

McFarland Historical Society



5814 MAIN STREET, MCFARLAND, WISCONSIN 53558
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Edited by Dale Marsden



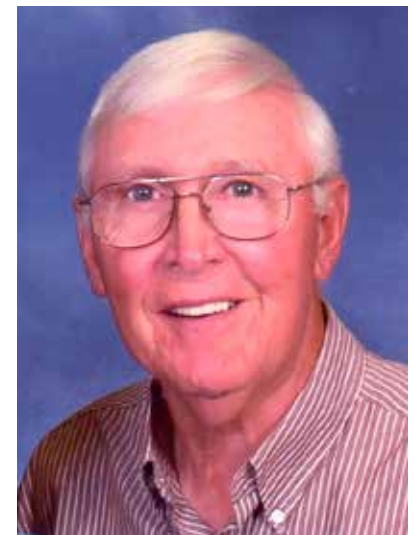
Annual Meeting to Feature Tom Thrun's Family Farm Display

Finally, we are getting back to our usual annual meeting in March. It will be held March 5th in the Community Room at the McFarland E.D. Locke Library from 1 to 3 pm. Tom Thrun, former McFarland resident and editor of the McFarland Community Life newspaper, will talk about his experiences of growing up on a farm near McFarland. During Covid, Tom used his time in isolation to build a model farm like the actual Thrun farm located at the corner of highway AB and Siggelkow Road. Last fall, he set up his model farm in the McFarland Museum lobby. Tom was on hand for the 3rd grade tours and explained the purposes of the buildings and the different activities going on to run the farm. Tom has agreed to give his presentation to us at the annual meeting. This should be very meaningful for those of us who have experienced living or working on a farm. For the rest of us, it will be an eye-opener. As usual, there will be excellent treats, a short business meeting and we will honor our Volunteer of the Year.



Volunteer of the Year

We will honor Wes Licht as our very worthy Volunteer of the Year. Wes has served on the board of directors for nearly twenty years. His many talents and interests have been used to further the mission of our organization. Wes initiated the tradition of creating lobby displays, designing most of them himself and assisting others in putting them together. He also designed and helped build the recent window displays for the museum. Wes has long organized the 3rd grade tours and lined up the necessary tour guides. He has given horse-drawn carriage rides for the museum and made lovely succulent arrangements for sale at the Larson House. Wes gathered stories, old photos and artifacts from local residents and developed the extensive Early Farming display in our Annex building. He helped other men on the board of directors to restore the Norwegian Log Cabin and beautify the strip of land next to it with a rustic fence.



(Continued on the next page.)

Wes (Continued from front)

It was Wes's suggestion to build an addition to the museum as a place to restore and display the double-pointed rowboat used at early resorts on Lake Waubesa. Wes organized work crews to do the time-consuming restoration work. Wes designed and helped create William McFarland's Parlor, the McFarland State Bank display and renovate others. It was his suggestion to make the walls permanent between Pete Nelson's Shoe Shop, the Child's bedroom and the early Norwegian kitchen and upgrade those displays. Wes often contributes information and Ole and Lena jokes at the Society's annual meetings. Wes is also active in McFarland Lutheran Church, singing in the choir, serving on the Care of Creation Committee, working in the church garden where produce is given to the food pantry, and championing solar panels for the church. Wes volunteers his time to teach children at Waubesa Intermediate School about native prairies. He is the official "horse whisperer" of McFarland, teaching horsemanship to generations of youngsters over the years. Please come to the annual meeting and help us thank Wes for his many contributions to the Society and our community.

Dinner Parties at the Larson House

by Jane Licht

Did you know that you can rent the Larson House for small group gatherings? Wedding showers, book club meetings, birthday parties and even one

wedding reception have been held at the Larson House. Recently, two dinner parties were held at the Larson House. The Larson House Garden Committee ladies had a potluck supper there on December 29. They used the fancy dishes, silverware and napkins available for use. A group of neighbors gathered for another dinner party on January 7th. They received a brief tour from Jane Licht as they admired the Christmas decorations throughout the house. Contact Jane for more information by texting or calling her cell phone – 608-234-2504, since her land line (608-838-8178) is not working.



Members of the Larson House Museum Garden Committee that enjoyed a dinner party at the Larson house. From L to R: Karen Kuenzi, Carol Beck, Gail Aaroen, Sue Vick Finley, DeeAnn Larson.



Additional members at the garden committee party were Sue Rausch, Margit Shiefelbein, Jane Licht and Thelma Allen.



Dining this evening are, L to R.: Traci Swenson, Joe Laeser, Kara Kaeser, Wes Licht, Eric Swensen, Glenn Nielsen, Meg Nielsen and Jane Licht, not shown.

Mowing Crew

by Jane Licht

In addition to the ladies who care for the Larson House Gardens, the other group of people who keep the Larson House Museum property looking so perfectly groomed are the members of our Mowing Crew. Bill Mitchell is the organizer who assigns a weekend to each person and takes the 5th weekend of the month himself.



Jerry Herbst is mowing the lawn in the front yard of the Larson House.

Bill also recruited his wife Joan to help him rake and dispose of leaves in the fall. Past members include Larry Nygaard and Jim Harried who both passed away far too soon, leaving many loved ones and good friends behind. Current members are Jerry Herbst, Tim Mitchell, John Feldner, Mike Flaherty and of course, Bill. When you see these people, please let them know how much you appreciate their efforts. If you wish to volunteer, contact Bill at 608-838-8279.



Joan Mitchell is raking leaves and cleaning up the Larson House yard.



Bill Mitchell is mowing the Larson House lawn.

Larson House Museum Needs volunteer Leaders

Facilities manager, Jane Licht is a bit overwhelmed with all of the responsibilities and needs help. Duties include (1) maintenance, (2) signing up fundraisers, (3) renting the house and (4) organizing volunteer hosts. If you are willing to provide leadership in one of these areas, please let me know by calling or texting 608-234-2504.

Board Members

All McFarland Historical Society board members serve as volunteers and all help in running the Society. If you would like to serve on the Board contact one of these board members: Gail Aareon, Carol Beck, Cindy Clark, Rod Clark, Richard Kohl, Jane Licht, Wesley Licht, Dale Marsden, Don Peterson, Rosalie Richardson, Clair Utter, Jackie Utter.

Very Victorian Christmas

By Jane Licht

Our Very Victorian Christmas at the Larson House was amazingly lovely and greatly appreciated by the many visitors. Carol Torgeson took over chairing the decorating committee from Kathy Krusiec and did an excellent job. The decorators created beauty in each room. They included the following talented ladies: Carol Torgeson, Gail Aaroen, Thelma Allen, Cheryl Salava, Judy St. Clair, Sue Vick Finley, Sharon Quale, Karen Kuenzi, Marlene Richard, Carol Beck, Sue Raush, Peggy Anderson and her daughter Sarah.



Sarah and Peggy Anderson doing the decorations in the child's room.

and scrubbies that were purchases by many guests, to Wes Licht who sold his attractive succulent arrangements and to Thelma Allen whose Santa ornaments sold out with all proceeds going to the Larson House.

The hosts and tour guides for Saturday, December 3rd and the Sundays in December included Carol Beck, Carol Torgeson, Cheryl Salava, Lee and Cheryl Ackley, Karen Kuenzi, Gail Aaroen, Sylvia Krepiski, Jane Licht and Terri Bouffiou. The Christmas music on the Larson House studio grand piano was played by Glenda Phillips, Terry Peterson, Lori Stoneking and DeAnn Larson.



Carol Torgeson and Judy St. Clair decorating the tree in the master bedroom.

Guests were entertained with piano music, tours of the house, and the reading of the Night Before Christmas by Chris Maleug. Special recognition should be given to Judy St. Clair and Dale Marsden whose beeswax teacup candles were offered for sale, to Joan Mitchell for contributing her knitted washcloths



Marlene Richard and Carol Beck are working on the tree in the Lokken bedroom.



Thelma and Karen after decorating the tree in the front hall.

Obituary



MCFARLAND - Thomas Ray Aaroen passed away at home in the presence of his loving wife, Gail, his son, Jake, and his devoted sister, Andrea, on Wednesday, May 25, 2022, after a brief battle with cancer. Tom liked to say that he was born in Madison, Wis., in the middle of the night, in the

middle of the year, in the middle of the century, at 2:02 a.m., on July 25, 1950 - a child of the post-World War II Baby Boom. He was the third son in as many years, born to Barkley Eugene and Violet Lorraine (Lee) Aaroen. Tom graduated from McFarland High School and attended two years of college at UW-Platteville, UW-Whitewater, and UW-Eau Claire. On June 23, 1972, Tom married the love of his life, Gail Foster. Together, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary a month early, on May 23, surrounded by family and friends. Tom was awake and aware throughout the celebration, enjoying the food, the company, and the chance to sit outdoors. The day was a beautiful gift to all of those involved.

Tom worked for many years as a mail carrier in Madison. He bowled and played golf and softball until 1992, when he fell victim to a back injury that left him disabled. Tom loved reading, watching sports, doing Sudoku, and working crossword puzzles. He had a passion for reading anything about the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln, about whom he had hoped to write a book. Deep in his heart, he was both a writer and a poet who had a lively sense of humor, even into his last days.

One of his first jobs was as a sports reporter at the McFarland Community Life newspaper and his journals reflect a well-written account of family history and lore. Throughout the years, he penned a number of poems that testified to his deep love for life, for his wife, Gail, and for his children and his extended family.

Tom was very interested in local history and his wife, Gail, serves on the board of directors for the McFarland Historical Society.



Sharon Quale and Sue Vick Finley just after finishing the decorations on the tree in the office.



Thanks to these volunteers who moved and set up the Christmas trees into the rooms at the Larson House. Seated are Dale Marsden, Rod Clark, Wes Licht, Sylvia Krepski. Standing are Tim Mitchell and Don Peterson.



Thanks to these volunteers who put the Christmas trees in bags and moved them to the attic and the basement at the Larson House. Seated are Tim Mitchell, Wes Licht, Ken Brost. Standing are Mike Flaherty, Sue Vick Finley, Don Peterson.

Please renew your membership this year to stay on our rolls.

Your membership and donations help to support the McFarland Historical Society and keeps the museum operating. If you would like to volunteer, let us know. We also have board positions open if you are interested in becoming more active in the Society. Many area residents volunteer their time and energy to make this a successful organization.

I want to support local history as a member of the McFarland Historical Society. Please enroll me as a new or renewal member for 2023. (If you are a **life time member** new donations are appreciated.)

(Select one membership option)

- Individual \$ 15
- Family \$ 25
- Individual/Family life \$ 150
- Supporting & Business \$ 250
- Special Donation for the Larson House \$ _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Name(s): _____

Street or P.O. Box _____

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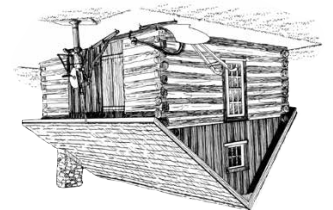
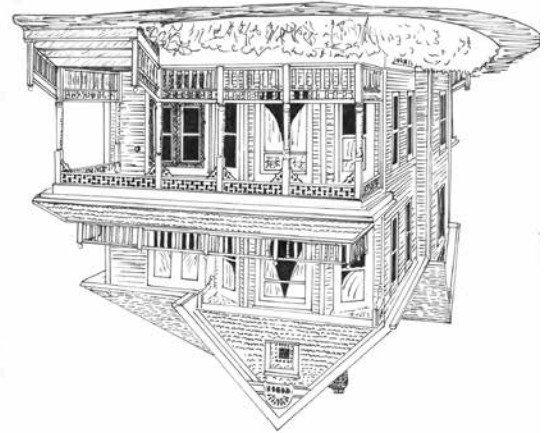
Check here if you would like to receive the newsletter by email in the future.

Make your check payable to:
McFarland Historical Society

Mail to:
McFarland Historical Society
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Go to www.mcfarlandhistorical.org for a color copy of the newsletter, information and color photos on all McFarland Historical Society activities. Photos are by Jane Licht & Sue Vick-Finley.

Address Here



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