an update of the workings of your CCHS Marker Committee of Kurt Gaber, Jim Schuh, Jim Erickson, Mary Kleusch, Frank Smoot, and myself.

We will soon have 70 CCHS historical markers placed within Chippewa County. The most recent additions include:

- CCHS #60 – Eagle Point Town Hall (Eagle Point-Eagleton/Highway 124)
- CCHS #61 – Chippewa Loggers Baseball (Chippewa Falls Downtown/Riverfront Park)
- CCHS #62 – Harnessing the Chippewa River (Chippewa Falls Downtown/Riverfront Park)
- CCHS #63 – Lake Wissota Hydroelectric Dam (Lafayette-Wayside Park/Ray's Beach)
- CCHS #64 – St. Charles Church (Chippewa Falls/810 Pearl St.)
- CCHS #65 – Old Abe State Trail (Anson/County Highway "S" & 97th Ave.)
- CCHS #66 – Olson's Ice Cream (Chippewa Falls Downtown/611 N. Bridge St.)
- CCHS #67 – Yellowstone Trail/Lafayette (Lafayette/Wayside Park/County Highway "X")
- CCHS #68 – Marquis de Lafayette (Lafayette/Recreation Fields at 5765 197th St.)

Continued on page 7 sidebar ➡

Introduction of CAHC Board Members

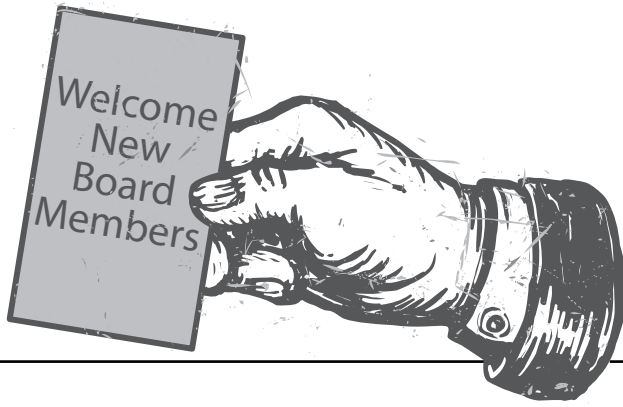
Hello,

By way of introduction my name is Dave Raihle. I am currently the President of the Chippewa Area History Center and Vice President of the Chippewa County Historical Society. I would like to take the opportunity in the next two editions of the newsletter to introduce you to the Chippewa Area History Center board. A photo of the CAHC Board was in the last newsletter. Our board currently consists of nine members, myself as the current President, our Vice President is James Docksey, our Secretary is Jim Schuh, and our Treasurer is Robert Hogseth. The other members of the board include Dave Gordon, Diana Germain, Rose Mary Willi, Skip August, and Wendy Sullivan. As the founding board members, we have faced the unique challenge of transitioning from the construction of our history center to an operational facility. Our board has worked through the formation of the organization establishing its by-laws. Additionally, we have established seven standing committees to include finance and audit, resource development, nominating, personal, operations, buildings and grounds, volunteer recruitment.

We are blessed to have a dedicated board with diverse experiences and expertise. The center's paid staff are employed by the Chippewa Area History Center. We currently have an employment contract with Frank Smoot as our executive director and Jarrod Showalter as the center educator, and Elizabeth Peterson as our collections manager.

The Chippewa Area History Center, Inc. is responsible for providing and maintaining a facility, in which the Chippewa County Genealogical Society, and the Chippewa County Historical Society are able to function, and carry on their respective missions. When you look at the names of our board members you will notice all of our board members have been extremely involved in many aspects of our community. All hold a deep, abiding love of Chippewa Falls and the history of Chippewa County. It is with great pride that we introduce two of our board members. In the following edition of the (Eagle Speaks) I will introduce the remainder of the board. Our board is very accessible and willing to talk, if at any time you come across any of the board members, and have questions, concerns, or thoughts about how we can help in any way please feel free to reach out to us.

Continued on page 7 ➡



Board Members *continued from page 6*



Skip August graduated from UW Madison: Mechanical Engineering and Electronics, post graduate U.S. Army Vietnam Era Veteran. He was employed at Rockwell International (1973-1974) Design Engineer, Northrop Defense Systems (1974-1976) Project Engineer, Cray Research/SGI (1976-2003) Chief Engineer and Company Officer and he was later self-employed as August Consulting (2003-2012) Executive Technical Consultant.

My wife Rose and I moved to Chippewa Falls in 1976, so we have spent most of our lives here, making this home. Our children grew up here and their activities pulled us into many organizations. As a result, we became very interested in our community and our surroundings. This, and our curiosity, brought us to the Chippewa County Historical Society. The more we learned about our community, the more we got involved. As a member of that board and my background, it was only natural to get involved in the new building and its overseeing organization. Of course, it doesn't hurt that we are surrounded by a great group of people. I served on 15 local non-profit boards: Boy Scouts of America, Resident Assn, YMCA, Church Council, Cultural Association, Historical Society, United Way, McDonell Schools President 2004-2007, Community Stewardship, UW Alumni, Museum, and Rotary.



My name is **Diana Germain**. I have lived in Chippewa Falls for the past 47 years. Both my father-in-law and my husband owned and operated businesses in the city. After my husband, Wayne Germain, passed away in 2016, I took over management of the downtown building that he renovated after his retirement. This building was where his father, Edward Germain, had repaired automobiles and radiators for over 50 years. I feel that I have a vested interest in the community.

My own professional career includes stints working as a dental hygienist, office assistant, bookkeeper for my husband's business and finally, my favorite as librarian at UWEC McIntyre library. I currently hold memberships in the Wisconsin Historical Society, the Chippewa County Historical Society, and the Chippewa County Genealogical Society (CCGS). I am serving on the Board of Directors of CAHC as a representative of CCGS. I have come to admire and respect the time, dedication, and perseverance of those who had the vision to make the new history center the reality. My hope is that the broader community comes to feel that they also have a vested interest in keeping this new community treasure operating for current and future generations. ✦

Continued from page 6

Marker Committee Update

CCHS #69 – Map of West Hill Historic District (Chippewa Falls/Grand Ave. & Albert St.)

CCHS #70 – Map of Bridge St. Historic District (Chippewa Falls/Bridge & Columbia Streets)

As time permits and as needed, periodic maintenance of the existing marker houses is performed by rebuilding, re-painting, and replacing worn out wooden cedar shake roofs with new durable metal roofs.

We continue to support and promote the National Yellowstone Trail (YT) Historic Transcontinental Highway route as it passes through the City of Chippewa Falls and Chippewa County. Additional YT signage has been added along the route as it winds through the Village of Lake Hallie. Several highly visible yellow painted rocks have also been added by residents living along the YT. Those yellow painted rocks were used when the trail was established so that travelers could see the exact place along the route to turn.

A new printed booklet is being developed that will list the text and include a corresponding photo and the location of all 70 of our CCHS markers. When finished the booklet will be available for sale at The History Center museum store as a fundraiser. ✦



CHIPPEWA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

GENEALOGY CORNER

Donations

Donations for operating costs of Chippewa Area History Center

- Donna Bourget
- Jim Lindberg
- Carol and Gregory Koss
- Terry and Julie Magnuson
- Susan Delong
- Dean Arnold
- The Pledging Foundation

Memorial Donations for Museum Exhibits

Joe Niese in memory of his father, Marvin Niese

Memorial Donations toward Operating Cost of Chippewa Area History Center

- James Barnier in memory of Robert Bernier
- Judith Roth in memory of her husband, Lanny Roth

Thank You!

Family Holiday Gatherings Are a Great Time to Talk About Family History

WENDY SULLIVAN, CCGS PRESIDENT

Consider adding a light-hearted game of “Family History Trivia” to your family holiday gatherings this year. While it IS important to document names, dates, and places for your family history, the phrase “family history” might cause some groans and maybe even a few eye rolls. Instead, by asking fun and interactive questions, the stories and day-to-day events of your family can come to life and connect generations. Soon, those groans and eye rolls will turn to grins and laughter and many fun shared memories. You could even have a small prize for whoever answers the most questions or has the funniest story. Below are some questions to get your family history discussion started. Consider taking notes to document the stories you talk about.

1. What is your earliest childhood memory?
2. What town(s) did your family live in? Where was your favorite place?
3. Did you grow up in town or in the country?
4. Were you ever seriously sick or injured? How?
5. What chores were you responsible for as a child?
6. What school(s) did you attend?
7. Who was your favorite/least favorite teacher?
8. What was your favorite/least favorite subject in school?
9. Did you play sports in school or during the summer break?
10. Have you ever won a contest or sporting event?
11. In the summer, did you swim in a pool, a pond, a lake, or a river?
12. Name one time you or a sibling/cousin got in trouble.
13. Name one time you or a sibling/cousin should have got in trouble but didn't get caught.
14. What did you dream of becoming when you grew up?
15. Did you have any pets? If so, what kind and what were their names?
16. At whose house did you celebrate Holidays (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving)?
17. Did you have any special Holiday traditions or special foods? Are they traditions that have been passed down from earlier generations? Have you shared a favorite family recipe with the next generation?
18. What was your favorite Christmas or Birthday gift as a child?
19. What was your favorite Halloween costume as a child?
20. What did your childhood telephone look like?
21. How many television channels did you get as a child? What size was your childhood television?
22. Are there physical characteristics that run in your family? Balding, a cleft chin, a great smile or laugh, a good storyteller? Who do they come from?
23. Share a favorite memory of a family member who has passed. 🍷



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THE EAGLE SPEAKS



DECEMBER 2023

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MISSION: COLLECT, PRESERVE, INTERPRET AND
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The Eagle Speaks is published quarterly by the Chippewa County Historical Society, a non-profit organization established to promote and stimulate historical interest in Chippewa County.

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