

THE EAGLE SPEAKS

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JUNE 2025



www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org

"OLD ABE"

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Carding wool at The Past Passed Here



EVENING IN IRVINE

Thursday, June 26, 5-7 pm
see page 7 for more info



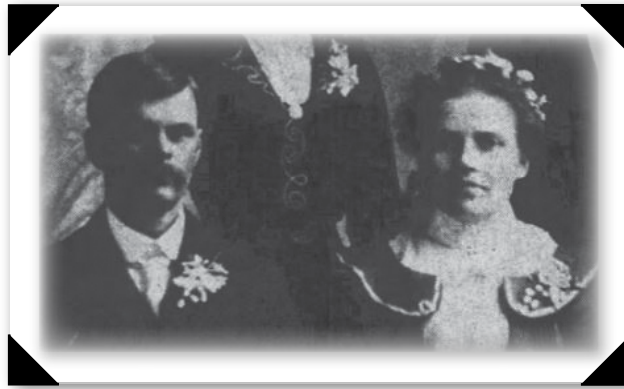
Large Crowds Enjoy The Past Passed Here

GAIL BENSEN

More than 600 third and fourth-grade students traveled back in time May 7-9 at the 22nd annual celebration of Chippewa County history during The Past Passed Here. Under warm and sunny skies, over twenty-four historical reenactors demonstrated many of the skills and tools used in the fur trade and lumber industry that thrived in Chippewa of the early 1800s. Nearly 500 visitors enjoyed this year's event during the three days open to the public, with many guests also visiting the Chippewa Area History Center across the street from the camp set up in Marshall Park.

The planning committee thanks all the volunteers who helped with set up and break down, along with those serving popcorn and root beer, staffing the front gate, welcoming students, and providing tours of the mobile-lumbering museum.

Continued on page 3



Andrew and
Inga Rasmus
wedding photo
Dec. 16, 1900

MEMBERSHIP FORM

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE / ZIP

TELEPHONE

Type of Membership:

- ☐ **Individual / Student** \$25/year
- ☐ **Family/Household** \$50/year
- ☐ **Iron** Business or Household..... \$125/year
- ☐ **Copper** Business or Household \$250/year
- ☐ **Silver** Business or Household... \$500/year
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- ☐ **Lifetime Membership**
- Household \$5,000

MAIL TO:

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

CELEBRATING CENTURY FARMS

A Century Farm in Eagle Point Township: The Rasmus Farm

WENDY SULLIVAN

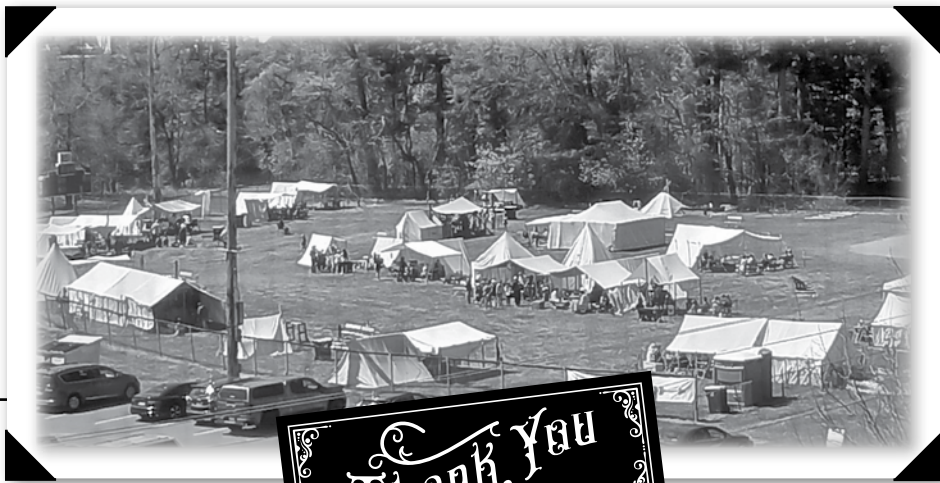
In 1992, the Rasmus Farm, located in Township 29N, Range 08W, Section 28, celebrated 100 years of ownership in the Rasmus family. The farm is located on Hwy S, east of Chippewa Falls; the Old Abe Bike Trail runs through the property and the brick Rasmus School (now a real estate office) was once part of the property. The 350 acre farm was acquired in 1892 by brothers Martin Rasmus and Mathias Rasmus (1858-1899). The brothers immigrated to Chippewa County from Forde, in the province of Gunnfjord, Norway; Martin in 1865 and Mathias in 1878.

Mathias and his wife, Inga Klopstad Eliasdatter (1869-1953), were married in 1889 and lived on the farm in Eagle Point township. Martin lived on his farm southeast of Bloomer. Five children were born to Mathias and Inga; Alma, Elizabeth, Dana, Alvin, and Carl. Mathias became ill in 1898 and died on November 28, 1899, at the age of 41. Prior to his death, Mathias hired his nephew, Andrew Rasmus (1872-1936), to manage the farm.

Following the death of her husband, Mathias, Inga married Andrew Rasmus on December 16, 1900, and together they continued to manage the Rasmus farm. Five children were born to Inga and Andrew Rasmus; Martin, Herman, Ingolf, Marian, and Margaret. In 1906, Andrew and Inga changed from crop farming to dairy farming. In 1910, the family added a new crop of tobacco to their farm and continued to grow it until the prices fell in 1920. Martin, Andrew, and Inga Rasmus jointly owned the farm until 1916 at which time they divided it, with Martin taking the west half and Andrew and Inga taking the east half. At that time, Andrew and Inga built the stucco house, which still stands today, along with a new modern barn that allowed them to expand their dairy herd and start a retail milk route under the name "A.H. Rasmus and Sons." Andrew died of an accident in 1936.

In 1939, Andrew and Inga's son, Martin W. Rasmus (1901-1990), purchased the west half of the original farm from the heirs of Martin Rasmus. Martin W. Rasmus married Elizabeth Kalk (1905-1981) on October 1, 1940; one son, John, was born to them in 1942. Martin W. and Elizabeth razed the original house that stood on the west half of the farm and built a modern brick house that still stands on the property.

In 1973, John Rasmus, the son of Martin W. and Elizabeth Rasmus, purchased the east half of the original Rasmus farm. Following the death of his parents, John and his wife, Barbara Nowak, became the owners of the entire 350 acre original Rasmus farm. Two children, Patrick and Lisa, were born to John and Barbara. Today the property is still owned by the Rasmus family. ❧



Thank You

The Past Passed Here *continued from cover*

In addition, the planning committee wishes to thank our generous 2025 sponsors:

Lumber Baron Level:

Edward and Hannah Rutledge
Charities
WEAU 13 News

Timber Cruiser Level:

Chippewa Falls Parks & Recreation
CVCTF Community Work-crew
GFL Environmental
Harold McDonald Endowment Fund
in the Community Foundation of
Chippewa County
Lee Beverage of WI
Pat & Sue Quinn Fund in the
Community Foundation of
Eau Claire County
Raihle Law Office

Trader Level:

Blue Marble Pub
Gaber Signs
Micon Cinema
Northwestern Bank
Old Dutch Foods.

Trapper Level:

Eric's Diamonds
Horan Funeral Home
Pederson Volker-Funeral Chapel
Jim Schuh and Jerry Way

Posters were sponsored in part by
Rooney Printing of Chippewa Falls.

Save the date for 2026: May 6-10



CAHC Room Rentals

Room rentals include:

- ❶ **Meeting Room (A117):** capacity 12-15
- ❷ **Rutledge Room (A106):**
capacity 50 (as presently configured
with one exit)
- ❸ **Diamond Classroom (A303):**
capacity 50-60+
- ❹ **Phillips Lookout (M301):**
capacity 12-15

Fee schedule, during business hours:

- ♦ A117: \$25/hr, min 1 hour.
Free to non-profits and affinity
groups as the schedule allows.
- ♦ A106: \$50/hr, min 2 hours
- ♦ A303: \$50/hr, min 2 hours
- ♦ M301: \$40/hr, min 1 hour

Fee schedule, after hours:

- ♦ A117: \$30/hr, min 2 hours
- ♦ A106: \$75/hr, min 2 hours
- ♦ A303: \$75/hr, min 2 hours
- ♦ M301: \$60/hr, min 1 hour
- ♦ **Full facility:** all rental rooms and
exhibit areas: \$150/hr, min 2 hours;
special, \$500 for 4 hours.

Rental rooms are available for meet-
ings, retreats, family and class reunions,
wedding ceremonies, funerals, and
town halls. Not available for wedding
receptions.

Fees include tech, chairs, tables.
Some serving dishes are available,
but not linens or place settings.
Prohibitions: No open flames except
Sterno, no potted plants (only cut
flowers), no glitter ever. ✨

*"I rented a room at the Chippewa Area
History Center for a scam seminar
I held for our community. Jarrod and
his team were very easy to work with
and were accommodating to our needs.
I received many compliments from
guests about our choice of location.
I would absolutely rent there again,
and can't wait to plan my next
meeting there."*

KELSEY NICOLAI, AAMS™, FINANCIAL ADVISOR,
EDWARD JONES



Kat Debevec

CALENDAR



June 4

Jarrold Showalter, World War II and Chippewa County

July 2

Dennis Mickesh on Early Surveying and Chippewa County (official title forthcoming)

August 6

Tim Wolter, History Underfoot

CCHS Museum and Store is open to the public Wed.-Sun. 11 am-5 pm

CCGS Library open to the public Fri. Sat.-Sun. Noon-4 pm

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

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Anne KellerAuthor/Proofreader
Jim EricksonAuthor/Proofreader
Mary EricksonAuthor
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Jarrod ShowalterAuthor
Wendy Sullivan.....Author
Dave JankoskiAuthor
Tiffany Wogan.....Author
Gail BensenAuthor
Elly Rochester Design & Layout

Introduction of New Operations Manager

CCHS members,

Hello. I am Kat Debevec, the new Operations Manager for the Chippewa Area History Center. Before coming to CAHC, I was with the Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry and Technology. While at CFMIT, I worked to help catalogue and manage its collections since 2019, as well as giving tours and helping out with exhibits when needed.

A little about me. I grew up in Salem, Massachusetts, until my Mom and I moved back to Wisconsin when I started school at UW-Eau Claire. I earned my bachelor's degree from UW-Eau Claire in public history, and then I completed my master's degree in public history and museum studies through SNHU's online program during the pandemic.

I am very excited and glad for this opportunity to work alongside such a large community passionate about preserving its local history and dedicated to sharing it.

Please reach out and let me know if you have any ideas, thoughts, suggestions or questions going forward. I would love to hear them as we grow together and learn from each other in the coming months.

Thank you again for your support and this exciting opportunity.

Kat



Donations

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
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| ■ Charities Aid Foundation America | ■ Bohl & Proulx |
| A Target Customer Donation | |



One Year With St. Joseph Hospital

JERROD SHOWALTER

During the past month, staff and volunteers of the Historical Society visited two of the past locations of St. Joseph's Hospital. It's been just over a year since the hospital announced its closing, and April 2nd marked one year since the Historical Society began taking in some of its material history.

The news is still shocking. For generations, St. Joe's had been a place where lives began, where healing happened, and where losses were met with compassion. The hospital's origins lay with the origins of Chippewa Falls itself—European missionaries, Father Goldsmith's church on the hill, and the logging boom. It evolved as the city and county did, and the story of St. Joseph's is inseparable from the stories that are told at the History Center.

One year later, the Historical Society remains humbled to serve as caretakers of the St. Joseph Hospital legacy. In the months following the closure, we received dozens of artifacts, documents, instruments, and personal items that now reside within our walls. They are not just objects, they're memories ... an ID bracelet for a newborn, worn photo albums of Sisters and staff, medical textbooks relied on for answers to every ailment.

The exhibit about St. Joseph's opened last November - not as an unalloyed celebration, but as a pensive commemoration. From members and visitors alike, many strong emotions and vivid memories of the institution have been shared. We didn't want to be in this position, but I am glad we were here to preserve the St. Joe's story. I hope you feel the same.

The work continues. Volunteers installed the gazebo from the hospital campus on our grounds last fall, and I have been so pleased to see it become a very popular spot for Irvine Park visitors and people looking for a place to rest or eat lunch.

We also held the first Legacy Lights event this past winter, another part of the St. Joseph's story. We look forward to holding it again in a few months.

In other words, the Historical Society is taking on this responsibility from many different angles, and we do not take it lightly. To preserve the memory of St. Joseph's is to acknowledge what was lost while still preserving its memory in Chippewa. We are still looking for new stories and artifacts. St. Joseph's history belongs not to the History Center, but to the entire community—just like the hospital did. ♡

GENEALOGY CORNER

WENDY SULLIVAN, CCGS PRESIDENT

Since the last Eagle Speaks newsletter, the Chippewa County Genealogical Society has had some great monthly meeting speakers. At our March meeting, we had a presentation that covered a brief history of CCGS and how to use the CCGS library resources. At our April meeting Deacon Jerry "Lefty" Devine and Darius Husain gave an informative and heartwarming presentation about their biographical book *The Nine Devines of Chippewa Falls*; the book is available in the museum gift shop and is a wonderful read. The May meeting topic was a presentation by Gary Swartz where he shared his travels to historic and genealogy-related sites in Chippewa County.

CCGS Visitors and Volunteer Hours

(2025 year-to-date):

- Visitors year-to-date = 126, a monthly average of 31.5 visitors. (Jan=7, Feb=29, Mar=65, Apr=25)
- Volunteer hours year-to-date = 1007.75 hours, a monthly average of 252 hours. (Jan=280.75 hrs, Feb=234 hrs, Mar=255.5 hrs, Apr= 237.50 hrs)

Upcoming CCGS Monthly Meetings:

- **June and July:** no meetings are scheduled
- **Aug. 25:** CCGS Annual Potluck and Meeting. Meet and Greet with Jarrod Showalter, CAHC Director
- **Sept. 27:** Stephanie Staber will share her Facebook Tips and Jokes
- **Oct. 25:** Rebecca Blanchette will give a presentation about FOREVER.COM, a permanent cloud storage solution that is popular among genealogists.
- **Nov. 22:** to be announced
- **December:** no meeting scheduled

Miscellaneous:

The next issue of the CCGS Newsletter will be mailed in mid-July

Library Hours:

Friday, Saturday, Sunday 12–4 pm ♡

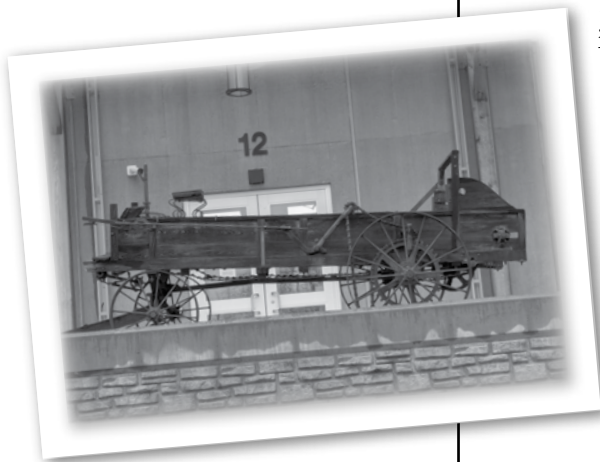


**Find Treasures at the
Cook-Rutledge Mansion**
500 W. Grand Ave. Chippewa Falls,

Thrift Sale

June 12 & 13, 7 am–5 pm
June 14, 8 am–12pm.

Follow us on Facebook for further details.



The manure spreader that was in front of The Chippewa Artera History Center since opening has been removed because of safety concerns. People were climbing on it and having photos taken. We used about a dozen people to put on a trailer. It is very fitting that the new owner is a retired high school agriculture teacher.



DAVE RAIHLE

A Message From Your President

I hope everybody is enjoying our beautiful spring weather. I would like to welcome all snowbirds back to Wisconsin. I hope you will get an opportunity to come into the History Center and see all the marvelous changes that have occurred. Since the last edition of the Eagle Speaks was published, there have been a number of significant developments for the Historical Society and The Chippewa Area History Center. First, I would like to welcome you to some of our

full time staff. Kathleen Debevec is our new Operations Manager. The Chippewa Area History Center had previously decided that, in light of Jarrod's experience in history, the greatest need for the center was to help provide administrative assistance, so we are blessed to have Kathleen with us as she has a tremendous background in administration but is also blessed with a love for, and education in, history. If you stop by, please make a point of introducing yourself to Kathleen. We are very excited to have her aboard. Jarrod Showalter and his fiancée will be married by the time this article is published, so we would like to welcome Rachel to our family and wish the best for both of them.

This past month we have had a number of successful events. The Past Passed Here held its event in Marshall Park with beautiful weather and phenomenal turn out. We wish to thank the Past Passed Here Committee for its hard work and dedication. It is a marvelous way to connect with our school students and community at large. Our Lunch and Learn program continues to expand. It has had a tremendous response from the community. I wish to thank Tom Larson for his willingness to take a leadership role in that program and provide a number of the programs himself. His programs have been very well received as have the others. It is another important way for us to help spread our mission to the community.

The Chippewa Area Genealogical Society has continued to expand its program and bring new people to the center on a regular basis. The partnership with the Genealogical Society, History Society and History Center is very strong and bodes well for us in the future. The support from the Genealogical Society and its volunteers greatly enhances the experience the History Center offers to our community.

Both the Chippewa Historical Society and The Chippewa Area History Center have been greatly assisted by Ric Gannon and Rick Bowe's assistance in our financial agreement. Both gentlemen come to the organizations with a strong financial background. They have helped us establish new policies and practices that will serve our organization well in the future. Thank you to both of them for their dedication and hard work. Elizabeth Peterson and the Artifacts Committee have established a strong policy for accessions of new exhibits and reviewing our inventory of artifacts to maximize our space. It is an on-going task as our community continues to be very generous with its precious artifacts through their donations. The exhibit committee has also undertaken to reinvent the entrance to the History Center. The manure spreader has been removed and is at a new home. The committee is working on a new display for the entrance to the facility. We look forward to seeing the new entrance.

Our financial footing is sound. However, as we know, our organization survives in large part on donations from our members and community. I would encourage anybody who is not yet a member or who is a member to help spread the word about



Thank You, “Sustaining Partners”

A continual challenge that virtually all non-profits face is generating adequate funds for ongoing operation expenses. The Chippewa Area History Center also faces that challenge. Admission fees and membership fees cover less than 50% of our operating costs.

The “Sustaining Partners” recognition program was established in October, 2024. These generous donors who have expressed their intent to support operational costs with an annual gift of \$1,000 or more for the foreseeable future (typically three or more years). The hope is to expand this list of donors. If you are interested in becoming a Sustaining Partner, please contact our Executive Director, Jarrod Showalter. Thank you!

Our Sustaining Partners as of April 2025

Dean Arnold	Kevin and Lynda Koehn
Skip and Rose August	Dan and Susie Minahan
Donna Bourget	Dan and Karen Mittag
Jim and Jan Docksey	Northwestern Bank
Ric Gannon	Dave and Rita Raihle
Diana Germain	Edward and Hannah Rutledge Charities
Dave and Ann Gordon	Jim Schuh
Bob Hogseth	Scott and Wendy Sullivan
Jerry and Mary Jacobson	Skip and Jill Thaler
Norm and Mary Ellen Keller	Dick and Mary Rose Willi
Peter and Joan Kirk	

A Message From Your President continued from page 6

joining either the Historical Society or the Genealogical Society. Additionally, contributions to the Chippewa Area History Center are greatly appreciated as those are the funds that are used to maintain the building for both of our societies. We are looking forward to an exciting summer with a full staff of highly qualified people and our tremendous volunteers, without whom the center would not be possible. I hope that everyone has an opportunity to stop in several times during the summer to see the new and exciting exhibits, engage with our staff, and utilize your facility. My door is always open for ideas, suggestions or input. Please spread the word to the community to come to the facility and tell us your story.

Best Wishes! David H Raihle, CCHS President

Evening in Irvine

Thursday, June 26
Irvine Park Main Pavillion

We cordially invite you to an
“Evening in Irvine”
fund-raising picnic dinner in
Irvine Park’s historic main pavillion

Drinks & Social Hour: 5-6 pm
Dinner: 6-7 pm

Volunteers and donors have succeeded together in building a local History Center we can all admire. We are also debt free! However, a continual challenge that virtually all non-profits face is generating adequate funds for on-going operation expenses. We also face that challenge. Many steps are being taken to raise funds in a positive manner.

This event is designed to be a relaxing, casual evening featuring drinks, a great dinner catered by Fosters, and socializing with friends and fellow supporters. It will also be an opportunity to meet our new Executive Director, Jarrod Showalter. The cost is \$125 per person, which includes a \$100 tax deductible donation. Our goal is to have 120 attendees and to have an enjoyable evening raising \$12,000.

RSVP by JUNE 14: 715-723-4399

We also encourage you to invite anyone you feel might be interested in supporting this great community asset. If you are unable to attend this event, any donation will be much appreciated. We hope to see you on June 26! Thank you for your support.

COUNTY NEWS

Stanley Area Historical Society

DAVID JANKOSKI, PRESIDENT

The Stanley Area Historical Museum will be opening for the summer/fall season the weekend of June 7 and 8. Thanks to our cadre of wonderful volunteers, we will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 1–4 pm through Oct. 4. We are fortunate to have returning Landon Wilson, who was with us as a UW-Eau Claire student intern last season. He is an excellent researcher and very helpful for anyone seeking to explore local history. We expect him to also be able to keep current the digitization of new artifact donations.

Our 2025 major projects have been completed and most importantly, have been paid for, thanks to volunteer labor and the generous support of our membership. We have a new furnace in the original museum building, the air conditioning system throughout the museum has been updated, a closure of a basement exit has been completed, and new exit steps have been constructed to accommodate any need for use in an emergency.

Our most recent publication, "Vintage Views of Stanley, Wisconsin, Brought to Life With Color," is still available for sale at our museum and we expect Betty Plombon's release of her research that will be published in book form in September. It will cover four major topic areas gleaned from her research of early Stanley history.

We invite you to come and see what we have accomplished in the over 12,000 square feet that hold our collections. Visitors are generally amazed at our exhibits and what we have available for researching one's family history. While there is going to be street reconstruction on one corner of our museum, we expect this will not restrict access to it. The walk will be no more than needed to get into the Chippewa County Historical Society Museum. ♡

CCHS Marker Committee Update

TOM LARSON, MARKER COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Here is an update of the workings of your CCHS Marker Committee, which includes of Kurt Gaber, Jim Schuh, Jim Erickson, Mary Kleusch, Frank Smoot, and me, Tom Larson.

We've completed and published our brand new 158 page book, titled "MARKING OUR HISTORY – 102 Historical Markers, Places, and Sites Located in Chippewa County, Wisconsin"

This very informative book has been years in the making and details the location of each marker and the text with accompanying photos, of all the historic markers placed throughout Chippewa County, including:

- 73 Chippewa County Historical Markers
- 6 State of Wisconsin Official Historical Markers
- 2 Wisconsin Registered Landmarks
- 13 National Register of Historical Places
- 8 Other Markers/Historical Sites in Chippewa County

Special thanks go to Darlene Brain who created a fabulous detailed index that appears at the end of the book. This book is a fundraising project to support the continuing operations of our new Chippewa Area History Center and is available for sale in the gift shop for \$25. ♡



Inaugural Spring Vendor Fair a Success

GAIL BENSEN

There were more than 800 visitors who enjoyed the first Spring Vendor Fair on Saturday, March 29 as over twenty vendors displayed their unique products throughout the exhibits at the Chippewa Area History Center. Guests could experience

handcrafted items and artisanal products while viewing a variety of new exhibits, all under the canopy of a WWII parachute. Locally veteran-owned Primal Pizza food truck provided its signature slices out on the lawn for guests to savor.

Adding to the festive atmosphere of this popular fair, visitors were invited to join in a scavenger hunt throughout the museum, trying to locate some very visible items and some not-so-obvious. Winners received certificates for museum store merchandise.

This event follows an equally successful Fall Vendor Fair last November, and plans are already underway for another fall showing on the day after Thanksgiving – Friday, Nov. 28, 2025.

Do you have an interest in volunteering? Please stop by the History Center Wednesdays through Sundays from 11 a.m.–5 p.m. or call 715-723-4399. There are many ways to help with the vendor fair, exhibits, research, and more. ♡



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MISSION: COLLECT, PRESERVE, INTERPRET AND
SHARE THE RICH HISTORY OF CHIPPEWA COUNTY

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.

Mail any comments or future articles to: Chippewa County Historical Society, 12 Bridgewater Ave., Chippewa Falls, WI

JUNE 2025

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