

THE EAGLE SPEAKS

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

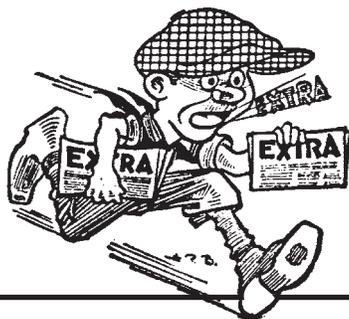
NOVEMBER 2008



"OLD ABE"

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**Tuesday,
December 9
1:00 p.m.
Chippewa Falls
History Coalition
Meeting**

Have You Seen Our New Baby?

She was rescued from the Chippewa River
at the Xcel Energy dam site.

ARLEY ENGEL

A very special thank you to Steve Bowe a now retired employee of the Chippewa Falls Street Department. Steve informed my friend Norm Ford of this "Historic Log", that was rescued from the gates of the NSP dam at Chippewa Falls. Norm informed me of it's presence at the dam site on Monday, September 29. On Tuesday, September 30 as I was driving past the entrance to the dam site on my way to volunteer at the History Center, I noticed the entrance gate was open. I made an appearance at the center and informed them that I was on a mission, to rescue a log that had floated into the gates at the NSP dam. Actually it belongs to Xcel Energy now but it still says NSP on the top of the building. After checking in at my volunteer position, I went back to the dam site and got the attention of the operator Duane Elstran. After a short introduction as a member of the Chippewa County Historical Society, Duane took me on a quick tour of the dam. It was on this tour that I explained our interest in this huge log sitting on the dike next to the powerhouse.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2007-2009

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

✧ **President**

Dave Gordon, 6854 182nd St.,
Chippewa Falls (08) 723-2647

✧ **Vice President**

Arley Engel, 5294 90th St.,
Chippewa Falls (07) 723-5124

✧ **Recording Secretary &
Corresponding Secretary**

Mary McKenna, 36 River St., #10
Chippewa Falls (08) 720-9635

✧ **Treasurer**

Kathryn Forsgren, 18498 122nd Ave.,
Jim Falls (08) 382-5511

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Chippewa Falls 723-4171 (10)

✧ Lucyann LeCleur, 201 S. Rural St.,
Chippewa Falls 723-7468 (10)

✧ Skip August, 18416 54th Ave,
Chippewa Falls 723-8493 (11)

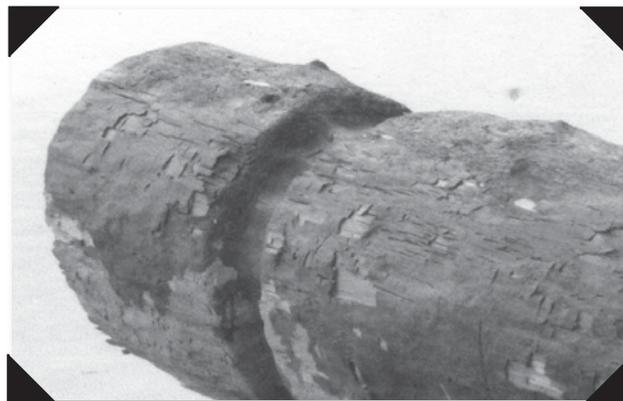
✧ Steve Rasmus, 936 N. Bridge St.
Chippewa Falls 723-4339 (11)

✧ James Schuh, 5432 178th St.,
Chippewa Falls 726-2376 (11)

✧ Wayne Meyer, 622 S 8th St.,
Cornell 239-6239 (09)

✧ Nancy Schuh, 5432 178th St.,
Chippewa Falls 726-2376 (09)

✧ Teri Stahr, 7493 County Hwy K
Chippewa Falls 723-9007 (10)



A boom log
probably used by the
Chippewa Lumber
and Boom Co.

COVER STORY CONTINUED

This log is 40 feet long and it is 30 inches across at the butt end. The butt end is also cut to a wedge shape. It was used as a boom log probably by the Chippewa Lumber and Boom Co. That would make it over 100 years since it was cut down. Comparing it's size to one from the "HA" Hiram Allen Lumber Company that had 169 years of growth, I would say this log is at least 170 years old or more, and has been under water for more than 100 years. If this log could talk think of all the "History" it could tell us.

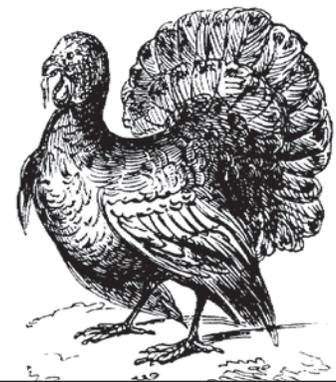
After talking with Mr. Elstran he informed me that Xcel would be interested in donating the log to our history center. I jumped at the chance of saving this magnificent piece of history. It would be our problem to move it and find a suitable spot to display it. At that time my thoughts turned to Allen Park and the area where we put our display for "The Past Passed Here". My next stop was over to the City of Chippewa Falls Street Department where I consulted with Glen Zwiefelhofer and told him of our plight. I was there to ask about the use of Allen Park not knowing at the time who controlled the use of the park area. Glen informed me that Bill Faherty had control of that area and as I was leaving he said "Uncle Buck" (an old nickname of mine) we will move the log for you if a spot is found. With this offer to help I was off to see Bill Faherty of the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Faherty was on the phone when I arrived and when he finished, another lady had come in for an appointment with him, but she let me make a quick explanation as to what I was after. Bill told me to hang around so we could go look for a site in Allen Park, after a short meeting with the young lady, Bill and I were off to find a suitable spot in Allen park. We agreed on a site north of the "Railroad Bridge Abutment." All of this happened before noon, then I went back to the history center to eat lunch with the ladies.

Monday, October 6

I had gone to the Wheaton Town shop and picked up some broken off sign posts for decking to lay this massive log on. This was on Monday morning. In the afternoon I cut these posts to the correct size needed for the cradle structure. (Thanks to Dave and Pat for their help.) On Tuesday at 11:00 am I met with Glen and Mike from the street department at Allen Park to show them where the log would be placed —everything looked great.

I called Duane Elstran Tuesday evening to let him know we would be at the dam site a little after 7:00 am Wednesday morning as this was a little earlier than his normal hours called for. After a little running around between the dam site and the street department, arrangements were made to move the log on Wednesday, October 8. I went to bed early Tuesday evening about the time the presidential debate came on TV—it was more interesting than I thought it would be, so I watched it till the end falling asleep before the news came on. I was hoping to catch the weather forecast. This must have made me nervous as I woke up at 1:30 with a stomach ache. This lasted into the morning so I got up at 5:30 am and had some breakfast. I wanted to be at Allen Park by 6:40 am to place more cribbing on the site.

This log is 40 feet long and it is 30 inches across at the butt end, the butt end is also cut to a wedge shape.



COVER STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

It had rained close to 1/2 inch in the last 24 hours but the ground seemed stable, at least with the weight of my van. I headed south on Bridge Street past the dam site and Oh! The gate was still locked. This added to the tension, but I crossed the bridge heading to the Street Department. Upon going in I met with Glen and Mike for a short time until they met with their crew for their daily dispersal of jobs. At this time I headed over to the dam site and as I pulled in to park along-side of the locked gate, in pulled Mr. Elstran with the key. Oh boy, things were going good now. About 5 minutes later here comes the street department crew. What a relief, I was feeling better already. It only took a few minutes to put a chain around the log and pull it forward enough to get under it with the huge fork lift. Now comes the test, we had no idea how much this water soaked log would weigh! It was no match for the loader, Mike Bohl had no problem getting it balanced, then headed for the lowboy trailer. After it was loaded and secured, we stopped traffic on Bridge Street and headed north to Allen Park. Mike had gone first with the loader so he was ready to unload the log quickly as the lowboy arrived. It is close to 250 feet from the street to the log's final resting place. With the skill of the operator there was no problem getting the log into it's cradle, then rotating it a little to get its wedge end in the correct position. The log has new home for all to see and enjoy a historical part of our past lumber industry in the Chippewa Valley. That's all for now from Engel's Little House on the Wheaton Prairie.

P.S. I would like to thank all the individuals who were so giving of time and materials to help this project go to completion at such a rapid pace. Our next move will be to acquire funding to build a roof over this magnificent treasure and fence around it to protect it for the next 100 years. Roger Meier a retired park director stopped in to visit at the History Center on October 14, and after looking at photos of the log, he left us a generous donation to help us get started on this goal. 🍷

Area History Center Focus of New Community Television Program

JIM SCHUH

Wisconsin residents will soon be able to experience our facility from their homes. The program taped September 10th is intended to give the viewer an idea of what it is like to visit and learn about Chippewa County history through explanations from dedicated volunteers. The goal is to attract more visitors once they realize what wonderful exhibits have been assembled. Our rare restored music box provides background music throughout segments of the program.

During the program I welcome viewers to the facility and Dave Gordon provides background about the Chippewa County Historical and Genealogical Societies. Docents Pat

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 🍷

CALENDAR

Place these dates on your calendar

December 9

1:00 p.m. - Chippewa Falls History Coalition Meeting

December 16

9:15 a.m. - CCHS Board Meeting

December 23

Museum closed for Christmas

December 30

Museum closed for New Years

January 20

9:15 a.m. - CCHS Board Meeting

January 27

1:00 p.m. - Chippewa Falls History Coalition Meeting

February 16

5:00 p.m. CCHS Annual Meeting - Pot luck: hors d'oeuvres & Program

All meetings are at the Area History Center 123 Allen Street unless otherwise noted.

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, Wisconsin.

Mail any comments or future articles to 123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. 715-723-4399.

Chippewa County Historical Society
123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI
Open on Tuesdays | 9am-4pm

FEATURED ARTIFACT



Railroad Room

Room 301 is the Railroad Room and the above photo shows examples of communication equipment in that room. In the foreground is a L. C. Smith Corona typewriter. Trains were instrumental in carrying U.S. Mail. The railroad room has a grid of mailboxes filled with cover sheet slips that helped postal items reach their correct location. Examples are: airmail mixed foreign, military—Army / Navy, there are also slips for all states, large cities and major train stations.

The first communication carried by wire began in 1887 when American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) installed its first private Morse telegraph circuit in New York City. There is a telegraph key that you can try out by testing your Morse Code skills in the railroad room. On June 15, 1976 AT&T workers disconnected the last direct telegraph circuit. The telephone was then used for communication between trains and stations. Also pictured is an early version of a telephone switchboard.

A Message From Your President



“Time flies when your having fun”. It’s November already and we have just witnessed history being made with the election of Barrack Obama. While not on the same scale, the Chippewa County Historical Society had an election at our semi annual membership meeting held in the Irvine Park Activity Building on September 16. The candidates for the offices and directorships did not campaign and did not spend any money to get elected.

I have agreed to continue as President and was reelected. Kathy Forsgren agreed to continue as Treasurer and was reelected. Nancy Schuh was elected to fill a vacant directors position for 2009. She has been a very active member of thee Society for some time and I’m glad she has joined the board. Jim Schuh agreed to continue as a director and was reelected. Steve Rasmus and Skip August were elected to join Jim in the 2011 class. Steve is very active in downtown real estate and very interested in history. He will be a great asset as we explore the possibilities of a new museum in Chippewa. Skip recently retired from the Catholic School System and is very active in the community. His work in the community and his involvement in other historical organizations will help develop the History Coalition.

Speaking of the History Coalition it continues to investigate the possibility of a new museum. Allyson Gommer, Tourism Director, Chippewa Falls Area Chamber of Commerce has joined our meetings. At our last meeting Tom Halbleib, President of Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry and Technology (CFMIT) reported the City of Chippewa Falls has changed from its 18 month notice to CFMIT to vacate the city building to an offer to sell CFMIT the building for a dollar. This takes the pressure off of CFMIT to find a new home. They are still interested in the possibility of a new museum. Another possibility for a new museum was discussed. The Metropolitan Building, corner of Bridge and Spring Street, is for sale. It would be an excellent site for a new museum. Don Baker, owner of the Metropolitan Building attended the meeting and has expressed interest in the new museum project. Marnie Keilholz, owner of a business downtown (House Blend Lighting & Design) also attended the meeting and has expressed interest in the museum project. Jason Smith, Chippewa Falls City Planner, attended the Coalition’s November meeting to share some of the city’s progress on developing the downtown riverfront entrance plan.

Jim Schuh, Chairman of the Publicity committee, has been hard at work getting the Historical Society in the news. Be sure to see his article about the Poor Farm Cemetery restoration and the upcoming Community Television program on the History Center.

We continue to make progress on computerizing our collections. We have visitors from far and wide as you see in this newsletter and they continue to be amazed at what we have at the History Center. We look forward to seeing you, *The Eagle Speaks* readers, at the Center. We’re here every Tuesday. *Dave* 🍷

After the project flowers were placed on the graves of her infant twin sisters by Evelyn Shilts.



The Poor Farm Cemetery restoration workcrew proudly pose for this photo at project completion.

50th Historic Marker spurs Poor Farm Cemetery Restoration

JIM SCHUH

In late 2007 the Historic Marker Committee discussed creating a marker for the Poor Farm Cemetery following inquiries from people trying to find its location. Wissota Health & Regional Vent Center worker Mike Winscher maintains the grounds where the cemetery is located. He had researched the grave sites and attended our July meeting expressing an interest in helping improve the cemetery. For decades this cemetery consisting of 262 graves had been neglected. The first date inscribed on a headstone is for Mary Ann Hill in 1901 and the most recent is for George Loisell who was buried in 1965. There are six rows of graves with 42 to 48 graves in each row. Prior to the restoration only about half of the tombstones were visible. Some were under trees and brush and many had sunk below the sod.

I offered to direct the project by contacting interested parties, seeking donations and recruiting volunteer workers. After a meeting to inspect the area project goals were set. Activities included improving the cemetery's appearance by clearing brush, trimming tree limbs, removing tree stumps, digging up the headstones and resetting them in straight lines level with the sod and planting grass seed.

Several businesses and groups stepped forward to participate in this project. Chippewa County Historical Society with support from the Chippewa County Genealogical Society coordinated the project. The Chippewa Valley Correction & Treatment Facility provided a 15 man Community Work Crew. The property owner St. Joseph's Hospital provided a worker, heavy equipment and lunches. The Wissota Health & Regional Vent Center donated topsoil and Mike Winscher from their maintenance department provided direction. Forest Hill Cemetery provided guidance on setting headstones and lent the use of their hand tools. Harvey's Tree Care donated removal of a four-foot wide basswood tree stump.

The Project work was completed on September 23, and 25th. Everyone has described it as a huge success. There was a "Your View" letter in the Chippewa Herald Saturday October 11 written by Evelyn Shilts, the sister of infant twins who are buried in the cemetery. She had not known where her sisters had been buried. After our project she was very happy to locate her sisters' grave sites and to honor them by placing flowers along-side their headstone.

Since the project was publicized by local print, radio and TV news media Johnson Monument offered to donate a Civil War era style monument identifying the cemetery. We decided at our last Historic Marker Committee meeting that the donated Johnson Monument stone and our 50th Chippewa County historic marker will be unveiled in a dedication ceremony at the Poor Farm Cemetery just prior to Memorial Day on Thursday, May 21, at 5:00 p.m.

Facilities where most of the cemetery population lived had various names. The timeline for these healthcare facilities date back to the 1800s and were as follow.

- 1877 - The County purchased the Poor Farm to house indigents.
- 1892 - Federal legislation that was enacted mandated states to provide care for their chronically insane and mentally retarded residents.
- 1894 - Chippewa County Board decided to build an insane asylum.
- 1901 - The decision was made to abandon the Poor Farm.
- 1902 - The County Home was erected to replace the Poor Farm.
- 1930 - Due to the increased number of indigents a new Home was built to house 60 and the old building was remodeled to house "trusty patients"
- 1945 - The Chippewa County Insane Asylum & County Home had capacity for 435.
- 1945 - 1955 Names changed to the Chippewa County Hospital and County Home
- 1967 - Chippewa County Board decided to build a nursing home
- 1970 - Construction began on the Golden Age Home
- 1971 - Patients were first admitted and the capacity was 193 beds.
- 1974 - County Board voted to build a new 160 bed facility to replace the old County Hospital and the new building was called Wissota Lakeside
- 1976 - Residents from County Hospital were transferred when project completed

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Ben Franklin

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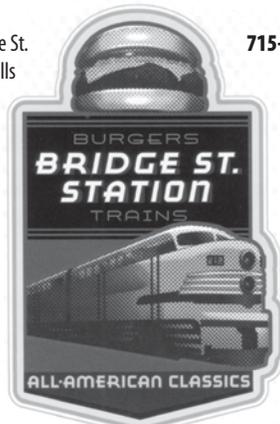
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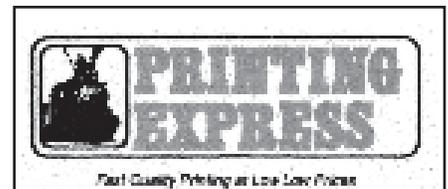


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| Edmond Geissler | Arley & June Engel..... | 5.00 |
| Joan Howard | History Center..... | 10.00 |

Other Donations:

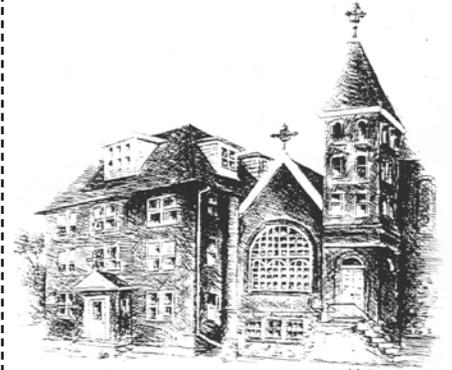
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| | Adelaide Willett..... | 10.00 |
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|-------|---------|
| | \$10.00 |
| | 12.00 |
| | 15.00 |
| | 15.00 |
| | 6.50 |
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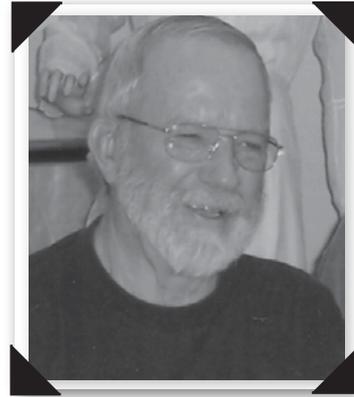


We have moved into the 21st century!

Go to www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety.org and view our new web site. Its just started and soon we will have our newsletter and brochure on the web site and much more to come.



Committees in sync—new members!



Arley Engel

Chippewa County Historical Society Committee Members

*** Collection & Artifacts:**

- * Nancy Schuh, Arley Engel, Lucyann LeCleur, Terri Stahr, Gail Willi, Jeff Pritchard

Photography Sub Committee:

- * Lucyann LeCleur, Donna Borget

*** Building & Grounds:**

- * Steve Rasmus

Space Utilization Sub Committee

- * Steve Rasmus

*** Education:**

- * Cathy Lee, Evalyn Frasch, Ann Gordon, Rosemary Broeren

Docent Subcommittee:

- Lalie Boos, Pat Ahneman

*** Exhibits:**

- * Arley Engel, Nancy Schuh, Lucyann LeCleur

Historic Markers Sub Committee:

- * Tom Larson, Jim Schuh, Arley Engel, Kurt Gaber

*** Finances:**

- * Skip August, Kathy Forsgren

*** Membership:**

- * Shirley Liedl, Mary McKenna

Telephone Subcommittee:

- * Mary McKenna

*** Publicity:**

- * Jim Schuh, Wayne Meyer
Newsletter Editor: Elly Rochester

* *Chairperson*

A VOLUNTEER PROFILE

MARY MCKENNA

Arley

On October 20, 1936 a “fine baby” as his mom stated about him, was born to Evelyn and Raymond Engel at St. Joseph’s hospital in Chippewa Falls. He was the second of five boys: Eugene, Richard, Bertram and Charles who shared a two bedroom house. His dad was a dairy farmer who did custom farm work along with his brother, Arley’s uncle, Ford. They were the Engel Brothers, who did custom combining of oats and grass seed and chopped a lot of hay and corn, filling silos and barns for neighboring farms.

His mom was the typical farm wife raising chickens, ducks and a big garden. From that came food for the table—canning and freezing stored the rest for future use. Farming nearly 240 acres of land involved everyone. Inside the home he’d have dishes to do and recalls that when his mom went into town to shop, the boys would bring in the fox hounds to lick the plates clean and then they’d wash them and put them away. His mom never took advantage of the big dog’s tongues.

Outside barn chores awaited Arley and his brothers each night: cleaning the mangers, feeding silage to the cattle, milking the cows, feeding the calves milk and tossing hay from the upstairs hay barn to feed the cows for the night after milking. A strong work ethic was formed at an early age. The job he liked the least was cleaning the manure from the chicken coops every Saturday.

Arley shared stories of spending much of his life with aunts, uncles and cousins along with his grandparents. His favorite memory of his grandma was her pump type organ and that was the first place the grandkids headed when coming to visit. He fondly remembers his grandpa, Adolph Peterson and riding in his Model T Ford —especially the trip from Abbotsford to Chippewa Falls when the car overheated. They had to take a pail to a nearby creek to get water for it. He also recalls picking worms off of tobacco leaves and being paid a penny-a-piece for each worm from his other grandpa, Bert Engel. He used his earnings to attend the Chippewa fair. Hunting, fishing and good times at Old Abe’s restaurant in Jim Falls owned by his uncle Ford were especially fun with his cousins and family. His cousin Gale and Arley spent much of their youth playing in Beaver Creek a former site of a cattle crossing that was to become the present site of his home. He and his wife June received the property as a wedding present. They were married on August 13, 1960 at Lake Street Methodist Church in Eau Claire. Their families knew each other for years long before they became sweethearts. Arley and June have two children: Kevin Lee and Terri Rae and three grand-children: Stephanie Rae, Ashley Ann and Alex.

Arley’s early education began at Sunnyside grade school and continued at Chippewa Falls High School. Although he was offered a scholarship upon graduation, he preferred to enter the military. Having lost a few fingers in an accident with blasting caps, he was deferred to 4F status and was unable to realize his dream.



Victor Block
Chippewa Falls, WI



LOCAL NEWS

Where Do They Come From?

Visitors to the Chippewa County Historical
and Genealogy Society since June 2008

West Chazy, NY
 Colorado Springs, CO
 Bella Vista, AR
 Barron, WI
 Minneapolis, MN
 Bloomington, MN
 Boise, ID
 Richland, WA
 Lakeville, MN
 Inverness, FL
 Kenneth Square, PA
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 Belen, NM
 Egan, MN
 Des Plaines, IL
 Old Town, FL
 Oak Creek, WI
 Green River, WY
 Geneva Switzerland
 Wolfgang Germany
 Dousman, WI

ARLEY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

While he lived most of his single life at the home farm, he did live in Racine as a young adult and worked at a foundry for awhile. He said it was hot and dirty work. He also worked for John Deere in Waterloo, IA. He began his life's work in the automotive parts industry at Ideal Chevrolet located then at Grand Ave. and Bay St. in Chippewa Falls. He became the parts and service manager but then left to work for Griffin-Doege in 1961. He first began delivering parts around the counties: Clark, Barron, Rusk including Chippewa deemed "outside routes".

Next he got into selling, later the company was bought by Northern Auto Supply who were later bought out Car Quest. He retired from his full-time job on December 24, 1999. Arley still works two days a week for Car Quest running the hot freight "loop" truck making 280 miles a day delivering parts.

Arley is a member of the Wheaton Knights Snowmobile Club participating in Chippewa Falls Main Street's lighted Christmas parade each year, the Rolling Wheels Vintage Motorcycle Club and is a member of the Forest History Association which he says is almost like a 4-H club for adults. In addition, he is Vice-President of the Chippewa County Historical Society and has been setting up extraordinary displays for the Chippewa Fair, Oktoberfest and especially the event held in Allen Park in the spring, "The Past Passed Here". His trailer is loaded with artifacts that entice and enchant the young and old alike. Arley spends countless hours sharing stories and facts about the historic items with the visitors.

Sharing his time extends to keeping in touch with special friend, Eugene Harm, visiting him in the Chippewa Retirement Home and taking him on outings. Arley also has a gift for writing and shares tidbits of history in his famous articles in the History Center's newsletter, *The Eagle Speaks*. He is also an active member of the Historic Marker Committee

As a child he was nicknamed Arley Barley Buck but the name "Buck" stuck. He is endeared to all who know him for his warm smile and easygoing nature. "Ask Arley" any question and he is off and running to find the answer. He's one terrific guy. 🍷

TELEVISION PROGRAM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Ahneman & Lalie Boos describe tour highlights and describe our exhibits while viewers see artifacts in each room. Arley Engel and Eugene Harm explain lumbering artifacts donated by Eugene's family and review highlights of the lives of local lumberjacks. The topic of lumbering was selected to highlight because of the importance it played in the early development of the community and the fact that we had the largest water powered saw mill in the world under one roof right here in Downtown Chippewa Falls.

Thank you to CTV and staff Rob Mattison for making this program possible. Charter Cable TV customers can view stations 96, 97, 993 and 994 that telecast a wide variety of public access community programming from the Chippewa Valley. 🍷

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