



251 North Wolf Road • Wheeling, Illinois 60090

WHEELING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2010

Wheeling Pavilion Senior Center Celebrates 25 Years

The Wheeling Pavilion Senior Center celebrates its 25th anniversary this year.

The Center, located at 199 North First Street in Wheeling, opened 1-1/2 years after its groundbreaking. Partly funded by a federal grant, the seven-room structure was built as part of a complex near Milwaukee and Strong that included elderly housing, an emergency clinic (Holy Family Hospital), and condominiums.

Here are some facts and trivia gathered from the archives of the Pavilion, with the help of Shari Matthews Huizar, LCSW, Director of Human Services at the Center.

Nearly 50 years ago, our citizens would have joined the "Over 50 Club." These clubs were formed to begin projects and find recreation, sometimes conducting bazaars to sell home-

made objects and earn money for field trips. From dues, the members chartered buses. Just as today, they always felt they could do more if public transportation was available.

As late as 1968, the Over 50 Club of Wheeling met at Heritage Park Field House for business meetings. They met for social meetings twice a month at Potawatomi Forest Preserve in good weather or at the field house in bad weather.

In 1971 the Wheeling Over 50 Club began to use the Wheeling Park District facilities rent-free based on its contribution to the community and the many years its members paid taxes to the district. The board asked the club to move from Heritage Park because of the district's expanding recreational program, such as volleyball in the gymnasium. The club agreed to hold meetings in the church



Gazebo Beginnings

building in Chamber Park on Wolf Road.

The Over 50 Club eventually became the Senior Citizens Club of Wheeling. On the first Thursday they met to play cards, then hold a business meeting. The other Thursdays were social meetings. Frequent trips were planned to

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The Construction Begins



The Pavilion and Gazebo

"The object of this Society shall be the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the Community of Wheeling."

**WHEELING
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

Located in the
Wheeling Park District's
Chamber Park
251 Wolf Road
Wheeling, Illinois 60090

Museum Hours

April through October
Sunday 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

**2010–2011
OFFICERS**

President

Joan Wiener

Vice President

Bill Hein

Treasurer

Marilyn Chromy

Secretary

Charles Vallas

DIRECTORS

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Patti Hancock

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Donna Vallas, Assistant

Web Site

Terry Steilen

Newsletter Editor

Donna Vallas

This newsletter is
published monthly as a
benefit of membership



Wheeling Park District

Liaison

Cheri Klumpp
Commissioner



Message from the President

Dear Members and Friends,

September is here and a cool down should not be far away. Hope this letter finds all of you in good health or recovering.

The general meeting was held on August 25th. David Leider was the guest speaker for the evening. He has written a book called Wisconsin Central in Illinois. He gave us an interesting history of the railroad and how it has affected Wheeling and the surrounding area. David told us it took him twelve years to write the book. He also included more information on Wheeling in his presentation than what was included in the book. The Society also purchased one of the books.

During the business portion of the meeting the new holiday ornament design was announced and discussed. The design was given to us by Patti Hancock. The new recorders have arrived and we are starting interviews this month. We still need volunteers for this project. All the reports were given and approved.

The September board meeting will be held this time on Wednesday, September 15th, at 7:30 p.m. and the general meeting on Wednesday, September 22nd at 7:00 p.m. Lollipop Lane will be the topic of discussion. Hope to see you at the meeting.

I ask that you put Lorraine Haben, Leo Chromy, and their families in your prayers.

**Historically Yours,
Joan Wiener, President**



Curator's Report

Our Thursday morning team continues to meet and keep busy, going through mail, logging obits and news articles, cleaning, filing, and researching.

We received one request from the granddaughter of the owner of the Union Hotel, asking for any information or photos we might have.

We also got a call from Jan Bowman who is looking for a photo of the area where the Westin Hotel is now located. We found a photo of the Wedgwood Riding Center stables, formerly located at Milwaukee and Lake-Cook Road, that we scanned and emailed to her. She is planning a visit to the museum soon.

**Patti Steilen
Curator**



**Board meeting:
Wednesday
September 15
at 7:30 p.m.**

**General meeting:
Wednesday
September 22
at 7:00 p.m.**



★ Visit our website at www.WheelingHistoricalSociety.com ★

Things to do and Places to go ...



“All You Can Eat Pancakes” at the Wheeling Senior Center on Sunday, September 19, from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Adults: \$6; Children under 5 are free. This fundraiser, by the Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association, purchases specialized equipment and items not budgeted for the Wheeling Police Department.

New Wheeling Fire Station Headquarters—the Grand Opening and Open House will take place on October 2, 2010, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This new station is located at 499 S. Milwaukee Avenue.

The Wheeling Farm Stand Market—Visit the Farmers Market at Wheeling Park District every Tuesday from Noon to 6:00 p.m. at the southeast corner of Northgate Parkway and Dundee Road. This market is open until the end of October.

Deerfield Historical Society’s 35th Annual Fall Festival— Sunday, September 26, Noon to 4:00 p.m., includes Antique and Classic Car Show. Food, entertainment, antiques and demonstrations. 517 Deerfield Rd.

Northbrook Historical Society’s 32nd annual ShermerFest and 10th Classic & Antique Car Display, at 1776 Walters Avenue, on Sunday, September 19, 2010; Noon–4 p.m. ☺

The Wisconsin Central in Illinois

David Leider spoke at our August meeting about his recently published book, “The Wisconsin Central in Illinois.” The Wisconsin Central was a federal land-grant railroad, which meant if they built the track, they would get the land. The WC built track in Wisconsin and planned to connect with Chicago, making stops from Ashland, Wisconsin, and down through towns such as Burlington and Waukesha to Wheeling. They built tracks west of the towns because it was less expensive.

There were never any stocks or bonds sold; it was very secretive. They were using Milwaukee Road to get to Chicago and they didn’t want that to be known. The WC was incorporated in the 1870s. The farmers needed better transportation to Chicago so they were willing to sell their land to the railroad for as little as \$1. The workers were paid with a scrip so they’d show up for work. Existing railroads were against a new railroad so they’d file lawsuits against the WC, but the railroad ignored them.

The track laying companies back then could lay up to 1-1/4 mile of track per day. They ran short of ties by the time they got to Wheeling so they asked the farmers to cut them, which they did. The first timetable that showed a stop at Wheeling was in August, 1886.

There was a purse of \$500 for a depot due west of Wheeling. Peter Knittel and Catherina Mors donated the land. Mors started a subdivision, Huntersville, but it never happened; Knittel bought the property to add to his farm.

The government required a list of assets from the railroads, so from those records we know that near the Wheeling station was a stockyard owned by the railroad and a pickle factory. In 1895 the railroad surveyed towns along its line to determine the revenue and listed the following: milk, cheese, lumber (the number one revenue), general stores, Wheeling brewery company, and “considerable manure.” People requested that the railroad fill the depot properly because it became so muddy when it rained.

In 1896, when bicycle riding and racing became popular, the WC provided passenger cars to get to Clybourn Park for the beginning of the 25-mile bicycle race from Wheeling to Garfield Park in Chicago, along the line of the Wisconsin Central. The railroad eventually went broke. ❖



Leo Chromy

The Wheeling Historical Society sends their regrets to Marilyn Chromy and her family on the passing of beloved husband and father, Leo Chromy, a longtime member of the Wheeling Historical Society. Leo passed away on September 8, 2010, at the age of 81. Leo was also an active member of the Knights of Columbus, the Why Nots S.A.C., and the Wheeling Garden Club. We remember Leo for his smile and contagious sense of humor. ☺



Wheeling Pavilion Senior Center

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spots such as these (how many still exist?): Sara Lee factory, Gale Street Inn—Diamond Lake, bus tours to the Jays Potato Chip plant, to Chicago’s Old Town, the Sears Tower, the Union Illinois Railway Museum, to Amlings Flowerland in Melrose Park, to Merchandise Mart to see the Quaker Oats test kitchens, Hapsburg Inn, Maywood park to view the Horse Capades, and to see the Ice Follies. They also volunteered for service acts such as filling Red Cross ditty bags to send to the men in Vietnam for Christmas.

The Wheeling Pavilion Senior Center’s ribbon cutting was August 21, 1985. The grand opening was on September 29, 1985, and it began with a flag-raising ceremony by the Naval ROTC from Wheeling High School, and was attended by Village President, Sheila Schultz, and the center’s first Senior Citizens Coordinator, Barbara Hansen, among others. In 1985 about 10 percent of Wheeling’s 23,000 residents were seniors.

A local newspaper stated that the members could read a book, crochet, visit with friends, play pinochle or hand-and-foot (like canasta), watch the Cubs on TV, hook rugs, tell stories, and fish. The Center held fishing contests at the man-made pond which was stocked with baby bluegill, bass, and carp. Most participants practiced catch-and-release.

Now there are classes, field trips, breakfast programs, support groups, and various services. ☺

—Donna Vallas

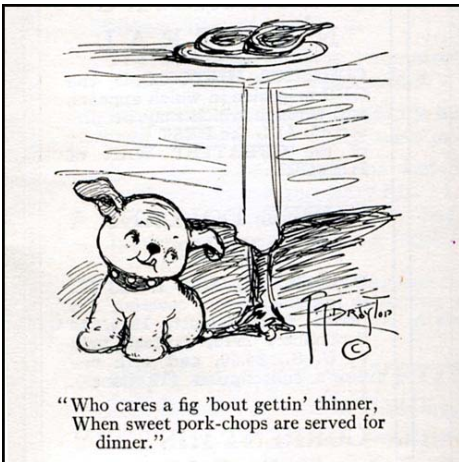


A Senior Party at Heritage Park



New Construction of the Pavilion and Gazebo

If all the people who fall asleep in church were laid end to end, they’d probably all rest much better. ☺

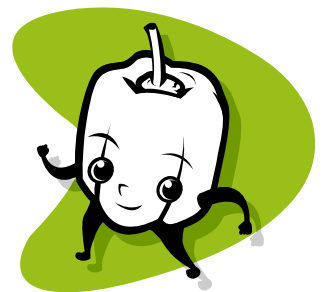


Sign in a restaurant serving seafood—
We take special pride in the crabs we serve,
so bring your wife and come for dinner. ☺

Cook's Kitchen

Stuffed Green Peppers

- 6–8 large green peppers
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 1 bag shredded mozzarella
- 2 med. cans tomato sauce
- 2 cups rice
- Salt and pepper



Wash the green peppers, cut off the tops, and scoop out the insides carefully without poking through the pepper. Set aside. Cook rice as usual and set aside.

Brown the ground beef and onion in a skillet, drain off grease, add one can tomato sauce. Add the cooked rice to the meat mixture and stir together well. Season.

Place some mozzarella in the bottom of green peppers and then spoon in the meat mixture, packing down carefully until filled. Use the second can of sauce to cover the green peppers and bottom of the baking dish. Sprinkle some mozzarella on top.

Bake at 375°F in a covered roasting pan or a baking dish with foil over the top until the green pepper is slightly soft, about one hour. ☺