

# TIMELINES

## NEWSLETTER OF THE OZAUKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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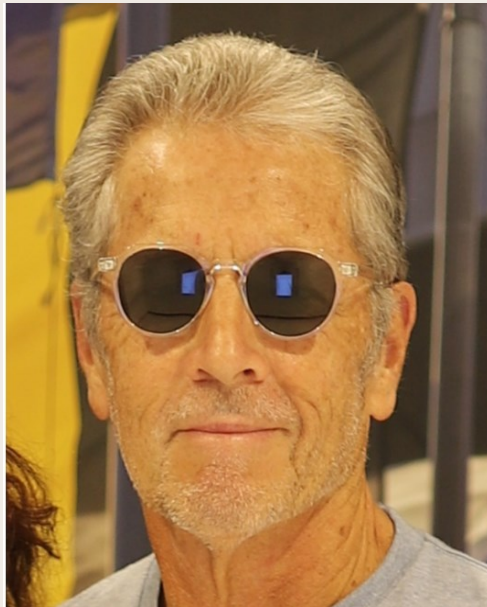
### OZAUKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPRING QUARTERLY MEETING

**Monday, May 6th**

**Reception/Book Signing: 6:30 - Presentation 7:15**

**Location: Old Courthouse**

**109 N. Main Street—Port Washington**



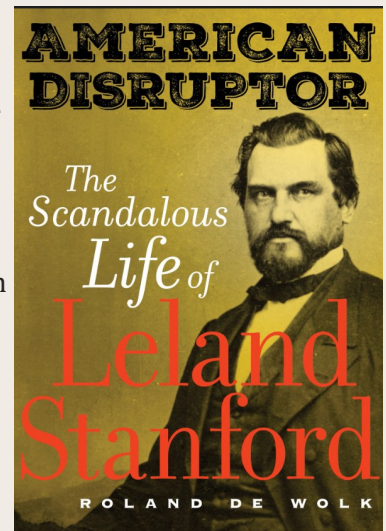
### **Roland De Wolk—Author American Disruptor: The Scandalous Life of Leland Stanford**

Roland De Wolk, holds a degree in history from the University of California, Berkeley. He spent many years as a print, online and broadcast journalist and cofounded the first university online journalism site in the nation as a Senior Lecturer at San Francisco State University's journalism department. That background kept him on track to research the life of Leland Stanford, one of the Central Pacific Railroads' "Big Four." Roland spent time at the Port Washington Historical Society and the Ozaukee County Historical Society as he gathered valuable material for his book on Leland Stanford, published in 2019.

The story of Leland Stanford begins in Albany, New York, a feckless youth who dodged hard work every chance he got and moved to Port Washington, WI in 1848. Having studied law in New York and passed the State Bar of Wisconsin, he set up a small law practice on Franklin Street. He got involved in the politics of the day and stayed a prominent figure in the city until a fire destroyed his office in 1852. He then started his journey west and became one of the most important figures in the building of the transcontinental railroad, which altered American life forever. His life was met with intrigue, failures, success, love and loss. He eventually became one of the most powerful and wealthiest men in the nation. The death of his adolescent son prompted him to build Stanford University as a memorial. The school became the birthplace and incubator of the Silicon Valley.

Refreshment / Beer Tasting /Wine served

***Thank you to our sponsors: O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, Dejong and Laing, SC., The Port Hotel, the Port Washington Historical Society, the Ozaukee County Historical Society and The Fermentorium."***



## ***Greetings From the President:***

***Hello !***

***On your marks, get ready, get set, GO! OCHS is doing some great things each and every day. We are preserving structures (caboose project), documenting rural history across the county (barn and one room school-project), cataloging photos and documents (archives), compiling stories (genealogy) and collecting artifacts that represent our heritage.***

***We are the custodians, the keepers of our story. It is how Ozaukee County came to be, of how the founding families used their skills learned in their homelands as they encounter the challenges of the new world. They suffered hardships and stayed the course by their strength and determination to develop the communities we now know as Ozaukee County.***

***This is a BIG DEAL and OCHS is continuing their incredible journey by making history everyday! OCHS shares the stories, the experiences and artifacts of the area with our visitors and each, other through our school tours, events and special programming.***

***We have some wonderful events and programs planned this summer and hope to see all of you soon. If you haven't renewed your membership, please do so now, so you won't miss a thing.***

***Please feel free to give me a call (1-262-377-4545 )with any ideas, comments or suggestions you may have.***

***Mary Ann Velnetske - President***

## **BOARD MEMBERS**

Mary Ann Velnetske, President  
Allen Buchholz, 1st Vice-President  
Becky Miller, Secretary/Graphic Design  
Don Borgwardt, Treasurer  
Keri Eichner, Director  
**Open**-Quarterly Program Chair  
Dan Paulus, Director  
Dick Liersch, Director  
**Open**, Volunteer Coordinator

## **SUPPORT STAFF**

Jane Butz, Archivist  
Chris Fricke, Archivist  
**Open**, Membership  
Jim and Sally Punzel-Pioneer Village Caretakers  
Eugene Durben/ Kayla Beegle-Storck Blacksmiths

## **TOUR GUIDES/DOCENTS**

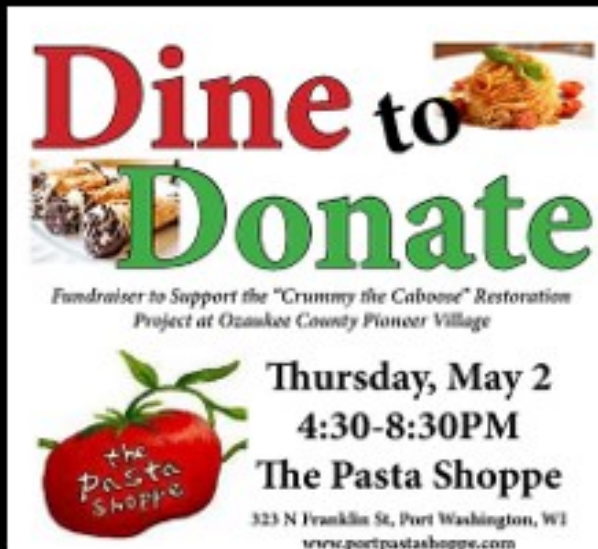
Dennis Beder     Barbara Roob  
Donna Smith     Carol Stephenson  
Linda Ziebell     Carol Curtis  
Chris Schultz

## **CONTACTS**

Village Management-Allen Buchholz  
Village Hall Rentals-Allen Buchholz  
Website-Mary Ann Velnetske  
Marketing-Becky Miller  
Videographer-Dick Liersch  
Photographer/Social Media-Laura Bruederle  
Newsletter-Mary Ann Velnetske  
School Tours-Mary Ann Velnetske

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### Upcoming Events



**Dine to Donate**

Fundraiser to Support the "Crummy the Caboose" Restoration Project at Ozaukee County Pioneer Village

**Thursday, May 2**  
**4:30-8:30PM**  
**The Pasta Shoppe**  
 323 N Franklin St, Port Washington, WI  
[www.portpastashoppe.com](http://www.portpastashoppe.com)



Ozaukee County Historical Society Presents  
*A Star Spangled Salute Featuring*  
**BILL SARGENT BANDS**  
**Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> - 7:00pm** Doors open at 6:30pm. Free, on-street parking.

*Advance Tickets*  
**\$25**

*Cedarburg Performing Arts Center*  
 W8N811 Evergreen Blvd, Cedarburg, WI  
**Bill Sargent BANDS**

Tickets available at PW18-Cedarburg Branch and on-line.



**WWI LIVING HISTORY EVENT**  
 1944 - 50th Anniversary of D Day

**Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> 9am - 4pm**  
*Public Preview Day:*  
 Friday, May 17th, 9:00am-2:00pm \$5/Person

**SATURDAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**  
 Meet with us in our old car long history showcase versus military airplanes, vehicles and artifacts from the WWI era.  
 Remembering the Holocaust Exhibit  
 Demonstrations throughout the Village  
 Have Lunch in our Village Hall  
 Scavenger Hunt  
 Shop the Vendor

11:00am... Military Vehicle Parade  
 12:00pm & 2:00pm ... Village Battles

Admission: \$10 Adults, \$5 Students (20-24) & Seniors, \$5 Veterans & Children 10-17, \$1000 Veterans 18-21



**Cemetery Walking Tour**  
**May 25 St. Mary's Cemetery**  
**Port Washington**  
**10AM-Noon Free**

## MORE SUMMER EVENTS TO ENJOY



**Flag Day Celebration**  
Stony Hill School  
June 15, 2024

Music by the US Army Reserve Band  
Meet Bernard Cigrand  
Tour the School  
Learn about Flag Etiquette, there will be mementos and more!  
Program and Music from 1:00 - 3:00 pm  
Plan to see all the improvements, too!



**Harry Potter Event July 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**Magic, Puzzles, Escape Room,**  
**Yule Ball Dinner**



**Fire Up the Forge July 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Blacksmith Event 10AM-5PM**  
**Presented by OCHS, Storm**  
**Cloak Forge & UMBA**

OZAUKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

### Bluegrass at the Village

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 11, 2024**

Food & Fun

OZAUKEE COUNTY PIONEER VILLAGE  
4880 HWY 1, SAUKVILLE

Raffles

RAIN OR SHINE UNDER THE BIG TENT!

GATES & CONCESSIONS OPEN AT 10:30AM • MUSIC: 11:00AM to 5:30PM

**BANDS:** 11:00 Pickin' Up Speed  
12:00 The Millbillies  
1:00 Fox Crossing String Band  
2:00 Jordan Kroeger/Ernest Brusubardis IV Duo  
3:00 Fox Gloves  
4:30 Heartland Howlers

**ADMISSION:** Advance Ticket Prices: \$12.00 Adults/Seniors/Students  
OCHS Members \$5, Kids 5 and Under Free  
**\$25.00 Day of Event**

## FOND MEMORIES - Remembering Don Engelbert

Submitted by Jane Butz



For all of us about to page and read through this edition of the OCHS TIMELINES the probability is very high that we all received a membership card urging us to become part of the OCHS community from Don Engelbert. He was perfect for the role. Enthusiastic, committed and dedicated to growing OCHS. If he couldn't sway you the first time, just wait he would be back. And back. And back.

As membership Chairman for over 20 years, he could be found at every event and function of OCHS. He loved telling the story of the organization and its gift to the community. Like a promoter at the State Fair, he would rattle off the events from Pioneer Village to Stony Hill School and the great research available at the Archives. He would set up his table, strategically place the many brochures describing the different venues offered by OCHS, open the cash box and don his straw hat. He was ready for business.

Although Don's effort was in growing the membership he spent a great deal of time at the Archives. Not being officially a staff member of the Archives, he would stop by weekly just to see if he could provide any assistance to anyone. He would attend to a sticking door or a beeping fire alarm, collect and sort the mail and perform the dreadful semiannual chore of resetting the clocks. Don would handle these tasks often unnoticed and without request just because he cared.

His caring could also be found at any event held by OCHS. Don would often leave his membership table to assist others in controlling parking, hauling tables and chairs, or repairing a light fixture or gate in preparing the venue. The one event Don did not care for was the rummage sale, but even then, he was there to support his wife Pat and the crew with sorting the donated items well into the night and the day of the sale as well.

As we say goodbye to Don and remember his legacy may we all be motivated by his spirit of love and caring.

## Donations February—April

### Memorial Donations:

Dean & Lois Schwarten -Don Engelbert  
Phil & Jean Steinke -Don Engelbert  
Curt & Debbie Gruenwald -Don Engelbert  
Allen & Cherie Buchholz -Don Engelbert  
Phil & Jean Steinke -Jan Hill  
Arnold Kaul -Darlene Kaul

### HVAC Donation:

Laurie Bell

### Sponsorships:

Cedarburg Overhead Door—WWII, Ansay & Associates—WWII, Velnetske Law Offices—WWII, Peter Wollner American Legion—WWII, Answerport Technology & Management Consultants -WWII & Bluegrass, Jon & Sandy Dehlinger- Bluegrass, O'Neil, Cannon, Hollman, Dejong -Qtrly. Meeting, Port Washington Historical Society-Qtrly. Meeting, Fermentorium-Qtrly. Meeting, The Port Hotel-Qtrly Meeting.

**General Donations:** Emeline Johnson, Jane Boesch and Nancy Roozen

**Thank you for your kindness, generosity and support!**

### Casual for a Cause

The employees of the Port Washington State Bank have chosen OCHS as their favorite charity a second year in a row for their “Casual for a Cause” program.

On Fridays, they can wear casual attire to work if they donate to the “cause”. Port Washington State Bank sent us a check for \$565.00! We are so grateful to have their support! **Thank you to PWSB!**

### Grants:

**We have met our goal of \$20,000 for the Interurban Depot HVAC project because of the enormous help of the Greater Cedarburg Foundation grant in the amount of \$12,000!**

**We are also very thankful to Charter Steel for their \$1,000 which will get us closer to completing the Caboose Project!**

## 2024 Revised Events Calendar

- ◆ May 2 Dine to Donate at the Pasta Shoppe
- ◆ May 11 Star Spangled Salute Big Band Concert
- ◆ May 17 WWII School Day
- ◆ May 18 WWII Encampment Event
- ◆ May 19 Pioneer Village Opens
- ◆ May 25 Cemetery Walk - St. Mary's Port Washington
- ◆ June 15 Flag Day Celebration –Stony Hill School
- ◆ July 7 Fire Up the Forge
- ◆ July 27 Harry Potter at the Village
- ◆ Aug. 11 Bluegrass at the Village
- ◆ Sep. 7 Planes, Trains and Automobiles
- ◆ Sep. 28 Autumn at the Village
- ◆ Oct. 27 Pioneer Village Closes
- ◆ Dec. 21 Winter Solstice

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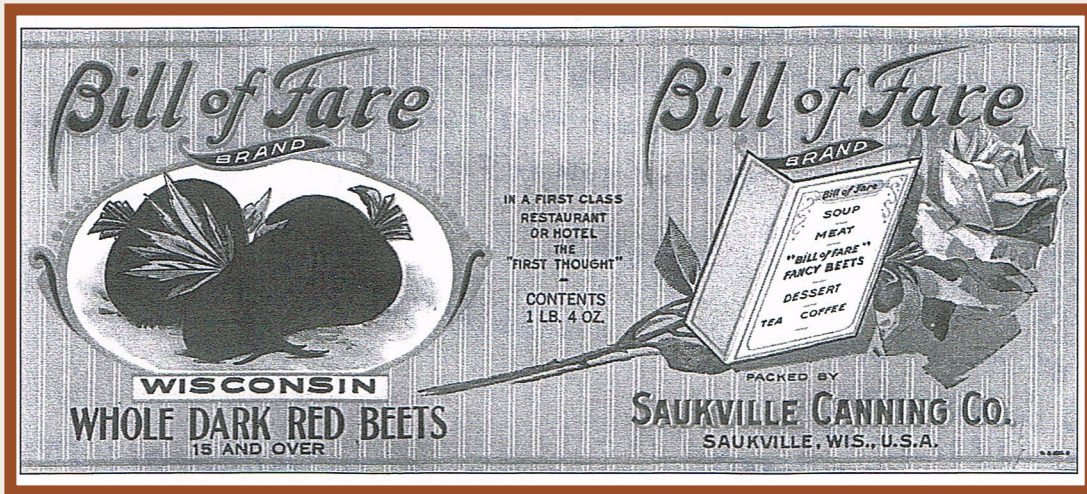
### **Volunteers: You can have it “your” way!**

- ◇ **You can volunteer by calling Becky 262-689-1452 or Mary Ann 262-377-4545.**
- ◇ **You can email us at: [ochsvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:ochsvolunteers@gmail.com)**
- ◇ **You can signup on our website: Go to “Volunteer” and it is linked to SignUp Genius. Pick your role, date and time.**

*We are still in search of a new Volunteer Coordinator. If you are interested, please let us know!*

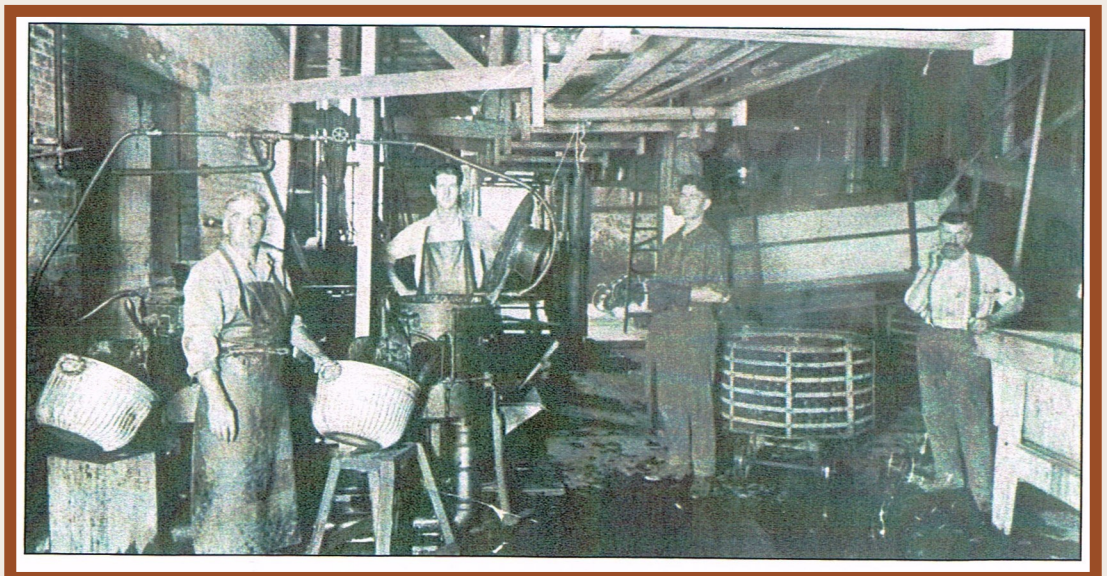
**Sign Up NOW!**

## Red Gold, Sorrow, and the End of the Saukville Cannery



Everyone knows Wisconsin for its beer and dairy production, but how many know that Wisconsin also leads in the production of canned vegetables? Peas, beets, snap beans, sweet corn, kraut, and more come in enormous quantities from the terrific soil and climate of the eastern part of the state. Near the center of Ozaukee County was the Saukville Canning Company (1920-1945), one of the largest employers in that town for over 20 years.

Founded in 1920 by 3 men from Saukville, including Fred Hulbert, manager; 1 man from Port; and John William Gross from Milwaukee, the company benefitted from rail connections that made it easier to ship more food to big-city folk, while new roads allowed growers as far afield as Slinger to truck in their produce. The Hansen Canning Machinery Co., in Cedarburg, sold 90% of the canning equipment used in the U.S., including to Saukville. "Hansen's sanitary pea and bean filler" revolutionized production by 1923, and soon came their "automatic kraut filler," too. Tomatoes by "thousands of tons of the crop" went into cans as juice – one salt cube per can – and Saukville became the "Tomato Center of Wisconsin." In the peak years of about 1932 to 1937, harvest-season employment reached about 150 people, mostly women. In a 1991 oral history, one elderly townsman, who as a teen earned 25 cents/hour, recalled "Saukville's Red Gold."





## Red Gold, Sorrow, and the End of the Saukville Cannery (cont'd)

The company launched the Tomato Festival in 1932 complete with a baseball game, pitting brokers vs. canners. There were family games and picnics and a late-night dance that was halted at 10:00 PM so they could vote for Miss Tomato Queen. All seemed well. In 1934 the festival was cancelled so that tour groups could attend the World's Fair in Chicago. It returned in 1935. In 1936, it was postponed due to heavy rains, then everyone had to race to harvest before the frost. Bosses launched a basketball team for morale that included new "suits" – red, of course. In 1937, floods across the Midwest caused the Milwaukee Road to take down its water tower and windmill, depriving Saukville of its most visible symbol.

Indeed, nothing lasts forever, especially during the Depression. Official statistics from the state and USDA tell us that Wisconsin's acreage for vegetables to be canned led the nation. During 1927-1936 the average was 136,000 acres. In 1938, 154,000 acres were planted, as success attracts more producers. Meanwhile, canneries in Fredonia, Port, and Belgium were only the nearest competitors to the Saukville Cannery. Suddenly at year-end 1938, the company owed growers \$30,000 from a "large holdover" of the old crop, especially peas and tomatoes.

The main stockholder among the founders of the company in 1933 was John William Gross, officer of a coal company in Milwaukee. His oldest son, John, Jr., was sales manager at Saukville, and popular as town Athletic Club treasurer in 1936. In spring 1937, he married Isabelle McKeith, daughter of Scottish immigrants in Milwaukee. The well-to-do young couple lived in Grafton.

Tragedy struck when John, age 26, having already borrowed the limit from his father, died mysteriously in Peoria, Illinois, in January 1939. The *Peoria Evening Star* ran 5 articles on the case; the *Cedarburg News* ran just 1, suggesting a homicide. The coroner's Cause of Death reads: "open."

Drought in 1940 affected everyone, yet the Saukville Cannery kept going when World War II boosted demand for their goods through the end of the war. The company went into receivership after the War. The entire plant was auctioned off in 1950 for \$27,500.

The Freeman Chemical Co. used it, then for 22 years Northern Signal did, and today the buildings house JRT Top Notch Roofing.

**Article written and submitted by: James M. Cornelius**

### Grafton Man Found Dead at Peoria, Ill.

#### Mystery Surrounds Death of Manager of Saukville Canning Co.

A startling theory that John W. Gross, Jr., 26, of Grafton, whose body was found under a railroad viaduct near Peoria, Illinois Saturday night, was murdered was advanced Monday afternoon by Peoria County Coroner Harold Diller following an inquest.

Gross, sales manager of the Saukville Canning Co., Saukville, was reported missing to Milwaukee police on Friday. Clarence H. Lichtfeld of Thienaville, who said he was making the report at the request of Gross' wife, said that Gross had been missing since Tuesday, when he left home saying he wanted "to see a broker." That same day he registered at a Peoria hotel, but misspelled his name. Hotel attaches said he did not drink.

Gross' mutilated body was discovered at 2:30 a. m. Saturday morning on a switch track running under an 85 foot high bridge. A switch engineer saw it suddenly, but was unable to stop his engine in time to avoid cutting a leg off the body.

Gross was dead when the engine crew reached him. A first examination disclosed no external injuries except those inflicted by the freight train and a slight wound on one wrist, but a later post-mortem examination showed that he had suffered a broken back, internal injuries and a skull fracture. Physicians said the injuries could have been received in a long fall or a bad beating.

Although Gross was dressed in expensive clothing, his pockets contained only \$60, a cheap watch, keys to his automobile and a couple of business letters. One of the letters found on the body was reported to have read John Grob, Cedarburg. Peoria police immediately notified Cedarburg police but Chief Frank replied that there was no John Grob in this city. It was not until later that the body was identified.

Gross was married on April 14, 1937 to Miss Mary Isabelle McKeith, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David McKeith, 2549 N. Stowell Ave., Milwaukee. McKeith is the Milwaukee superintendent of public buildings. Members of the family said that Gross and his wife had had no trouble.

Gross had been a resident of Grafton for the past six years. He is a former student of Marquette university and the University of Wisconsin, where he was a member of Chi Psi fraternity. Besides his parents and wife, he is survived by two brothers, George, living in California, and Ben Peckham of the University of Wisconsin, and two sisters, Edith and Mary.

Funeral services were held Tuesday afternoon at 2:30 from the funeral home of Philip J. Weiss, Inc., 1901 N. Farwell ave., Milwaukee. Interment was in Forest Home.

Gross' car was found in a loop garage in Chicago Tuesday and an inquest will be conducted by Coroner Harold F. Diller of Peoria in a few days.

## New Exhibit-Ozaukee County Native American Evidence

Board member, Allen Buchholz, has been researching and working on a new exhibit for the Welcome Center at Ozaukee County Pioneer Village. The historical society has a wealth of Native American artifacts and has learned much more about them through his research and meeting with Kurt Sampson of the Dodge County Historical Society. The exhibit includes a large collection of artifacts from the Thiel farm along the Milwaukee River north of Saukville. He found that there is evidence of Native Americans in Ozaukee County as early as 8000BC (10,000 years ago)! The exhibit covers points that date as late as the Late Woodland Period and as early as the Early Archaic period.

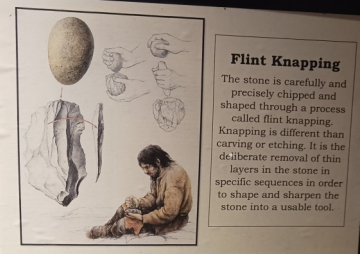


The origins of the Ozaukee name belongs to the Chippewa form of the name for the Sauk tribe, "Osagig". The word is sometimes interpreted as "people living at the mouth of a river" or "people of yellow earth".

Sauk and Menomonee tribes maintained a joint village on the banks of the Milwaukee River at the convergence of two trails. The location became the Village of Saukville.



Waubeka was named after a Potawatomi chief who was friendly to the area settlers. Chief Waubeka's tribe made several clearings near the river to cultivate corn in addition to their main occupations of hunting and fishing.



**Renew your membership NOW!**

**Ask a Friend, Neighbor or Relative to JOIN!**

**Give a gift membership for a birthday or maybe Mother's Day!**

**Invite them to become a VOLUNTEER!**

**All are Welcome! See you Soon at Ozaukee County Pioneer Village!**

**SHARE THIS PAGE WITH A FRIEND!**

Ozaukee County Historical Society  
N57 W6406 Center Street -PO Box 206  
Cedarburg, WI 53012-0206  
www.ochs.co.ozaukee.wi.us

Hazel Wirth Archives Research Center  
262-377-4510  
E-Mail: ozaukeearchivist@gmail.com

**~2024 Membership Application ~**

Membership ~ January 1 thru December 31, 2024

Sign me up! I'm ready to be a part of history!

Enclosed please find my:  Renewal  New Membership

Individual \$25  Husband/Wife/Family \$50 (incl children under 18)  
 Sustaining Individual \$50  Sustaining Family \$100

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Email & Phone Number will never be shared!)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Children (under 18): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Yes!, Count me in! Please contact me when you need volunteer help!**

*I want to make a contribution to history. Enclosed please find my additional tax-deductible contribution specified for:*

- Hazel Wirth Archives Research Center
- Acquisitions & Collections Maintenance
- Stony Hill School Upkeep
- Ozaukee County Pioneer Village Upkeep
- General: Where Needed Most

- Interurban Depot Preservation Fund
- Memorial: In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_
- Celebration: In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsorship of an Event: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ozaukee County Historical Society**  
N57 W6406 Center Street  
P.O. Box 206  
Cedarburg, WI 53012-0206

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



Ozaukee County Historical Society  
N57 W6406 Center Street -PO Box 206  
Cedarburg, WI 53012-0206  
www.ochs.co.ozaukee.wi.us

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Hazel Wirth Archives Research Center  
262-377-4510  
E-Mail: ozaukeearchivist@gmail.com

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Email & Phone Number will never be shared!)

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Cedarburg, WI 53012-0206

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

