



Sumner House

# Roselle History Museum Newsletter

Official Publication of the Roselle Historical Foundation  
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Winter 2019



Photo by Bonnie Rimer

*"Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful."*  
(Norman Vincent Peale)

## You're Invited!



Sunday, December 8  
2-4 p.m.  
Sumner House Museum  
102 S. Prospect St.  
Corner Elm & Prospect

## It's a Candy Cane Christmas Open House

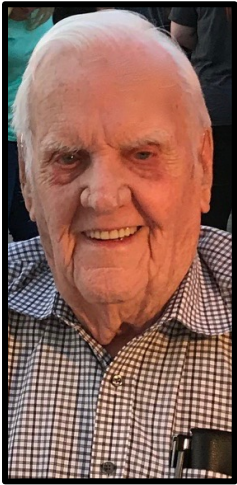
It'll be a Candy Cane Christmas at the History Museum December 8. The aromatic mint will play a role in luring visitors to the traditional homemade cookie tasting you've come to know over the past 19 years.

NEW this year will be a visit from **Mrs. Claus!** Yes, in person! Santa's best friend and fellow child pleaser will be on hand to share wonderful Christmas stories with the children. So bring the kids along.



Volunteer baker bees are selecting their favorite recipes now, which will be included in the cookie booklet you'll receive when you arrive. Mark your calendar so you won't miss savoring some of the most delicious, beautiful Christmas cookies ever—and even a candy cane or two.

**Note: This is a corrected date. Mark your Calendar!**



## Joseph L. Devlin 1922-2019

by Threse Bonnan

Before there was Joe Devlin, the Trustee and Mayor of Roselle; Joe Devlin, the businessman; Joe Devlin, the husband and father; Joe Devlin, the veteran of WWII; there was Joe Devlin, the patriotic college student at Carnegie Institute of Technology (CIT) in Pittsburgh, PA. Joe attended the college in 1941 because he

wanted to be an engineer. The United States was involved in World War II at the time, and patriotism was alive and well on the college campus. Joe was a member of the War Bonds Committee, helping to sell War Bonds in Pittsburgh to raise funds for the war effort. Joe knew that he wanted to join the military. His goal was to be a part of the U.S. Army Air Corps (now the U.S. Air Force) where he could put his engineering interest into action.

In January 1943, Joe left Pittsburgh, his parents, and his sister, and enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps where he received advanced training as a flight navigator. His squadron was stationed in Northern Africa and flew missions over occupied Europe. Joe was credited with seven missions. Bombardment of the oil fields of Ploesti, Romania, in April 1944, was part of a significant Allied War Strategy. It was on one such mission that Joe became a prisoner of war.

Joe, as a navigator, using the ground radar equipment designed to see the target through the smoke, was on the Ploesti mission. Flack hit the plane and the crew parachuted to safety. Joe's parachute was caught in a tree and he fell the final 50 feet, breaking his right leg. Alone in the woods, Joe set his leg with branches and began walking in hopes of finding other U.S. airmen. He was captured by Romanian farmers who took him to the local police station. After seven days he was transported to Bucharest and interrogated by the Germans. He was then sent to a prisoner of war camp in Bucharest, Romania.

"The sleeping facilities were very crowded, about 21 men in a 24 x 30 room. Mattresses were made of straw and infested with bedbugs and lice. There were no lights in the rooms. During the first six weeks, no water was available for bathing or toilet facilities. We had no change of clothes. The whole place was very unsanitary. No medical care was provided," Joe recalled. During his confinement, Joe lost 60 pounds.

Joe had no communication with his family back in Pittsburgh. For the first five weeks after the attack, Joe

was listed as Missing in Action. When it was discovered that he was in a prisoner of war camp, his family started writing letters to him. He did not receive any of these letters until he escaped the camp.

In August 1944, Romania broke its alliance with Germany and sided with the Allies. Prisoners of war were being moved to Germany. The Romanians, in an attempt to free the allied airmen, led rescue aircraft to a field near Bucharest, beginning a POW airlift to Italy, enabling 1,161 fliers, including Joe Devlin, to be returned to safety. This was considered to be one of the largest prison escapes in World War II history.

Joe received an honorable discharge in 1946 and a Purple Heart. He returned to CIT to complete his mechanical engineering degree using his GI benefits.

Like most veterans of WWII, Joe did not talk a lot about his war experiences. Once he was home he returned to his original plan to become an engineer. His business affiliations brought him to the Roselle area, and he later became the president of an electric and heating company. Joe married Barbara Ann Stieglitz in 1948 and they had three daughters. A natural-born leader and problem solver, Joe became involved in local politics. He served as the Mayor of the Village of Roselle for eight years, as well as a village trustee before and after his terms as mayor. He was a Committeeman for Bloomingdale Township and Commissioner for the Water Commission, DuPage County. The water treatment plant in Roselle bears his name. He was an active member of the American Legion and was Commander of Post 1084 in Roselle from 1969-1970.

The story of Joe's involvement in the war (including photographs) is featured in the book, *In Love with Freedom*, by Steven E. Aavang, published in 2011. The book is available at the Roselle Public Library and on Amazon.

Joe loaned his uniform, photographs, copies of military documents and his medals, including his Purple Heart, to the Roselle History Museum for display in the Veteran's section of the museum.



Joe continued to have vivid memories of those months as a prisoner of war and remembered details of the mission over Ploesti, his interrogation by a Major in the German Army, the prison camp, and the daring escape to Italy until the end of his life. His love for his country never wavered from his college years through his WWII years, and afterward, through his Roselle community service years. Joe never had to brag or boast about his accomplishments. The record speaks for itself. Joe died on October 29 with his family at his side.



## Pastor Charles S. Mueller, Sr. 1929-2019

"We are losing the Giants of our time here on earth."

David W. Smith, former superintendent of Lake Park High School, said it well upon learning of the passing of Rev. Dr. Charles S. Mueller, Sr. "Pastor Senior" passed away on October 30, leaving his wife, Audrey, four children and their spouses, 17 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren.



Charles S. Mueller, Sr.

Pastor Mueller was a contributor to this newsletter on three occasions in the past couple of years. We take the liberty to reprint here his poignant story about Roselle-That-Was that he wrote in Fall 2016.

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### ROSELLE-THAT-WAS (by Charles S. Mueller)



Garrison Keillor, of Lake-woebegone (MN) fame, would be right at home in the Roselle I learned to love after arriving in 1978 to serve Trinity Lutheran Church. The Roselle I came to know was like no community I had experienced before and which now no longer exists except in the memory of some and in stories we pass on.

I was introduced to Roselle-That-Was by longtime residents like Ma (and Pa) Thorsell, Esther Kruse, Leroy and Norma Thiemann, Ed Gieske, Ron Kuhlmann, the Tedrahns, and many others. Patiently and with kindness to all they told me how that world worked then.

Rule #1, then, was that in Roselle-That-Was everyone was related or was connected in one way or another to everyone else. As such they not only practiced, but were community.

Rule #2 was that in some miraculous way, news spreads throughout that community faster than the speed of light. People in Roselle-That-Was were careful about what they said to and about each other—not so much because they were afraid of being caught, but because they were a family that really cared for each other, including the one or two quirky family members everybody knew about and accepted.

As I was learning who was who in the community, I discovered that most whom I came upon in the community's centers (places like the lumberyard, the stores on Main Street, Shirli's Drive-In, Gorski's, Roselle

Bank, Pik-Kwik, Rose Cafe, the shoe repair shop, and the paint store—all now gone) already knew who I was via the local tell-or-phone system. They not only spotted and helped me, but I found that they did the same for other people who were new in town. Everyone functioned as an unofficial but effective Welcome Wagon.

Soon after I arrived I needed a haircut and turned to Ron's Barber shop for his one-of-a-kind trim. His barbershop was where people dropped in to talk, pass around the latest news, banter with Ron and sometimes get a haircut. When I entered I noticed a priest seated who was waiting his turn. I introduced myself and we shook hands. After he left Ron told me he believed that was the first time the local Lutheran pastor and Catholic priest had publicly acknowledged each other. Maybe so. But it certainly wasn't the last as subsequent years of cooperative efforts between Trinity and St. Walter's and St. Isidore's show. I mention this not only to show that the winds of ecumenical change were blowing in Roselle at the clergy level but that healthy and helpful relations among Roselle's various churches were being practiced at the pew level before they were openly exhibited at the pulpit level. The seeds of better things to come were quietly sown in Roselle-That-Was.

(To see Pastor Mueller's other stories, go to [www.rosellehistory.com](http://www.rosellehistory.com), click on Newsletters, and scroll to the Spring 2017 and Spring 2018 issues.)

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PASTOR CHUCK MUELLER, JR. ("Pastor Junior") said, "My father, and Trinity's Pastor Emeritus, "Pastor Senior," was welcomed into heaven to be with Jesus . . . at the age of 90 years after a battle with esophageal cancer. . . My family and I are grieved to have lost him here on earth. Nevertheless, we are celebrating the impact his life had on all of us and the great joy he is experiencing as he beholds his precious Savior face-to-face."

From 1993-1998, Pastor Senior served on the Lake Park High School Board of Education where he exemplified the Lancer mission and was a highly respected colleague.

SHARON HITZEMANN shares: "We have many memories of Pastor Senior; most are personal. However, I do have one I'd like to share. It was a typical Sunday morning, no special service, but Pastor Junior was ill, so he asked his father to please take the service and do the sermon. Pastor Senior had already been retired for several years. After he gave the sermon, the whole congregation stood up and applauded. I have been to many services and have heard over 500 sermons, but that was the first and only time I have ever seen a whole congregation rise to its feet and applaud a sermon."

DIANA ECKERT shares: (He) was one of the main reasons I joined Trinity. I loved his style of preaching. He didn't use any notes and was very down to earth. I was proud that he was so involved in so many aspects of the Lutheran Church. When I attend other Lutheran churches out of state, most know of Charlie Mueller!"

## *Flags for Roselle wins Governor's Hometown Award*



The Flags for Roselle program has won the Governor's Hometown Award for Excellence Through Volunteerism! Brian Joanis (left), Village of Roselle intern, created a video presentation, and he and three FFR representatives described the various aspects of the program during a judging session in Springfield on September 18. Kay Cahill presented the history of the program and discussed the involvement of the History Museum and Lake Park High School. Joyce Benko presented for the American Legion, and Scott Williams presented for the Scouting programs. The awards luncheon will be held on Thursday, November 14, and these four representatives will be there to accept the "project" award on behalf of the Village of Roselle and all the tireless volunteers who have made Flags for Roselle an award-winning program.

### *Flags for Roselle Proceeds - Where Do They Go?*



For the past three years, the **FFR PROGRAM** has distributed its net proceeds evenly to five organizations: The American Legion Charitable Foundation, Lake Park High School Educational Foundation, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, and the Roselle History Museum. We asked each organization to share with readers how they use those funds. Let us count the ways! *(Continued on Page 5)*



## AMERICAN LEGION CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

(Continued from Page 4)

Past Commander Bob Benko reports that Post 1084 distributes all of its proceeds from the FFR program to veterans' programs and organizations, including, but not limited to, the Veterans Network of Illinois, Hines VA Hospital, and American Legion Comfort Warriors. Post 1084 members play an active role in the FFR program and are grateful for the proceeds that help them in their work to help veterans.



## LAKE PARK HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Executive Director Becky Wyatt shared the ways the LPEF is using the FFR proceeds:

- Lancer Emergency Fund: helping to cover the cost of AP Exams and SAT Prep Classes for students with financial need
- Funds for Excellence Grants: providing teachers with grants for innovative programs
- College Scholarships: adding to our Foundation Scholarship Fund which helps us to provide over 30 scholarships worth more than \$25,000



## BOY SCOUT TROOP 408



Maryann Grygiel, Committee Chair for a Roselle Troop and District Advancement Chair, reports that Troop 408 is using the funds as follows:

- to purchase new tents that replaced earlier versions past their life cycle and to support an expanding troop
- to purchase much-needed supplies: propane, charcoal, etc., for camping trips
- to subsidize scouts on monthly outings as well as summer camp (see photo on page 4 of Troop 408 at Camp Freeland Leslie Summer Camp, WI)
- to fund attendance of Troop leaders at summer camp
- to help make a donation to Feed My Starving Children Mobile Packing

"Troop 408 is extremely grateful for the funds received through the Flags for Roselle program and those who worked very hard to make this happen for the scouts."

Assistant Scoutmaster Eric Shutes said, "One of the most special aspects of the FFR program for me is how the proceeds received by the support organizations are utilized to offer other community-wide programs and services—essentially paying it forward—which is outstanding!"

## GIRL SCOUT TROOP 50572

Girl Scout Leader Bonnie Rimer reported that her troop paid it forward in several ways:



- to build a school garden
- to build a monarch way station and prairie garden at Roselle Middle School
- to create a wildlife habitat at Spring Hills School
- to run a book drive to collect books for the Friends of the Library sale
- to purchase backpacks and fill them with supplies for the homeless
- to help an animal shelter and make blankets for the animals

## ROSELLE HISTORY MUSEUM

RHM Treasurer Glenn Spachman reported that the proceeds from the FFR program helped the museum to increase the number of paid hours of the part-time Museum Manager.



## FFR'S VISION FOR 2020!



The new FFR program will be launched December 1. That's when you can subscribe to have a 3x5-foot U.S. Flag installed at your home or business on five holidays next year: Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Patriot Day, and Veterans Day.

Volunteers will install your flag in the early hours of the holiday and return at the end of the day to remove it and return it to the Fire Department, where the firemen store the flags and oversee their care.

Send your \$50 check today: Flags for Roselle, P.O. Box 72001, Roselle, IL 60172. If you prefer to pay online, go to [flagsforroselle.weebly.com](http://flagsforroselle.weebly.com) and scroll to "Donate." Provide your name, address, phone, email, and, if needed, any special installation instructions.

To see how the installation is done, go to the website and scroll to "Instructional Video," for a student-produced presentation by the experts (LPHS students).

Just click it! To volunteer for one or all five holidays, or to have your questions answered, send an email to [flagsforroselle@gmail.com](mailto:flagsforroselle@gmail.com) or call 630-207-1136. Also, visit [facebook.com/FlagsForRoselle](https://facebook.com/FlagsForRoselle).



# *Chicago's Other Team: The Forgotten Chicago Cardinals*

by Tom Piorkowski

There has long been a saying in the Chicagoland area that while baseball divides us, football will bring us back together. Over the spring and summer the loyalties of sports fans are divided between the Cubs and the White Sox, but once fall rolls around, and both those teams are usually long out of it, we can all come together again over our beloved Bears. As the NFL progresses through its 100<sup>th</sup> season, it has been a point of pride that the Bears are one of only two franchises from the first season still playing in the league today.



What is interesting to note though is that Chicago's devotion to football goes deeper as the other team still in existence from that inaugural season is the Arizona Cardinals, who started out their life as the Chicago Cardinals on the city's south side. And while football unites us today, for the first four decades of the league's existence it was just as divisive as baseball when fall rolled around and loyalty to the Cubs shifted to the Bears and loyalty to the White Sox shifted to the Cardinals.

It is easy to forget this early history of the Cardinals because the Cardinals themselves were relatively forgettable during this period. While the Bears became one of the dominant franchises of these early decades of pro football, the Cardinals often had trouble reaching .500. Playing the majority of their seasons out of Comiskey Park they managed only two championships during their time in Chicago. They were able to take home titles in 1925 and 1947, with the former coming only after the Pottsville Maroons were suspended by the NFL and denied the right to claim the championship. Their overall record in Chicago from 1920 to 1959 was 165-248-25, and this total does not include the 1944 season during World War II in which they merged with the Pittsburgh Steelers and finished 0-10.

With that track record, it is easy to see why they were overshadowed by their cross-town rivals. During this same stretch, from 1920-1959, the Decatur Staleys, who would become the Chicago Bears in 1922, enjoyed tremendous levels of success, essentially becoming the NFL's answer to the New York Yankees. They won seven titles over that stretch of time including the 1940 NFL Championship Game by a score of 73-0 over the

Washington Redskins, still the record for largest margin of victory and most points scored by a single team in an NFL game. They were owned by, and coached by for most of this period, George Halas. One of the most revered figures in the history of the league, the championship trophy awarded to the NFC conference champion is named in Halas's honor.

Despite this, the Cardinals made their mark on the NFL in several important ways. Several members of the Chicago Cardinals have been elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

The most prominent of these players was Ernie Nevers, who set the record for most points scored by an individual in an NFL game on November 28, 1929, in a win against the cross-town rival Bears. He scored six touchdowns (a record that has been matched only by the Bears' Gale Sayers almost three decades later) and kicked four extra points to account for all 40 of the Cardinals' points that day.

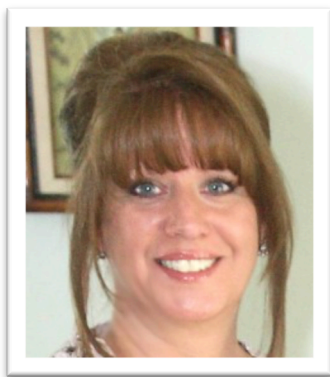
In addition to these achievements, the Cardinals were one of the few teams in the early days of the NFL to employ African American players. The most prominent of these players was Duke Slater, one of only 13 African Americans who played in the NFL prior to World War II and who was regularly the only African American player in the league during his tenure with the Cardinals. By the time he retired in 1931, Slater had been named First Team All-Pro five times and Second Team All-Pro an additional two times.

The Cardinals never did achieve the success of the Bears however, either in the standings or in the ticket booth. Following the 1959 season, facing financial turmoil, the Cardinals moved to St. Louis before finding their way to Arizona for the 1988 season. Since leaving Chicago they have not fared much better, winning no more titles and appearing in only one Super Bowl. Despite this, there is pride to be taken in their legacy. The NFL today is a juggernaut. It is one of the most popular, and therefore profitable, sports leagues in the world. A common joke is that the NFL owns a day of the week. With this in mind, it is almost impossible to fathom a time when the NFL was a tiny upstart league started by men who simply loved the game. It is remarkable to think that the Cardinals, and the city of Chicago, have been there since the beginning.



*One man with conviction will overwhelm a hundred who have only opinions. (Winston Churchill)*





## New Museum Manager

LESLIE DREWITZ assumed the role of Roselle History Museum Manager in September, following the resignation of former manager, Bonnie Rimer.

The part-time position description lists management of the day-to-day operation of the museum, as well as the organization and oversight of its collection.

Leslie is a graduate of the National Institute of Genealogical Studies, University of Toronto, St. Michaels, with a Professional Learning Certification in Genealogical Studies—Librarianship (PLCGS), along with certifications in Archival Studies and Collection Preservation.

Leslie's vision for the Museum is that it becomes a "touch point"—a place for friends to gather for an hour or so for social interaction and to see what the museum is up to lately. The museum is centrally located, so making it a touch point is perfect if you are meeting friends to do some antique shopping two doors down, to go out for lunch or dinner, to do some gift shopping on Main Street, or to check out a book at the library.

She sees a day when young moms will say to their friends, "Let's take the kids to the Museum Campus."

In due time, Leslie wants to see innovative programs geared to children from preschool age to high school. She wants to hear from kids: Who/what sparked your interest in history? Was it a parent, a teacher, a grandma, a veteran, an event?

Now, in her first year, Leslie's priority is to complete the upgrading needed in several of the buildings. She is brimming with ideas that she looks forward to implementing when the upgrades are completed.

In the next few years, Leslie would like to see the museum and Richter House open for visitors during the week as well as on Sundays.

For the past 15 years, Leslie has been employed as a genealogical librarian in the Local History Room of Bloomingdale Public Library. She is the local historian for all documents and artifacts and oversees the Library's Genealogy Club, working individually with patrons and non-patrons of all skill levels who are researching their genealogy. Leslie does special program lectures as well.

In her role as curator for the Bloomingdale Park District Museum, she helps staff members plan the Festival of Lights during the holidays as well as special exhibits.

When time permits, she writes articles for the *DCGS Review* (DuPage County Genealogical Society).

Leslie has worked closely with the Bloomingdale Historical Society on numerous projects with an emphasis on cataloging and preservation. In 2014, she was awarded the DuPage County Historical Society's Award for Excellence. In addition to the listed job responsibilities, she does individual private genealogy contract work.

Leslie and her husband Michael, who currently live in Bloomingdale, have plans to move to Roselle in the near future. Their four grown children, like their parents, are all involved in various areas of community service. Leslie's hobbies include reading, genealogy, gardening, and history. To reach Leslie, call 630-351-5300 or send an e-mail to [rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net) and type her name in the subject line. ~

## President's Report

2019 was a busy and exciting year. Visitors to the museum have been very complimentary of the upgrades we made last year. This year we added a new sink and refrigerator in the small kitchen.



Ray Hitzemann, President

We also held all of our regular events: Historical Evening, Rose Parade float, glow stick sale, Taste of Roselle booth, and Concert on the Porch. New Museum Manager Leslie Drewitz came on board in September.

Closing out the 2019 year is the annual Christmas Open House on December 8.

The RHM thanks the Roselle Garden Club for its donation of plants and volunteer help in the gardens and for its generous donation of \$500 earlier in the year.

We continue to work with the Village to resolve the repair and maintenance issues in the Museum Office building (coach house) and the Sumner House Museum.

Increasing membership remains a challenge, and ways to meet this challenge are being studied by the staff, the Board, and the Core Group. We extend our gratitude to those members who continue to make contributions each year, and especially those who have chosen to increase their donations. Tax-deductible membership contributions are the main source of revenue for the museum.

We look forward to conducting a new program in 2020, Oral Histories of Roselle. We have started gathering the names of residents who would like to participate. If you would like to be a part of this "saving our history" effort, simply call the Museum office (630-351-5300, or email to [rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rosellehistory@sbcglobal.net)). (Ray Hitzemann) ~



ROSELLE HISTORY MUSEUM  
39 E ELM STREET  
ROSELLE IL 60172



## Winter 2019

Nov 11	Flags for Roselle–Veterans Day
Nov 30	Cocoa Crawl
Dec 1	2020 Flags For Roselle Program Opens
Dec 8	Christmas Open House
April 25	Historical Evening



### What Else is New?

#### Cocoa Crawl

Join the Village, Library,  
and Main Street



Merchants to “Celebrate the Season and Small Business” on Nov. 30, 2-5 p.m. Visit the Museum, enjoy some cookies and have your Crawl sheet stamped.

**Cover Picture:** Photog Bonnie Rimer was modest when congratulated on the great shot: “I can’t take all the credit; the lighting and the snow were perfect at that moment.”

### Mark Your Calendar: HISTORICAL

**EVENING** will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2020, at 7 p.m. at the Trinity Lutheran Family Life Center. Heading up the evening’s entertainment will be **RICK PICKREN**, singer-songwriter-actor, presenting an interactive and entertaining musical program. More information in the next newsletter.



### Oral History Interviews: Coming in 2020!

“Everyone Has a Story” – oral history interviews of current and former residents of Roselle.

**Meeting Change Notice:** The November general meeting has been changed to NOVEMBER 16.

#### Mission Statement

To maintain and enhance a historically accurate museum with primary focus on Roselle and surrounding areas

To collect local facts and artifacts of today that will be our village history and pride tomorrow

To provide a dynamic historical and educational resource for our residents and visitors

#### Board of Directors

President: Ray Hitzemann

VP/Treas: Glenn Spachman

Secretary: Tom Piorkowski

Members: Milan Bagel,  
Joan Beauprez, Hank Kvintus,  
Walter Lotz

Museum Manager: Leslie Drewitz

#### General Meetings

Second Saturday of the Month  
10-11:30 a.m. – 39 E. Elm

#### Museum Hours

Sundays 2-4 p.m.  
Other times by appointment

#### Newsletter Deadlines

Feb 1 – May 1 – Aug 1 – Nov 1  
Editor: [kaycahill@comcast.net](mailto:kaycahill@comcast.net)