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## **Century of stories : a 100 year reflection of Janesville and surrounding communities. 2000**

DuPre', Mike

[Janesville, Wisconsin]: [Janesville Gazette], 2000

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# CENTURY OF STORIES

*A 100 year reflection of  
Janesville and  
Surrounding Communities*



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**Cover Photo:** In a festive return to Rock County, some 600 soldiers, sailors and Marines who served in World War I, marched down Janesville's Milwaukee Street on Oct. 8, 1919.

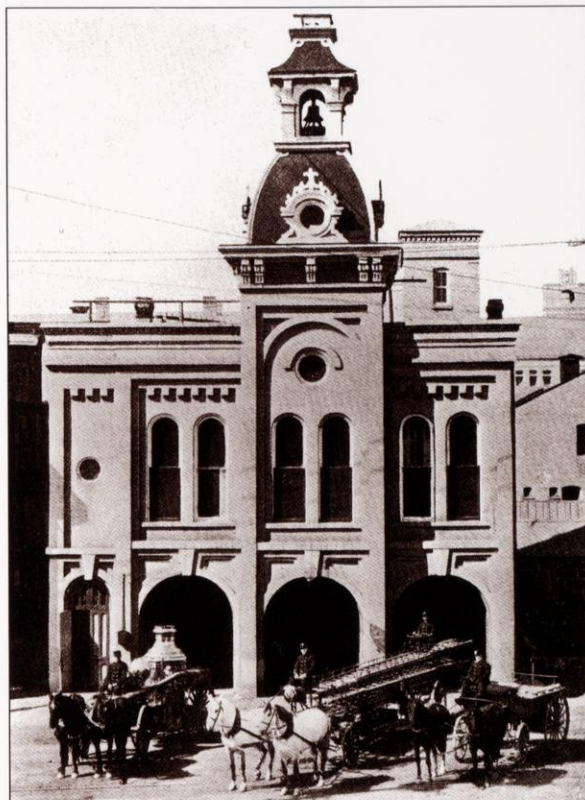


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WISCONSIN  
AUTHOR







# CENTURY OF STORIES

*A 100 year reflection of Janesville and  
Surrounding Communities*

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# FORWARD

The manuscript, originally written by the author, was first published in the year 1910. The author, in writing this book, and while that was his first, was not alone in his efforts.

Long the way, many of the friends of the author, and many of the friends of the author, have been the help of the author, and the author, in the year 1910, was not alone in his efforts.

I believe that the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts.

The author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts.

With much love

*Dedicated to the memory of Mooch, Corky and Silvio*

The author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts.

The author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts.

The author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts, and the author, in writing this book, was not alone in his efforts.

With much love

With much love





# FORWARD

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We newspaper reporters rush breathlessly from one event to the next. We battle to meet deadlines, and when that doesn't work, we battle our editors to bend the deadlines.

Along the way, we try to put the deeds of the day in perspective...to tell our readers why these events are important to their lives. And, knowing we can never be perfectly objective reporting machines, we strive to be fair.

I learned a lot about fairness from Mike DuPre'. When I was a rookie editor and Mike was already a veteran journalist, having been both reporter and editor, I wrote a headline about the employee of a local business being convicted of some crime.

Fellow employees had written letters of support for the accused, so I felt justified in noting the employer in the headline. It read something like "Acme Cogwheels employee convicted."

Mike didn't like it.

"The headline was accurate," I defended myself, feeling confident I had done the right thing.

It was accurate, sure, Mike agreed. But it wasn't fair.

Mike was saying we had smeared all the employees...and maybe the company, too...because of one person's misdeeds. And where the person worked was irrelevant to what he had done.

It was a lesson I never forgot.

I don't always agree with Mike. But he is one of the best, most tenacious battlers for truth and fairness in the daily journalism game I've ever met.

He is deadly serious about getting the news right, getting it fair and getting it balanced. But he knows that's not enough. He knows we must write compelling stories, stories people will read with gusto not just because of what is told, but how it's told.

Mike is a storyteller who knows a good yarn. He's also a veteran of 25 years in the journalism game, most of those in Janesville. He knows southern Wisconsin like few others ever have.

For these reasons, he was a great choice to write "Century of Stories." However, I must admit that I envied him and coveted this project.

I love history, and like most reporters, I long to make a mark in this world that lasts longer than the usual daily flashes in the pan. But writing something of such significance usually takes time...a journalist's most prized possession. Our bosses at The Janesville Gazette agreed to give Mike a year in which to produce this book. Few newspapers of our size have ever or will ever make such a commitment.

But the commitment paid off, and you're holding it in your hands. It is an uncommon work from an uncommon journalist.

Mike not only has lot of local history rattling around in his head; he also knows that newspaper people are subject to foibles and errors, prejudices and compromises, just like everybody else.

Who better to sift through The Janesville Gazette's reports of the past 100 years, winnowing wheat from chaff?

Read "Century of Stories" in small bites, knowing it's not some hodgepodge of news bits plucked from random pages. Each item was selected by a master journalist who also has a sense of history...a sense of what's important and interesting.

Enjoy.

— Frank Schultz

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Many people and sources made “Century of Stories” possible, not the least of which was the management of The Janesville Gazette.

Editor Scott Angus, Managing Editor Barb Uebelacker and General Manager David Johnson got behind the project and did not flinch when it involved more time, money and column inches than originally anticipated.

Uebelacker also was the primary editor for “Century of Stories” and regularly devoted extra time to catching not only mistakes in grammar and syntax but also holes and incongruities in the stories.

Published sources for the material were diverse.

“The American Century” by Harold Evans provided the overarching historical context, and The World Book Encyclopedia and The Rand McNally Encyclopedia of World War II answered specific questions.

“City on the Rock River: Chapters in Janesville’s History,” written for the Janesville Historic Commission by Carol Lohry Cartwright, Randal Waller and Scott Shaffer, proved a most valuable resource.

Also providing valuable information were other locally written chronicles: “History of the Janesville Fire Department” by Judy (Hladky) Sheridan; “UAW 50 Years” by Richard Costerisan, Howard A. Milbrandt and John O’Meara, and “The Janesville 99” by Dale R. Dopkins.

The Rock County Historical Society, Hedberg Public Library and city of Janesville

also provided information and, in the case of the library and historical society, photographs and posters to illustrate “Century of Stories.”

“Century of Stories” would not have been nearly as complete without local voices offering context and comment, and I’d like to thank all the people who graciously gave their time to be interviewed.

Several were centenarians, and of those, three regularly contributed: Mae Thompson, Evansville; Ella Dunbar, Footville, and Mayme Simonsen, Janesville. In the course of the year it took to research and write “Century of Stories,” Dunbar, 103, and Simonsen, 102, passed away. I’m grateful to have been able to share their recollections with Gazette readers.

The heart and soul of “Century of Stories” were Century Notes, and for the bulk of them, I am indebted to the staff of The Janesville Gazette, past and present, because it was their work that I researched and encapsulated.

Several past and present staff members directly contributed to “Century of Stories,” either in the form of previous stories that were republished or new articles created specifically for the retrospectives.

My thanks to Jeff Bollier, Marcia Nelesen, Stan Milam, Anna Marie Lux, Judy Immel and especially Sid Schwartz, who stepped up many times to help.

Beverly Mink, newsroom clerk/typist, helped considerably by retyping stories previously published.

A special thank-you goes to Andrew Beaumont, who designed “Century of Stories” in its newspaper form and helped find and select much of the artwork. Besides his graphic duties, Beaumont also edited copy, wrote headlines and photo captions and offered a big shoulder to lean on when the hours got long.

Another special thanks goes to my life companion, Anna Lee Moss, for all the time I spent with microfilmed newspapers, time I could have spent with her.

Finally a thank-you to the folks at Terry Printing...especially the Terrys, Jack, Mark and Mary...for seeing the potential of “Century of Stories” as a book and for the talent and time they devoted to making it a reality.

– Mike DuPre’

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# PREFACE

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The idea for “Century of Stories” germinated in shoptalk at the Gazette newsroom Christmas party in 1998.

A few of us were talking about the annual chore of publishing the Progress edition, when I said, “What are we gonna do next year, when everybody thinks it’s the end of the century?”

Eyes widened. Chatter stopped. Beer was gulped instead of sipped.

“We could do a 100-inch story with one item from each year,” I suggested and watched Barb Uebelacker, then the news editor, blanch.

From journalism school on, we’ve been drilled: “Be concise. Write short stories.”

And getting enough space for such a long story isn’t easy. But “Century of Stories” became much more than a single story.

A few days later, I suggested to Editor Scott Angus that we make the annual Progress edition a century recap. But he pointed out that the Gazette is a for-profit business that wants more, rather than fewer, revenue opportunities.

Well, I countered, if we’re going to do this right, it will take all year. We could publish the retrospective in 10 monthly installments, one for each decade. That would give us 10 chances to sell advertising and newspapers.

Angus pitched the idea to General Manager Dave Johnson and other department heads. They liked it.

The problem with any good idea is that it always degenerates into a lot of hard work. It was my idea, so it became my project.

I was not a “history buff.” But I guess I appeared that way because I suggested and wrote many articles about local veterans’ experiences in World War II.

I envisioned a graphically oriented, horizontally structured time line of local history to accompany similar time lines of the last century’s accomplishments and failures in science, industry, entertainment, national and international affairs. Accompanying them would be an overview and a feature story or two about the more interesting or influential local folks and happenings.

At the same time we were hashing out the concept, we learned that a news syndicate was offering what we needed: decade-by-decade recaps of the 20th century’s national and international personalities, events and trends. But the syndicate’s retrospectives were in classic, vertical newspaper style, so we decided to follow that format.

The process meant finding nuggets of news, or notes, and not just of what the city council or county board did or didn’t do.

We published the first eight-page section March 27.

That’s when the readers essentially took over. Their response startled us. When people dislike an article, we might get three or four calls. When they like a story, we might get one or two.

Over the next four days, no fewer than a dozen readers called to ask if they had missed a section or when the next one was coming out.

They loved the notes. Especially the obscure or quirky items about people’s idiosyncrasies, foibles and follies. Just as with contemporary news, readers appreciated most the stuff that prompted them to say, “Hey, listen to this!”...even if it wasn’t about some earthshaking event.

In all our collective years in the newspaper business, we had not seen such a positive response. So we responded to with more notes and more stories.

The folks at Terry Printing of Janesville saw what the Gazette was doing, and Mark Terry approached the newspaper about forming a partnership to turn the 10 newspaper sections into a book. That, too, was part of my original idea, but while the Gazette has plenty of experience publishing newspapers, it has little experience publishing books.

Terry Printing provided the expertise and equipment to transform “Century of Stories” into this book.

Local history provided more than enough material and is the sole subject of this book. The Gazette purchased the news syndicate’s national and international retrospectives, but the deal was for one-time publication.

---

Janesville and Rock County have pasts more interesting than I and probably most Gazette readers realized. The fact that the city was a bustling rail center made for plenty of visits by politicians, entertainers and celebrities.

Many presidents and presidential candidates stopped, spoke and visited here. Some of the most prominent musicians of the 20th century performed here, including composer and bandleader John Philip Sousa, cellist Pablo Casals and violinist Jascha Heifetz.

And because it was a rail hub, Janesville attracted hard-working immigrants to tend to the engines, rails and switches. The city also lured gamblers, drifters, prostitutes and thieves intent on relieving rail workers, merchants and anyone else of their money.

The celebrities and leaders, crooks and creeps spiced up life already fascinating because of local folks' ideas, inventions and endeavors. George S. Parker's Lucky Curve pen is just one example.

Janesville, Rock County and the rest of southern Wisconsin kept growing before my eyes. More people...and all that goes with them: more industry, more commerce, more schools, more churches, more entertainment, more politics. More of what was then news, good and bad, and what became history to us.

The research required focus and limits. That's why most notes and stories on business and industry concentrate on Janesville. It's why I could not list all of Janesville schools' conference championships or name every city council and school board member.

I made mistakes, big and small. We think we've caught them all...at least those we realized or were made aware of...in this book.

What I learned and, I hope, the readers learned was that Janesville and the area were as integral a part of the 20th century as London, Berlin, Moscow or Washington, D.C. What happened here reflected and affected what was happening elsewhere. People from here were changed by the world, and they changed it.

Janesville was no worse...and often much better...than many other American cities.

Janesville was prejudiced against immigrants, blacks and other minorities. But, while the Ku Klux Klan poked its ignorant, hateful head out here in the 1920s and 1990s, no one was lynched because of race. Janesville was the site of an ugly lynching on July 12, 1855, but the reason was a brutal murder, not skin color.

Those prejudices were reflected in the Gazette's reporting and writing, and therefore, some of the Century Notes contain language—always in quote marks to denote the material is exactly as originally published—that is objectionable today. Such terms and phrases were included to show the biases of past eras. In the 1990s, the city's enlightened residents denounced racism and rejected racists.

For decades, women could not be legally served at bars in Janesville as the city moved away from a boozing, bawdy reputation. But women played strong, constructive roles in civilizing the brawny, brawling railroad town...even before they could vote.

Crime. Greed. Gangs. Alcohol and drug abuse. Janesville was not exempt from society's ills. But Janesville also stood up for itself and what was right.

The United Auto Workers' 1937 sit-down strike at the General Motors plants in the city showed intelligence and courage.

The bravery and patriotism of southern Wisconsin's sons and daughters in the century's wars stand as shining examples of what Americans can do when faced with horror and hardship. No one can know the World War II story of The Janesville 99 without feeling admiration and sorrow. Local people proved generous.

They helped each other and others, whether victims of the San Francisco Earthquake in 1906 or the Rock County tornado in 1911, whether soldiers far from home in Europe and Vietnam or refugees fleeing the fighting in their home countries, whether to renovate the public library or build a new Boys & Girls Club.

As you read this book, I, the reluctant historian, ask you to reflect on the past, hope for the future and live in the present.

– Mike DuPre'







# 1900-1909

## ALL ABOARD THE, TWENTIETH CENTURY

### Janesville bustles with business as century born

*The 20th century dawned on a Janesville that was bustling with industry and commerce, a city that worked hard with its hands and its head, a city very different but still much the same as today's community.*

The community was 65 years old, still very much the city that grew from an agricultural village but a city that was building the industry that would sustain it and propel it forward in the decades to come.

Janesville was a major rail hub, and railroads were at the heart of the city's industry and the commerce that it supported.

In 1902, 64 passenger trains arrived and departed daily at the city's depots. In addition, countless freight trains brought in raw materials for the city's factories and hauled finished products to markets from coast to coast.

Many of the city's 13,000-plus residents worked on the railroads—passenger, freight and the interurban line that linked southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois cities.

The Janesville Gazette ran a regular column of railroad news under the standing headline Link and Pin. Janesville voters saw and heard many presidential candidates because the whistle-stop was the chief campaign tool of the time.

Trains brought the world—good and bad—to Janesville.

Traveling shows enhanced the city's entertainment and culture. Performers at the Myers Grand Opera House included stars of vaudeville and the New York stage.

But sharpies, smoothies and grifters also arrived by rail and lightened the wallets of gullible locals through artful cons. Restless youth and faithless spouses rode the trains to run from Janesville.

Railroads made Janesville's economy pulse with money and work, but the tracks exacted a price in blood and bone.

Hardly a month went by that the Gazette did not report a local person killed on the rails or maimed by the loss of a limb.

The United States was still rawboned in the 20th century's first decade.

The conquest of the West was still fresh in the country's collective memory, and the

United States was entering its own imperialistic phase. It just won the Spanish-American War and inherited a rebellion and jungle warfare in the former Spanish colony of the Philippine Islands.

The Janesville Gazette periodically reported the return of veterans from the Philippine campaign.

Workers nationwide endured terrible working conditions under the robber barons of industry, and the workers struggled to organize unions to fight for their rights.

Violence was common—but not in Janesville.

Elsewhere, workers fought with goon squads hired by companies to break up the fledgling unions. In 1900, when the young women

**Left: Workers remove stumps while clearing the site for the Colvin Baking Co. on Milwaukee Street in Janesville in 1906. The steeple of St. Mary's Church dominated the city's skyline.**

**Right: Theodore Roosevelt makes a speech from the back of a train during a whistlestop tour that passed through Janesville near the turn of the century. Being a rail hub, Janesville was a popular stop for many politicians.**





working at a Janesville cotton mill went on strike for better pay, they implored the Gazette reporter not to describe their job action as a strike.

The century started with the assassination of President William McKinley in 1901, and violence and assassination settled a political score in Kentucky.

In Kansas, the question of alcohol vs. prohibition sparked riots, spawned murder and mayhem and fueled the burning of saloons and at least one church in retaliation.

In the late 19th century, Janesville was home to one of the leaders of the temperance movement, Frances Willard. But in the 20th century's first decade, four breweries and more than 40 saloons slaked Janesville's thirst. Many residents, both prominent and proletarian, campaigned to prohibit alcohol, but disputes were settled in court, not on the street.

Most of the drugs that are illegal today were legal in the century's first years and often were included in the patent medicines that were advertised as cures for virtually every ailment.

Drug abuse occasionally was cited as the reason for a crime or outrageous incident. Users of the Sears, Roebuck catalog could order legal opium from one page and the cure for opium or morphine addiction from another.

Then, as now, alcohol was the chief accomplice when emotions boiled into violence.

Lynchings, almost entirely of black men for purported assaults on white women, were common across the South and mid-South.

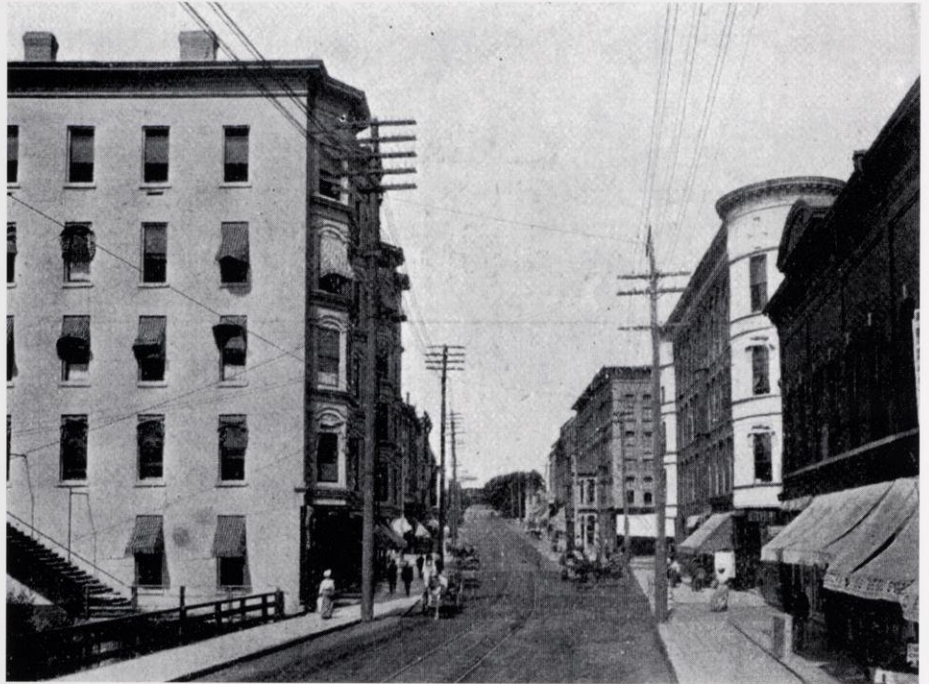
A scan of Gazette editions showed that while Janesville had a hefty share of bar brawls and street fights, most of the rare and serious violence originated in domestic situations—as it does today.

American-born, not immigrant, settlers founded Janesville in 1835. In the mid-19th century, Irish, English and Norwegian immigrants infused new blood into the community, but a wave of German immigration made Germans the largest immigrant segment of Janesville's population by 1880.

Enough African-Americans settled in Janesville after the Civil War to raise money for a Methodist church, which was never built, but by the 19th century's end, the black population in both Janesville and Rock County had dropped significantly.

The turn of the century found the United States emerging from a depression and experiencing a flood of immigrants. More than 12 million immigrants arrived in the United States between 1890 and 1910. In the century's first decade, 9 million of them arrived looking for work and a better life.

For those reasons—and one group's inher-



**A turn of the century view of downtown Janesville, looking east down Milwaukee Street from the bridge.**

ent distrust of another—society was preoccupied with ethnicity and race. At best, people referred to and described others by their ethnicity and race. At worst, they heaped abuse and scorn on the newcomers.

Irish immigrants suffered most of the indignities that blacks had endured, and, in their turn, blacks and Irish dished out the same to Italians.

It was a time when a mentally ill person would be described simply as a “maniac” or “lunatic.”

Janesville was no exception, and terms that today are derogatory regularly found their way into the Gazette's pages.

But Janesville appeared to be no worse and probably a lot better than cities elsewhere. No blacks were lynched here, and public sentiment was opposed to the barbaric practice. In 1904, federal courts investigated lynchings, and in reporting the story one of the Gazette's headline read: “They must protect the black.”

And while the city's sensitivities were a long way from where they are today, the city was generous in its charity, raising money for the victims of the San Francisco Earthquake, for example.

The Janesville Machine Co., the city's largest employer during the century's first decade, is a perfect example of the city's past evolving into its future. With roots in a small shop founded in 1859, Janesville Machine made agricultural implements—plows, cultiva-

tors and the like—that were used by farmers here and throughout the country.

In the century's second decade, the new and growing General Motors Corp. would buy Janesville Machine, and the city would join the dozens of American communities eventually dependent on the cyclical automotive industry.

But from 1900 through 1909, Janesville's economy was quite diversified.

Factories hummed and clanked on River and Franklin streets downtown and near where the GM plant is today, what was then the “suburb” of Spring Brook.

Businesses, shops, offices, saloons and pool halls jammed Milwaukee and Main streets. Many were built on the wooden bridge that carried Milwaukee Street traffic—horses, buggies, wagons, pedestrians and a growing number of automobiles—over the Rock River.

Farmers still harvested crops and raised livestock within city limits.

Many of the Rock River-powered mills that made the city prosper had closed or were closing, but city workers manufactured furniture, barbed wire and porch shades. They made clothes, shoes and fancy pearl buttons. They brewed beer, bottled water and mixed soda pop.

City companies warehoused tobacco, rolled cigars and made the boxes they were sold in.

Janesville craftsmen made saddles and carriages. And they made cars—for Owen Thom-



as Automobile and Wisconsin Carriage, later Wisconsin Motor Car—years before GM became a corporate citizen.

City workers turned out heavy machinery and fireless ovens.

They quarried stone, made bricks and spun cotton and wool into cloth.

The Parker Pen Co. was expanding its business overseas, and copycat companies tried to emulate its burgeoning success.

Conditions for industrial workers often were miserable, and pay could be poor. Industrial accidents killed and crippled many workers. Unions were forming here, but they had little muscle to flex.

At the century's start, Janesville was evolving from country town to an urban city. It began to pave its roads and dig sanitary and storm sewers. It built its first city hall, permanent post office and library.

The school system grew with new buildings and programs, such as kindergarten.

Fire and police departments expanded.

Increases in taxes accompanied the increase in city facilities and services, and, not surprisingly, complaints about municipal government also increased. The concerns would lead to reforms that still serve the city well today.

Electricity lighted street lamps and began to supplant gaslights in businesses and homes. City residents had been using telephones for two decades, and in the century's first decade, two phone companies competed for local business.

Then, as now, the city was a regional shopping center.

Then, as now, the city was generally conservative. A 1902 reflection on Janesville says in part: "It is far enough from Madison not to be contaminated by the intellectual and political degeneracy of that capital. ..."

Further indicating that conservatism are Gazette stories in 1904 trumpeting local attorney Malcolm J. Jeffris' efforts to denigrate Wisconsin governor Bob LaFollette.

LaFollette, of course, today is recognized for championing progressive and reform government.

But while women did not yet have the vote, Angie Josephine King, a Janesville resident, became only the third woman lawyer in Wisconsin in 1879. In 1902, King was listed among the city's "prominent attorneys."

Then, as now, business was the city's driving force, both in the public eye and behind the scenes. Businessmen sought to attract companies and keep existing enterprises from leaving.

In 1909, a group of businessmen, not politicians, discussed whether limiting saloons should be an election issue. Their overriding

attitude was: "As long as business is good, do nothing to change the status quo."

Then, as now, rivalry existed between the city's east and west sides. Businessmen and professionals generally lived east of the Rock River. Tradesmen, servants and laborers lived on the west side and referred to the east-siders as "the hill crowd" because of their large houses on Courthouse Hill.

Then, as now, residents worshiped in their respective churches, sent their children to school and fretted over how the kids would turn out.

Then, as now, Janesville folks played base

ball, football, basketball and golf for recreation, though golf scores were a lot higher and basketball scores a lot lower than they are today.

Then, as now, men worried over impotence, and women thought their breasts were too small. But in the early 1900s, the Heidelberg Electric Belt, not Viagra, was a cure for impotence, and "Bust Cream or Food" and electrolysis were advertised for bust development.

As the 20th century dawned, Janesville had its feet on the ground, its hands on the job and its eyes on the future.

## It isn't all fun and games for kids at turn of the century Strict rules keep youngsters in line

If you were a kid when the centuries turned, you really did walk to school, where you were expected to study hard and do well.

And you were expected to work. You either helped your family or moved away from a home with too many mouths to feed to work elsewhere.

Those are some of the recollections of centenarians living in the Janesville area.

Born Aug. 15, 1897, in Tomah, Hazel Hanson recalled helping her mother with household chores.

"I liked to stay busy," said Hanson, a resident of Premier Rehab in Beloit. "I helped my mother with little things. I dusted."

But when her mother became ill, Hanson, the youngest of six children, assumed all the household responsibilities. It's probably no surprise that she married young.

"I was 15 or 16," she recalled.

Another Premier Rehab resident, Aizle Dawes, was 106 in 1999.

One of seven children in a poor family, Dawes moved in with her grandparents to lighten the load on her mother and father. Dawes' grandparents owned a small fruit farm outside Lexington, Ill.

"My grandparents were elderly, and I was a good help," Dawes said. "Mostly I made berry boxes. I'd sit in the backyard on a little stool with a tack hammer. I'd fold the boxes and tack 'em. I made berry boxes galore.

"I drove the (horse-drawn) buggy to town and delivered them to the fruit grocer."

Fred Linenberg was born Oct. 9, 1897, in Monroe County. He, too, lived at Premier Rehab in Beloit.

The Linenbergs had 11 children, and as was often the practice with large rural families, Fred went to live and work on another

farm when he was a boy.

"I worked on a big farm, 400 acres of good land. When I was 9 years old, I went to stay with them. Dad had worked for them for a while," Linenberg recollected.

"I did everything everybody else did. They had two hired men. They told me I'd be another hired man. I'd get up in the morning and do work like everybody else, milk cows, stuff like that. I got up around 4:30 or 5 a.m. It didn't bother me.

"I could go home now and then. I was there about 30 years. I learned about machinery. There was a lot of stuff I had to learn. I was an auto mechanic, auto and truck."

Linenberg, the fifth child, attended a one-



**"We used to ride the horse and buggy to high school. We put it up at the livery stable on High Street."**

**— Mayme Simonsen, Janesville native**



room schoolhouse.

"We had an Irish woman for a teacher. She wasn't a very good teacher. They could hire her cheap," he said. "A lot of time I was the only kid in school. Around Christmastime, it got cold, and the other kids wouldn't come. I only had a little ways to go. I'd walk a quarter mile. We had a neighbor who was on the school board, and his kid didn't come."

Linenberg did not attend high school.

"Eighth grade is as far as I went," he said. "The rest I learned by myself. You can do that self-learning. I learned to be a mechanic."

Mayme Simonsen, 102, a Janesville native, lived in the skilled nursing unit at Cedar Crest in Janesville.

When she was 6, Simonsen walked a mile and a half to a one-room schoolhouse from her family's dairy farm on County A.

Children "were expected to do their work and learn," she said.

As she grew older, she helped teach the younger children "just everything."

When she was in fourth grade, however, Simonsen stayed with her grandparents on Yuba Street so she could attend a city school because her mother was not satisfied with the one-room schoolhouse.

Simonsen remembered riding the trolley to school. One winter morning, her grandfather shoveled her way through a few snow-filled

blocks to the school.

Simonsen would help prepare Sunday dinner, which was "mostly chicken. My father would cut the head off the chicken and bring it in. I would make pies and everything when I wasn't very old. I used to peel the potatoes."

But unlike many of her contemporaries, Simonsen did not have many chores to do. Hiring household servants was common even for middle-class families, and Simonsen's family was fairly set financially because her father had sold a drugstore he operated in Chicago with his brother.

Her father used the money to buy the farm, and the family was able to hire hands to help with the farm work and a girl to help around the house.

"The only thing I ever did was at haying time," Simonsen recalled. "I drove the horse and put the hay in the loft. I thought it was fun. My brother was supposed to help—but he didn't always."

And because her family lived in the country, they did not have electricity as people living in Janesville did.

"I used to clean the oil lamps in the morning," Simonsen said.

She learned to handle a horse and buggy when she "was just a kid. ... We used to ride the horse and buggy to high school. We put it up

at a livery stable on High Street."

At that time, Janesville High School was in a Romanesque-building—no longer standing—at 58 S. High.

For entertainment, "we used to have gatherings in the house. We'd take up the rug and do some dancing," Simonsen said.

As for music, "there always seemed to be somebody who could do it, the fiddlers, a banjo. I just loved to dance."

For boyhood recreation, Linenberg "would run around the woods with the dogs, stuff like that. I was not a hunter. I'd get lost, and the dog would know the way home."

Hanson remembered playing ball and cards and listening to the relatively new invention of the phonograph as childhood recreation.

Her parents were strict, Hanson said, but her dad was loathe to punish her physically.

"My dad would say, 'You need a spanking, but I'll let the next fellow do it,'" she recalled. "It was different in those days. My dad never slapped me. My mother did, but not very often."

Even more strict were Dawes' grandparents, who were devout Christians.

"I never drank or smoked," Dawes said. "My grandparents were old-fashioned. Grandpa wouldn't allow anything like that. My grandparents didn't believe in dancing. My grandparents never let a card in the house."



# 1900-1909

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1900

■ **Jan. 2:** A weekly subscription to The Janesville Daily Gazette costs 12 cents. Telephone number for Dedrick Bros. grocery is 9.

■ **Jan. 4:** "Bad Police System Lets Man Get Away" is the nowhere-near-objective headline on a story of an employee at Buob's

Brewery, Janesville, stealing \$4 and a silver watch from other employees engaged in the annual ice harvest. The employees cannot find an officer, even after using the telephone to call the jail, hotels, livery stables and drug stores in search of a cop. A similar story runs a couple of days later when residents can't find an officer to investigate the theft of brass fittings from boats.

■ **Jan. 6:** "What Women Are Doing" column reports some of the activities engaged in by members of the "unquiet sex." The article goes on to cite women in manly endeavors such as athletics, editing a newspaper, running a mill and carrying a sandwich sign.

■ **Jan. 8:** "For the larceny of a five-dollar overcoat, James Larson was this morning sentenced to 30 days hard labor in the Rock County Jail.

"Larson is but 19 years of age."

■ **Jan. 15:** 500 attend a meeting of Frances Murphy Temperance League at YMCA. Jacob Friend tells the audience that "vile liquor no longer holds any temptation for him" and he can walk past a saloon just as easily as a telegraph pole.

■ **Jan. 17:** 100 "girls" employed at the Monterey mill by the Janesville Cotton Mills strike for higher wages. They contend other cotton workers are paid higher wages and that they are needed because Janesville has a shortage of female workers. A committee of four "good-looking young ladies" is appointed to talk to management, but to no avail. Within three days, all the women are hired by tobacco warehouses.

■ The county school superintendent says an unnamed teacher should be getting a good night's rest, not out dancing, on a school night. One board member says teachers can do as they please, including sit up all night with their lovers, as long as they tend to business in the morning.

■ **Jan. 23:** The Rock County Jail, a new brick building, is completed at 104 Water, Janesville. The 1900 jail replaces a stone jail that was built in 1857 at 108 Water and which is demolished after the new jail is complete. In 1950-51, the jail is again replaced—by a building at 108 Water that in 1999 was being renovated into offices.

■ **Jan. 26:** 55 Janesville "sports" attend cock fights in Madison. Janesville money covers most of the bets; Janesville birds win three of five matches.

■ **January:** Janesville High School finishes the two-game basketball season of 1899-1900. The local boys split a pair of games with Wau-

kesha, winning the second game 18-17. Gazette notes that the star Waukesha player is "colored."

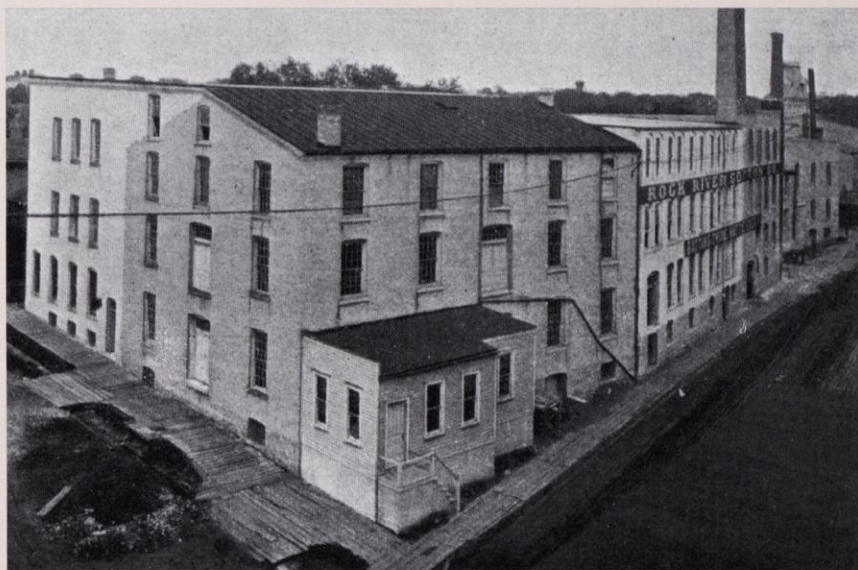
■ **June 15:** Fire destroys the Wisconsin Carriage Co. plant on Wall Street. Damage amounts to \$18,000. Not to be confused with its rival, Janesville Carriage Works, the company builds a four-story factory at 600 W. Milwaukee to continue making buggies and wagons.

■ **Aug. 10:** Two trainmen—engineer E. P. Slater and fireman Augie Abnedroth—are killed in a collision between a passenger train and an engine.

■ **Sept. 10:** Fire again wreaks havoc, destroying the Choate-Hollister Furniture Co.,



**Victor P. Richardson, mayor of Janesville at the turn of the century**



**Rock River Cotton Co. was one of three cotton mills operating in Janesville at the turn of the century.**

## Workers don't cotton to low wages

One hundred "girls" employed at the Monterey mill by the Janesville Cotton Mills struck for higher wages on Jan. 17, 1900. They contended cotton workers at Rock River Cotton and the Janesville Batten Co. were paid higher wages. The young women also argued that they were needed because Janesville had a shortage of female workers.

A committee of four "good-looking young ladies" was appointed to talk to management. Doing piece work, the women earned as much as \$40 a month and "don't know how good they've got it," the company said,

"because they are paid more than at other local cotton mills and as well as some men with families."

The women argued their monthly pay averaged \$20. Within three days, all the women were hired by tobacco warehouses.

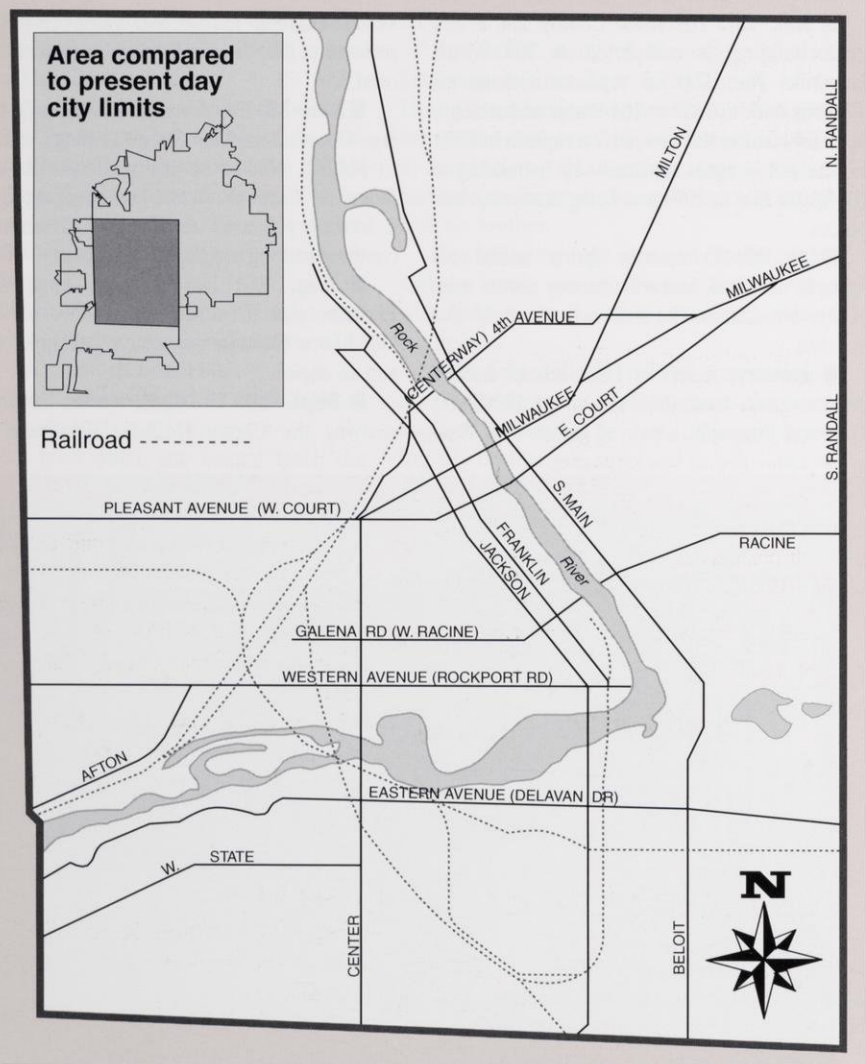
Forty male workers at the cotton mills refused to return to work under the "old conditions."

But by Feb. 1, they were back on the job under the old conditions.

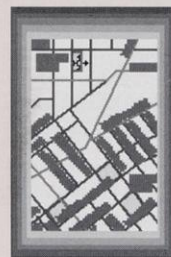
Despite losing more than two-thirds of its work force, the company claimed victory.



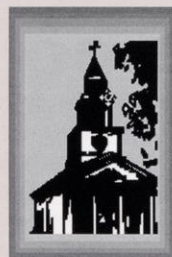
# Janesville in 1900



**Janesville's city limits in 1910.**  
Some of the street names have changed since then.



**Area of city:**  
7.25 square miles



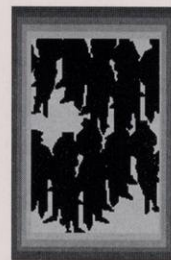
**Number of churches:** 15



**Number of schools:** 11.  
Two are high schools, one public, the other parochial. Nine are elementary, seven public and two parochial.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 0  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 0  
**Miles of water mains:** 20.38



**Population:** 13,185



**\$1 in 1900 has buying power of \$19.43 in 1999**

maker of dining room tables, near Spring Brook. Loss estimated at \$18,000.

■ **November:** The Gazette endorses Republican William McKinley for president. McKinley wins his second term but is assassinated a year later.

■ **Sometime in 1900:** Rock County dairy farmers produce 3.7 million pounds of butter and cheese, almost double the 2 million pounds they produced 20 years earlier.

■ Burr Springs Bottling Co. does just as its name describes, bottles and sells water from a spring just north of Janesville in what is now

Riverside Park. At least one optimistic observer predicts the start of spring-based spas to comfort and heal the ailing. Burr Springs water won recognition in the Columbia Exposition of 1893 in Chicago, but no spa develops.

■ Janesville Cotton Manufacturing Co., which was the first cotton mill in north-central United States in 1874, shuts its factory at 220 N. Franklin. Several other manufacturers will use the buildings on the site until they are renovated into apartments in 1985.

■ The Irish American Star, a weekly newspaper with a Catholic affiliation, starts and stops

publishing in Janesville. The Wisconsin Druggist Exchange, a monthly trade publication, ceases publication after an eight-year run.

■ Jackson Elementary School is built at 423 W. Eastern, a street now called Delavan Drive. The building eventually is demolished.

■ In a sure sign of the century to come, the fledgling Janesville Electric Co. buys Ford's Flouring Mill and demolishes the mill to make room for a power plant. The mill, an example of Janesville's first important industry, is a link to the past. Electricity will power the future.





Patrons enjoy a drink at the City Beer Hall in Janesville. In 1900, Janesville's population was less than 14,000 people, but the city had nearly 50 saloons.

## 1901

■ **Jan. 1:** Janesville and Rock County residents celebrate the arrival of the 20th century. Unlike their descendants, people at the turn of the century realize that a new century starts with a year ending in 01, not 00.

■ **Jan. 15:** The Gazette prints an obituary for Colonel, a beloved fire horse. The "handsome, docile, intelligent colt," originally trained for the circus, changed from dapple gray to pure white with age. "Too old to make good time at fires," Colonel became the chief's personal horse about a year before his death. Firefighters mourn his loss.

■ **Feb. 1:** The California Limited advertises "Carry Your Golf Clubs to California ... Follow Your Fad in Winterless California." By train, of course.

■ **Feb. 8:** J.M. Bostwick & Sons, local retailers, in response to a call from Marzluff & Co. for a larger factory, proclaim that they are willing to erect a building for any good manufacturing company.

■ **Feb. 9:** Published tax list shows First National Bank (Bank One) paying the most property tax for a business, \$2,310, and A.P. Lovejoy, lumberman, carpenter and investor, pays most for an individual, \$1,654.

■ **Feb. 13:** Charles Hudson, foreman at Welch's tobacco warehouse, is laid up and suffering considerable pain because of a snowball that hit him in the eye.

"There is nothing to indicate malice back of the shot, but the skill displayed by the youngster who threw the missile has temporarily deprived Mr. Hudson of his sight." The Gazette goes on to decry the onslaught of the city boys' "snowball industry" and warns that more of them might suffer the fate of the boy clunked in head with a stone thrown by a man pelted by numerous snowballs.

■ **Feb. 18:** Ad for Omega Oil to relieve corset pain declares: "A woman once said she liked to wear a corset because it was such a relief

when she took it off." Rub on a little Omega Oil to "relax the squeezed-up flesh and muscles."

■ **Feb. 20:** Hettie Bennett, a rural Beloit woman and 40-year-old mother of four, is found dead, apparently from a botched abortion, which is called only a "criminal operation."

■ **Feb. 23:** P.L. Myers, manager of Myers Grand Opera House in Janesville, complains that the locals don't appreciate the arts and have not purchased enough advance tickets for the traveling show "The Bells of New York."

■ **March 25:** The gasoline engine explodes at Janesville Barbed Wire Co. in a factory complex along South River and Franklin streets. Jim Horn and Daniel Preller are killed. The company is renamed Janesville Fence and Post Co. in 1921, and in 1938 the company changes again, becoming a hardware and appliance store that still operated in 1999 as Harris Ace Hardware.

■ **Summer:** The Janesville Country Club—one of the first golf clubs organized in the United States in 1894—hosts Wisconsin's first golf tournament. The club originally started as the Sinnissippi Golf Club, and in 1901, both clubs coexist with many of the same members playing on the same links. The site is the same as today.

■ **August:** The P. Hohenadell Canning Co. is completed on Janesville's south side. On Aug. 24, a runaway locomotive careens into the plant, destroying a large part of it, but by Sept. 12, canning resumes. Located at 1200-1400 Harold, the operation is the largest kraut-packing plant in the United States, employing 400 workers and turning out 700 barrels of kraut a day, 60,000 bushels of cucumbers per season and 125,000 cans of vegetables per year. After many changes in name and management, the company is sold to Libby, McNeill and Libby in 1946.



John C. Spencer,  
chief of Janesville  
Fire Department,  
1892-1902

■ **Oct. 19:** The Grand Lodge of Masons lays the cornerstone for the city's first freestanding city hall at the same location where the current Municipal Building stands. Built of sandstone in the Romanesque Revival style, the new building is 66- by 94-feet, has three stories and houses the police department, city jail, municipal court, administrative offices, city council chambers and an assembly hall.

The building's budgeted cost is \$44,000, but the addition of a marble staircase and marble wainscoting and other overruns pushes the cost to \$64,000, which further swells to \$80,000 to pay for new furniture and fixtures.

■ **Dec. 27:** Arthur Nash, 24, Janesville, a "sober, industrious young man who was the favorite" of his fellow train workers, is killed when run over by a train he is helping to switch in a city train yard.

■ **Sometime in 1901:** Janesville starts constructing streets from macadam instead of crushed stone.

■ City voters approve a public sewage system.

■ Federal appropriation for future post office is raised from \$50,000 to \$75,000.

■ Civil War veterans monument is erected at the courthouse at cost of \$10,000.

■ St. Mary's Catholic Church is under construction.

■ Jackman Block, north side of East Milwaukee, is remodeled at cost of \$30,000.

■ Main and Milwaukee streets had 24 vacant stores at the year's beginning but only one at year's end.

## 1902

■ **Feb. 4:** Fire destroys the Janesville Street Railway Co. shops and barns near Spring Brook.

■ **Feb. 23:** Fire guts the shoe factory of F.M. Marzluff & Co. near the old wooden bridge that carries traffic on Milwaukee Street over the Rock River. Damage to the factory that employed 75 people is estimated at \$55,000, but production resumes the next year in upper two floors of the former Janesville Cotton Mill, 222 N. Franklin.

■ **May:** Work starts on the Janesville Public Library, now the Senior Center, at 64 S. Main. A \$30,000 grant from industrialist-turned-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie provides most of the money for the new building, one of 64 Carnegie libraries built in Wisconsin shortly after the turn of the century.

The city buys the site for \$17,000, and F.S. Eldred donates \$10,000 for a children's room. John P. Cullen & Bro. get the library construction contract.

■ **March 1:** 200 molders strike Fairbanks,





The aerial hook and ladder truck as it appeared after the Feb. 23, 1902, fire that gutted the F.M. Marzluff & Co. shoe factory on Milwaukee Street.

Morse & Co. in Beloit because their union representative is fired.

■ E. Tracy Brown, "the shoe man," buys the first automobile in Janesville. A Remington, the car costs \$1,000 and weighs 1,300 pounds. The gasoline-powered car was tested as able to run through 2 feet of snow, but the machine will not hit city streets until the weather gets better.

■ **March 6:** The Sinissippi Golf Club minstrel show parade is judged a success, one of the "attractive features" being a pony cart filled with "little coons," but only the characters Bones and Tambo appear in black face in the show.

■ **March 13:** W.H. Ashcraft, Janesville furniture and undertaking business, advertises a sale of couches: "Your choice at \$12 ... We have a few cheap couches we will close out at \$5 each."

■ **March 14:** The Rock County Republican Club forms in Janesville to support Gov. Bob La Follette. The club's motto: "Republicans first, last and for all time."

■ **March 17:** The Gazette headline reads: "Chief Geronimo to get civic rights. Apache warrior signs legal papers signifying his intention of becoming a good Indian."

■ Coeds at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., are advised not to "spoon"—flirt or kiss—on campus and not to take Sunday or evening walks along Lake Michigan with young men. The dean of women hopes they won't even walk with young men from classes.

■ **March 25:** A Madison defense attorney argues that his client's crime, beating his wife, is not as serious as hitting a man. The indig-

nant judge sentences the brute to four months but wishes he could sentence him to the whipping post because a "man who would strike a woman ought to be tied to a post and given a dose of his own medicine."

■ **March 31:** The Gazette reports 200 armed mourners bury two Hatfields and two of their allies in Whitesburg, Ken. They were killed in a shoot-out with McCoys two days earlier.

■ **June:** The new St. Mary's Catholic Church, the same building as in 1999, is completed. The parish was founded in 1875 to ease crowding at St. Patrick's and to provide German services for German Catholic immigrants.

■ **November:** The Rockford, Beloit & Janesville Interurban line starts train service to Janesville with cars coming into the city on South Jackson Street. The interurban combines with the Janesville Street Railway Co.—an enterprise plagued by financial problems since its start as a horse-drawn trolley service in 1886—to provide two routes, one running out Milton Avenue, the other linking downtown to cemeteries on the city's northwest side.

Interurban cars arrive hourly in Janesville from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. The holding company owning the interurban line buys the embattled electric streetcar business in 1907 as a supplement to and extension of the interurban line.

■ **Dec. 31:** The Gazette decries poor holiday shopping season and high prices.

■ **Sometime in 1902:** Another new elementary school, Garfield, is constructed at 315 S. Jackson. The no-longer extant building brings the number of Janesville's public elementary schools to nine. Janesville High School is located at 58 S. High. Built in 1895, the Romanesque-style high school building later is demolished.

■ The Janesville Fire Department's alarm system has 53 street boxes. Janesville electrician Henry Klein, who will become fire chief, invents an electric alarm system and sells it to the city for \$250.

■ Three parochial schools serve the city. St. Joseph's School and St. Joseph's Academy, a high school, are Roman Catholic. St. Joseph's Elementary School will evolve into St. Patrick's. St. Paul's is Lutheran. The State School for the Blind, now Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped, operates on West State Street.

■ Janesville dairies adopt the practice of pasteurization.

■ Hough Shade Corp., founded in 1900 by Azel Hough in South Butler, N.Y., is wooed to the city by the Janesville Businessmen's Association with an offer of free land on South Jackson Street. Manufacturing starts in 1903. The company adds on three years later, and at its peak, 230 workers make porch shades until the 1920s. Then production changes to

wooden industrial shades, later to residential and folding doors. The business continues today as HUF COR on Kennedy Road.

■ The Municipal League forms as taxpayers become upset with rising taxes and few official reports of city spending.

■ Hanson Furniture, specializing in dining room suites, incorporates.

## 1903

■ **Jan. 6:** Clarence Thomas of Janesville is "killed by the (train) cars at Milwaukee."

■ **Jan. 30:** Fire causes \$30,000 loss at Isabel Co.

■ **Feb. 14:** Janesville Cement Post starts production.

■ **March 6:** Construction starts on the new Janesville Public Library.

■ **March 23:** Leo Wright dies in a train accident in the Janesville yards.

■ **April 4:** President Theodore Roosevelt's western tour brings him to Madison. His train switches tracks in Janesville in early morning hours.

■ **April 6:** The Wisconsin Legislature considers a bill banning sale or manufacture of cigarettes in the state. Janesville schools have a high number of smokers, a state official says.

■ **April 13:** A moving picture show—unnamed—plays at Myers Opera House. "An attachment has been placed on the machine, and the usual buzzing sound that accompanies shows of this sort is done away with." But prop sounds—such as the scraping of a moving chair—are made behind the screen in concert with the images.

■ **April 14:** Thousands of pounds of sugar beet seeds arrive in Janesville in preparation for planting 1,000 to 1,200 acres.

■ Engineer Herman Knowles of Janesville is killed in a rail accident in Salem.

■ **April 16:** 30 Janesville "laboring men" form a construction trades laborers' union.

■ **April 22:** Charles R. Van Hise, born on a farm near Fulton and a graduate of schools in Milton and Evansville, is chosen president of the University of Wisconsin.

■ **April 30:** Skateboarders, take note: Janesville police are instructed to clamp down on bicyclists who flout city ordinances by biking on sidewalks.

■ **May 23:** Henry Zimmerman is assaulted in Courthouse Park. He dies 12 days later; no arrest reported.

■ **June 15:** The Janesville Public Library opens. The city agrees to allocate money to maintain the building and library services.

■ **July 4:** "Dull day in Janesville. Many left town."

■ **July 10:** "Art league ladies throw the discus at the Fisher farm."



■ **July 30:** A group of Indians waits for a train in Janesville, and their "presence on streets frightens chance visitors in the city."

■ **Aug. 3:** Dense clouds of insects flying from the Congregational Church are mistaken for smoke.

■ Jack Rooney, a bareback rider with the Forebaugh/Fish Wild West Show, is killed in a train accident in Janesville.

■ **Aug. 20:** Thieves take \$300 cash and \$1,000 in stamps from Clinton Post Office.

■ **Aug. 24:** News from Madison: Janesville woman Bertha Kopke leaps from a hotel window to run away with a bartender.

■ **Sept. 9:** George Carle finds two men stealing from his grocery wagon and grabs "Tinker" Smith by the coattails, but Tinker engages him in conversation and escapes.

■ **Sept. 10:** Tinker Smith is discovered in A. H. Hayward's hayloft.

■ **Sept. 15:** Tinker is captured in Belvidere, Ill., and given 18-month prison term.

■ **Sept. 21:** Electricity from a power plant on the Rock River starts to power city streetcars.

■ **Sept. 29:** Work starts on installing 203 electric lights for city streets.

■ Art Study workers strike.

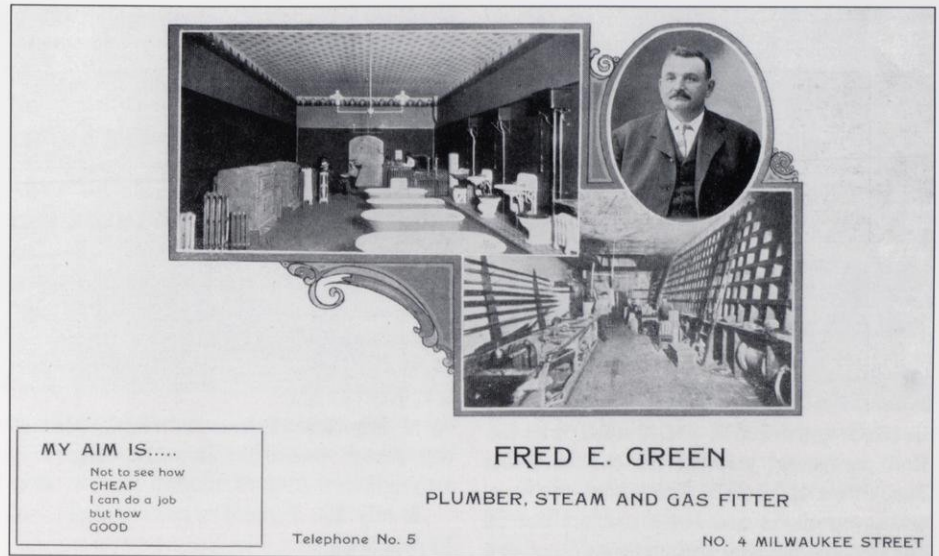
■ **September:** Janesville schools add kindergarten.

■ **Oct. 6:** Janesville High School football team whips Milton College, 12-0.

■ **Oct. 10:** Serving liquor in drugstore bars is outlawed.

■ **Oct. 11:** Richard James Lester, "maniac with a gun," terrorizes patrons at Connie MacDonald's restaurant. No injuries are reported. Two days later, Lester is sentenced to a year in prison.

■ **Oct. 22:** Roy Young of Beloit makes off



MY AIM IS.....  
Not to see how  
CHEAP  
I can do a job  
but how  
GOOD

FRED E. GREEN  
PLUMBER, STEAM AND GAS FITTER  
Telephone No. 5  
NO. 4 MILWAUKEE STREET

This is an advertisement for Fred E. Green's plumbing business. Green pointed out his main goal was quality. Also, notice the single digit telephone number.

with a locomotive.

■ **Nov. 9:** Colored Odd Fellows Lodge organizes in Beloit.

■ **Nov. 14:** Burglars escape down the river in a boat with \$12,000 in silks and furs from J.M. Bostwick store.

■ **Dec. 5:** "Peg" Connors meets a "horrible death" in a rail accident near the St. Paul line roundhouse in Janesville.

■ **Dec. 31:** Janesville resident Frank E. Hayes is among the more than 600 people killed in the Iroquois Theater Fire in Chicago. A Presbyterian minister from Janesville, identified only as the Rev. Henderson, is visiting in Chicago and helps the volunteer doctors and nurses who rush downtown to help those injured in the holocaust.

■ **Sometime in 1903:** Fashionable men's suit coats are thigh length. Women's dresses are wasp-waisted and ankle-length. Large, elaborate hats for women are the fashion. Fashions remain essentially unchanged throughout the decade.

■ Forty-six saloons operate in Janesville.

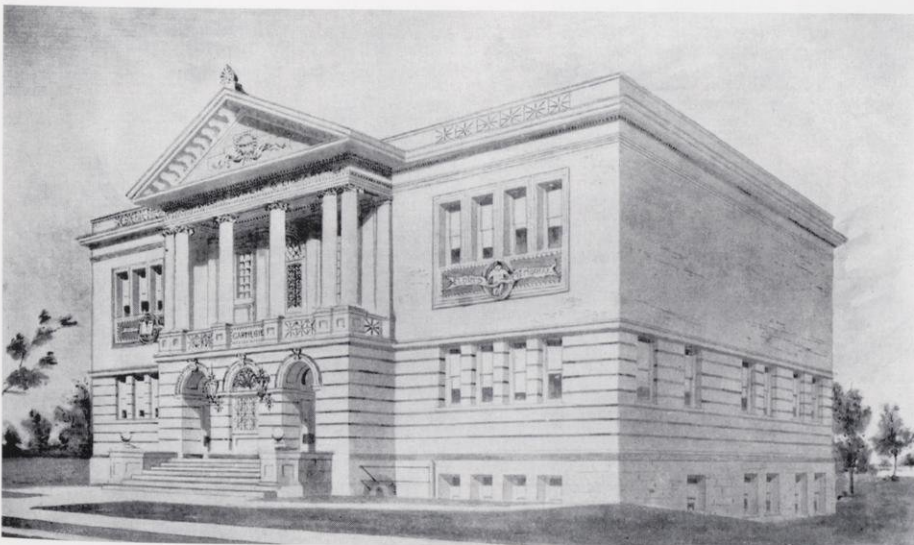
■ Janesville Brickyard, 51 N. High, reorganizes as Janesville Red Brick Manufacturing Co. Four years later, it moves to Court Street where it grows into what was Janesville Brick & Tile in 1999.

■ St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church organizes in Janesville to serve English-speaking Lutherans. Previous Lutheran congregations spoke primarily German or Norwegian.

■ Undoubtedly spurred by the burgeoning success of the growing Parker Pen Co., the Williamson Pen Co. starts in a downtown location. Williamson lasts until 1929, the year of the Great Panic and Stock Market Crash on Wall Street. So does Corona Pen Co., a short-lived operation started in 1923 by former Parker Pen machinist Samuel Corona. Other pen companies—Burdick Pen, Smith Pen, Century Pen and Scritchfield—operate downtown about the turn of the century, but their operations are short-lived.

■ Construction is completed on the first permanent location for the Janesville Post Office at 15-21 S. Franklin. A postmaster, seven clerks and seven carriers serve the city. The building eventually is replaced and sold for use as the city's Labor Temple until demolition in the 1980s.

■ The Independent, a weekly newspaper with ties to the growing but beleaguered Labor Movement, starts publishing in Janesville. The Independent will report news of working men and women until 1935. Its birth gives Janes-



The current Janesville Senior Center started out as the Janesville Public Library. Construction started on the building in May of 1902, helped by a \$30,000 grant from Andrew Carnegie. The library opened in June of 1903.





In 1903, construction was completed on the first permanent location for the Janesville Post Office at 15-21 S. Franklin. A postmaster, seven clerks and seven carriers served the city. The building eventually was replaced and sold for use as the city's Labor Temple until demolition in the 1980s.

ville four newspapers. Two of the others are dailies, The Janesville Gazette and Rock County Recorder, and the third is the Janesville Journal, a German-language weekly.

During much of the late 19th century, Janesville readers were able to choose from many competing newspapers, but only six were dailies. Besides the Gazette and Rock County Recorder, the other dailies were Janesville Daily Times, a Democratic daily published in 1860; another Democratic paper of the same name printed 1878-81; The Chronicle, a Republican daily printed in 1880; and the Janesville Republican, a weekly that became a daily and published from 1891 to 1899.

## 1904

■ **March 3:** Ernest Heller finds a roll of cash—\$500—at the St. Paul train depot, turns it in and receives a 50-cent reward from the “delighted” owner.

■ **March 24:** The rising Rock River floods two Janesville factories and washes out one rail line. Worst flooding in 20 years.

■ **March 26:** Walter Conroy and Hugh Waggoner are arrested for robbing Volney Atwood's chicken coop.

■ **March 28:** Johnnie Condon, 14, shoots and kills his 13-year-old pal, George Griffin. Condon eventually is found guilty of fourth-degree manslaughter.

■ **April 4:** Henry Westby, a Janesville boy, dies after intentionally sniffing fumes from a kerosene can. Doctors declare inhaling kerosene has become a “form of dope” in the area.

■ **April 23:** Fire destroys Janesville Art Study Co. near Monterey.

■ **May 16:** Janesville City Council outlaws “all gin-mills west of railroad tracks.” The city

has 47 saloons and three breweries.

■ **July 4:** “Janesville has the only notable Fourth of July celebration in the state.” 20,000 scream with delight at the big industrial parade in the morning and afternoon burlesque parade of the Nonesuch Bros., a local group of businessmen turned amateur entertainers. The holiday is not without tragedy and calamity: George Ablett falls off the top of a downtown building and dies, and a skyrocket is believed to ignite a fire that guts part of the Rock River Cotton factory for a loss of \$20,000.

■ **July 16:** Switchman Edward Broderick is killed by a train.

■ **July 18:** A Janesville couple, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Green, die after their buggy is hit by a train on the city's south side.

■ **July 19:** Parker Pen makes a deal to sell its pens in Chile.

■ **Sept. 7:** The new city pound “executes” its first six dogs, and objections are raised because the police department kills the strays by using them for target practice. Soon afterward, dog catcher William Drafeh resigns.

■ **Sept. 9:** Janesville school census records 1,963 boys and 1,956 girls.

■ **Sept. 14:** State School for the Blind has 100 students.

■ **September:** The Janesville baseball team, an unnamed “aggregation,” finishes the season 16-4 and claims title of southern Wisconsin champion.

■ **Oct. 3:** The Janesville council reverses itself and decides not to require that electric lines be buried.

■ **October:** The Rock River Sugar Co. starts processing sugar beets, which were introduced to Rock County by German immigrant

farmers. The company operates one of the largest sugar beet processing plants in Wisconsin, employing some 500 workers during the season. The business continues successfully until 1939.

■ **Nov. 8:** Voting machines are first used on Election Day. Teddy Roosevelt, who became president after McKinley was gunned down, carries Rock County.

■ **Dec. 16:** A passenger train strikes and instantly kills machinist Robert Brown.

■ **Dec. 28:** City Marshal John J. Comstock, chosen for the job just the day before on the city council's 72nd ballot, stops a team of heavy draft horses that bolt down Milwaukee Street. He is dragged and trampled for many yards.

■ **Sometime in 1904:** Janesville city officials develop a plan to provide sewerage service to the entire city. The system is built over many years.

## 1905

■ **Jan. 14:** Sam Keller of Green County claims the bounty on a large wolf killed in Avon Township. Bounty on wolves—and crows, 10 cents a head—continues for many years.

■ **Jan. 25:** A committee recommends the city boost number of police officers to six and to provide all with uniforms.

■ **Feb. 13:** A temperature of 51 degrees below zero is recorded in Janesville, making it the coldest day on record here.

■ **March 9:** The Gazette notes a “sure sign” of the approaching spring: “Every cell in the lock-up is filled with tramps.”

■ **March 12:** Switchman John Myrne is killed by being impaled by a bolt on a train car at Five Points.

■ **March 13:** Local cigarmakers claim

This advertisement from the Sears, Roebuck catalog touted the ease with which the laundry could be done with its new washing machine — “even a child can run it.” The washer came with a five-year guarantee and a six-month free trial.





**Workers pause while rolling cigars at the T.F. McKeigue Cigar Factory, which manufactured the 'Grand Duke' and 'Dum Dum' cigars in the early 1900s. At the turn of the century, the city had more than 30 tobacco warehouses, and local cigar makers claimed the city smokes more than 100,000 cigars a week.**

Janesville smokers consume 105,000 cigars a week, 5.46 million a year.

■ **March 20:** Janesville Granite & Brick starts work on a \$25,000 factory.

■ **April:** A new fire house, Janesville's third, opens on McKey Boulevard, which is now part of South Jackson Street. The fire department also forms a rescue battalion this year.

■ **April 27:** Teachers request higher wages from the Janesville School Board. They show their average annual wage is \$39.72 compared to average yearly wages of \$410.80 for a "factory girl."

■ **April 29:** Janitors' union forms in Janesville.

■ **May 24:** Janesville now home to 15 autos.

■ **July 12:** A train runs down and kills Annie Piske near downtown Janesville.

■ **Aug. 16:** The Gazette reports Ira Dutton, former Janesville resident known as Brother Joseph, continues ministering to lepers on the Hawaiian island of Molokai.

■ **Aug. 31:** George Nelson climbs down a downtown factory fire escape and dives into the Rock River to rescue 13-year-old Elisabeth Booth.

■ **Sept. 20:** Still another train accident kills Knute Sanderson near downtown.

■ **Dec. 5:** All Rock County children are invited to write letters to Santa Claus, in care of the Gazette, which prints 200 letters. The practice continues for many years.

■ **Sometime in 1905:** Janesville Machine Co., whose roots go back to 1859, sells its mowing machine manufacturing operation to Thomas Manufacturing Co., Springfield, Ohio. Janesville Machine continues to make reapers, plows, harrows, seeders and cultivators in its complex along South River and South Franklin streets.

■ A group of leading Janesville women meets at Sue Jeffris' home to form the city's first YWCA, but the national organization

prohibits new chapters in communities of fewer than 25,000 people. The Janesville YWCA eventually organizes in 1921.

■ Janesville Clothing Co., which started in 1894, remodels the old Woodruff Buckle Factory at 336 N. Franklin. The company makes men's and boys' work clothes at the location until the 1940s.

## 1906

■ **Jan. 22:** Janesville City Council limits encroachment by downtown businesses on the river banks.

■ **Jan. 24:** The Gazette becomes a member of the Associated Press.

■ **Feb. 2:** 750 women and girls are working in local tobacco warehouses.

■ **Feb. 14:** A head-on train collision kills three and seriously injures six near Afton.

■ **March:** Congregation of Central Methodist Episcopal Church, formed by the merger of two local Methodist Episcopal congregations, dedicates a new church at 70 S. Franklin. The building—whose construction was aided by a \$10,000 donation from William W. Cargill—no longer stands, but Cargill United Methodist Church continues at 2000 Wesley.

■ **April 20:** Concerned Janesville residents meet and raise \$400 to help victims of the earthquake that wracked San Francisco two days earlier. City residents eventually raise \$2,288.

■ **May 21:** Another railroad fatality, William Lemke. Other local trainmen die in accidents in Illinois this month.

■ **June 7:** Seven local ministers protest baseball on Sundays.

■ **July 4:** No Nonesuch circus and parade. Janesville pines for festivities.

■ **July 12:** 20 Janesville "ladies afflicted with baseball fever" drive into the country to play their own game.

■ **July 29:** Billy Sunday, professional baseball player turned flamboyant evangelist, preaches to 3,500 at a Chautauqua meeting in Janesville.

■ **Oct. 26:** The Chicago White Sox play an exhibition baseball game in Edgerton.

■ **Nov. 1:** Famed vaudevillian Eddie Foy appears in "The Earl and The Girl" at the Myers Theater. The little Foyes do not appear with him, but one of the actresses, Elsie Moore, is injured when she falls from a prop staircase.

■ **Dec. 6:** Patrick Lavin "struggles three hours in a vat of freezing beet pulp" before a fellow worker rescues him.

■ **Dec. 25:** The Salvation Army and Janesville churches distribute 500 Christmas dinners to needy families.

■ **Sometime in 1906:** Janesville Shirt and Overall Co. moves into the old Janesville Cotton Mill on North Franklin Street. A primarily female work force of about 80 makes overalls and work shirts until the 1970s.

■ Thoroughgood and Co. starts making wooden cigar boxes in a four-story factory at 205 N. Main. Tobacco production has been extensive in Rock County since the Civil War, and by the turn of the century, Janesville is home to some 30 tobacco warehouses. Cigar-making and cigar box-making become local industries. At one point in the late 19th century, more than 20 shops made cigars in Janesville.

■ Colvin Baking Co., which evolved from a business started in 1865, breaks ground on a large wholesale bakery at 300-304 E. Milwaukee. In 1908, the company completes the bakery and moves in. Its products are distributed throughout the upper Midwest until around 1970.

■ Croake Brewing Co. buys City Brewery, operated solely by Louis Knipp on Janesville's north side. Croake brews about 5,000 barrels of beer a year until 1920, the year Prohibition takes effect. "Near beer" is not enough to save Croake, which closes before 1933. After Prohibition ends, Croake reorganizes as Bower City Brewing Co. and produces about 7,000 barrels of Croake Select Lager at the old City Brewery works until competition-forced bankruptcy in 1939.

Three other breweries operate in Janesville in the century's first decade including Gray Beverage Co., which brews weiss beer and makes soda pop. Gray Brewing was the city's only microbrewery in 1999.

## 1907

■ **Jan. 19:** Carpenters Union demands a minimum wage of 35 cents an hour.

■ **Feb. 7:** Over the past 20 years, Rock County divorces total 1,031.

■ **March 8:** A River Falls man dies under the wheels of a locomotive near Janesville depot.

■ **March 9:** 50 Rock County farmers form



a co-operative to market their own crops and to try to control oversupply.

■ **March 15:** Henry Prince, "gentleman of color and erstwhile porter in a local barbershop, is found guilty of shooting craps and is given one hour to shake the dust of the city."

■ **March 21:** Railroad detective John W. Cowan is shot in the right arm but foils efforts by two desperados who try to jam a railroad switch in an attempt to derail a train.

■ **March 29:** A train kills John Eherlinger in Hanover.

■ **March 30:** "The Clansman," a play based on white supremacy in race relations, plays at the Myers Theater.

■ **Spring:** Only 687 acres of wheat are planted in Rock County. The once dominant crop—18,637 acres were harvested in 1880—no longer keeps numerous Janesville mills in business.

■ **April 9:** Fine and costs are \$27.60 for selling beer on Sundays.

■ **April 16:** Train kills Levi Armstrong near a local brewery.

■ **May:** The Janesville Cement Shingle Co., which will become Janesville Sand & Gravel, starts operations. The next year, big contracts for material for a huge Chicago & North Western train yard and roundhouse in Janesville and the new state Capitol building help the infant company grow.

■ **June 14:** A team of horses pulling a buggy carrying two high school graduates to a party breaks loose on Milwaukee Street Bridge and runs down young George Miller, killing him.

■ **June 18:** The second floor of Blodgett Milling Co.'s copper shop collapses, hurling workers Joe Smith and James Heffernan into the Rock River. Members of the fire department rescue battalion save both men.

■ **July 4:** Industrial and Nonesuch Bros. parades and festivities return to Janesville, delighting 25,000 people.

■ **Aug. 7:** Carrie Jacobs Bond, renowned songwriter and musician living in Chicago, returns to her hometown of Janesville, to give a recital at the Grand Hotel.

■ **Aug. 16:** Another tip is received that disgruntled owners of Lake Koshkonong shore property plan to blow up the Indianford Dam with dynamite.

■ **Aug. 17:** John Kruse risks his life to save his team of horses. Man, wagon and horses fall into the river when rotten girders give out on a bridge spanning the mill race near Centerway Dam.

■ **Sept. 3:** J.P. Cullen Co. wins \$92,525 contract to build a new high school in Beloit.

■ **Oct. 16:** Rock County Sugar Co. starts operations with 350 workers.

■ **Oct. 25:** Announcement is made that Billy Sullivan of Edgerton will captain the

## A tale of lust, betrayal and attempted murder

She was a housemaid in Darien who had saved her meager wages. He was a house painter who loved to drink and chase the ladies.

But George Schumacher chased one lady too many, and Florence Dugan gunned him down on North Academy St. in Janesville on April 18, 1907.

The darkly handsome Schumacher languished for months in Mercy Hospital, finally succumbing to gangrene on Nov. 28, Thanksgiving Day.

Dugan beat the rap on a plea of temporary insanity.

Schumacher and Dugan had been carrying on for four years. She supported him, even paying for his divorce from his first wife. Wife No. 1 said Schumacher would come home drunk three or four times a week. He would yell at her and beat her.

Though Dugan gave Schumacher her love, affection and money, he became engaged to another woman, Margaret Smith of Watertown.

Dugan approached the couple as Schumacher and his fiancée walked down Academy Street just north of Milwaukee Street at 7:30 p.m. April 18.

"George, I have a bone to pick with you," the petite Dugan told Schumacher, but he shouldered his way past her.

She pulled out a .32-caliber revolver—available by mail order for as little as \$1.60

from the Sears, Roebuck catalog—and shot Schumacher in the back.

He fell to the ground, and Dugan fired another slug into his chest. She would have shot him a third time, but nearby police officers ran to the scene and stopped her.

Surgeons at the hospital removed the bullet from Schumacher's chest but could not extract the bullet from his back because it was too close to his spine.

Dugan's trial on a charge of first-degree attempted murder started on Oct. 8.

Thomas S. Nolan, a prominent Janesville attorney and politician, defended her.

Dugan suffered from temporary insanity, he told the jury, because she was a woman robbed of her virtue and had no recourse.

Schumacher testified. A shadow of his former self, he came to court "fortified with whiskey, nitroglycerine, strychnine and a full grain of morphine," The Janesville Gazette reported.

The jury agreed with Nolan.

On her acquittal, Dugan did not say a word, but a "slight turn of a smile played over her face," the newspaper reported.

"The story is one of those sordid tales that do not often reach a climax in the city of Janesville," the Gazette continued. "A story of a woman who alleges serious wrongs against her womanhood, a man who is alleged to have trifled with her affections to satisfy his lust."

**Harrington & Richardson's Young America, Self Cocker.**  
Reduced Size, 32-Caliber, Double Action, Rifled Barrel, Central Fire.



**\$1.60 AND \$2.50**

32-caliber only.  
Young America.

Full nickel, rubber stocks, 5-shot, 3-inch rifled octagon barrel, 9 ounces. Takes the 32-caliber S. & W. cartridge, No. 6R377.

No. 6R1355 32-caliber, central fire, nickel, 2.50  
No. 6R1357 32-caliber, with pearl stocks, 2.50  
If by mail, postage extra, 15 cents.

**SEE OUR PRICES FOR CARTRIDGES.**

Chicago White Sox in 1908.

■ **Nov. 16:** Alfred Lohrman, 14, is killed by train cars near the sugar factory.

■ **Sometime in 1907:** The Owen Thomas Automobile Co. forms, becoming the first automaker in Janesville. Two years later, Owen Thomas Automobile is making cars with six-cylinder engines in an old train shop along South Pearl and Terrace streets.

The Thomas auto's one-piece frame and welded all-metal body are ahead of the industry, but by 1910, the company runs into money trouble and sells its patents and rights to Corliss Motor Car Co., another Wisconsin auto manufacturer. Corliss abandons the Janesville factory, and the Owen Thomas automobile becomes a historical footnote.

■ Following the successful wake of Burr Springs Bottling, Hiawatha Springs sells water from a spring just north of downtown Janesville.

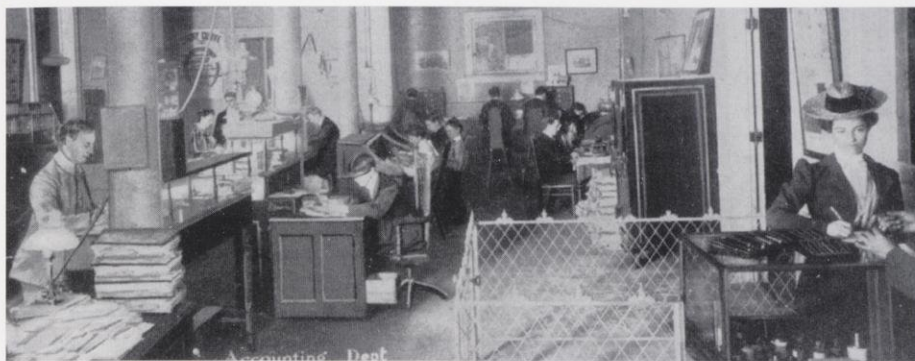
■ The Nott Brothers create a company to make paper boxes at 14-16 N. Academy. In 1910, the company reorganizes into Janesville Paper Box and relocates to the old cotton mill on North Franklin. The company eventually evolves into Panoramic Inc., which still made packaging at 1405 Riverside in 1999.

■ The Sisters of Mercy, a Roman Catholic order operating St. Patrick's school, pay \$10,000 for Palmer Memorial Hospital—named for Janesville's famed 19th century physician Dr. Henry Palmer and completed by his son, William—on North Washington Street. The name is changed to Palmer Memorial Mercy Hospital.

## 1908

■ **Jan. 7:** H.C. Buell, superintendent of Janesville schools, appeals for support of the fledgling Janesville Park & Pleasure Drive Association's proposal to establish a system of





This view of the Parker Pen office shows the accounting department in the early 1900s. The company, founded in Janesville in 1888, employed more than 108 people in 1908 and shipped pens all over the world.



The view from the stage at Myers Grand Opera House. The theater was a popular venue to see many different productions in the first decade of the 1900s.

parks in the city, which has few. The first steps are taken to make Janesville the City of Parks.

■ **Jan. 18:** Fire destroys the tobacco warehouse of Julius Marqusee & Co. and 4,000 cases of tobacco. Loss estimated at \$250,000, Janesville's largest property loss to date. Three firemen suffer injuries.

■ **Jan. 27:** Five unmuzzled dogs are shot as Janesville weathers a spate of rabies. Bitten human victims are taken to the Pasteur Institute in Chicago for treatment.

■ **Feb. 3:** 85 men cut ice on the river during the annual harvest.

■ **Feb. 6:** Locomotive 1313 continues on its unlucky track. It collided with a livestock train in December, but as it is about to be returned to service after repairs, it backs into a turntable pit, necessitating more repairs.

■ **Feb. 13:** Martha Anderson, a 45-year-old widow, is found lying dead in bed with her throat cut and a razor by her right hand in a downtown boarding house. Though a neighbor reports hearing footsteps and a struggle and the door is found broken, Anderson's death is ruled a suicide.

■ **Feb. 18:** G.W. Skelly buys the first auto to be used for commercial deliveries in Janesville.

■ **Feb. 20:** Harriet and Hazel Smith, 17 and 15 respectively, are arrested for "staying out

nights in the company of tough youths." When the sisters try to leave town on a train, they are apprehended and sent to Girls' Industrial School in Milwaukee.

■ **Feb. 28:** The number of unmuzzled dogs shot by police reaches 90. City officials become skeptical of the state laboratory, which finds rabies in every dead dog sent for examination. The officials kill a healthy cocker spaniel, send its head for examination, and the lab reports the dog has rabies. When lab officials learn of the Janesville folks' ruse, they retaliate by saying maybe the city will have to go elsewhere for tests.

■ **March 3:** A New York company performs Henrik Ibsen's "unconventional and depressing drama, 'Rosmersholm,'" at the Myers Theater.

■ **March 5:** Fire destroys the L.L. Olds seed warehouse in Clinton. Loss estimated at \$50,000.

■ **March 22:** Citizenship is granted to 125 Italians, Greeks and Russians.

■ **March 30:** The Janesville council votes to build a main sewer system at a cost of \$75,000 to be paid for with 20-year bonds.

■ **April 7:** Beloiters vote to retain saloons. Clinton goes "wet" by a 41-vote majority.

■ **April 9:** Methodist minister tells a Janesville congregation that more young women are "damned by the dance" than young men are damned by drink.

■ **April 25:** "Officer Thomas Morrissey comes upon Fritz Boutan, a 6-foot Polack tramp, wriggling through a window opening into J.L. Spellman's cigar store and drags him out by the heels." Boutan claims he is famished and thought he was breaking into a bakery. Sentence is suspended.

■ **May:** Janesville's first United Brethren in Christ Church conducts its first services in its new building at 733 Prospect.

■ **May 6:** The Bladon family of Janesville travels to Europe on the new British ocean liner Lusitania. The sinking of the Lusitania in 1915 by German U-boats is one of the major reasons

that the United States enters World War I.

■ **May 8:** The Good Roads Movement, aspiring to convince local governments and taxpayers that spending money on roads is important, starts taking hold in Rock County. Thirteen of 20 towns in Rock County appropriate \$11,102 to build good roads in 1908. The county will match the amount.

■ **May 15:** G. Spencer Wallrath, landlord of Janesville's Union House rooming house, is killed by a train while traveling in New Mexico.

■ **May 29:** The city supplies food to the Jacob Zastoupil family, which has been quarantined for days because of an outbreak of diphtheria. The county refuses them aid.

■ **Summer:** The steamer Columbia and a couple of smaller steam-powered boats carry sightseers and revelers on the Rock River north of Janesville. More than 60 gasoline-powered launches also are plying the river above the Centerway Dam.

■ **June 11:** 56 graduate from Janesville High School.

■ **June 30:** A tornado wreaks havoc in Rock County. Tobacco sheds, barns, silos and windmills are toppled; damage estimated at \$50,000. Evansville and Edgerton are hardest hit; Janesville unscathed.

■ **July 5:** Auto racing pioneer Barney Oldfield passes through Janesville on his way to races in St. Paul, Minn.

■ **July 6:** Janesville saloons number 51; still three breweries.

■ **July 30:** 20,000 attend Ringling Bros. circus and "pronounce trappings, costumes and show finest ever seen here."

■ **July 31:** A tobacco warehouse and other buildings on the Decker and Ressguie farms—which are in city limits on Milton Avenue—are lost to fire. Damage estimated at \$72,000.

■ Ida Fox, railroad bookkeeper, is run down and killed by a train.

■ **Aug. 4:** 30 impoverished girls from the tenements of Chicago enjoy a day in the country. Escorting them is Miss Murphy, a colleague of famed humanitarian Jane Addams, who has founded Hull House in Chicago.

■ **Aug. 5:** Italian rail yard workers strike the local Chicago & North Western operation because they refuse "to undergo further tortures ... of handling railroad ties treated with creosote in hot weather."

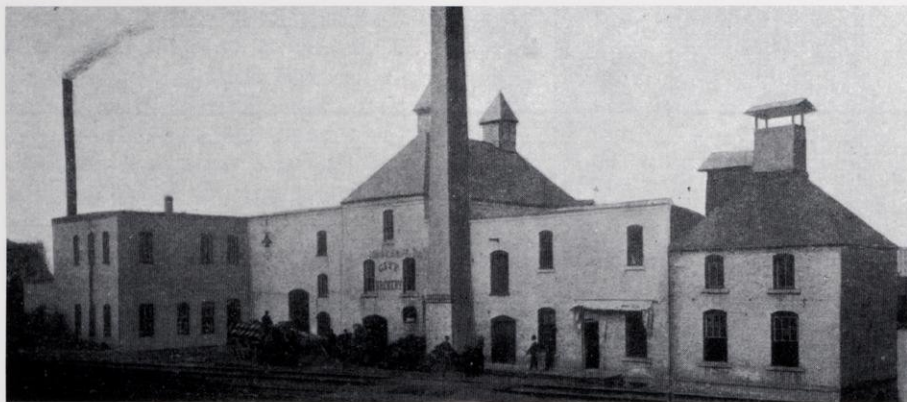
■ **Aug. 15:** While eating a banana, Bessie Birch discovers and "slays a good-size tarantula."

■ Hugh Earl of Shopiere is fined \$25 for "unmercifully beating a horse."

■ **Aug. 16:** Harry J. Moore, lamptender for Janesville Electric Co., is killed by an interurban train on South Franklin Street.

■ **Sept. 5:** Hiram Merrill, president of Janesville's New Gas Light Co., dies. His family





**City Brewing, one of four Janesville breweries in the early 1900s, sat on the city's north side. City Brewery was bought by Croake Brewery in 1906, operated until Prohibition in 1920, then was resurrected when Prohibition ended, before closing in 1939.**

gives up control of the company, whose roots run to 1853, to United Gas Improvement Co. of Philadelphia. Burning gas for illumination is on the way out, but the company promotes cooking with gas. Eventually purchased by Wisconsin Power & Light Co., New Gas Light operates as a subsidiary until 1936.

■ **Sept. 24:** Republican William H. Taft brings his presidential campaign train to Janesville. The eventual winner addresses a crowd of 5,000.

■ **Sept. 26:** William Jennings Bryan, Democratic candidate for president, makes a campaign stop in Janesville. Perhaps the greatest orator of his time, Bryan runs unsuccessfully for president three times, serves as the state prosecutor in the Scopes Monkey Trial arguing against teaching the theory of evolution and serves as secretary of state for President Woodrow Wilson.

■ **Oct. 3:** County assessors report 16,758 horses and 124 automobiles in Rock County.

■ **Oct. 30:** Eugene V. Debs, Socialist candidate for president, arrives in Janesville on the Socialist "Red Special" train and addresses 800.

■ **Oct. 21:** The northern lights illuminate skies over Janesville, but the aurora borealis is seen as an omen of a bad winter.

■ **Nov. 9:** The Caloric Co. incorporates to make the fireless cooker on the south end of Jackson Street. The cooker is an insulated cabinet with one or more cooking wells into which preheated stone radiators are placed above and below the food so that the meal cooks without burning. Fifty to 150 workers make 300 cookers daily. They sell for \$8.50 to \$15 depending on size and number of cooking compartments.

■ **Nov. 15:** Train wheels kill yet another Janesvillian, immigrant Archilios Pappadimitrou.

■ **Dec. 5:** Four Janesville people—Violet and Fannie Blivens, Earl Cooper and Harvey Richardson—drown when they go through the ice while skating on Lake Koshkonong.

■ **Dec. 9:** B.C. Astin struck by train; he dies the next day at Mercy Hospital.

■ **Sometime in 1908:** Janesville Machine is the city's largest manufacturer. Its downtown factory complex stretches for three blocks. Between 250 and 300 people work for the agricultural implement manufacturer. Annual production is valued at \$300,000.

■ Janesville's First Baptist Church reports that its 710 members make it the largest Baptist church in Wisconsin.

■ St. Patrick's Catholic Church has a membership of 2,500.

■ Wisconsin Carriage Co. joins the auto industry and becomes Janesville's second car company, making an automobile known as the Wisco. Two years later, Wisconsin Carriage spins off the Wisconsin Motor Car Co. to manufacture Wiscos. But the Wisco doesn't catch the fancy of the newly motoring American public, and Wisconsin Motor Car closes. Five years later, the popularity of cars forces Wisconsin Carriage to close.

■ James Zanas opens the Lyric Theater at 113 W. Milwaukee.

■ Janesville's Women's Christian Temperance Union reports only 21 active members and little activity. The city is rife with saloons and breweries, and the irony is that the WCTU, the most widely recognized national temperance group, was founded by Janesville resident Frances Willard in 1874.

■ The Parker Pen Co., which started with the partnership of George S. Parker Sr. and W. F. Palmer in 1891 and incorporated in 1892, continues to grow and moves into the upper floors of the old Gazette building on East Milwaukee Street. The company also rents more space in other East Milwaukee Street office buildings to keep up with demand for its high quality pens. Parker Pen employs 100 people in 1908.

■ The Janesville Pearl Button Co. stops

making fancy pearl buttons from clam shells gathered from the Rock River and other county waterways. The company operated in locations on North Main and South Jackson streets since 1899.

## 1909

■ **Jan. 10:** Fire burns the Christian church in Footville and threatens the entire village. Loss estimated at \$4,000.

■ **Jan. 21:** Michael Cronin, an aged stone mason, is found near the gate to his yard with his skull crushed. He dies at Mercy Hospital without regaining consciousness. His wife, Ellen, tells of two men who came to the door, one asking directions to a neighbor's house. When the second man comes to the door, Ellen warns him: "By the holy Jesus, if you don't go from this place, I'll put a bullet through your head."

The crime goes unsolved, but the apparent motive, a gold hoard in the Cronin house, turns out to be true. Ellen eventually owns up to more than \$3,000 in gold pieces secreted in the house walls.

■ **Jan. 24:** Joseph M. Bostwick, Janesville's most prominent retailer, suffers a stroke and falls dead after chatting with friends at the Elks Club. He is 74. All flags in the city fly at half-staff per Mayor Stewart Heddles' proclamation.

■ **Jan. 29:** Charles O'Malley falls off the Jackson Street Bridge in a howling blizzard and suffers a compound fracture of his right leg. He crawls 1,500 feet through the snow to the Spring Brook fire station.

■ **Feb. 15:** Janesville Cigar Co. organizes and will build a factory downtown.

■ **March 1:** Mrs. Francis Davis, a former slave in South Carolina dies in the county home at age 104. Her 110-year-old husband, known as the Colonel, survives her. Probably because the Davises are well-known in Rock County, the description "colored" does not follow their names as it regularly does when the Gazette reports on African-Americans.

■ **March 15:** Peter Myers pays a \$10 fine for allowing a Sunday performance at the Myers Theater.

■ **March 29:** Floyd Lash, a Michigan student helping on the railroad, is "run down and cut in pieces by a locomotive while tending the switch lamps."

■ **April 1:** William C. Hart, a partner in Janesville's Buob Brewery, commits suicide in the Hotel London downtown. Worries over the business in light of proposed anti-saloon legislation are cited as probable causes for his suicide.

■ Thirty Austrians working as laborers on Janesville's main sewer project strike for higher wages. One of them, described only as Joe,



stays on the jobs and is beaten by his striking colleagues. Four days later, 25 new Austrian workers are imported from Chicago to take the strikers' jobs.

■ **April 24:** The new Austrian laborers strike, contending the sewer work is too dangerous.

■ **May 4:** Michael Grimkos, a Greek laborer, is caught in a sewer construction cave-in and barely survives.

■ **May 10:** The YMCA Commercial Baseball League forms. Member teams are the YMCA, Parker Pen, Lewis Knitting, Wisconsin Carriage, Janesville Machine and Gazette Printing.

■ **May 19:** Rock County Sugar brings 30 German and Russian families to town as laborers. Because no accommodations have been provided for them, the immigrants spend the night in a barn basement.

■ **May 20:** Naval officer Frank Bostwick, a Janesville native, is transferred from command of the cruiser Buffalo to command of the Navy yard at Portsmouth, N.H.

■ First warning is issued to speeding automobile drivers. Police Chief George Appleby asks them—"for humanity's sake"—to start earlier to their destinations.

■ **May 26:** An earthquake shakes Janesville buildings, rattles dishes and windows, but no serious damage occurs in the city. The quake is felt as far west as the Mississippi River and as far north, east and south as the central regions of Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois.

■ **May 29:** Hiram Morgan of Janesville flies "several rods in aeroplane of his own design and construction."

■ **June 5:** William Bradley of Rockford, Ill., falls under an interurban train on South Jackson Street and loses his foot, a common injury in railroad accidents. He eventually dies.

■ **June 15:** 47 graduate from Janesville High School.

■ **June 29:** 52 applications for saloon licenses are filed, but seven are not granted. Mayor William Carle asserts that it's in Janesville's best interests to have fewer saloons. The saloon debate continues for months. The council grants some licenses over the mayor's veto; others are rejected.

■ Bicyclists again are warned to obey ordinances and stay off city sidewalks.

■ **July 26:** The local "demimonde," Janesville's prostitutes, are brought to court. Their \$236 in fines are earmarked for the school fund.

■ **July 27:** At the request of police, "Bull Dog Joe" Knauth and his 25 canines leave the city between 1 and 4 a.m.

■ **July 30:** 10,000 attend the Barnum & Bailey Circus at Spring Brook.

■ **Aug. 12:** Because it's too wet to work on his farm, Horace Pease of Fulton goes "pearl fishing" in the Rock River and finds one valued at \$2,000 in a fresh-water clam.

■ **Aug. 16:** Hugh Murray rides on the upper platform of the elevator at Hohenadle Canning and is crushed to death when the hoist hits two beams at the top.

■ **Aug. 22:** Willis Cole of Milton plays his first game in left field for the Chicago White Sox.

■ **Sept. 12:** Major F.F. Stevens, a Union veteran of the Civil War, dies at his Janesville home at age 74.

■ **Sept. 18:** Janesville Machine wins the Commercial League baseball championship, 6-3, over Parker Pen, but Parker protests, claiming Janesville Machine used ringer players to win. The protest is disallowed.

■ **Sept. 22:** Laborer L. Johnson suffers a broken collarbone when a sewer ditch he is digging collapses.

■ **Sept. 24:** Owners of closed poker parlors complain to police that bridge is still played in cigar stores. Cops clamp down on bridge playing.

■ **Oct. 11:** The acetylene gas plant in Milton explodes, wrecking the entire building and contents for a loss of \$3,000, but no one is hurt.

■ Court records show 58 divorces in Rock County for the past year.

■ **Oct. 12:** The Gazette writes to U.S. cities employing the new mayor-commission form of government, a reform measure, and hears favorable reports from them. Cost overruns on the new City Hall, rising taxes, official silence on public expenditures and charges of crony politics among the city's aldermen fuel discussion and debate about government reform.

■ **Nov. 7:** Complaints are filed against two policemen for clubbing suspects on arrest. One officer eventually is suspended.

■ **Nov. 11:** Janesville Machine gives up steam engines in favor of electricity to produce farm implements.

■ **Nov. 16:** The Baptist Church stages a mid-winter fair "with all the proper accompaniments of red hots, merry-go-rounds, nigger babies and side shows." The term "nigger babies" refers to small chocolate or licorice candies shaped in the form of black infants, but many consider the term offensive.

■ **Nov. 17:** Apparently undeterred by their earlier fines, Janesville prostitutes return to court and pay fines totaling \$210, again earmarked for the school fund.

■ **Nov. 19:** High school football player Verne Merrill dies at Mercy Hospital from an infection resulting from a scratch he received in practice some days earlier.

■ **Nov. 23:** A.E. Graham of Janesville is put



**A bird's eye view of Janesville, looking west from the courthouse tower.**

on trial for selling oleo as butter. Oleo is an early form of margarine outlawed in the dairy state of Wisconsin.

■ **Dec. 7:** Wisconsin Sand & Gravel forms and takes over Janesville Cement Post.

■ **Dec. 17:** A. Hyatt Smith, grandson of Janesville's first mayor of the same name and an engineer at the sugar beet factory, burns his face and hands in a chemical accident at the processing plant.

■ **Dec. 24:** Upset over a real estate deal, farmer Oliver Babcock of rural Footville shoots John E. Kennedy at a Janesville implement store. Kennedy loses his right arm to the bullet; Babcock kills himself after running from the scene.

■ **Dec. 31:** Prielipp Bros., Janesville's first auto dealership, advertises new autos for sale. The dealership carries Buick, Oldsmobile, Oakland, White Steam and White Gasoline models. Prices range from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

■ **Sometime in 1909:** Lewis Knitting Co., which moved to Janesville in 1889, expands. A work force of 100, mostly women, make men's and women's underwear until 1951.

■ The State School for the Blind adds a music building.

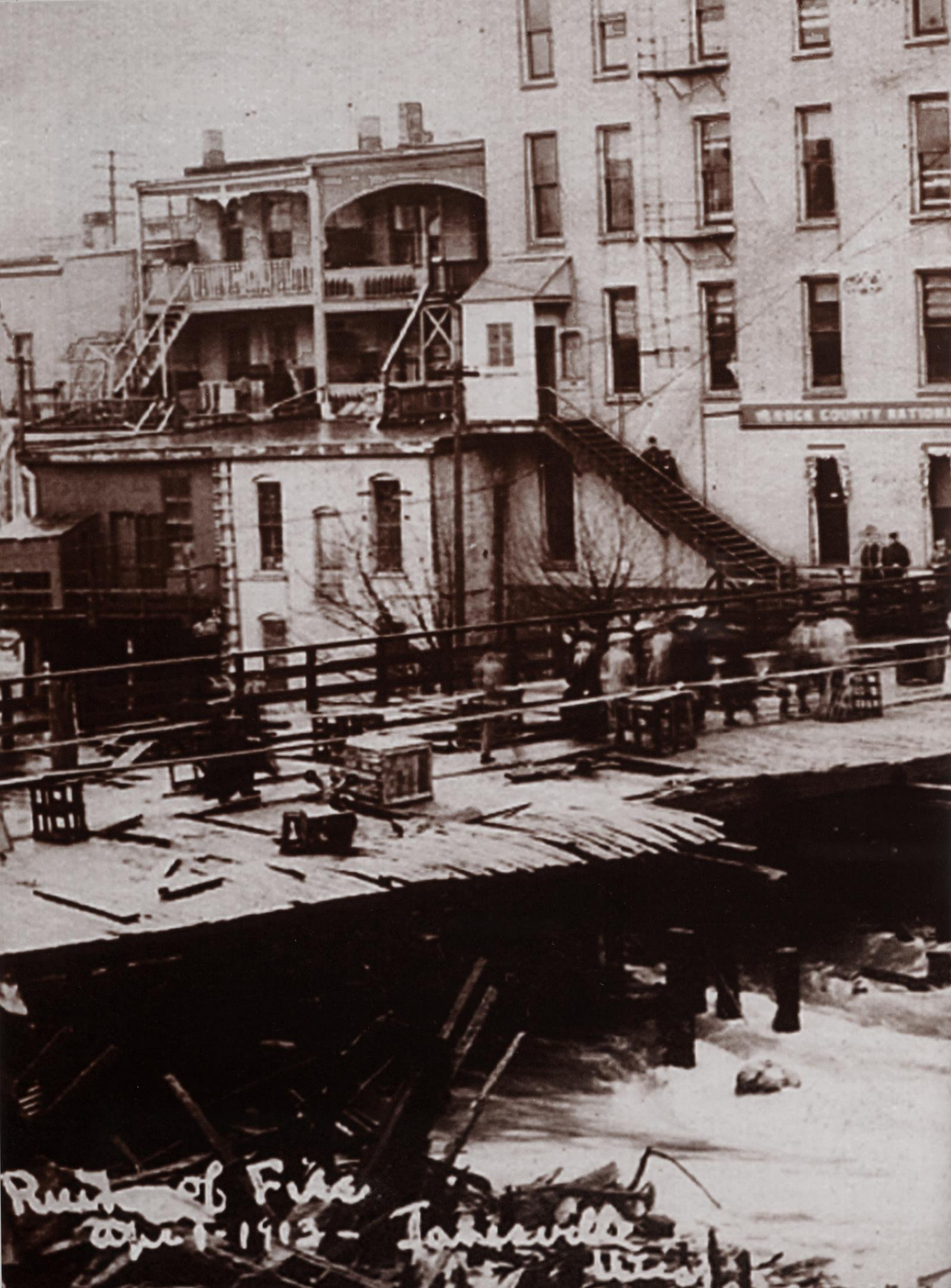
■ Three nickelodeon movie theaters—the Royal, Unique and Majestic—open on West Milwaukee Street.

■ The Salvation Army buys a building (no longer standing,) at 101 M. Main for its Janesville headquarters.

■ The Gazette moves into the first building of its own—on the southeast corner of East Milwaukee and South Bluff (Parker Drive) streets, where the courtyard of the current Gazette building is now. Circulation hits 5,000.

■ Badger Telegraph and Telephone incorporates to provide long-distance service to neighboring communities. Thirty-one years earlier, Dr. Henry Palmer installed the city's first phone line, a private connection between his home and medical office. At the turn of the century, two companies—Wisconsin Telephone and Rock County Telephone—compete for local service. The companies merge in December 1921.





Ruin of Fire  
Apr 1 - 1913 - Jacksonville  
Fla.



# 1910-1919

## COPING WITH CONFLICT

### Janesville matures through troubled times Growing city works to clean up its streets, image, government

*Conflict was the keynote of the 20th century's second decade—abroad, nationwide and in Janesville.*

The war in Europe became World War I, eventually ending three empires and the United States' isolation, if not its isolationism.

The United States was divided along several lines. Labor contended with the heavy hand, often balled into a fist, of management. Prohibitionists wanted alcohol banned while drinkers obviously did not. Women still could not vote, an obvious source of friction. American-born whites continued to scorn and abuse blacks and immigrants.

Nineteenth century laissez-faire philosophy ran into the 20th century's budding progressivism, which held that government had not only the right, but also the duty, to correct social ills.

Janesville mirrored the nation, though again not to extremes of violence.

On one hand, Janesville had a thriving business community led by conservative men who preferred the governmental-hands-off attitude of laissez-faire and rejected vital tenets of progressivism, namely the taxes that would pay for government programs. Besides objecting to the recently enacted federal and state income taxes, residents also protested one of the most elementary civic improvements—paved streets—because they cost money.

The city had a wild side. Janesville had a saloon for every 250 people; the ratio in 1999 was 722 people per liquor license. The lion's share of arrests were for drunkenness. Gambling was open and widespread. Prostitutes were enough of a problem that the police chief felt compelled to run them out of town—at least temporarily.

The city was dirty. Janesville started municipal garbage collection in 1912, but the Rock River, its banks and Goose Island (Traxler Park) remained dumps. And garbage then included manure, animal carcasses, decaying vegetables and fruit from grocery stores. The annual clean-up of a city much smaller than it is today ran for a week and filled many wagons many times over with trash.

Contagious disease, including tuberculosis, was prevalent. Flies were such a problem that a "swat-the-fly" campaign was started.

The city shared the nation's prejudice against African-Americans and immigrants. The Janesville Gazette reflected those prejudices as it regularly printed derogatory language and biased stereotypes.

**Left: Fire destroyed most of the Milwaukee Street Bridge and eight businesses perched on it April 1, 1913. One man died from injuries suffered in the fire, and the old wooden bridge had to be replaced—with a concrete span. The light-colored building on the right in the photo is One East Milwaukee, home of the law firm of Brennan, Steil, Basting & MacDougall in 1999.**

**Below: In a festive return to Rock County, some 600 soldiers, sailors and Marines who served in World War I marched down Janesville's Milwaukee Street on Oct. 8, 1919.**





But on the other hand, the city was home to many forward-thinking men and women. Local industrialist Joseph A. Craig saw the opportunity to lure the fledgling General Motors Corp. to the city, but the city also had to improve its housing, streets and schools to be an adequate and efficient home to a major manufacturer.

Women—and the right to vote that many of them had worked for—pushed the city in a more civilized, less rough-hewed direction.

Mayme Simonsen, a 102-year-old Janesville resident, was one of the students at Janesville High School who met to discuss women's rights and politics. When she was a junior, the school's yearbook, the *Phoenix*, predicted Simonsen, then Mamie Austin, would be a "suffragette leader."

"When I was in high school was when I was first aware of the way England was misusing women. They were arresting them, and some of them died. They were just walking in the street (in protest to get the vote)," Simonsen recalled.

Simonsen found it ironic that Great Britain went to war with Germany in what was sold to the public as a battle between democracy and absolutism but Great Britain—and the United States—did not allow their women to vote.

In the century's second decade, Rock County women organized to campaign for suffrage, and they formed the Janesville Federation of Women, an association of many clubs and groups, to improve the community. One of the federation's major successes was establishing a free dental clinic that served the community for some 40 years.

When women won the right to vote, their ballots ensured approval of government borrowing—and therefore higher taxes—for good roads and a new Janesville High School that both would help convince GM to come to the city and would become a showpiece of Wisconsin's progressive philosophy.

In the decade, city politics were conflicted.

Janesville experimented with and rejected reform government: the mayoral-commission form as opposed to the cronyistic and possibly graft-tinged mayoral-aldermanic form. But in 1919, the city took a major step toward modern government by establishing a plan commission and hiring John Nolen to develop an overall city plan.

"Janesville is at the turn of the road—the parting of the ways," Nolen wrote in his preliminary city plan. "The old order and the established customs of the past 30 years are already beginning to give place to the activities of a keener, modern industrial life."

"This new state of affairs is due to a general awakening throughout the country, a new sense of civic responsibility and also an expansion in industry which has taken form in Janesville in the plant of the Samson Tractor company."

Churches generally were not politically pro-



**The tornado of Nov. 11, 1911, killed nine people, destroyed many buildings and essentially demolished the Milton Gas Works, above, on its rampage through Rock County.**

gressive, but their congregations usually were devout and often aghast at the boozing, betting and bawdy women in the city's slew of saloons. A Janesville resident, Frances Willard, founded the Women's Christian Temperance Union in the late 1880s, but it was generally inactive here during the teens. Still, many smaller temperance groups continued to meet here and decry demon rum.

In the teens, alcohol "was the ruin of the nation," 100-year-old Mae Thompson of Evansville recalled. "Men spent too much money drinking. Their families needed the money for food. People had more religion in those days."

Probably because women could not vote, Janesville rejected going dry several times in the teens in local option balloting. The city yielded to Prohibition only when the federal government enacted it initially in 1919 as a rationing pretext during World War I, though women voters probably would have supplied the margin needed to pass a local alcohol ban.

Nevertheless, Janesville reduced its allotment of liquor licenses and, in an apparent effort to curtail the allure of saloon crawling—and its incumbent problems—city leaders banned both women and piano players from bars.

Public opinion in Rock County also was split on whether the United States should enter the European war.

"Stay out of it, we all thought," Thompson recalled. "They (military) just took all the good boys and left."

Her husband, Wallace, avoided the draft because he had a farmer's exemption.

But Ella Dunbar, another Evansville centenarian at 103, remembered:

"People accepted that we needed to fight. I

was teaching in a (rural) school. I had to roll bandages and make towels. They put the work on the teacher. You didn't get the kids; you got the parents (to help). You were kind of the coordinator of things."

"Flour was rationed. We had to use a coarse flour."

So were meat and fuel, including coal.

Dunbar's husband, Ernest, was 13 years older than she, and he had served in the Philippines, putting down the insurrection the United States first encouraged, then inherited when it won the Spanish-American War.

Like Ernest and older Rock County veterans who fought in the Civil War and Mexican-American war, the young men of the county proved patriotic, often eager for the fight. Many enlisted, and many were drafted. Their parents, friends and neighbors sent them off with parades and greeted their return with parades.

Letters from the front printed in the *Gazette* reflected the soldiers' and sailors' patriotism, optimism and desire to defeat absolutism, but it also is doubtful that skeptical or gloomy letters would have been published. Military censors might not have passed them; parents probably would not have shared them, and it is doubtful the newspaper, mindful of homefront morale, would have printed them.

Seventy-three men and two women from Rock County gave their lives in World War I. Accurate records of wounded are unavailable.

As the century's second decade ended, many of its conflicts were resolved, but many, especially how Americans would get along with each other in an increasingly diverse nation, were still to be answered.



# Letters from the front

## Rock County soldiers tell tales of World War I for the folks back home

A soldier on either side in World War I could walk virtually the entire length of France from the Mediterranean Sea to the English Channel without ever leaving the trenches.

But if he popped his head over the edge, he was a target.

The Western Front was hundreds of miles long and defended by millions of soldiers. Adding to the vast destruction and carnage was the fact that World War I was the first modern war employing tanks, aircraft, submarines and poison gas.

In all, 73 Rock County men and two women died in World War I service.

Janesville men served in every branch and many units of the military, but Company M of the 128th Infantry, 32nd Division, was originally composed entirely of Rock County men.

Before the 32nd saw combat, however, the 128th Regiment was stripped of captains and privates to serve as replacements in the 1st Division, so many Rock County men said goodbye to friends and made comrades of strangers.

The 32nd was under fire from May to November 1918 with only 10 days in a rest area, went "over the top" of trenches in three major offensives and suffered 14,000 killed and wounded from combat and all other causes.

Letters from the front were censored, but the Gazette printed many letters from "over there." A sampling of letters gives a taste of life—and death—in the trenches:

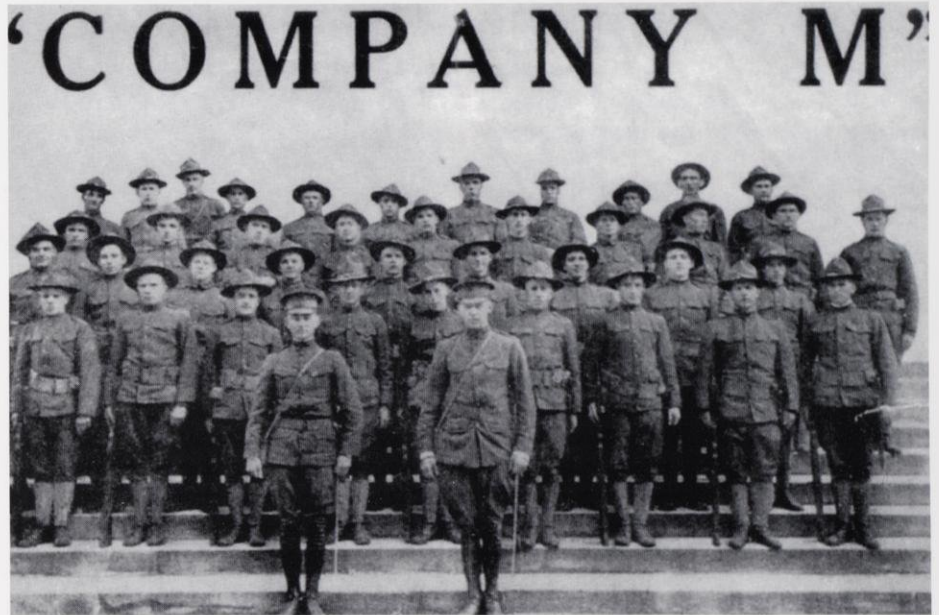
■ **Perry Burnett, Janesville**, on the French railcars known as "40 and 8" because they could carry 40 men or eight horses:

"Dear Folks at Home: ... We left there and traveled two days on a train, if that is what you could call it. They are the funniest trains I ever saw—such little cars about 18 feet long (actually 20 feet, 5 inches), and we rode 40 in a car, so we sure were packed in there. So there was no chance for sleep there—oh, yes, they were boxcars, ha, ha!"

"When we got off the train, we were marched 10 miles with overcoats and packs, and we were nearly all in as we were not used to walking since we started on the boat to come across, and when I got here I had a big blister on each foot, but we don't mind a little thing like that any more."

■ **Allen Dearborn, Janesville**, Battery E, 149th Field Artillery:

"Our days and nights were filled with good, hard work with a little recreation now and then for



Lyrics by Mary E. McBain were put to music by Dorr W. Sillaway and the ensuing song was dedicated to the men of Company M. This photo is from the cover of the sheet music. Company M of the 128th Infantry, 32nd Division, was originally composed entirely of Rock County men.

eating and sleeping, and I can again assure you that we had all the thrills you hear about."

"Plenty of gas, lots of shrapnel and many high explosives bursting about us. It gives a fellow a mighty fine feeling to know that his little individual efforts are of some value toward crushing the Huns. ..."

"The best way I can explain the sound of an approaching shell is that they sound just like the interurban (train) coming up Main Street at a great rate of speed. Well, when you hear that sound approaching, it is wonderful to know just how fast you can fall to the ground, stretch out and endeavor to camouflage yourself. It has proved to be the quickest and safest way. ..."

"Every gun in our regiment, every French battery for miles, opened fire, and for 2½ hours the guns roared. The sky was one mass of flame."

■ **Walter Fosmyre, formerly of Janesville** and formerly of the 128th's Whitewater company:

"Every day I have the pleasure of witnessing several air fights, and it is great sport to be on the ground and watch them get the Hun, and they most always get him with the machine guns or shrapnel."

■ **John Litel, Albany**, on meeting the "Tiger of France," Georges Clemenceau:

"Dear Father: ... I noticed the party return-

ing from the trenches. As the party was about five or six feet from me, the brigadier general told the civilian that we were American. ..."

"The civilian came over and spoke to me in perfect English. He was a man of small stature, that is not tall, though perhaps I shouldn't say small. He looked quite old and bent, yet when I looked into his eyes, he didn't seem old at all but rather seemed to be filled with vitality and strength."

"He asked me where I came from, what part of the States; told me he had been there for four years. ... He said he was 77 years old and then quite casually said, 'You know I am the prime minister.' Of course, I didn't know it, and I didn't know what to do now that I did know. I supposed there was something I should say, but I couldn't think of it, so only said, 'No?'"

"This seemed to satisfy him, though I felt a bit nervous as we had been extremely friendly just before that—in fact we had had our arms up each other's shoulders. We chatted on for some time longer, and then we moved over to Don and talked with him. ... After a little more talk, the prime minister said he was glad to have met us, shook hands with us."

■ **Pvt. Arthur Beiman, former Company M member**, describing part of a battle on May



28, 1918, in which seven Company M men were killed.

"Dear Mother: ... I don't suppose you know it, but I was wounded twice and I am in the hospital and will be for some time. I got shot twice, once in the back which was only slight and the other bullet penetrated my arm and went out below the elbow. ..."

"I didn't say anything about being in the trenches before because I didn't want you to worry. But I had been up there 10 days and been out in No Man's Land several times. ... About daylight I thought all hell was loose. Our artillery kept it up until 6:45, and then over the top for us."

"We were laughing and joking, and I don't think there was a fellow in the crowd who was afraid. We knew just how far we had to go and believe me we got there when we started. We then started to dig in, and I had my hole about half-finished when I got hit, one right after the other. ..."

"One of the boys has told me since then that my chum was killed in the fight, but talk about dead—there were Huns laying on top of each other, some of them old men and others only little chaps of tender years."

■ **Harold Amundson, Edgerton**, formerly of Company M, on the death of his brother, Ralph:

"Dear Mother: ... We have just got back from our second time in the trenches and we lost a few more men. Ralph was one of them. It is sure hard to write about it, but I can imagine how you feel about it, but please try to take it as easy as you can, as it cannot be helped."

"He sure had hard luck from what I heard. He was facing seven Germans all alone, and one got him from the back. It sounds awful, Mother, but there were others that went the same way. ..."

"I know it is going to be terrible hard on you, Mother, but he died for the greatest and noblest cause anyone can die for, and he died facing our enemies."

■ **Capt. E.N. Caldwell, Janesville**, former commander of Company M:

"We were passing through a ridge of large hills, and there was not a vestige of vegetation of any kind in sight. Not a bit of grass or a tree. All that remained of the trees were splintered stumps, and the ground was simply pockmarked with immense shell holes. The whole surface of the ground looked as if it had been churned up."

"Graves with little crosses of wood were everywhere as far as you could see—both German and French. The German you could tell by the helmet on the cross and the French by the little knot of red, white and blue. ... Many

"Talk about the dead—there were Huns laying on top of each other, some of them old men and others only little chaps of tender years."

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bodies lay bleaching in the open where they had been disinterred by exploding shells. ... I saw one place where (the Germans) had dug a trench right through one of these little cemeteries, and bones, boots, pieces of clothes, etc., were sticking out of the trench walls."

■ **Ambulance driver James Palmer, former Janesville resident**, on a series of German attacks:

"They shelled anything and everything, including all the Red Cross stations and hospitals within range, and as fast as their guns could work. ..."

"I was trying to sleep, but again expecting an attack, I couldn't quite make it, so sort of keeping one eye open for the coming of Fritz in the shape of gas."

"He started with gas and kept it up for hours as hard as he could, and on all the important points he dropped his big cherries (shells)."

And on his ambulance: "When I look at my flivver, now I have a pity for the poor old thing. I can hardly understand why she still

"Graves with little crosses of wood were everywhere as far as you could see—both German and French. The German you could tell by the helmet on the cross and the French by the little knot of red, white and blue. ... Many bodies lay bleaching in the open where they had been disinterred by exploding shells."

—*Capt. E.N. Caldwell, Janesville, former commander of Company M*

"When I look at my flivver, now I have a pity for the poor old thing. I can hardly understand why she still runs, or rather limps as Fords generally do. The body is just perforated with machine gun bullets and (shrapnel) holes, and she is so tattered and torn that she looks sickly."

—*James Palmer, former Janesville resident on his ambulance*

"You ought to see some of the poor little children here who have no fathers or mothers. I hope the war will soon be over. We are fighting hard, and none of us is afraid to fight, but oh the awfulness of war! I think Sherman said it too mildly when he said that war is hell."

—*Pvt. John Bradley, Janesville*

"He said he was 77 years old and then quite casually said, 'You know I am the prime minister.' Of course, I didn't know it, and I didn't know what to do now that I did know. I supposed there was something I should say, but I couldn't think of it, so only said, 'No?' "

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"Summer is here at last, and all of the trees are in bloom except where the war has wrought its terrible desolation. You cannot imagine what it is like. I have seen three months of hard fighting, and it seems I have lived 100 years. I have been in one town that was taken and retaken by us twice. ..."

"All of the people here love us Americans. They seem to appreciate in every way what we are doing for them. This is a grim business, and we are going to get it over with just as soon as possible."



# 1910-1919

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1910

■ **Jan. 5:** A severe blizzard halts all rail traffic to Janesville including interurban line.

■ **Jan. 8:** 228 hoboes are brought in to shovel snow at the Chicago & North Western rail yard here. They strike for a 25-cent-an-hour wage and better food.

■ **Jan. 9:** Mrs. Julius Deitche and her 2-year-old daughter, Tina, are killed when kerosene poured on an open fire explodes.

■ **Jan. 10:** Hobo snow shovelers strike again, this time for 30 cents an hour.

■ **Jan. 11:** The reform mayor-commission form of government is voted down in Janesville, 1,017 to 622.

■ **Jan. 13:** Another blizzard hits. The worst storm since 1881 halts virtually all Midwestern train traffic.

■ **Jan. 27:** A.E. Graham, found guilty in federal court of selling oleomargarine as butter in Janesville, is sentenced to 18 months in Fort Leavenworth Prison. Local violators of the law get off much easier, a \$50 fine and costs.

■ **Jan. 28:** Businessmen gather to organize the Industrial and Commercial Club to boost Janesville business. The next day, the club votes to increase to \$50,000 the incentive requested by Monitor Auto Co. of Chicago to construct a truck assembly plant here.

In March, Monitor occupies an old tobacco warehouse on North Academy Street and makes the first trucks manufactured in Janesville, open-cab models used largely for local deliveries. The company adds a bus in 1911 but eventually closes before 1917.

■ **Feb. 7:** William Shadel is killed by a train near Milton Junction. His sleigh is demolished, but his horses escape unscathed.

■ **April 1:** Masons in Janesville strike for an eight-hour day at "the old wages." All construction work in the city grinds to a halt.

■ **April 5:** The city stays wet—alcohol sales still allowed—by 663 votes.

■ **April 28:** 15 men strike for more pay at the St. Paul rail yards.

■ **May 2:** Journeymen plumbers strike for higher wages.

■ **May 4:** Local contractors hire non-union masons.

■ **May 11:** 200 attend an "enthusiastic" labor union meeting.

■ **May 14:** Journeymen plumbers return to work "after settling their differences."

■ **May 22:** Halley's Comet is visible in the

western sky. Comet parties become popular.

■ **June 7:** Union masons compromise; they agree to work a nine-hour day at 60 cents an hour for the Beloit contractor building Janesville Machine Co.'s new \$45,000 factory.

■ **June 30:** During the first half of the year, railroad accidents claim nine lives; June is the bloodiest month so far with five fatalities.

■ **July 11:** Janesville City Council OKs 48 saloon licenses.

■ **July 13:** Fire destroys the Harden & Poleys butcher shop in Clinton and threatens the village's entire business district.

■ **Aug. 5:** Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show performs at the fairgrounds.

■ **Aug. 24:** "Waldo Luchsinger, a baggageman on the St. Paul road, is thrown from the train as it rounds a curve but falls on his cork leg and is not injured."

■ **Sept. 19:** Joe Furer, "an Italian section hand," shoots Ed Miller, a machinist, with a shotgun in the rail yards because Miller is meddling with the tomato vines Furer had planted by his shanty. Furer held in custody; one of Miller's eyes is removed because of his wounds.

■ **Sept. 23:** Workers strike at Janesville Machine over a wage cut.

■ **Nov. 21:** Mr. and Mrs. Harry Rothstein of Janesville host officials of a Chicago synagogue who perform circumcisions on their sons.

■ **Dec. 5:** The Edgerton ordinance prohibiting the sale of alcohol to women is ruled void.

■ "Mysterious Kendricks, the woman hater, is given 35 days for insulting women."

■ **Dec. 10:** A representative of a Japanese importing company inspects vehicles at the Monitor plant.

■ **Dec. 31:** Ads in the Gazette include: Ford Model T Touring cars for \$780 and Model T Roadsters for \$680.

Smith's Pharmacy proclaiming "Let the children Kodak." The drugstore carries Kodak cameras prices from \$5 to \$129 and Brownies costing \$1 to \$12.

■ **Sometime in 1910:** Police make 1,090 arrests for 1910; Sam Brown accounts for almost 20 percent of them with 198. Of the arrests, 922 are for drunkenness.

■ Janesville is hit with five more train fatalities in second half of the year. All occur in November.

■ Janesville Cement Shingle reorganizes as Janesville Sand & Gravel, reflecting the change to mining sand and gravel from making concrete

products.

■ The Janesville Traction Co. forms to take over streetcar service, a perennial money-loser, but the owner, a New Jersey holding company, keeps the line operating to supplement one of its other businesses, the interurban train to Rockford, Ill.

### 1911

■ **Jan. 9:** Fire consumes Abel Fisher's tobacco warehouse on Washington Street. Loss is \$30,000.

■ **Jan. 31:** In Monroe, George Bercy, a worker at Creole Cigar here and a former Janesville resident, shoots and kills Fred Leichtl of Monroe for refusing to sell him a drink. Bercy shoots himself and dies the next day.

■ **Feb. 5:** The Rev. T.D. Williams speaks on the "Evils of the Public Dance Hall in Janesville." Another of his topics is "Can Janesville Be Converted?"

■ **Feb. 16:** Attorney A.E. Matheson prepares a list of "radical bills" being considered by the Wisconsin Legislature including the State Highway Bill providing for public construction of state roads and the Income Tax Bill.

■ **March 6:** Three bar owners are arrested for selling alcohol on Sunday.

■ **March 11:** Janesville Board of Education "adopts the slant system of writing in place of the vertical system and teachers are instructed in the former."

■ **March 16:** The Janesville postmaster distributes fliers "asking that proper mailboxes be furnished at residences." Local carriers on average walk 12 miles per day and deliver 77 pounds of material.

■ **March 20:** In an effort to save money, the Janesville City Council rejects streetlights on posts. The question of Sunday alcohol sales splits the council.

■ **April 1:** The city's aldermen and the candidates running against them in the upcoming election declare that they oppose secret council sessions.

■ Ninety children attend the first story hour at the Janesville Public Library.

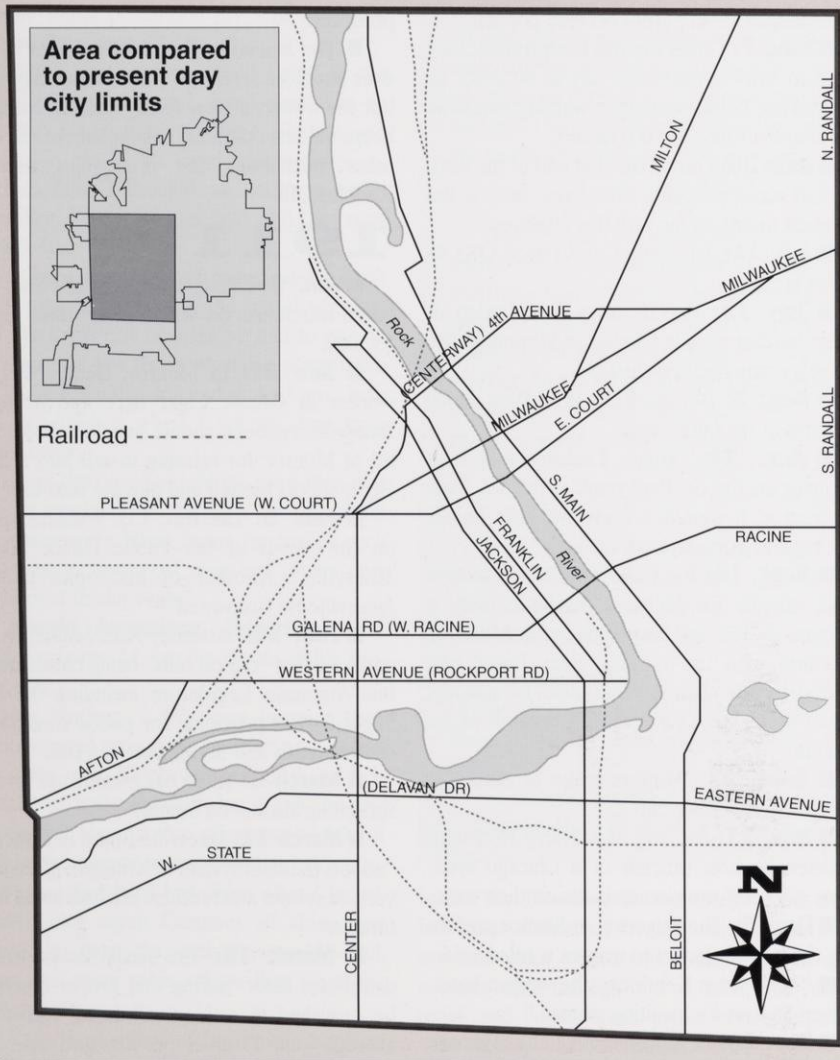
■ **April 3:** 35 painters strike for an all-union shop and 34 cents an hour as the minimum wage.

■ **April 4:** The professional at the Beloit Golf Club is hired to spend three days a week improving the games of Janesville linksters.

■ **April 5:** City lockup is temporary home to 25 hoboes. The rail center of Janesville has a reputation as a "bo-friendly town," a percep-



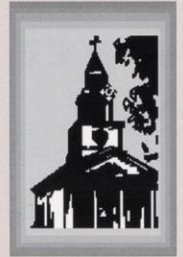
# Janesville in 1910



**Janesville's city limits in 1910.**  
Some of the street names have changed since then.



**Area of city:**  
7.25 square miles



**Number of churches:** 18



**Number of schools:** 12.  
One is a public high school, the other 11 are elementary schools, including two parochial



**Miles of storm sewer:** 1.73  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 16.66  
**Miles of water mains:** 40.88



**Population:** 13,894



**\$1 in 1910 has buying power of \$17.09 in 1999**

tion city fathers are trying to change.

■ **April 6:** Bell Telephone puts 60 men to work installing its new phone system.

■ **April 21:** "John Slinn of Porter receives wonderful messages from the Almighty, but the jury thinks he had best go to Mendota."

■ **May 1:** At the first meeting of the new city council, the "question of street repairs causes the usual argument." It's the same argument 88 years later: Cost vs. need.

■ **May 15:** The city council sends back to committees proposed ordinances that would ban fortune-tellers and prohibit breweries from

operating bars.

■ **May 19:** Mayor Nichols proclaims that the straw hat season has started.

■ Five local veterans of the Civil War travel to Vicksburg, Tenn., to attend the dedication of a monument to Wisconsin veterans.

■ **May 22:** Painters call off their strike and return to work.

■ **May 23:** Measles epidemic continues to rage. Some 650 people are stricken; two die.

■ **May 30:** Boys Scouts of America organize first troops in Janesville. Scouting proves popular as 50 lads sign up in just a few days.

■ **June 3:** The paint shop at the Hough Shade (HUFCON) factory catches fire, but the loss is limited to less than \$1,000.

While escaping from the building, Mae Hager has her clothing caught in a machine and ripped from her body.

■ **June 8:** A delegation from Janesville's Industrial & Commercial Club goes to Madison to protest the income tax bill.

■ **June 21:** Louis Keller shoots and kills Johanna Hischke in cold blood and fires at her daughter, Katherine, and husband, Fred. The motive for the killing is that Mrs. Hischke refused



to allow the 80-year-old Keller to court 15-year-old Katherine. Keller is found hiding on Goose Island (Traxler Park). He pleads guilty in September and is sentenced to life in prison.

■ **June 28:** Police Chief George Appleby bans use of revolvers on the Fourth of July.

■ The first six months of 1911 prove relatively safe on the tracks; only two deaths reported, both in June.

■ **July 1:** Violet Davis, 4, Edgerton, dies in Mercy Hospital from lockjaw—tetanus—which she contracted by stepping on a rusty nail.

■ **July 3:** Carl Blohard ignores the chief's order and is arrested for carrying a revolver.

■ **July 4:** Huge festivities with a parade and carnival in Janesville. Included is a mock battle at the fairgrounds involving several Army and militia units in which 20,000 rounds of ammunition are expended. No serious injuries are reported anywhere in the city, probably thanks to Chief Appleby's scrutiny.

■ **July 14:** A new law limiting hours of work for women severely hurts Janesville factories and stores.

■ **July 19:** Four masked men hold up Italian laborers living in bunk cars at a local rail yard and make off with money, guns and watches. Two days later, four frightened Italian immigrants return to the old country.

■ **Aug. 2:** Local merchants ask the city council to reconsider and approve streetlights on posts.

■ **Aug. 7:** Notices are sent to 40 businesses that they must clean up trash they have dumped on the Rock River banks.

■ **Aug. 8:** A jury of the Jackson Club decides an ordinance banning fortune-tellers would be unjust. Local mystics Z.O. Bowen and Prof. Harry Daverkosen appear to defend themselves to the delight of club members.

■ **Aug. 10:** A huge thunderstorm breaks the drought that has strangled Rock County all summer, but the storm's lightning ignites many barns. Damage, including livestock lost to the flames, is estimated at \$12,000.

■ **Aug. 21:** City council argues bitterly over paving Janesville streets.

■ **Aug. 30:** Former resident Carrie Jacobs Bond, Janesville composer best known for writing "I Love You Truly," is "arrested in Los Angeles for turning her auto the wrong way in the street."

■ **Sept. 4:** The Carpenter's and Joiner's unions sponsor Labor Day races at the fairgrounds, and 4,000 attend to watch motorcycles, horses and autos compete.

■ **Sept. 8:** Two "launches" collide on the Rock River, and the 3-year-old son of John Jarvis is thrown overboard. William Heise rescues the toddler.

■ **Sept. 18:** City Ice Co. buys land on Goose Island (Traxler Park) and begins to build a new ice house. The company continues business today.

■ **Sept. 19:** Janesville schools prepare to offer physical education as required by a new state law, and the schools switch from roller towels to paper towels in washrooms, again because of a state health statute.

■ **Sept. 25:** L.G. Carlson, carpenter and former resident, shoots and kills his 21-year-old wife, Celia, at her mother's home at 618 Linn. He then commits suicide.

■ **Oct. 4:** The Vagabond, an anonymous but frequent guest columnist in the Gazette, writes that a better moral tone is needed among city youngsters.

■ Appearing at Myers Theater is The Gay Morning Glories Burlesque featuring a "Big Aviation Chorus," indicating that aviation, only 8 years old, has captured the nation's fancy.

■ **Oct. 23:** High school students are given remedial work in arithmetic because of complaints they do not know how to figure interest.

■ **Oct. 30:** Jerry McCarthy, 77, is killed, and William Donovan is hurt seriously when they are buried in a cave-in of the ditch they are digging on South Bluff Street (South Parker Drive).

■ **Nov. 8:** Hannah Lawton is brought into court for using abusive language.

■ **Nov. 18:** John Philip Sousa's band performs at the Myers Theater.

■ **Nov. 21:** A doctor examines Janesville High students and reports their physical condition as "very disappointing."

■ **Dec. 11:** Dr. Maud Williams tells a group of women at City Hall that "vanity, as shown by insufficient clothing, causes tuberculosis."

■ **Dec. 16:** J.A. Tann falls out of a window of a building constructed on the Milwaukee Street Bridge, burns his hand on an electrical wire and splashes into the river. He swims the half-block to shore.

■ **Dec. 31:** Railroads remain deadly; seven men are killed since June.

■ **Sometime in 1911:** F.M. Marzluff consolidates with Western Shoe and becomes Lay-Watson Shoe, making shoes on Laurel Street (then West Bluff) until around 1918.

■ Rock County Rural Normal School forms to train teachers for the county's one- and two-room schoolhouses. In its 22-year operation, the school graduates 585 teachers.

## 1912

■ **Jan. 2:** Slight earthquake rattles dishes in Janesville.

■ **Jan. 10:** A local Anti-Tuberculosis Society forms to combat the "white plague." The group collects \$610 in its initial fund drive.

■ **Jan. 21:** Miss Katherine Jeffris of Janesville puts out a fire at Stowell Cottage on the Beloit College campus and rescues two girls who were overcome by smoke.

■ **Jan. 23:** Janesville votes 2,182 to 1,193 for the mayor-commission form of government.

■ **Jan. 24:** Three families fall seriously ill with trichinosis after eating bad pork.

■ **Feb. 3:** Local Gideons plan to raise money to place Bibles in all Janesville hotel rooms.

■ **Feb. 13:** Fire destroys the Bassett & Echlin saddlery plant in Janesville for a huge loss of \$140,000. "The fire is discovered about 9 o'clock in the evening, and but for the fact that night was still the entire business district might have burned."

■ **Feb. 18:** "When a stock train lays over in the C&NW yards, the roundhouse force milks all the cows and goes on a milk jag."

■ **Feb. 23:** "Bull Dog" Knauth, run out of Janesville in 1909 because of his wild ways and 25 dogs, is arrested in Beloit by federal officers for sending gambling apparatus through the mail.

■ **Feb. 24:** Harry Daverkosen, well-known Janesville "clairvoyant and psychic medium," is arrested for misuse of the mail.

■ The YMCA starts a campaign to raise \$15,000 to remodel its building (still standing at North High and West Milwaukee streets).

■ **Feb. 26:** Local women meet at the library and form the Rock County Women's Suffrage League. They elect Mrs. A.P. Lovejoy president.

■ Three "good boxing bouts" are staged at the Janesville Rink. All feature boxers named Kid. The local favorite, Kid McDuff, falls "down and out" to Julius Stien.

■ **Feb. 27:** Rock County Telephone Co. experiments with the automatic electric phone.

■ **March 14:** Local auto dealers stage their first show, exhibiting 20 models at the ice rink. The next day, vandalism is discovered. Several cars are found to have emery dust put in their bearings.

■ **March 15:** William Jennings Bryan, three-time presidential candidate and most famous orator of his era, gives an address at the Myers Theater.

■ Despite objections from ministers, the city council repeals the ordinance closing theaters on Sundays.

■ **March 26:** Members of the Janesville High basketball team receive the city's first athletic letters: white monogram "J's" on blue sweaters. In the state championship game, Janesville loses a heart-breaker, 39-38, to Menominee.

■ **March 30:** "Bull Dog" Knauth pleads guilty to misuse of the mail and is sentenced to four months.



## Killer twister tears through Rock County

**N**ov. 11, 1911. "It was so warm that morning. It was a muggy day," recalled Mae Thompson, 100, of Evansville.

11/11/11. An unusually warm, humid Saturday in November. The high temperature was 74. The next day, the mercury stood at zero.

"It was bitterly cold that morning," remembered Ella Dunbar, a 103-year-old Evansville resident.

The change in the weather triggered the worst tornado in Rock County's recorded history: a killer twister that took nine lives, tore many houses and barns to splinters and destroyed crops and countless livestock.

The tornado—then called a cyclone—ripped a long slash of destruction from Rock County's southwestern to northeastern corners.

Shortly after 2 p.m., the twister touched down west and north of Brodhead, roared east past Orfordville to pound Hanover, then veered north, skirting the northwestern edge of Janesville.

The tornado sliced through the northwestern corner of Harmony Township and was headed along the "Milton road"—John Paul Road (County Y)—directly toward what was then the separate town of Milton Junction. But the twister slanted northeast and howled between the villages of Milton and Milton Junction, what today is the center of Milton.

The twister killed a toddler—4-year-old Helen Austin—when it demolished the house on her family's farm northeast of Lima Center.

The tornado exhausted its destructive power about four miles from the Austin farm in the county's extreme northeast corner.

In about 20 minutes, the twister carved a highway of death and devastation some 34 miles long and between 100 and 400 yards wide, The Janesville Gazette reported.

"The wind came up, and it got dark," Thompson remembered. "I was scared to death."

Her family took shelter in the farmhouse basement.

"It just whizzed right through," she said. "I could hear the whistle of it. It took some trees at our place."

The tornado scattered disaster throughout Rock County, but the most tragic loss was at Anton Schmitt's farm near Hanover. The 55-year-old widower was blown out of his barn and died from a broken neck and internal injuries.



**A tornado ripped through Rock County on Nov. 11, 1911, killing nine and causing more damage and destruction than any other twister in the county's history. Houses and barns were flattened, and at the William Douglas farm the tornado snapped off a tree before topping off the remainder of the trunk with a buggy.**

His 14-year-old son, Albert, was buried under hay and almost bled to death during the driving rain that followed the tornado. He died on Monday.

Albert's two sisters—Alice, 19, and Regia, 9—died terrifying deaths. The twister crushed their house and hurled them some 800 feet.

As the Gazette graphically reported:

"The clothing (Alice) wore was completely torn from her body with the exception of a corset, the stays of which were driven deep into her body. In addition ... her neck was broken, also both arms and limbs.

"Regia was hurled head-first into a hog wallow, and her body forced head-first into the mud. When found, her shoulders were submerged, and it was with great difficulty that she was extricated. The body was terribly mangled, the neck, both hips, ribs and arms being broken."

"That Schmitt family, one boy (Sam, the eldest) was away working," Dunbar recalled. "He was the only one that lived."

Sam was killed seven years later in World War I, according to Gazette records.

A man—described only as a tramp seeking shelter from the storm—was in the barn with the male Schmitts and amazingly survived because he had the presence of mind to grab the barn floor. The twister ripped away the barn over the tramp, and he escaped without a scratch.

The next day, Dunbar was one of the many

people from Footville who boarded railroad freight cars to visit Hanover to view the destruction. They went to the Schmitt farm.

"We were dumbfounded. We didn't realize all that happened," she said. "I saw that buggy in the tree (at the W.O. Douglas farm). I saw splinters driven through poles."

Besides the Schmitts and the Austin girl, the tornado killed Mrs. John Crowder and Elizabeth Proede, who lived in separate homes between Brodhead and Orfordville; Leo Lentz, 16, blown from a barn in Hanover; and Amy Korbin, 8, instantly killed as her home two miles north of Janesville was demolished.

The Gazette listed eight others as hurt with injuries including amputated fingers, broken bones, bruises, cuts and internal injuries.

At the Schmitt farm, a four-foot board was driven through a large hog. Throughout the county, the twister stripped chickens of their feathers, and the birds froze to death in the ensuing cold.

Total damage approached \$17 million in 1999 dollars.

The county rallied to clear the debris and help the injured and destitute.

The Gazette organized a fund drive, raising thousands of dollars. Convoys of cars made up "relief squadrons" that brought help to often homeless families.

"Everybody got together and helped clean up," Thompson said.





On Feb. 24, 1912, the Janesville YMCA began a campaign to raise \$15,000 to remodel the building. The structure still stands at North High and West Milwaukee streets.

■ **March 31:** Ice destroys part of the Indianford Dam, and within a few hours, the Rock River rises 28 inches in Janesville. The water rises for days, flooding business basements on Main Street.

■ **April 2:** Janesville Machine divides into six departments because of increasing business. J. A. Craig is appointed general manager.

■ **April 3:** The first mayor and commissioners elected under the new form of city government pledge publicly "that the people are to be given a square deal and are to know where every dollar is spent."

■ **April 7:** Easter Sunday and because of an ordinance repeal, nickelodeons are open on Sunday for the first time in years.

■ **April 8:** Slack work results in the railroads' laying off many Janesville men.

■ **April 14:** Fire destroys the Doty and Feed Mill, a city landmark on Milwaukee Street since 1854. Loss pegged at \$10,000.

■ **May 3:** Mabel Griffin Walker, Celia Millay and Jennie Jacobson are jailed for drunkenness.

■ **May 8:** Local rail agents are summoned to Chicago "to assist in helping to break the freight handlers' strike."

■ **May 9:** The Sinnissippi Golf Club starts a goat contest. Members play for each other's goats.

■ **May 12:** Many in Janesville wear white

carnations in honor of Mother's Day, two years before the day is recognized nationally and officially.

■ **May 18:** Freight handlers' strike continues; local merchants feel the effects of few shipments of goods.

■ **May 21:** The Janesville Police Department adds an officer so that each policeman can have a day off each week.

■ **May 24:** Note to Celine Dion: Lillian K. Decker of Janesville writes "Riding in the Deep," a song about the Titanic disaster, which occurred five weeks earlier.

■ **May 29:** Local grocers receive instructions from state officials regarding recently enacted pure food laws.

■ Police receive many complaints about auto drivers not using mufflers and suggest an ordinance requiring mufflers.

■ **June 1:** Arrangements are made to give local firemen a day off each week.

■ **June 7:** The Janesville council passes ordinance providing for municipal garbage collection.

■ **June 19:** State Eagles convention in full swing here: Five extra cops on duty; 1,000 uniformed Eagles and 11 bands march in a morning parade; motorcycles and autos race in the afternoon; aviator Nels Nelson gives biplane rides; four prize fights staged at night; Chief Appleby warns to watch out for pickpockets.

■ **June 26:** H.H. McDaniels, local motorcycle dealer, orders a biplane for himself.

■ **June 27:** 23-day-old freight handlers' strike ends in Chicago.

■ **June 30:** Remarkably, only one person is killed in a rail accident during first half of the year.

■ **July 1:** Janesville passes 8-mile-an-hour speed limit for autos in the business district.

■ **July 10:** John Reid, 18, Avalon, has both hips crushed when he is kicked by a "vicious stallion."

■ **July 11:** "Police are called to the Griffin home when the notorious Mabel and her parents get into a fight."

■ **July 17:** Bradley Conrad pays \$2 and costs for violating the auto speed limit.

■ **July 26:** Members of WCTU and Loyal Temperance Legion enjoy a picnic at a local farm.

■ Janesville is chosen as the site for the 1913 state convention of retail liquor dealers.

■ **Aug. 7:** Reluctant to pay, property owners on Washington Street protest city decision to repair and pave the street. They succeed in getting assessments reduced.

■ **Aug. 10:** George S. Parker, founder of Parker Pen, offers a black bear cub to the city as the nucleus for a zoo. No zoo develops.

■ **Aug. 13:** Transient Thomas Flood gets 50 days in jail for "insulting"—propositioning—two girls on the street, and a "campaign against mashers is planned."

■ **Aug. 14:** State reports 867 autos in Rock County, 275 of them in Janesville. County is fourth in state in number of autos and motorcycles.

■ **Aug. 16:** First auto fatality in Janesville is recorded when 5-year-old Gilbert Rubin is struck and killed at Milwaukee and Jackson streets by a car driven by Katherine Jeffris. No legal action reported.

■ **Sept. 20:** "The Municipal Court is busy as rainy days throw many out of work and drunks are frequent."

■ One hundred immigrants, more than 40 of them Scandinavian, are granted citizenship.

■ **Sept. 25:** 1,000 women attend the first fashion show at the Myers Theater. Sponsored by the local store of Pond & Bailey, the show features women's dresses with straight, not gathered, waists. Hemlines are still to the ankle, and high heels are worn with evening wear. Fashionable men's suits are single-breasted with jackets extending just past the hip. Hats for men and women are a fashion must.

■ **Oct. 1:** Tillie Bergsterman, 37, is found dead in her home, and an autopsy reveals she was "criminally assaulted"—raped—shortly before her death. Two days later, two youths, Harry Berger, 17, and Edward Meyer, 19, are



## Blaze burns businesses at heart of city

**F**ast action, lots of help and little wind kept Janesville's business district from flaming destruction on April 1, 1913.

But the blaze that swept the Milwaukee Street Bridge killed one man, leveled eight stores and knocked the bridge out of operation.

The bridge and the stores built on it were made of wood. Ignition sources and highly flammable materials were everywhere: gas and kerosene lamps, pails of paint and gasoline, barrels of oil and tar, and the relatively new, and therefore primitive, innovation of electrical wiring.

The fire's cause was believed to be "incendiary," arson, but the bridge and the frame stores jamming either end of the bridge essentially were a bonfire waiting to happen.

Two years earlier, the state fire marshal warned Janesville that its crowded business district—ravaged by block-burning blazes in 1865 and 1868—still was prone to fire. The entire central city could have burned in the manner of the Chicago and Peshtigo fires if not for the savvy of the Janesville Fire Department, help from residents and firefighters from Rockford, Ill., and a still night.

The fire started underneath Archie Reid Sr.'s Dry Good store on the bridge's southeast end. His son, Archie Jr., left the store at 6:25 p.m.

"Yet within 20 minutes the fire was discovered, a roaring mass of flames, shooting under the entire row of buildings, across the river under the bridge and up through the flooring to the inflammable material within," The Janesville Gazette reported.

William Isaac was working in his tailor shop above the Reid store. As he tried to escape, the 66-year-old Isaac was overcome by thick smoke, and he fell down the stairs, badly gashing his head. A fire hose stream then walloped the helpless Isaac.

A priest helped Isaac to safety, but the tailor died a few days later.

Greenish blue flames spewed from ruptured gas lines. The blaze raced west along the south side of the bridge and climbed high into the night sky, illuminating flying birds miles away.

Sparks rained on neighboring buildings, endangering the downtown and keeping many men hopping to extinguish them. Burning debris sizzled in the river and floated south, threatening the wooden Court



**A fire swept through part of Janesville's crowded downtown business district on April 1, 1913. This view is from the west side of the Rock River looking southeast and shows the Hayes Block. The tremendous amount of debris that fell in the river caused the water to rise 8 inches and threatened the Court Street Bridge.**

Street Bridge. Debris dammed the Rock River, causing it to rise 8 inches and flooding Main Street basements.

The space under the bridge furnished a great draft to feed the flames, and dense, black smoke rolled in waves from under the span. Windows cracked and popped like a barrage of rifle shots. Before they could get water on the flames, firemen heard three explosions inside the Reid store, and the storefront blew out.

Chief Henry Klein realized the burning stores were lost, so he ordered his men to save what hadn't caught fire: buildings on the bridge's north side, structures on either side of the Rock River and the Court Street Bridge.

He stationed hoses on top of the Hayes Block and others behind businesses on North Main Street. Firemen chopped holes in the bridge to draw river water through suction hoses and combat the flames from underneath.

Klein ordered the city's electricity cut so live wires would not melt and fall on the firefighters and the large crowd of onlookers. Three cars were pulled up so their headlights could help the firemen.

Hundreds of onlookers joined the battle, helping firemen tug the heavy hoses into place and assisting merchants lug their stock from threatened buildings.

Beloit firefighters could not help because their hoses did not fit Janesville plugs. The Rockford Fire Department loaded a steam engine and 11 men onto an interurban train and raced here in 72 minutes.

The Madison department also was sending help by train, but the fire was controlled—not extinguished—before the Madison firemen left the rail yard, so they were told they weren't needed.

Firefighters got a break when the burning Miller and Schubert cigar store's foundation collapsed and the building tipped into the river, creating a gap in the path of the blaze. The next building west—F.J. Bailey & Son's Dry Goods—was brick and had an iron fire wall.

Intense heat crumpled the fire wall, and it slid into the river. Flames jumped to the rear of the Bailey store, but firemen extinguished them.

Within days, a temporary wood bridge was constructed, but the permanent replacement bridge was made from concrete.



arrested for the Bergsterman murder. They admit to obtaining liquor illegally and having sexual intercourse with the victim but deny killing her. They are held for trial.

■ **Oct. 9:** Jane Addams, noted humanitarian and founder of Hull House in Chicago, calls for women to get the vote before a large audience at the Congregational Church in Janesville.

■ **Oct. 11:** Many citizens meet with the council and demand that Janesville be cleaned up. The Bergsterman murder has inflamed local ministers who blame, in part, lax parents for the city's vices.

■ **Oct. 12:** Chief Appleby orders all slot machines removed from saloons and other businesses. His inspection two days later shows the order is followed.

■ **Oct. 16:** Famous golfer Chick Evans plays on the local links before a large gallery.

■ **Oct. 18:** Clairvoyant Harry Daverkosen pleads guilty to misusing the mails. He is fined \$1,000 and sentenced to six months in jail.

■ **Oct. 19:** A masher accosts a woman at Main and Court streets; she gives him a "thorough trouncing."

■ **Oct. 24:** "An examination of the income tax rolls shows that the poorer people pay most of the tax and the richer people continue to get off as easily as usual."

■ **Nov. 7:** As a further step to clean up the city, Chief Appleby gives Janesville's "disorderly women"—prostitutes—10 days to leave the city.

■ **Nov. 9:** Though poor himself and ministering to lepers on the Hawaiian island of Molokai, former Janesville resident Brother Joseph Dutton sends a contribution to the \$25,000 Mercy Hospital building campaign. He read of the fund drive in the Gazette.

■ **Nov. 12:** Janesville City Council bans women from saloons.

■ **Nov. 21:** The council considers a smoking ordinance "to regulate the nuisance, which has been especially pronounced since the cold weather began."

■ **Nov. 22:** Edward Meyer and Harry Berger are found guilty of the rape and third-degree murder of Tillie Bergsterman. Each is sentenced to 18 years in prison.

■ Chief Appleby tours the city and declares that the "disorderly women" have left.

■ **Nov. 28:** The Janesville High football team loses the state championship game to Oshkosh, 28-0, "owing to their inability to use the forward pass." The forward pass is new to the game and not allowed in all contests.

■ **Dec. 5:** Though elected only months earlier, Janesville's new mayor, James Fathers, and two commissioners are facing a possible recall, whipped up by former officials in lieu



Janesville High School's 1913 state champion basketball team

of public desire to clean up the city.

■ **Dec. 7:** The bodies of Miss Mary Fiedler and William Kunkle are found in the woods on the Kidder farm four miles west of Milton. Investigation shows Kunkle crushed Fieldler's skull, then shot himself.

■ **Dec. 12:** Petition to recall Janesville commissioners is filed but eventually dismissed. Recall continues for mayor.

■ **Dec. 31:** In the second half of the year, four people are killed in train accidents.

■ **Sometime in 1912:** Wisconsin Telephone builds an office building at 301 E. Milwaukee; the Georgian Revival-style building is still used today.

■ Janesville Fire Department buys its first motorized fire truck; two years earlier, the department acquired its first motor car, a Buick Run-About.

■ Janesville Vocational School, precursor to Blackhawk Technical College, forms.

■ Frances Ford, a Janesville resident for more than 30 years, writes "The Little Engine That Could."

■ First Church of Christ Scientist moves to its new building, 323 W. Court, where the congregation continued to gather in 1999.

■ Church of Christ organizes; in 1999, it was First Christian Church at 1909 Highland.

## 1913

■ **Jan. 2:** Dr. James Mills sends first parcel-post package from Janesville Post Office.

■ **Jan. 12:** Janesville's first visiting nurse, Agnes Anderson, reports that many city homes harbor unsanitary conditions.

■ **Jan. 20:** Rural Rock County teachers' average salary is reported at \$40 a year.

■ **Jan. 25:** The Apollo Theater, 306-308 W. Milwaukee, is completed. Eventually known as the Cullen building, the structure is razed in 1997.

■ **Feb. 26:** Louis Belden is arrested for killing Edward Ryan in a "cutting fray"—knife fight—and claims self-defense. Belden held for trial.

■ The first Dollar Day sale—an idea of the Gazette ad department—in the United States is staged as all Janesville merchants offer bargains.

■ **March 18:** After seven hours of deliberation, a jury acquits Louis Belden of the murder of Ed Ryan.

■ **March 29:** Janesville High beats La Crosse 38-24 to win the state basketball championship in a tourney at Appleton.

■ **April 3:** Judge J.A. Smith, justice of the peace in Edgerton, is sentenced to six months in jail for withholding money from the county.

■ **April 8:** The Janesville council restricts number of saloon licenses to 40 and creates a "liquor zone" downtown.

■ **May 8:** Lyle Gibson of the State Institute for the Blind drops dead while running on the race track.

■ **May 11:** Frank McDermott falls over a stair railing in the Riverside Hotel and is killed.

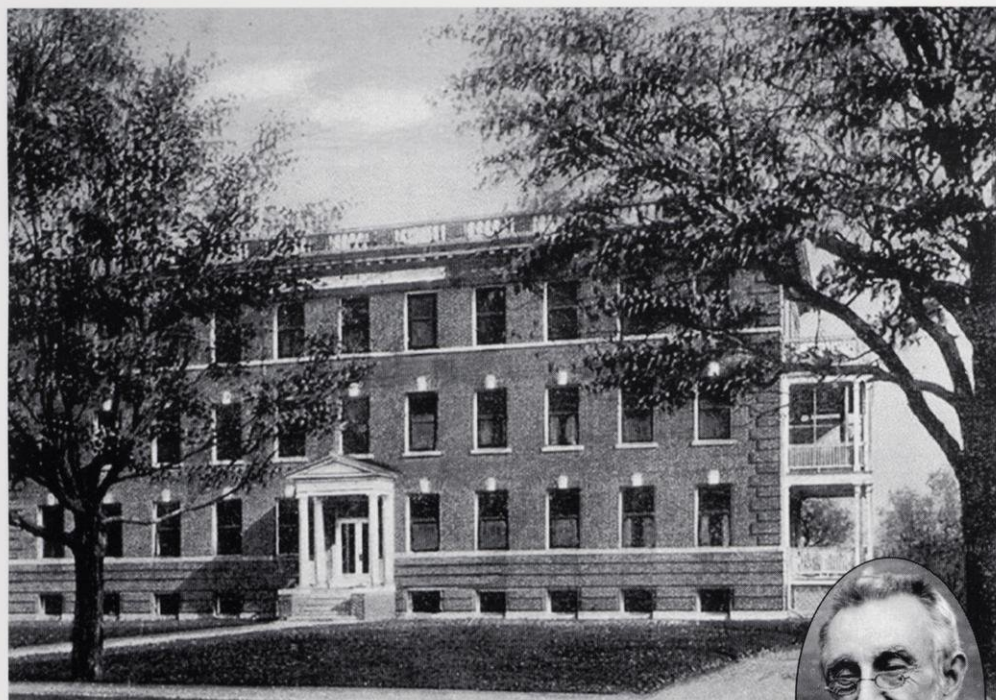
■ **May 20:** Chief Appleby retires, and the next day, E.H. Ranson, former county sheriff, is selected as Janesville police chief.

■ **June 6:** Tom Jones of Afton dies after being kicked in the head by a horse.

■ **June 7:** Janesville Board of Education accepts the proposal to construct playgrounds.

■ **June 14:** New law requiring "proof of health"—freedom from venereal disease—





Though poor himself and ministering to lepers on the Hawaiian island of Molokai, former Janesville resident Brother Joseph Dutton, right, contributed to the Mercy Hospital building campaign in 1912. He read of the fund drive in the *Gazette*. In 1913, a new 50-bed facility went next to Mercy's old building; the three-story brick building was demolished in the early 1970s.

goes into effect for people about to be married.

■ **June 26:** C&NW railroad employees attend a "safety first" meeting at the Myers Theater.

■ Visiting nurse discovers 21 cases of tuberculosis in Janesville.

■ **June 30:** Despite the council's limit of 40, the city clerk grants 42 saloon licenses.

■ Janesville Police Department starts a pension fund.

■ Only two people die in rail accidents in Rock County in the first half of 1913.

■ **July 3:** The Cullen company gets the contract to build First National Bank's new building. The site is the same of the current Bank One, which eventually acquires First National.

■ **July 7:** First playgrounds open. Within a week, 2,100 children enjoy the playgrounds.

■ **July 16:** 300 women meet at the library and pledge to work against the recall of the reform-minded mayor and commissioners. Janesville's young men follow suit. "Recallers also hold a meeting and a pass out their usual rant ... calling for a wide-open town."

■ **July 22:** Mayor Fathers wins the recall election by 98 votes over John C. Nichols "at the end of one of the bitterest campaigns ever seen in the city."

■ **July 28:** Buob Brewery, owned for 57 years by Michael Buob, is sold to Milwaukee businessmen.

■ **Sept. 8:** Lightning strikes the St. Paul rail station in Milton; it burns to the ground.

■ **Sept. 13:** Louis Belden, previously acquitted of murder, is killed by a train at the C&NW passenger depot.

■ **Sept. 26:** Oscar Hand is acquitted of a charge of running a "house of assignation"—house of prostitution.

■ Mercy Hospital installs its first X-ray machine.

■ **Sept. 29:** Myers Theater shows Thomas Edison's "talking pictures."

■ **Oct. 23:** The new juvenile court hears its first case.

■ **Nov. 5:** 83-year-old Robert Carr walks 8 miles from Milton Junction to Janesville in 2 hours, 15 minutes in what becomes Carr's birthday tradition.

■ **Nov. 13:** Janesville reports second lowest per-capita cost of municipal government in the state.

■ **Nov. 15:** The Rock County Board provides a stone pile for jail prisoners to work on over the winter.

■ **Dec. 2:** The St. Paul railroad, anticipating hard times, lays off "all but absolutely necessary men."

■ **Dec. 8:** Janesville Fire and Police Commission recommends higher pay for police and firemen and orders the chief "to get speeders."

■ **Dec. 18:** Despite layoffs on the St. Paul line, the *Gazette* runs a classified ad seeking locomotive firemen and brakemen for monthly wages of "about \$100; experience unnecessary." Daily, 110 trains arrive and depart from the city. Though the first half of the year was relatively safe on the railways, nine people are killed on the tracks in the second half.

■ The Janesville Business College, founded in 1904 at 202-204 W. Milwaukee, reports almost 250 students, "the brightest and brainiest young people in this part of the country."

■ **Sometime in 1913:** Mercy Hospital erects a new 50-bed facility next to its old building; the three-story brick building is demolished in the early 1970s.

■ St. Mary's Catholic Church establishes its parish school, becoming Janesville's second Catholic elementary school.

## 1914

■ **Jan. 9:** George Cotter sentenced to a year in Waupun for habitual drunkenness. He is the first of many people so sentenced during 1914.

■ **Feb. 6:** Bower City Boxing Club forms to stage local prize fights. Janesville is called Bower City because its stately elms arch over streets like cathedral ceilings.

■ **March 29:** Police raid "questionable house"—house of prostitution—on West Bluff Street (Laurel Avenue)—and three people are sentenced in municipal court.

At this time, Janesville has two Bluff streets: North and South, which today is Parker Drive, and West, which is Laurel.

■ **April 13:** Civics League offers 10 cents per 100 dead flies in "Swat the Fly" campaign. The club decides to buy trash cans for city streets.

■ **April 15:** E.H. Ransom resigns as police chief, and P.D. Champion gets the job.

■ **April 24:** Booker T. Washington—the famous African-American leader, educator and moderate—speaks at Janesville's Congregational Church.

■ **May 2:** W.S. Stewart is arrested for breaking into doctors' offices and stealing "dope," probably morphine. If "dope fiends" do not break laws—most drug use is legal—and land in jail, they typically are run out of town.

■ **May 12:** City voters decide by 3-1 majority that the city should buy the waterworks, which had been a private utility. The water utility becomes part of municipal public works in 1915.



■ **May 30:** City kids turn in carcasses of 14,700 flies.

■ **June 11:** Police continue their long-standing campaign against bicycle riding on sidewalks. Three outlaw bikers appear in court.

■ **June 30:** In first six months of the year, four die in rail mishaps.

■ **July 24:** Slot machines have returned to Janesville, and Chief Champion orders them all removed.

■ **July 27:** James Glennon is electrocuted when his steel fishing pole hits a live wire on the Fourth Avenue (Centerway) Bridge.

■ **Aug. 7:** German immigrants in Janesville receive notices to report for duty on their fatherland's side in World War I.

■ **Aug. 17:** Local tourists who were in Europe when the war broke out, including Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Jeffris, are heard from. "All have exciting experiences but come out safely."

■ **Aug. 19:** Joe "Bull Dog" Knauth shoots and seriously injures Constable Root, another former Janesville resident, in South Beloit, Ill.

■ **Aug. 25:** Janesville High switches from three terms to two semesters.

■ **Aug. 30:** Jennie Clark of Brodhead catches her hair in a cream separator and suffers serious injuries.

■ **Sept. 8:** City schools open with 2,065 students. In the previous school year, 6,488 children attended Rock County's rural schools.

■ **Sept. 24:** High school officials cancel all athletics after "outrages by students." Students' apparent opposition to alcohol prohibition are at the root of the "outrages:" a nail keg with the word "beer" on it strung up outside the school followed by the hanging of a real, but empty, beer keg and the breaking of two beer bottles in the science room.

■ Two hundred German-Americans gather to support Germany's war effort.

■ **Oct. 3:** Male students promise to behave, so Janesville High faculty restores athletics.

■ **Nov. 4:** The Miller farm near Evansville is quarantined when 60 head of cattle are found to have hoof and mouth disease. Within days, farms in Johnstown and Bradford are quarantined.

Killing of infected cattle soon starts.

■ **Nov. 25:** Local firms bid on orders for blankets, saddles and tack as war supplies.

■ **Dec. 3:** Because of hoof and mouth, 1,000 animals are destroyed on the Austin farm in Rock Prairie.

■ **Dec. 31:** Fire destroys landmarks in Milton, the H.B. Crandall meat market on College Street, and a neighboring hotel and hardware store. Loss estimated at more than \$10,000.

■ **Sometime in 1914:** Townsend Manu-

facturing, later Townsend Tractor, starts making tractors at South Franklin Street and Rockport Road. Company lasts until 1925, another victim of the depressed agricultural economy.

■ Only one rail death reported in second half of 1914.

■ St. Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church starts offering services in English; in 1923 the church drops the German designation.

## 1915

■ **Jan. 6:** The local branch of the German-American Bund passes a resolution against the United States sending war supplies to Great Britain and France.

■ **Feb. 23:** Fire destroys the hydro-electric power plant at Indianford.

■ **Feb. 26:** Janesville High debaters win the championship of Beloit College Debating League.

■ **March 10:** A bull gores James Smart to death near Footville.

■ **March 30:** Swatting brigade records 700 more kills, bringing to 1,300 the number of flies slain.

■ **April 5:** Janesville city officials travel to Fond du Lac to inspect concrete streets.

■ **April 25:** John Albright of La Prairie loses his life to a "savage bull."

■ **May 3:** First day of annual citywide cleanup keeps nine wagons busy hauling trash.

■ **May 17:** First dog license tag is sold in Janesville.

■ **May 31:** Pickpockets, known as "dips," work the St. Paul depot and "make several hauls."

■ **June 5:** H.W. Frick, president of the local German-American Bund, sends a request to President Wilson to work for peace.

■ **June 15:** 11-year-old Walter Meyers emerges as Janesville's ace fly swatter, recording 14,800 of total 71,900 kills.

■ **June 21:** 1,000 sign Commercial Club petitions seeking new street lights in business district. In a week, the number of signers doubles.

■ **June 23:** Dr. E.F. Woods of Janesville leaves for Europe to work in war hospitals. He will be killed Aug. 19 when a German submarine sinks the unarmed steamship Arabic bound for Great Britain. Woods' body washes ashore in Ireland and is buried in Canterbury, England, where he has relatives.

■ **June 30:** First half of year ends with only one death and one serious accident—loss of a leg—caused by rail accidents.

■ **July 1:** 22 get licenses to sell cigarettes under the new state law.

■ **July 5:** Art Bergstrom of Rockford, Ill., is hurt seriously when his car overturns in

Fourth of July celebration races at the fairgrounds. The fairgrounds are in the same location as today, but then the grounds were twice as big and included a double-oval track for horse, auto and motorcycle races.

■ **July 9:** 41 Janesville saloon licenses are granted. Number is down significantly from the mid-50s of a couple of years earlier.

■ **July 11:** Capt. Pliny Norcross, one of Janesville's most notable Civil War veterans, falls into the raceway by Blodgett Mill and drowns. Besides commanding Company K of the 13th Wisconsin Regiment, Norcross was an attorney, politician and businessman. He served as city attorney, district attorney, mayor and state assemblyman. A miller by trade, Norcross also started the city's first electric light plant in 1885.

■ Three thousand people attend a chautauqua in Janesville. Chautauquas combines popular education with entertainment through lectures, plays and concerts. They often included sermons.

■ **July 21:** Local physician Dr. A.P. Burrus maintains "military insanity, a contagious disease, is the cause of the present European trouble."

■ **Aug. 4:** Two men rob streetcar conductor Walter Martin, and the next day, one of the highwaymen, Austin Cairns, is arrested in Madison after a "revolver battle."

■ **Aug. 27:** Seventh Day Baptist Convention draws several thousand people to Milton.

■ **Sept. 12:** Heavy rains cause extensive damage, and the Rock River bursts the dam at Fulton. The floods drive families from their homes in Edgerton, wash out bridges and stall trains.

■ **Oct. 15:** "Local negroes voice objections before city commissioners to showing 'Birth of a Nation.'" The classic but highly controversial silent film directed by D.W. Griffith glorifies the Ku Klux Klan in its depiction of the Civil War and Southern Reconstruction. The Gazette continues to describe African-Americans as "colored," and stories demeaning to blacks, both local and national, make their way into the newspaper's pages.

■ **Nov. 2:** Janesville firemen respond to their 100th fire of the year, which does \$1,500 damage to the old house of circus owner and promoter Burr Robbins in Spring Brook.

■ **Dec. 11:** "Tony Martin, an Italian, shoots and kills Maudie Lawrence, age 14, on Holmes Street." Reward of \$350 offered for Martin's capture.

■ **Dec. 24:** The community Christmas tree is lit in Courthouse Park, but the Community Band does not give its usual holiday concert because all the band members have fallen victim to the gripe—influenza—epi-



## 1916 murder case has it all — a lynch mob, a bullet-riddled corpse and ethnic prejudice

The case started with Rafael “Raffles” Palmero’s bullet-riddled corpse found in Janesville’s “Italian colony.”

Before it was closed, a mob would march down Pearl Street intent on a lynching. Police would make a raid, swoop up suspects and give them “third-degree grillings.” Innocent people would be suspected simply because of their nationality.

A Beloit detective, unabashedly called “Dago Dan” in The Janesville Gazette’s first reference, would crack the case with good police work.

“MAFIA KILLS ITALIAN HERE AS TRAITOR” trumpeted the Gazette on Oct. 27, 1916, as it leapt to a biased, stereotyped conclusion that apparently proved incorrect.

The Beloit cop’s name was Dan Torrisi, but the newspaper was either lax or prejudiced—probably both—because it spelled the names of the principals in the case many different ways, including Anglicized versions such as Tracy for Torrisi, over the course of the story.

At 9:30 p.m. Oct. 26, Palmero died in a barrage of five bullets—initially reported incorrectly but nevertheless graphically as nine, complete with precise locations, “one shot outer corner right eye,” for instance.

Palmero was a leader in the local community of Italian immigrant railroad workers—twice finding and returning a runaway husband so his family would be supported, for example—and he had helped Janesville police in a couple of cases. Police apparently told the Gazette they thought the short rail yard foreman was assassinated because he was a “stool pigeon.”

Palmero also was a mean drunk “who had been drinking hard for some time,” and Police Chief P.D. Champion had found him beating his wife and mother-in-law.

But in the initial investigation, the paper

and the police focused on organized gangsters.

“He knew, no doubt, the terrible avenging of the Mafia, ‘THE BLACK HAND,’” the Gazette wrote of Palmero.

A day later, the paper suspected “three strange Italians” who had been in the city “engaged in noisy conversation with much argument evident and with a pronounced motioning with their hands.”

A week after the murder, local cops raided the “Italian colony”—the neighborhood west of the tracks and around what today are Pearl and Johnson streets—and grabbed six suspects, including Vincenzo Cornevallo; Palmero’s wife, Filomena; and her mother, Raffaella Bosco. “For hours afterward at the police station, they were grilled without mercy,” the Gazette reported.

Cornevallo, also known as “Jim the Gunman,” eventually confessed and implicated Bosco.

Raffles’ mother-in-law wanted him dead because he was no good, Jim the Gunman said, adding that she had constantly nagged him for six months to kill Palmero.

Figuring they would do authorities a favor, Italian rail workers conspired to lynch the 22-year-old Cornevallo. Torrisi and Janesville officer Harry Smith foiled the crime because they were en route to question a witness, also one of the four ringleaders of the lynching attempt, as the mob of some 50 irate immigrants marched down Pearl Street.

With the four ringleaders in hand, Torrisi convinced the crowd that justice would be done and that they would have to kill him, an officer they respected, if they tried to hang Cornevallo.

(Janesville’s only lynching—of murder defendant David Mayberry—was in 1855. At least three attempts—one in Clinton and two in Janesville, including the one on Cornevallo—were thwarted.)

Later, a group of immigrant rail workers, probably intent on vengeance, were turned away when they tried to visit Cornevallo in jail and were found to be packing weapons.

In jail, Jim the Gunman refused all solid food with the exception of mince pie and fruit. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life.

He was whisked out of jail before dawn to avoid his enemies, and when Torrisi and Deputy William Wogan put him on a train for Waupun, Cornevallo smiled, waved and said: “Goodbye, Bill. Goodbye, Dan.”

Jim the Gunman was described as a deliberate, slow-moving man with an upbeat sense of humor—despite his crime and sentence—which the Gazette ascribed to his “slow-acting brain. ...

“He came ... from the southern part of sunny Italy (where) hot and fierce blood runs rampant in the veins of men ... Human life’s hardly worth its weight in cotton there. Little wonder then he made Palmero’s wife a widow and his children fatherless.”

The women—Palmero’s wife and mother-in-law—were charged with being accessories to murder. They hired high-powered local attorneys. Bosco, the mother-in-law, eventually paid a fine. A review of the Gazette’s annual retrospectives through 1919 found no resolution of the wife’s case.

The Gazette’s reporting reflected commonly held prejudices about and stereotypes of Italians that have persisted to the present day. And objectivity was not a journalistic standby in the century’s early decades.

At one point, “moneyed Italians of Chicago” were reported on their way to bail out the women, but it appears that the murder of Rafael “Raffles” Palmero was the work not of the notorious Black Hand but of abused women who coaxed and cajoled a young man to take a life.

demic sweeping the city. Fifteen hundred cases are reported.

■ **Dec. 31:** For the first time in at least 15 years, Janesville goes six months without a fatal train accident. Safety undoubtedly has become a big issue because the Gazette’s column of railroad news, formerly called Link and Pin, now carries the standing headline Safety First.

■ Wisconsin Telephone, a member of the Bell System, advertises that with its local and long-distance service customers can reach 12,000 people in Janesville, 300,000 subscrib-

ers in Wisconsin and 9 million subscribers nationwide.

■ **Sometime in 1915:** George Esser buys City Brewery on North Franklin Street and changes the name to Esser Ale Brewery. During Prohibition, Esser makes ginger ale and soda, and the company makes both pop and beer after Prohibition until 1940.

■ Managers of the closed Wisconsin Carriage acquire a small Chicago factory and reorganize as Janesville Products to make children’s coaster wagons, scooters and other toys.

In 1999, Janesville Wagon carried on the tradition.

■ Janesville Electric builds a second hydroelectric plant, part of which still stands at Centerway and the Rock River.

## 1916

■ **Jan. 12:** The Janesville council receives bids for new street lights.

■ **Feb. 8:** Janesville’s Twilight Club, the city seat of debate and discussion, debates U.S. neutrality in the ongoing European war.



■ **Feb. 22:** Apparently nothing can keep them out of town, because city police again must ban slot machines.

■ **March 14:** Like the Washington Street property owners before them, Franklin Street residents object to paving the street because of assessments. The Janesville council eventually rescinds order to pave the street with brick.

■ **March 15:** Former President William Howard Taft outlines a plan for a "league of nations to enforce the peace" to a gathering sponsored by the Janesville Commercial Club.

■ **March 24:** William Vogel is charged with selling liquor to women.

■ **March 31:** The Janesville Federation of Women, a conglomeration of social and service clubs, forms to improve the community. The group's first project is to establish a "rest room" for women working and shopping downtown.

■ **April 18:** Work starts to dismantle the fountain at the Corn Exchange. The northeast corner of West Milwaukee and Franklin streets neighboring First National Bank (Bank One) is—and still is—called the Corn Exchange because it is where farmers meet to sell their crops and swap news and gossip.

■ **May 1:** The Beverly Theater opens at 17 S. Main.

■ The Commercial Club decries the traffic congestion at Main and Milwaukee streets.

■ **June 1:** Four women graduate as nurses from Mercy Hospital's training school.

■ **June 7:** Gossard Co. begins making corsets on East Court Street. Company continues until 1931.

■ **June 12:** M.G. Jeffris of Janesville begins campaign for Republican nomination for U.S. Senate against Bob LaFollette.

■ **June 13:** City residents protest the Chicago & North Western's announced plans to end passenger service to Janesville. The railroad eventually bows to the city's protest.

■ **June 28:** H.C. Buell, longtime superintendent of Janesville schools, is chosen as superintendent for the Wisconsin School for the Deaf in Delavan.

■ **June 29:** Janesville bans piano players in saloons.

■ Fifty-six county school teachers, whose annual salary is about \$40, get financial aid from the state.

■ **July 22:** Six-year-old Theodore Snyder saves a baby from a house fire on River Road.

■ **July 28:** Severe drought and heat wave continue to grip the region; five deaths in Janesville attributed to heat.

■ **Aug. 18:** "Presbyterian church ladies get wet when river pier collapses."

■ **Sept. 5:** Jeffris loses in Republican senatorial primary.

■ **Oct. 20:** School authorities plan cam-

paign against sale of cigarettes to minors.

■ **Nov. 13:** Reinhold Ohmund of Beloit gets 90 days for driving while intoxicated. It is Gazette's first mention of a DUI arrest.

■ **Dec. 10:** "A World of Pleasure" plays at the Myers Theater. An ad showing a woman with legs exposed to the knees—a new and scandalous style—proclaims: "A host of New York's most pampered chorus beauties coaxed from the white lights of Broadway for the first time. ... 11-car train filled with joy!"

■ **Dec. 31:** Janesville makes it through the year with relative safety on the rails: Only five are killed.

■ Mercy Hospital reports 657 patients treated in the year.

■ **Sometime in 1916:** The Sinnissippi Golf Club fades from the scene, leaving the Janesville Country Club as sole operator of the local links.

## 1917

■ **Jan. 4:** Sheriff Robert O. Whipple appoints Mary Whelan of Beloit as a deputy. First report of a female law enforcement officer in Rock County.

■ **Feb. 19:** City bowling alleys fined—again—for being open on Sunday.

■ **March 18:** As prohibitionists prepare for spring elections, many Janesville ministers preach against saloons.

■ **March 30:** Thousands march in a parade here and rally at Myers Theater in support of President Woodrow Wilson, who will ask for a declaration of war against Germany and its allies on April 6.

■ **April 3:** Janesville stays wet—alcohol sales allowed—by 219 votes even though the dries carried the 1st and 3rd wards. Women still cannot vote.

■ **April 8:** Recruitment in Janesville's Company M of the First Regiment, Wisconsin National Guard, swells to 90, on its way to full strength of 150.

■ **May 17:** 250 county women form Women's Defense Council to help with war effort. School children have received seeds to start vegetable gardens to help with anticipated food shortages because of the war. Meat and fuel will be rationed.

■ **May 23:** Janesville starts buying Liberty Bonds, and city purchases will top \$807,000—over Janesville's quota—and Rock County will reach its goal of \$2.5 million.

■ **June 11:** A.W. Pond and Orson Loomis leave for France to become ambulance drivers.

■ **June 30:** Licenses granted for 39 saloons and three breweries in Janesville.

■ **July 4:** 70 men meet at courthouse to form prohibition league; women usually organize such groups.

■ **July 15:** Company M mobilized for active duty as part of 128th Infantry, 64th Brigade, 32nd Division.

■ **Aug. 24:** Local draft board selects 243 city men out of 604 who underwent physical exams.

■ **Oct. 18:** Second contingent of 331st Machine Gun Battalion organized at Camp Grant in Rockford, Ill. The battalion's Company C is composed of Rock County men.

■ **Oct. 23:** State reports Janesville has most wealth per capita and lowest tax rate of any city in Wisconsin.

■ **Dec. 6:** Company M records its first death: Private Ben Johnson, a victim of pneumonia.

■ **Dec. 10:** Helen Jackson resigns from the high school staff to volunteer for war work in France. She is one of many local women who volunteer for duty either in the States or Europe.

■ **Dec. 31:** For the year, city police make 891 arrests, 587 for drunkenness.

■ Four Janesville people die in rail accidents during the year.

■ **Sometime in 1917:** Bower City Machine Co. organizes and makes heavy machinery until about 1942.

■ Rock County hires its first UW-Extension county agent, L.A. Markham.

## 1918

■ **Feb. 4:** Local police start registering male enemy aliens.

■ **Feb. 11:** First detail of Company M arrives in France while bulk of unit remains in Texas.

■ **Feb. 26:** Janesville voters return the city to the mayor-aldermanic form of government, rejecting the mayor-commission reform type by a 350-vote majority.

■ **March 8:** Wartime ban on restaurants serving meat is lifted.

■ **May 11:** "All idlers in the city are ordered arrested." Nine days later, Bobby Welch gets 90 days for vagrancy, the first of several such sentences.

■ **May 23:** 16 local boys enlist in the Navy.

■ **June 6:** First local war casualties announced: Thomas McDermott, a rural Albany resident, is the first soldier from southern Wisconsin to die in combat, and Richard Ellis of Company M is the first Janesville soldier to die in the fighting. Janesville's American Legion chapter will name itself for Ellis.

■ **July 18:** Another Janesville unit, Company G, leaves for training.

■ **Sept. 30:** Not all young men are eager to serve in the military; two are arrested in September for failure to register with the draft. And 27 local people are arrested throughout



## Craig's tractor deal still has Janesville trucking along

Joseph A. Craig turned the tables on William C. Durant. Durant founded General Motors by buying up individual auto companies—Oldsmobile, Buick, Oakland (Pontiac), for instance—and he bought Samson Tractor, a troubled California company, as an entry into the agricultural equipment market.

In 1918, Craig was general manager of Janesville Machine Co., a growing, prosperous manufacturer of farm implements and the city's largest business with 300 workers.

Durant called Craig to Detroit to try to entice him to leave Janesville Machine and heal Samson Tractor.

Craig had a different idea: Move Samson Tractor to Janesville and merge it with Janesville Machine.

Wanting not to become further entangled in the farm machinery business, Durant rejected the notion.

Craig persisted. The story goes that Durant looked out his office window for some time, then said: "I will cancel all engagements for today and tonight, and we will talk it over."

Both men turned out right.

The two companies combined in Janesville as GM's Samson Tractor Division and were augmented by the purchase of Janesville Carriage Works.

Janesville made its first Model M tractor on May 1, 1919, in the new one-story factory that GM built in what was then the suburb of Spring Brook.

In 18 months, Janesville's population jumped from 14,000 to 20,000 as people

moved here to work on and in the tractor factory, which employed almost 3,000 people in 1919.

City housing was tight. Residents rented spare rooms to newcomers, and a series of barracks, "Camp Samson," was constructed for workmen.

Durant was correct about the tractor business.

Samson was belly up by '22, the victim of both a national farm depression and quirky design.

For example, Samson's Model D, the "Iron Horse," was steered by reins in an attempt to make the tractors attractive to farmers used to handling teams of horses.

The Janesville factory also made trucks from 1920 until 1922. GM moved the truck assembly here from Flint, Mich., the first pull in the still ongoing tug-of-war between Janesville and Michigan for

truck production.

Craig was on the money about Janesville.

To seal the deal, Janesville leaders pledged that the city would provide paved streets, new houses for GM workers and good schools for their children.

The civic effort resulted in building Janesville High School—which became Marshall Middle School, now renovated into apartments. A housing corporation built houses to sell to the workers. Street paving accelerated.

And when GM closed Samson, Craig convinced the corporation that it owed Janesville because of the city's efforts, and GM decided to build Chevrolets here.

Folks walking through the often-expanded, sprawling GM truck plant today walk on the original brick floor of Samson Tractor.

Durant eventually was ousted from GM, but an appreciative Janesville named a high school for Craig.



**Joseph A. Craig paved the way for GM to come to Janesville**



**Above: Samson Tractor's Model D, the 'Iron Horse,' was steered by reins. The quirky design was an attempt to attract farmers used to handling teams of horses.**



**Left: Some employees of the Samson Tractor Company take a break to pose for a photo in 1917. The man holding the plow blade in the middle of the front row appears to be wearing wooden shoes, possibly an early attempt at safety.**



the year for the crime of giving or selling alcohol to soldiers.

■ **Nov. 11:** Janesville celebrates the Armistice in Europe. People dance in the streets for hours, parade and build huge bonfires. "Business was dispensed with and dignity forgotten."

■ **Dec. 31:** Of 972 arrests made during the year, 703 are for drunkenness. Five drunken driving arrests are made during the year.

■ Rail accidents kill three people during the year.

■ **Sometime in 1918:** Janesville Hide and Leather Co. starts at 222 W. Milwaukee and operates a tanning shop until 1935. It survives another five years as a retail leather outlet.

■ Drs. T.W. Nuzum, J.F. Pember and T.J. Snodgrass become partners and start a clinic that will evolve into Riverview Clinic.

■ Parker Pen sales hit \$1 million; company introduces the "trench pen" for soldiers who make ink by mixing a pill with water in the pens' caps.

■ Norwegian Lutheran Church, founded in 1852, changes its name to First Lutheran Church.

■ English services are offered at St. John's Lutheran Church, the city's second German Lutheran congregation, which formed in 1890.

## 1919

■ **Jan. 2:** Because of an outbreak of influenza, dances in Janesville have been banned. The ban will last another week.

■ **Jan. 16:** City and school officials vote for a new high school on South Main Street, pending voter approval of a bond issue.

■ **March 4:** Company M leaves the Rhine Valley, headed for home.

■ **March 28:** St. Patrick's Church announces it will build a new school building costing \$75,000 on the corner of Lincoln and School streets.

■ **April 1:** Though full suffrage for women will not come until 1920, Wisconsin women can vote in local elections in 1919. In the first Janesville election in which women can vote, they cast a third of the ballots, ensuring the approval of progressive projects such as the initial \$60,000 bond issue for the new high school and bonds for good roads.

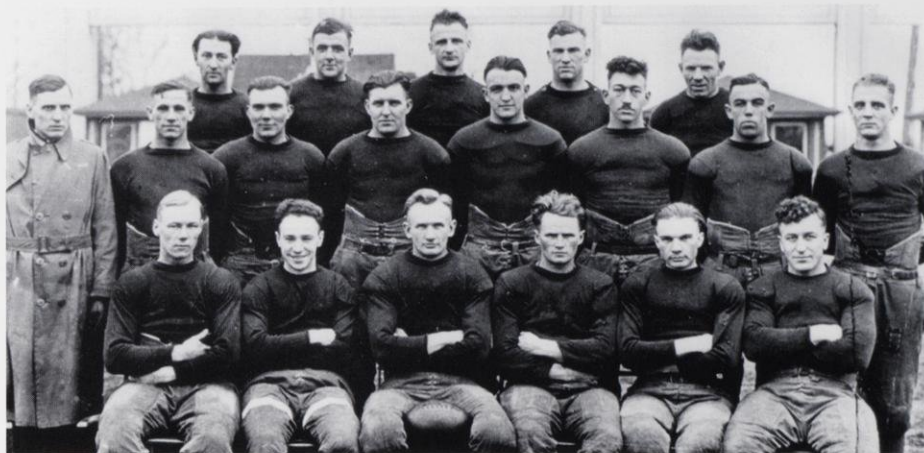
■ **April 19:** Rock County organizes the first Farm Bureau chapter in Wisconsin.

■ **May 1:** GM plant makes its first Samson tractor.

■ **May 19:** Company M returns to a large parade and joyous homecoming.

■ **June 9:** Janesville All-Stars lose to Beloit Colored Giants, 14-13, in baseball.

■ **June 10:** First commercial air shipment arrives in Janesville when a plane carrying



**The Green Bay Packers formed in 1919, the year before the National Football League organized. In the '19 season, the Packers ran up an impressive 10-1 record in their first season, playing against other company-sponsored teams from Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The Pack's lone loss came in a road game in Beloit and to a team with the unlikely name of the Fairies, but the squad of bruisers pictured above was sponsored by Fairbanks-Morse, hence the name Fairies. In their previous games, the Packers ran up staggering scores: 87-0, 85-0 and 61-0. Before they played the Fairies, the Packers allowed only one team, Racine, to score, and that was in a 76-6 route. But the potent Packers could not score against the fearsome Fairies, and the Beloiters won 6-0.**

clothing for a local store lands at the fairgrounds.

■ **June 30:** Much revelry erupts in Janesville at night as the city will go dry in the morning because of federal "wartime prohibition," a precursor to the infamous Prohibition of the 1920s. The federal government passes the war-time ban on alcohol because prohibitionists are successful in their arguments that the grain needed to make alcohol is needed more to feed the troops and country in a time of conflict.

■ **July 2:** "No drunks in court for first time in more than a year."

■ **July 7:** Drunks back in court.

■ **July 30:** Beer is confiscated from Oliver Grant's saloon.

■ **Aug. 1:** Chicago Air Line Transit stations a plane at the fairgrounds to take passengers to the Windy City.

■ **Aug. 2:** Foundation is in for an addition to Mercy Hospital.

■ **Aug. 5:** Nearly 300 men strike shops at Janesville railroads, disrupting rail traffic. Workers return Aug. 16.

■ **Aug. 27:** First report of a Janesville resident killed in an air crash: Harry Ormsby, who is in the military.

■ **Sept. 16:** The Janesville Housing Corporation, established to provide homes for GM workers and those building the GM plant, decides to build 500 new houses at once.

■ **Oct. 31:** Two auto fatalities are reported in Janesville in October alone, the total number of train deaths for the year. The car is replacing the train as the main traffic safety danger.

■ **Nov. 14:** City teachers appeal for higher wages. A study shows their wages are far below the cost of living. Their pay is boosted \$200 so that elementary teachers receive between \$1,050 and \$1,160 a year and high school teachers earn between \$1,050 and \$1,900 annually.

■ **Nov. 25:** GM asks for streets to be closed near its Samson tractor factory. Earlier, the company requested a street improvement.

■ **Dec. 15:** 21 residents of Janesville's 1st Ward are hurt, two severely, when a C&NW train hits a streetcar.

■ **Dec. 31:** During the first six months of the year, 40 Janesville saloons were open 17 hours a day each, and drunks paid fines totaling \$4,748 to the city and county. Since federal Prohibition hit July 1, the fines dropped to \$2,555 for six months.

■ **Sometime in 1919:** Schlueter Boiler Works and Dairy Supply Co. forms to make and service boilers.

In 1935, the company expands to make equipment for the dairy industry. Schlueter Co. continued in 1999, making equipment for the food processing and pharmaceutical industries.

■ Badger State Machine closes.

■ Rock County spends \$150,000 on good roads in 1919, thanks in large part to an advertising campaign and the progressive votes of the new female voters.

■ Janesville Federation of Women raises money to hire a dentist, buy equipment and establish a free dental clinic that operates into the 1950s.







# 1920-1929

## PROHIBITION, PROSPERITY & PREJUDICE

### **Janesville reforms into modern municipality** New form of government, industry, Prohibition and the women's vote usher in a new era for city

*Janesville became a modern industrial city in the 1920s.*

A new form of government, a huge new industry, women voting and Prohibition combined to change the course of a city that had a reputation as a boozing, bawdy brawling railroad town.

Many, if not most, people in Janesville probably were disgusted with many facets of their city—a downtown filled with bars, jail cells filled with drunks, alleys filled with trash and a city hall filled with mediocre politicians more interested in their individual wards and cronies than with the city's overall welfare.

Women first were able to vote in Janesville in 1919. Joseph A. Craig's luring of General Motors—in the form of Samson Tractor—to Janesville in 1919 provided the framework

for the women's first great political, social and educational impact: ensuring the vote to approve borrowing almost \$1 million for a new high school.

City business leaders, predominantly men, were loathe to raise taxes. But Craig convinced the city that Janesville had to improve its schools, streets and housing to attract the new and growing GM, so the businessmen saw a payoff for the increase in taxes for the school—Marshall Apartments in 1999—and street paving.

The city also received an early education in the up-and-down cycles of modern industry, which the auto industry exemplifies at its best and worst.

GM brought a boom to Janesville—and almost immediately a subsequent bust.

When the Samson Tractor factory was be-

ing built in 1918-19, the city's population exploded from 14,000 to almost 20,000 as people flocked here to construct the factory and work in it.

But a farm depression hit the nation in 1920 and lasted into '22. In 1920, Samson halted expansion, laying off 1,000 workers, and the factory curtailed production later that year, laying off more workers.

The Gazette's first reports of unemployment problems appeared in January 1921, when the newspaper started a bureau to find work for unemployed men. A relief fund for unemployed workers also was established.

In reviewing 1922, the Gazette reported:

"There was a lull in the business and some despondency in Janesville. For more than a year, the tractor plant had either been idle or so nearly out of business that it no longer

**Left: Members of the cast of 'Kathleen,' a 1921 production by the Knights of Columbus at the Apollo Theater, pose during a scene from 'Dance My Ladies.'**

**Right: Two of the people who helped shape and lead Janesville city government for decades were Joe Lustig, left, and Henry Traxler. Traxler was hired as city manager in 1923. Lustig, who started work for the city in 1911, was promoted to city engineer in 1927. Traxler was Janesville's first and longest-serving city manager, retiring in 1951. Lustig ended his 56-year career with the city in 1967 with a 10-year stint as city manager. This undated photo shows the two with a street cleaner, an apt symbol for their efforts to clean up Janesville and keep it that way.**







**The Parker Pen Co. sponsored a band made up of talented employees in the 1920s. Here, the group performs a concert in a Janesville park, probably Riverside, in 1926.**

was counted on as large employer of labor.

"But in the face of the depression, which was general, Janesville suffered no panic, nor was there any deeply visible reaction. The city readjusted itself to the situation..."

"Throughout the summer, there were rumors of changes and additions, but Janesville has learned a lesson, and so when the General Motors Co. officially announced the coming of the Chevrolet assembly plant and the branch of the Fisher Body Corp ... there was no excitement and no fictitious boom as had followed the arrival of Samson."

Because of GM, the city committed itself to civic improvements. Craig convinced corporate officials that they should commit to Janesville, which is one of the reasons GM located the Chevy and Fisher Body operations here after Samson withered to death.

With the improvements and women's more pronounced and effective role in local politics came a new sense of civic pride.

But, after a six-year—1912-1918—experiment with the reform commission-type of government, Janesville had returned to a mayor-aldermanic form with aldermen representing specific wards. Governing was done chiefly by partisan ward bosses on street corners, in billiard halls and the "soft-drink parlors" that the saloons had become because of Prohibition.

Most of the politicians were tradesmen and laborers who lived on the west and south sides of the city. They were separated by the Rock River from the upper-crust businessmen and professionals who lived on or near Courthouse Hill, thus earning the name "the hill crowd" from the working class.

"There was no distinction in (aldermen's) minds between political and administrative functions," Harold Stone wrote in 1940 in "City Manager Government in Nine Cities."

"They looked after their wards and the ad-

ministrative departments alike," Stone wrote. "There is no evidence of dishonesty in the aldermen's handling of municipal affairs, although the civic and social leaders of the community always were suspicious of paving contracts and purchases. There was no systematic (political) machine patronage, and the 'shakedown' was unknown. ...

"The principal effect of politics was in the regulation of the saloons and later the pool halls; they were the centers of social and political life of some of the aldermen's friends."

"The waste that unquestionably existed was a result of the handling of important work intermittently by mediocre individuals through a cumbersome and involved procedure."

Those dissatisfied with the aldermanic form of government in the early '20s, Stone reported, were business and professional men, the newly franchised women who formed influential social and service groups and the Protestant church congregations that wanted more strict regulation of public morals.

In 1922, politicking by women's organizations and a strident editorial campaign in the *Gazette* helped persuade voters to adopt the reform manager-council form of government. Henry Traxler became the city's first and longest-serving city manager, and his professional, objective administration lowered taxes while increasing services.

Though Prohibition closed the saloons and breweries, it did not stop drinking in Janesville. Contrary to popular memory, Prohibition did not outlaw the private consumption of alcohol, but it did ban the manufacture, sale and transportation of liquor, wine and beer.

Bootlegged alcohol—either homemade or smuggled—was readily available in Janesville, but the people who made it, carried it or sold it now were criminals as well as neighbors and local business people.

Raids were frequent, and arrests were

many. Violence increased, and alcohol played a role in three shootings of civilians by police or a police agent. Enforcement of Prohibition directly caused the homicide of a South Beloit man by the police agent, a young Janesville man.

Alcohol undoubtedly played a role in many of the train and auto accidents that killed and crippled scores of Rock County people in the century's first two decades, but how many is uncertain because no toxicology tests were done on accident victims at that time. What is certain is that death by poisoning from bad, homemade alcohol regularly killed county residents during Prohibition.

The '20s also were the Jazz Age, which often is seen as springing from Prohibition. The reverse is more true.

Prohibition actually was a reaction from America's middle class—largely rural, Protestant and prejudiced—against the "new age," which many conservatives thought frayed the country's social and moral fabric.

The "new age" was embodied both in liberated young women who now voted and flaunted their breaking of taboos, such as smoking in public, and in the ethnically and racially diverse cities where jazz first took root. It's no coincidence that in the '20s—most noted for Prohibition and its rejection by a large part of the populace—the United States, a country built by and for immigrants, first limited immigration.

By 1927, two-thirds of American homes had electricity, and a third had radios. The radio and phonograph brought jazz to Rock County. Reviewing the *Gazette's* annual retrospectives and spot-checking daily papers found no mention of any notable jazz musicians performing live in the city in the '20s.

But the music was popular here.

In 1923, A.E. Whitford, president of Milton College, felt compelled to ban dancing by students in public places—he called it a "growing evil"—and an ad for a 1929 New Year's Eve party in Milton Junction proclaimed: "Big Dance" and "Snappy Jazz Orchestra."

Nevertheless, the elimination of public saloons changed Janesville's physical appearance and cultural image, and the fact that drinking was illegal validated the belief of the city's many devout Christians.

Further altering the image of Janesville were the new reform municipal government and the progressive actions ensured by women's ballots.

In the century's teens, ministers lamented that Janesville was as filled with vice as Chicago, and one minister preached on the topic: "Can Janesville Be Saved?" In the '20s, civic leaders and the *Gazette* took to calling Janesville "Wisconsin's Cleanest City."



In many ways, the city was cleaner in the 1920s.

The number of annual arrests dropped precipitously just after the city went dry. Before the decade was over, the yearly number eventually would equal pre-Prohibition annual arrest figures, but the city was much larger, and many arrests were for traffic violations. While significant, the number of alcohol-related arrests did not dominate police statistics as they did in the century's first 20 years.

While nowhere near contemporary sanitary standards, the city was cleaner physically.

After fits and starts, the city adopted a more organized, more uniform system of garbage collection. The cleanliness of the Rock River and restaurants became issues as well, and steps were taken to clean them up. Rock County built a sanitorium for tub-

erculosis patients.

The city got its first crossing signals for trains and first stop-and-go lights for cars in the '20s.

During the '20s, the United States economy grew by an average 6 percent a year while productivity increased an average 4 percent annually. By 1929, the United States made more than 43 percent of the world's manufactured goods.

Though it had experience with an automotive boom/bust when the decade began, Janesville was riding high as the '20s ended because its twin GM operations—Chevrolet and Fisher Body—were expanding and setting records along with the juggernaut U.S. economy and the soaring stock market.

By the end of '29, Janesville was feeling pretty smug about itself. But bald-faced prejudice and outright racism were prevalent

here. Moreover, the nation and city were headed into the grips of the Depression.

Whether the Stock Market Crash of 1929 caused the Depression of the '30s is wide open to debate, but the cost of the stocks' failure to companies, the banks that played the market and individual investors is apparent. Many Americans had a stake in the stock market.

On Sept. 3, 1929, GM stock closed at \$71.75 a share. On Nov. 1—two days after Black Tuesday—GM closed at \$48 a share. It slid to \$45.50 by Nov. 4 and finished the year at \$40.50.

Much of the nation's supposed wealth evaporated with the Stock Market Crash. Though mostly on paper, people's savings and banks' assets were wiped out. Gone was the money—and confidence—to buy cars and almost everything else.

Hard times awaited the nation and city.

## Racial prejudice prominent in Midwest

**K**u Klux Klan membership reached its height of 4.5 million in 1924, its ranks swelled by American-born white Midwesterners.

The whites usually displayed their racism and bigotry openly and fervently.

An infamous photograph from 1930 shows the lynching of two young black men in Marion, Ind., north of Indianapolis and about 250 miles from Janesville. Many of the white men and women in the surrounding crowd wear expressions as cheerful or innocuous as people attending a church social.

While Janesville was spared lynchings, the KKK, racism and ethnic and religious bigotry were rife here and throughout southern Wisconsin. A 1925 photograph in the archives of the Rock County Historical Society shows 76 Klan members—men and women—displaying what was described as the largest U.S. flag in the nation.

The Rock County KKK was awarded the 104-foot-long flag because it had the largest proportionate membership at a July 4th statewide rally in Oshkosh, according to *The Janesville Gazette*.

Gazette records show that the photo is mislabeled in describing the flag display as in Janesville. Actually, it was at the Evansville fairgrounds, but the gathering included representatives of Klan groups from Jefferson and Rock counties, including the "junior Klan" for boys and girls younger than 18; members of the Ladies' Klan from Janesville, who "gave a drill"; and KKK musical bands from Madison and Rockford, Ill.

The racists—Caucasian and Protestant—feared, mistrusted and abused both black

Americans moving from the rural south to the industrial jobs of the urban north and the immigrants who flooded to the United States seeking better lives and bringing their Catholicism and Judaism with them.

"Whitewater had oodles of members, meetings, cross burnings, funerals, parades, etc.," says a 1983 letter to the historical society from a Fort Atkinson resident who wished to remain anonymous.

The writer was a boy in the '20s and witnessed KKK meetings in farm fields near his family's place. He recalled the meetings "were all against the Catholics, Negroes and Jews. ... All Klansmen carried guns. Many booed it up. I knew of several local members. In fact, I lived neighbors to some. Those never made any bones about it."

He also remembered a funeral on Whitewater's Center Street, "where Klansmen in sheets and hoods paraded two blocks long."

On Oct. 10, 1923, a crowd estimated at 5,000 attended a three-hour Klan rally on a Turtle Township farm near Clinton, where "25 Clinton men" were initiated into the KKK, the *Gazette* reported.

A "national Klan lecturer" from Georgia, where the KKK was resurrected in 1915, outlined KKK tenets. They started with "white supremacy" and included "protection of pure womanhood ... the tenets of the Christian religion ... the limitation of foreign immigration (and) preventing unwarranted strikes by foreign labor agitators ... preventing the causes of mob violence and lynchings."

It is telling that the KKK statement seemingly opposed to violence and lynching was directed at their cause—typically a purport-

ed assault or insult by a black man against a white woman. The statement was not directed at the abhorrent vigilante practices themselves.

Between 1918 and '27, no fewer than 417 blacks were lynched in the United States, most at the hands of the Klan or Klan-incited mobs.

The same front page reporting the Clinton rally also carried a story about Oklahoma Gov. J.C. Walton urging an anti-KKK law "to save the state from disaster." Because of the KKK, Walton had declared martial law, and he charged the Klan with "hundreds of outrages," including mob violence and "heart-rending cruelty in the extreme in the form of mutilations, some of which are too awful to disclose in print. ...

"This invisible, insidious and terrorizing empire exists in an exaggerated form—fear, falsehood and religious hatred fully exemplified from its operations," Walton said.

Other politicians played to the ignorance, fears and prejudices that the Klan fostered and thrived on.

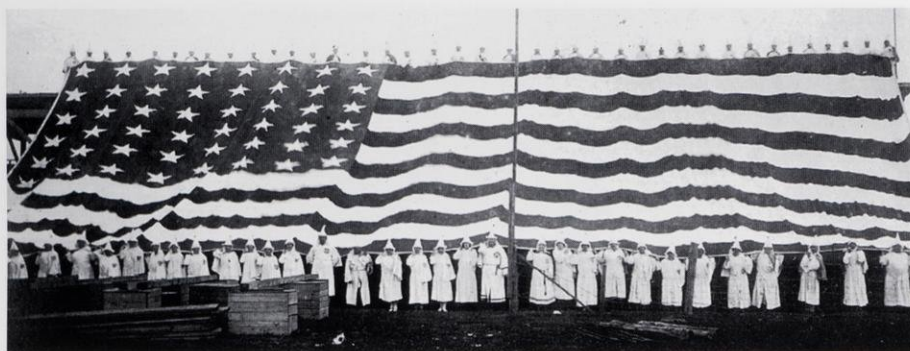
Daniel S. Woodward, a Wisconsin candidate for U.S. senator, addressed the KKK rally in Evansville.

"His platform is identical with that of the Klan, and while not a Klan member ... he will be their representative," the *Gazette* reported.

Woodward was not elected. But Oklahoma and Oregon elected KKK governors, and "the Klan all but took over the state of Indiana," according to "The American Century" by Harold Evans.

"There were people in Beloit I knew were members," said Ella Dunbar, a 103-year-old Footville resident who lived in Beloit while a teenager. "Good, prominent people





**The Ku Klux Klan reached the height of its membership—4.5 million—in the 1920s, and, then as now, the Klan tried to wrap its racism and hatred in the flag and national patriotism. Displayed at the old fairgrounds in Evansville in 1925 by Rock County KKK members, the flag pictured was 104 feet long and weighed 345 pounds.**

were Klan members. Good, substantial workers in the factory were members. ... There were people in church I knew were members. They were educated people.

"I guess they thought they had to keep America just for true-blood Americans. ... They were more or less against colored people."

She attributed the whites' racism and apprehension to a "large influx of untrained colored people" coming to work in Rock County factories.

"At first you thought it (KKK) was something needed, but they went too far in what they tried to accomplish," Dunbar said. "Later, you could see that it was the worst way to approach the problem. I've always been a Christian and believed you shouldn't feel that way."

But many Christians did—and still do—feel that way.

"To relieve Janesville of conditions such as are arising in Beloit and other rapidly expanding industrial cities of the north, the Janesville Realty Board ... placed itself behind a movement to devise a plan to keep the colored man in his place," the *Gazette* reported on July 14, 1920.

The real estate agents were unanimous in their desire to create a separate, segregated "negro colony" because they feared a time "when ... from inattention ... negro settlements are scattered throughout the city," the *Gazette* reported.

"That the negro, both industrially and socially, is not wanted in Janesville by the realty men, and from their personal observations not wanted by the people of the city, was the statement constantly reiterated," according to the newspaper.

One realtor "cited instances to show the negro is not wanted in this section; that the general feeling is strong against him," the *Gazette* reported.

Another realtor declared: "A school house

will be necessary. You will find that where there are many blacks, their standard of morals becomes pronounced and vividly outstanding against ours."

The real estate agents called on city officials, the chamber of commerce, the Janesville Federation of Women and other groups to discuss how to create the "negro colony."

But a review of *Gazette* editions for the next month found no further mention of the segregation proposal and no comment, either editorially from the *Gazette* or in the *Voice of the People*, for or against the proposal.

The newspaper's annual retrospectives for the decade also made no further mention of the segregation proposal.

Still, the Klan enlisted many members in Rock County over the next several years.

Many—probably most—white Janesville residents were prejudiced in the 1920s. Such biases were common. Ernest Hemingway used racial and ethnic slurs in his letters, and the president of Harvard University tried to restrict admittance of Jews, according to "The American Century."

The *Gazette* reflected those prejudices. When the paper reported on activities of African-Americans, usually as perpetrators or victims of sensational crimes in other locales, their race was reported prominently and repeatedly.

The same was true of reporting immigrants' nationalities and the races of Rock County residents when they were other than white.

One headline declared: "Negro Has Confessed to Race Riot." In fact, the man reportedly confessed to the attacks on white women that incited whites into several days of rioting near Washington, D.C., in August 1920.

Two violent local incidents from the '20s indicate that justice was different for blacks and whites.

In March 1925, Tommy Koops, a black hotel porter in Beloit, demanded immediate service from a white Janesville mechanic, Eugene P. Elliott, a "native southerner," the *Gazette* re-ported. The two exchanged words, and Koops challenged Elliott. Elliott was getting out of a car backward when Koops grabbed Elliott around the waist and lifted him.

Elliott happened to have a knife in his hand and swung it back to stab Koops in the back. Koops, who did not display a weapon, survived. But no charges were brought against Elliott—despite Koops' wife's initial insistence—because it was determined he acted in self-defense, the newspaper reported.

In December 1927, William P. Woods, a white Chicagoan staying at a Janesville hotel managed by a friend, got into a fight with Horace Brown, a black musician, in a South Beloit, Ill., "soft-drink parlor," probably a front for a bootlegging speakeasy.

The fight was instigated when Woods' date, a white woman from Oshkosh, complained that she didn't like "negro music," probably the blues because Brown sang and played guitar.

Both men felt insulted; the desire to fight was mutual, and the two men lunged at each other, according to trial testimony. But in the fight, Brown pulled a knife and slashed Woods, who died of his wounds.

Brown contended he acted in self-defense, and the defense tried but failed to establish that Woods, too, was armed with a knife. Despite testimony from several character witnesses, including locally famous former Beloit police detective Dan Torrisi, Brown was convicted and sentenced to life.

Not all the news about African-Americans was negative in the *Gazette* in the 1920s.

A January 1925 article reported: "Colored children of Janesville enjoyed a Christmas tree, program and distribution of gifts ... at the home of Mrs. Rosa L. Williams, president of the Janesville Sunshine Club, an organization for the uplift of colored people. The club holds meetings every Sunday afternoon."

Some 20 people—their races not reported—were members of the club "founded (in Nashville) by a white woman, Miss Johanna P. Moore," according to the *Gazette*.

In 1926, Rosa Williams and the Sunshine Club hosted the Wisconsin State Colored Women's Convention in Janesville, and the *Gazette* ran a photo of about 30 women who attended, including Mrs. M. McDaniel of Janesville, the group's second vice president.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that segregation was the norm, not the exception. The "colored children of Janesville" had their own holiday party, not a party with white kids.



# 1920-1929

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1920

■ **Jan. 14:** Rock County supervisors refuse a proposal to keep rural roads cleared of snow for duration of the winter.

■ **Jan. 21:** Janesville residents implore railroads to install safe crossings; railroads claim the expense is too great.

■ **Jan. 29:** Dynamite explosion at the Samson Tractor factory seriously injures two people.

■ **Feb. 10:** Urban planner John Nolen tells the chamber of commerce that Janesville needs more bridges over the Rock River.

■ **Feb. 18:** The Janesville city council votes to allow billiard halls and bowling alleys to open for limited hours on Sunday.

■ **Feb. 26:** Billiard hall proprietors are fined \$15 each for staying open longer than allowed on Sundays.

■ **March 1:** Expansion of Samson Tractor is suspended, putting 1,000 out of work. Company President J.A. Craig says the primary reason is a scarcity of houses for new workers, and he warns the city to keep up with the General Motors division. The suspension of work will not affect Samson's sponsorship of a baseball team in a 12-city league. The company has hired Slim Walsh so the ringer ball-player can play on the team.

■ **March 17:** Janesville plumbers enter the 17th day of their strike.

■ **March 27:** Janesville is chosen as the home base for the National Guard's first tank company—the 32nd Tank Company—in the United States. When it is activated for World War II duty, the unit will be called Company A, 192nd Tank Battalion. It will defend the Philippines in World War II, and many of the 99 Janesville men will become prisoners of war who will be tortured on the infamous Bataan Death March.

■ **April 2:** Frank O. Holt, superintendent of Edgerton schools, is chosen for the same job in Janesville.

■ **April 10:** The Janesville housing shortage eases as many contractors are erecting houses.

■ **April 14:** "Family of Julius Kutz, four babes and mother, burned in home near Delavan. Father badly burned but will recover."

■ **April 19:** The Rev. Lewis' sermon against dancing causes much discussion.

■ **May 1:** The Rock County

Farm Bureau exceeds its membership goal of 2,000 by 200.

■ **May 4:** The Janesville council decides that injured or sick city residents will be transported by ambulance for free, but visitors must pay.

■ **May 7:** Factories, stores and schools close so residents can watch the Samson baseball team's first game, a 4-3 victory over the Chicago Magnets. Samson sweeps the three-game series.

■ **May 15:** Surgeons amputate the arm of electrician Frank Kelly, who was hurt on the job at Samson.

■ **May 19:** Edward Ballard dies of injuries suffered in a 40-foot fall while working at Samson.

■ Many plumbers return to work after 12-week strike.

■ **May 25:** Moonshine that led to the arrest of three Edgerton youths is traced to a Milwaukee bootlegger.

■ **June 9:** First meeting of the Janesville Board of Health.

■ **June 14:** Francis McCue and Francis Cunningham drown when their canoe tips in the Rock River.

■ **June 16:** Della Kohl is burned badly while trying to light a gasoline stove.

■ **June 28:** New St. Patrick's Catholic School is dedicated at 305 Lincoln in Janesville. The two-story school with a raised basement still serves the parish today.

■ **July 1:** Charles Clarke rescues two people from drowning as a heat wave continues, drawing many to city beaches. Sixteen days later, he'll save four more from drowning.

■ **July 14:** Janesville real estate men meet and favor a "separate section for negroes."

■ **July 17:** Library board votes \$10 increases in monthly salaries for all Janesville staff. The head librarian will get \$135 a month.

■ **July 19:** Samson drops a double-header to the Simmons Bed team from Kenosha.

■ **July 28:** The entire city stops business for a midweek community picnic at Riverside Park with a full program of music and sports.

■ **Aug. 2:** City health inspector finds many groceries are unsanitary.

■ **Aug. 14:** The Janesville Gazette celebrates its 75th anniversary.

■ **Aug. 20:** Janesville police

move to rid city of "mashers," men who accost or proposition women.

■ **Aug. 24:** The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus plays to thousands in Janesville.

■ **Sept. 9:** Census shows Rock County population at 66,150.

■ **Sept. 11:** The Janesville School Board asks the city council for \$650,000 for the new Janesville High School (Marshall Apartments).

■ **Sept. 15:** Samson reduces tractor production, and a fire in the company's coal pile spreads fumes all over the city.

■ **Sept. 20:** "Miss Hart suffers fatal injuries when she falls through coal hole in new Parker Pen building. Jack Lynn, who was with her, arrested for assault." A coroner's jury rules the death an accident, clearing Lynn of all blame.

■ **Sept. 27:** Federal agents seize 28,300 bottles of "alcoholic stuff" from the Bank Saloon on South Main Street. Owner Thomas F. Abbott is arrested but freed on bail. He will appear before federal magistrate Kenesaw Mountain Landis, who soon will be appointed the first commissioner of professional baseball. His job is to clean up the game in the wake of the Black Sox Scandal of 1919 when eight members of the Chicago White Sox, the American League champs, took bribes to throw the World Series to the Cincinnati Reds.

■ **Oct. 1:** Janesville Amusement Co. buys the Myers Theater, which has been owned by the Myers family for 50 years.

■ **Oct. 21:** Meeting held in Myers Theater in support of the Irish quest for freedom from the British. Residents of Irish descent and immigrants are raising funds for Irish relief. The Easter Rising rebellion in Dublin four years earlier has brought the dispute into sharp focus.

■ **Nov. 1:** Streetcar fare rises to a dime.

■ **Nov. 3:** Warren G. Harding carries every Janesville ward as he is elected president.

■ **Nov. 12:** County board again refuses to clear snow from rural roads, and the Janesville Chamber of Commerce plans an appeal of the supervisors' action to the state.

■ **Nov. 13:** A year and two days after World War I fighting ended, the first bodies of slain Janesville veterans—James F. McCue and Andrew S. Connell—are returned for burial.

■ **Nov. 23:** L.E. Williams and H.C. Mathews are arrested for selling wine.

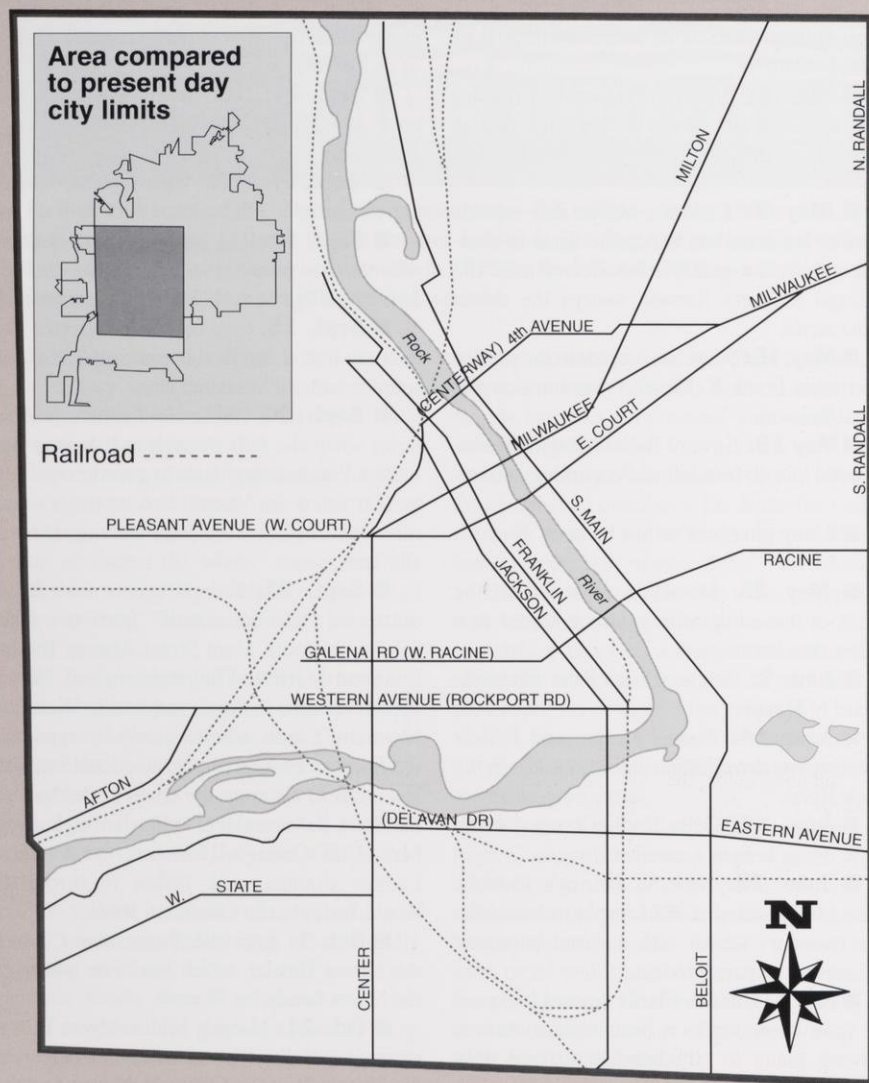
■ **Dec. 6:** Hotel London bar raided, and four bottles of liquor seized. William Canary



Frank O. Holt,  
Janesville schools  
superintendent,  
1920-27



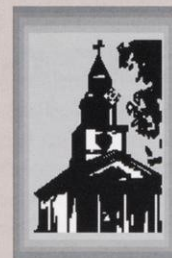
# Janesville in 1920



**Janesville's city limits in 1920.**  
Some of the street names have changed since then.



**Area of city:** 7.25 square miles



**Number of churches:** 17



**Number of schools:** 13. One is a public high school, the others are elementary schools, including three parochial.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 5.02  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 26.95  
**Miles of water mains:** 48.74



**Population:** 18,293



**\$1 in 1920 has buying power of \$8.12 in 1999**

is charged with storing alcohol and then freed on \$5,000 bail.

■ **Sometime in 1920:** Six Rock County people are killed in train accidents here and elsewhere, and seven die in automobile accidents.

■ Janesville police lock up 73 people for intoxication, a huge decrease from the 588 arrested in 1919, and the last six months of 1919 were dry here.

■ City cops also arrest four people on charges of adultery and two for fornication.

■ Helen Menzies Sutherland, one of the

few women to serve in local public office, is elected to the Janesville Board of Education; she will serve 10 years and play a significant role in improving education for children with special needs.

■ Rock County spends \$230,000 on new roads.

## 1921

■ **Jan. 4:** Stockholders of Rock County Telephone decide to sell to Bell Telephone.

■ **Jan. 6:** The Janesville Federation of Women decide to "censor" movies and vaudeville in the city "with praise and cooperation

in the better offerings and criticism for those of a salacious nature. Especially is this to be offered at the beginning of a long engagement so the public will know what to avoid."

■ **Jan. 15:** Judge George Grimm rules that women may serve as jurors.

■ **Jan. 24:** The Gazette opens a bureau to find work for unemployed men. Janesville is trying to convince W.C. Durant, ousted head of General Motors, to locate a plant for his new Durant autos in the city. Both the city and Durant will fail in their ventures.

■ **Jan. 27:** Relief fund for unemployed



## Abilities of blind and deaf Wisconsin woman touted across United States

**F**antastic? Or fake? Willetta Huggins, blind and deaf, made headlines across the country in 1921-22 for her purported abilities to smell colors, distinguish the denomination of paper money by touch and read newspapers and accurately discern spoken words by touch.

A native of Chippewa Falls, she was a youngster with extremely poor vision and partial deafness. At age 10, Willetta entered the Wisconsin School for the Blind in Janesville.

Two years later, her hearing was completely gone, and Willetta lost what little sight she had the next year, according to an article by E.R. Wolcott in *The Journal of the Osteopathic Association* that was reprinted in 1925 in *The Western Optical World*, a professional journal for optometrists.

At this time, Helen Keller, the world's most famous and successful deaf-and-blind person, was in her '40s. For years, Keller had been making speeches and writing books and articles about how she had overcome her disabilities to graduate from Radcliffe College in 1904 with honors.

The '20s were a time of fads, phony science and social experiments. One "scientific" study claimed to prove definitively that brunette women were more excitable than blonde women. Other articles reported the foibles on a "free love farm" and the escapades of a "nature queen," or nudist.

The press lost no time in trumpeting 16-year-old Willetta as the next Helen Keller, and the hometown newspaper, *The Janesville Gazette*, blew that horn loudly.

"Willetta Outshines The Famous Helen Keller in Interview at Madison" blares the headline over the story of the two women's meeting in Madison on Jan. 21, 1922.

Not everybody bought Willetta's tale.

Two months earlier, Dr. Joseph Jastrow, head of the University of Wisconsin's "psychological department," tested Willetta and declared her a "fake" because she was neither totally blind or totally deaf.

"I have no hesitation in saying that the tests, so far as they went, gave not the slightest

indication of a possession by this girl of any unusual sense," Jastrow said, "and that, on the contrary, indications are perfectly clear that she gets a knowledge of color through such portion of vision as remains to her.

"The same is true of hearing by vibration, and for the present I content myself with the statement that there is no miracle involved and indeed no mystery what-so-ever."

Perhaps not a miracle, and the mystery could have a different answer than Jastrow's. Keller could "listen" to other people speak by placing her hand so that her middle finger was on the speaker's nose, forefinger on lips and thumb on the speaker's larynx to feel vocal vibrations and lip motions.

Willetta reportedly "heard" others talk by placing her hand on their chests, ostensibly to feel the vibrations of their speech. She also reportedly could "hear" spoken words over the telephone by feeling the phone's vibrating receiver plate.

While Jastrow contended that Willetta retained some vision and hearing, the professional journal writer Wolcott maintained that "thorough and painstaking examination revealed only that the loss of both sight and hearing was complete and that there was not the slightest hope of improvement."

Acknowledging that an "account of her powers of tactile and olfactory perception reads like a tale from the Arabian Nights," Wolcott went to report her discerning speech through vibrations. Her tactile perception and mental concentration were so great, he concluded, that it was not a stretch to think that she could discern slight variations in printed paper so as to be able to read a newspaper and determine the denominations of paper money.

Could Willetta smell colors? Research turned up a reference to another deaf-and-blind woman who might have been able to smell the difference in clothing dyes, but no such reference was found relating to Willetta.

Despite the controversy, the *Gazette*, apparently eager for a hometown phenomenon,

spared no ink singing her praises:

"It was evident that the 16-year-old has done more in two years in overcoming the handicap of deafness and blindness than Helen Keller, more than twice the age of Willetta, has in her lifetime. Miss Keller's fame as the most wonderful blind and deaf person in the world is superseded by the marvel pupil of the Janesville institution."

The two women conversed first by signing into each other's hands, then by feeling the vibrations of each other's speech. Willetta retained her childhood ability to speak; Keller, blind and deaf since age 19 months, taught herself how to vocalize.

"I am delighted that the power and gift of her spirit has been marvelously developed," Keller said of Willetta, "and I look forward to her helping others to realize what they can do if they work long enough."

In 1922, the *Gazette* continued: "Milwaukee and Madison newspapermen were loud in their praise of proclaiming Willetta as the most marvelous deaf-and-blind person known in history."

In March 1955, Ripley's *Believe It or Not!* wrote to the Wisconsin School for the Blind for information about Willetta for a possible feature, but the school's records do not include a Ripley's article.

The *Gazette's* annual retrospectives through the 1920s make only one other mention of Willetta's demonstrating her abilities.

The prevalent opinion among graduates of the School for the Blind was that the "most marvelous deaf and blind person known in history" was a phony.

Graduates remembered Willetta reaching for things that she couldn't have known were there if she couldn't see, said Tom Hanson, superintendent of what is now called Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped. Hanson's father, Clarence, graduated from the school in 1930, and he recalled that Willetta returned to the school in 1928 and could see.

Willetta apparently pulled the wool over a lot of people's eyes.

men is organized.

■ **Feb. 7:** Joseph Anderson and Perry Hull escape from jail, steal an auto and are recaptured in Juneau. The "boy jail breakers" each receive 4 years in reform school.

■ **Feb. 15:** George S. Parker, founder of Parker Pen, buys a large tract of riverfront property for his mansion Stonehenge. In 1999, Ken and Diane Hendricks, owners

of ABC Supply, owned the home at 2501 N. Parker Drive.

■ J.P. Cullen & Son wins the contract to expand the water plant.

■ **Feb. 22:** Janesville decides to hire a "police-woman with full powers of arrest."

■ **Feb. 28:** Robert Carr, the elderly but robust Milton Junction man who would hike the 8½ miles to Janesville on his birthday, is

found dead at his home at age 90.

■ **March 1:** Captains are named for drive to raise \$75,000 to expand Mercy Hospital. Effort raises more than \$50,000.

■ **March 10:** Gilbert Evenson, a Janesville veteran of the Mexican-American War of 1846-48, dies at age 95.

■ **March 22:** Four tanks arrive for the tank company.



■ **April 26:** "Flood waters cover Walworth County." A heavy snowstorm struck 10 days earlier and was followed by heavy rains.

■ **May 1:** New, stricter garbage collection law goes into effect for Janesville.

■ Anna Tannahill, dean of Beloit College, declares: "Of course, extremes are bad and should be avoided, but a sensibly short skirt, full enough to permit freedom of motion is, in my opinion, strongly recommended. Such a thing was impossible in the days when women wore dresses to their toes. I consider the long skirt ridiculous."

■ **May 2:** Police arrest 15 men in gambling raids in downtown Janesville.

■ **June 7:** Margaret Kavanaugh becomes Janesville's first female police officer.

■ **June 15:** Mayor Thomas Welsh is arrested for speeding. He pays a \$10 fine.

■ **July 9:** Chamber of Commerce requests a 30-minute parking limit on Main and Milwaukee streets.

■ **July 12:** J.P. Cullen & Son wins contract to build the new Janesville High School. J.P. will resign as head of the police and fire commission to avoid a possible conflict of interest.

■ "City bakes in 103-degree heat."

■ **July 13:** Heat wave continues, over-coming three horses used for work on the road to Edgerton.

■ **Aug. 20:** A tornado kills Louis D. Hayes and destroys many buildings in the county. Two days later, Louis Barckley is electrocuted by a live wire as he repairs storm damage in Janesville.

■ **Aug. 23:** The Janesville council votes to buy 30 acres between the city limits and Riverside Park for the city's first community park. At this time, Riverside Park, an area popular with Janesville residents for recreation, including dances, is north of city limits. Fourth Ward Park, established in 1853, is the city's oldest neighborhood park.

■ **Sept. 15:** "City garbage collection system proving big success."

■ **Sept. 16:** Gasoline price drops to 18.5 cents a gallon.

■ **Sept. 29:** 700 attend the dedication of the Frances Willard schoolhouse, saved and refurbished by the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the national organization Willard co-founded.

■ **Oct. 4:** Largest budget in Janesville history to date, \$606,240, approved for 1922.

■ **Oct. 8:** Raids in Rock County result in several moonshine stills being seized and several arrests made.

■ **Oct. 24:** Concrete road (Highway 51 today) is completed to Edgerton.

■ Daniel Terwilliger survived the Civil War, but he is killed by a streetcar.

■ **Nov. 11:** Mrs. Nels Brickson is murdered near her home on Magnolia Road (County A today). Henry Vermeersek is arrested for the crime, but at trial he establishes a sound alibi that he was in Beloit, and the charge is dropped. No other suspect reported.

■ **Dec. 19:** St. Paul Railroad lays off 20,000 nationwide, including many workers in Janesville.

■ **Dec. 31:** Four "coasting"—sledding—hills are selected for Janesville kids.

■ **Sometime in 1921:** Rock County loses four people to auto accidents, and three die in train accidents.

■ The Janesville Police Department returns 12 lost children to their parents and kills 57 dogs suspected of having rabies.

■ Ninety-two houses are built in Janesville.

■ Number of Janesville voting wards increases by two to 14.

■ The Janesville YWCA chapter forms.

■ The Janesville School District starts the education of handicapped children when the board recognizes the need for a special teacher for "subnormal children"; two classes are formed.

## 1922

■ **Jan. 19:** The Janesville Federation of Women wins a fight to raise the salary of the county nurse to \$1,800 a year.

■ **Jan. 27:** Local prizefighter Charles Riley "takes a beating" in a bout at the skating rink on River Street.

■ **Feb. 3:** Samson cuts the price of its tractors \$220 to make them more attractive to farmers hit hard by depressed prices.

■ **Feb. 8:** Janesville women sign a petition to bring another form of reform government—manager-council—to a referendum.

■ **March 18:** Janesville police make their sixth moonshine raid in two weeks. They must mop the floor for the evidence.

■ **March 25:** Cornerstone laid for new Janesville High School.

■ **March 27:** 100 women start a drive to raise \$9,000 for a YWCA.

■ **March 31:** "Four Edgerton boys give blood to save girl schoolmate."

■ **April 3:** The interurban train line linking Janesville with Rockford, Ill., reduces service because of lack of riders.

■ **April 4:** The manager-council form of government passes by 711 votes.

■ **April 19:** Blizzard hits Rock County on 29th day of spring.

■ **April 22:** "Ole Bronson, legless man, burns to death in shop back of Reliable drug store."

■ **April 26:** A real break for Parker Putnam. His Prohibition violation case is dis-

missed because the evidence—a bottle of liquor—explodes.

■ **April 27:** Warren Curtis, 10, drowns after falling from rail trestle. A dragging search finds the boy's body May 15 and also reveals the "deplorable" condition of the garbage-filled Rock River.

■ **June 1:** Meeting held for clean-up of the river; immediate action approved.

■ **June 12:** "Trouble at Riverside Park when woman hits husband found with another woman."

■ **June 15:** Janesville High graduates its largest class to date; 98 receive diplomas.

■ **June 22:** Sale of fireworks banned in Janesville.

■ **July 1:** 145 workers in the two rail shops in Janesville—Chicago & North Western and St. Paul—walk out as a national strike of rail workers starts.

■ **July 6:** Local merchants feel the strike effects as shipments are delayed.

■ **July 11:** Fred Bauch is killed at Samson when he's hit by a two-ton wheel.

■ Railroads hire local men to take the strikers' jobs.

■ **July 20:** C&NW suspends many important trains.

■ **July 22:** Strikers vandalize the St. Paul yard.

■ **July 25:** City orders Mercy Hospital to remove a sewer that dumps into the Rock River. County supervisors agree "to build no more roads."

■ **July 27:** A mob of 250 attacks strikebreakers at the rail yards. Many of the strikebreakers run, leaving just a few on the job.

■ **July 29:** William Ullius wins the "Smile Week" contest sponsored by the Janesville Lions Club.

■ **Aug. 15:** Council buys seven more streetlights for downtown Janesville.

■ **Aug. 16:** Rail strike gets uglier: Two men beat the night watchman at the St. Paul yard. Two days later, a train derailed near Milton Junction because of a switch intentionally left open.

■ **Aug. 28:** Railroads import 30 strikebreakers; strikers appeal for money for their families.

■ **Sept. 5:** Two Janesville men are charged for calling a strikebreaker a "scab." The term nevertheless endures as part of American labor parlance and is used for virtually any worker who takes a striker's job or defies a picket line.

■ **Sept. 9:** Dr. Charles W. Blanchard, 58, Janesville, is charged with second-degree murder after the death of a 30-year-old woman from Rockford, Ill., from postoperative complications resulting from an "illegal operation"—abortion—performed in Janesville. No resolu-



tion of this case is reported in the Gazette's annual retrospectives, but Blanchard will make the news again.

■ **Sept. 14:** Rail strike settled.

■ **Sept. 16:** Chevrolet takes over the Samson factory, where production of tractors has been at a virtual standstill because of the national farm depression. Samson moves to the old Janesville Machine Co. complex on South

Franklin Street, where no tractors or farm implements are made but where Samson parts are stored for distribution until 1934.

■ **Sept. 22:** Janesville Harvest Festival starts with 3,000 watching parades. Festival continues the next day with more parades and free movies.

■ **Sept. 26:** The baby of Mr. and Mrs. Orrie Pautsch dies in a fire that destroys their

Janesville home.

■ **Oct. 3:** General Motors announces it will locate a Fisher Body plant beside the Chevrolet plant, which it starts expanding.

■ **Oct. 17:** John Philip Sousa and his band return to the city to play a matinee.

■ **Nov. 16:** Janesville cops warn gamblers to get rid of their punchboards by Dec. 1.

■ **Nov. 21:** Byron Jones is fined \$100 for possessing a moonshine still.

■ **Nov. 28:** In Janesville, the Strimple garage and 32 cars burn for a loss of \$50,000.

■ Parallel parking urged for the entire city.

■ **Dec. 8:** 200 Christmas trees secured to line Milwaukee and Main streets during the holidays.

■ **Sometime in 1922:** Rock County traffic fatalities number nine for the year: four by rail, five by car.

■ Western Union and Postal Telegraph offices send and receive 160,000 telegrams for the year.

■ Janesville arrests for the year total 476, about half those in pre-Prohibition years. Of the arrests, 138 are alcohol-related: intoxication, 104; drunken driving, 10; possession of alcohol, 16; transportation of alcohol, eight.

## 1923

■ **Jan. 4:** President A.E. Whitford of Milton College bans dancing by students in off-campus, semi-public places such as a confectionery store.

■ **Jan. 18:** Though it's early in the year, Funk Brothers of La Prairie claim the 1923 record for largest calf born, 125 pounds at birth.

■ **Feb. 5:** First classes conducted in new Janesville High School, which will be renovated into Marshall Apartments. The school costs \$1 million—\$8.12 million in 1999 dollars—and has 1,165 students in grades 10-12. The city establishes its first junior high for grades 7-9 in the same building.

■ **Feb. 14:** Janesville's GM plant makes its first Chevrolet car.

■ **Feb. 19:** Pablo Casals, internationally famous cellist, plays at the Congregational Church in Janesville.

■ **March 8:** Assembly work starts at GM's Fisher Body plant.

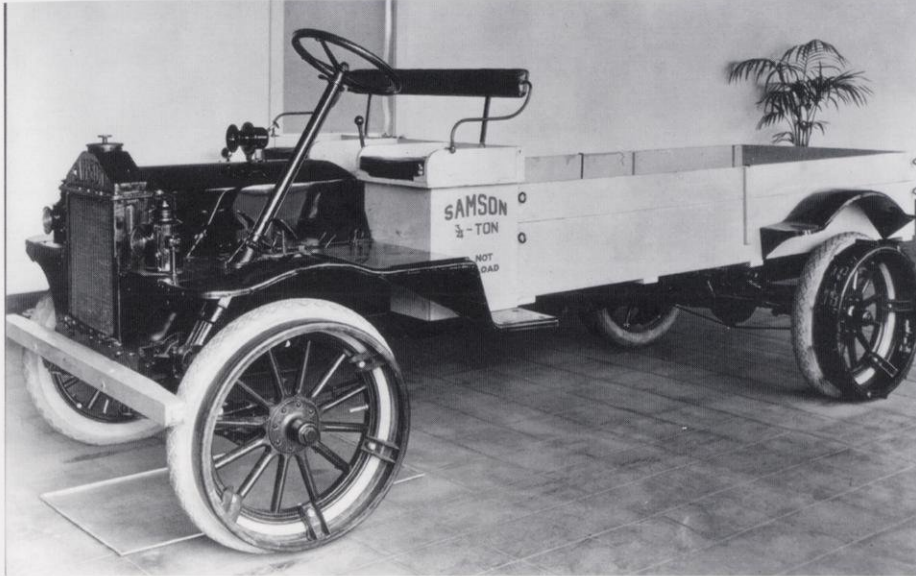
■ **March 17:** Third major snowstorm of the month blocks rural roads; Rock County declares opening the roads "hopeless."

■ **March 23:** Chevrolet production hits 100 cars a day.

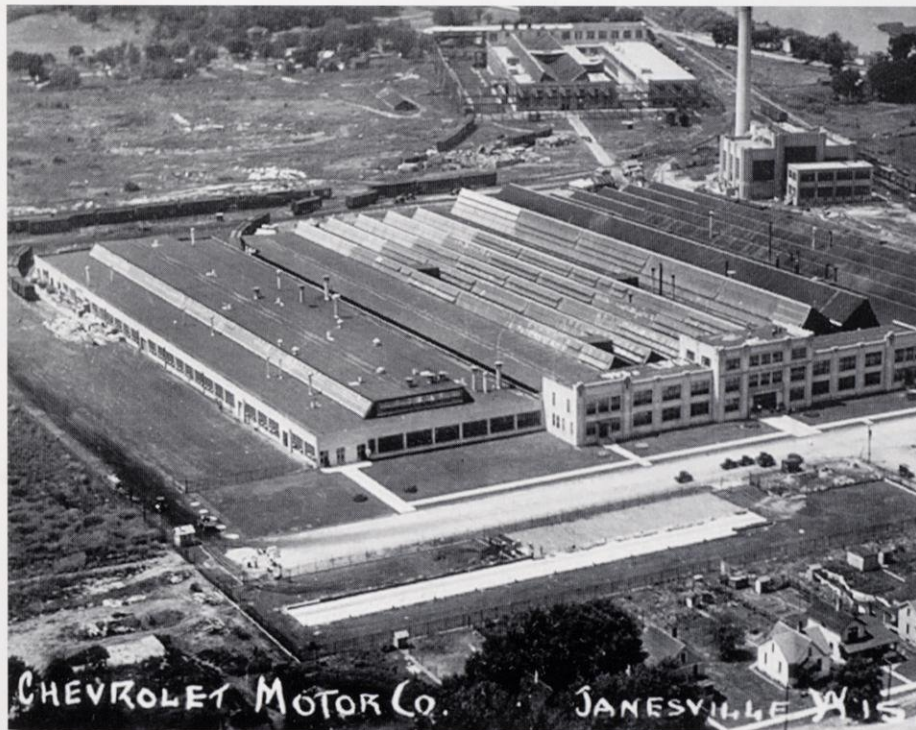
■ **April 1:** Evansville farmer Frank Montgomery, 45, is gored to death by a bull.

■ **April 8:** Alfred Miller, 36, Janesville, commits suicide after trying to murder his wife, Minnie. She recovers.

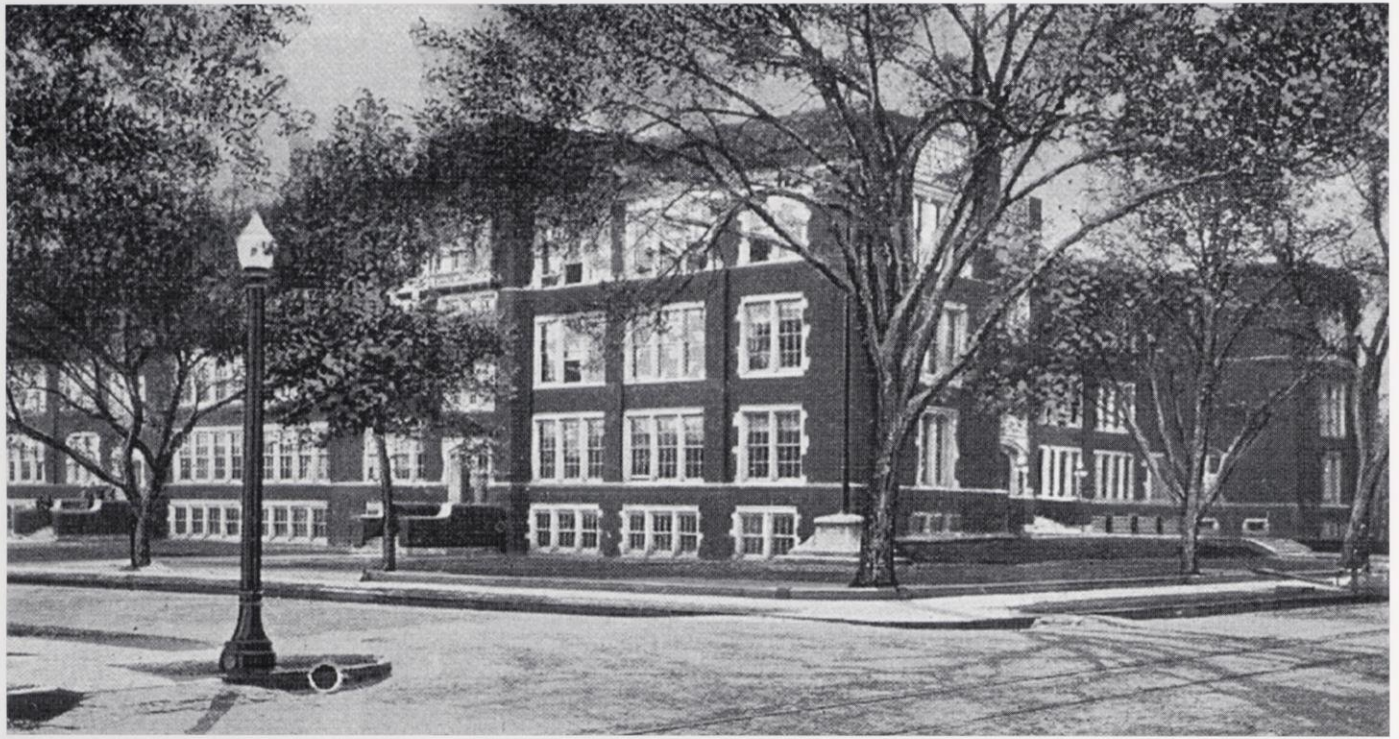
■ **April 12:** Janesville High students pub-



General Motors made the three-quarter-ton Samson truck, above, at its Samson Tractor division in Janesville from about 1920 until 1922. A farm depression helped doom Samson Tractor, but GM stayed in the city and continually expanded its plant, (below in an undated photo), housing Chevrolet and Fisher Body operations. Janesville workers made their first Chevy truck in the 1920s, and in 1999, the plant turned out sport-utility trucks and large, medium-duty trucks.







**Feb. 5, 1923**, was the date that 1,165 students entered the new \$1 million Janesville High School. Besides the high school classes, the building also housed the city's first junior high school. In 1923, the Gothic-style building with two gymnasiums, two pools and an auditorium was considered—at least by the community that built it—as the “finest in the Midwest.” General Motors’ desire for good schools, streets and housing in its plant cities was a major impetus for the city to support the new school and the tax increases needed to build it. The building eventually became Marshall Middle School and was renovated into its current use: Marshall Apartments.

lish their first newspaper.

■ **May 2:** Horses give way to motor trucks at American Railway Express Co.

■ Porter B. Yates, president of Yates Machine, Beloit, bequeaths \$1.9 million to his only child, 15-year-old Florence. The inheritance equals about \$15.4 million in 1999 dollars. Yates also left several lots in Beloit to his chauffeur and stenographer.

■ **May 3:** Oscar E. Wixom, 31-year-old Janesville man, dies from “excessive drink.”

■ **May 5:** Chevrolet starts assembling trucks here.

■ Caloric Co. gets the material to produce 5,000 phonographs.

■ **May 8:** The old high school becomes the Tank Company Armory. The building will be razed in 1930 when a new armory is built on the site.

■ Helen Sutherland is chosen to head Janesville School Board.

■ **June 5:** The interurban train strikes a car at Yost Park—now Big Hill Park, just north of Beloit off Afton Road—and instantly kills Rudolph Haberle, 27, of Beloit. Two passengers, Dorothy Davenport, 27, Whitewater, and Viola Murray, 24, Beloit, later die from their injuries.

■ **June 12:** A team of horses runs down

and kills Archie McKinney, 31, Evansville, at Johnstown.

■ **June 22:** Auto Driveaway Co., a precursor to the latter-day vehicle-transportation company JATCO and 1999’s CCI, starts at the Chevy plant.

■ **June:** Softball, called “kittenball,” is introduced to the city by Henry Schoenig, a Gazette employee who learned of the game in Minneapolis. The Gazette incorrectly reports that the game was invented in Minneapolis; it actually started in Chicago. The paper is right, though, in its assessment: “From the manner in which it was received, it is here for a long stay.

A city league of six teams of the younger businessmen of the city was formed.

“The enjoyment of the game came from the fact that it could be played by anyone.” The Knights of Columbus win the first city league championship with 9-1 record.

■ Janesville also joins the newly formed Southern Wisconsin Home Talent League Baseball League.

■ **July 2:** Edward A. Carter, 66, dies from a fall from a haystack on a Johnstown farm.

■ **July 6:** Rock County’s long-underpaid rural teachers get bonuses totaling \$2,000.

■ **July 20:** William Castner finds a \$2,000

pearl while clamming in the Rock River.

■ **July 28:** Frank Luftensteiner, 25, a Janesville lineman, is electrocuted. Three days later, Roy Lee, a 30-year-old Evansville lineman, is electrocuted.

■ **Aug. 3:** A water carnival attracts big crowds to Janesville; 638 out-of-town autos are counted.

■ **Aug. 14:** Henry Traxler of Clarinda, Iowa, is chosen as Janesville’s first city manager after two other men turn down the job down. Traxler will be the city’s longest serving manager—28 years until 1951—and leads many efforts to improve and maintain the city.

■ **Sept. 16:** A 14-year-old Beloit boy, Bobby Gillespie, is killed at the fairgrounds when he is run down by a race car driven by J.R. Mattes of Milwaukee.

■ **Sept. 18:** Saxe’s Jeffris Theater—under construction where the vacant Park Place Cinema was on West Milwaukee Street in Janesville in 1999—collapses, killing city plumbing contractor Claude E. Cochrane. A coroner’s inquest, described as the “most exhaustive in recent years,” blames the state building code and inadequate inspections by the state and city for the accident.

■ **Sept. 19:** Janesville High forms an orchestra.



■ **Oct. 10:** Celebration marks the opening of the concrete road (Highway 14 today) between Janesville and Evansville.

■ **Dec. 12:** Mercy Hospital opens a children's ward, a gift from the local Kiwanis Club. It will treat 16 children by the end of the year.

■ **Sometime in 1923:** Train accidents, including those involving streetcars and the interurban, kill 12 Rock County residents during the year while auto accidents kill seven county residents.

■ Number of Janesville arrests jumps to 740, a pre-Prohibition number, and of those, 163 are for liquor law violations. The Gazette and Chief Charles Newman attribute the increase in arrests to increased police activity, not greater disregard for the law, meaning more investigations are turning up crimes that previously were undetected. Their reasoning seems to contradict their earlier statements that Prohibition is an "unqualified success."

■ Mercy Hospital treats 1,500 patients and performs 973 operations.

■ Janesville's combined GM operations—Fisher Body and Chevrolet—turn out 45,800 automobiles for the year, employ 1,500 people and pay \$1.75 million in wages.

## 1924

■ **Jan. 1:** Rock County Training School for Teachers changes its name to Rock County Rural Normal School.

■ **Jan. 20:** Janesville prohibits smoking in streetcars.

Rock County Board again refuses to clear snow from highways.

■ **Jan. 26:** Hough Shade, today's HUF-COR, opens an office in Chicago.

■ The public chips in to raise money to clear snow from the main road between Janesville and Beloit (Highway 51).

■ **April 8:** Janesville City Council demands improvements in the streetcars and considers a proposal to switch to buses.

■ **April 15:** Work starts on Riverside Golf Course, the city's first public links. Six temporary holes are built for use in 1924, and 4,500 rounds are played. Janesville also builds nine greens for play in 1925. Over the course of the golf season, four players will record holes in one: F.H. Jackman at the Harlem Country Club in Rockford, Ill., and N.L. Carle, E.P. Wilcox and caddy Russell "Pete" Johnson at Janesville Country Club.

■ **April 16:** Janesville Electric Co. merges with six other electric companies to form Wisconsin Power & Light (Alliant Energy). The company initially serves 50,000 customers in 151 communities in 17 counties in central and southern Wisconsin.

■ **May 9:** Work resumes on what will be

## Traxler takes the politics out of city government

Janesville's first city manager also was the community's longest-serving chief administrator.

Henry Traxler was not the first man picked for the job—two others declined the post—but after he was chosen in August 1923 and assumed the job the next month, he held the job until 1951.

He is credited with bringing open, professional management to a city whose previous politics were not only partisan but which also revolved around individual wards and aldermen.

Born in Milwaukee in 1889, Traxler earned a degree in civil engineering from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. After graduation in 1910, he worked for the Los Angeles County Highway Commission and as a partner in a firm specializing in engineering public works in Centerville, Iowa.

In 1918, Traxler took his first—and only other—city manager's job in Clarinda, Iowa.

In its annual retrospective edition for 1924, the Gazette wrote:

"The city manager plan of government can be said to have proved a banner success in Janesville. Momentous things have been accomplished; the people have been given better service; efficiency has been outstanding in every function of government, and the greatest return has been obtained from every dollar of tax money expended."

Taxes are always an issue with government, and some of Traxler's chief accomplishments, the article noted, were:



Henry Traxler

"The tax rate and the amount of money raised by taxation has decreased despite a decline in the assessed valuation.

"Two fiscal years have ended with a surplus in the treasury. ...

"Better service has been given the public.

"No new general city bonds have been issued during the present administration. Everything has been paid for in cash."

Paying cash for everything would not last, of course, but Traxler also oversaw the complete change of the street department from horse-drawn wagons to trucks, cars and tractor graders.

He started the cleaning of all city streets, not just the downtown, at half the cost of just cleaning the central city.

Under Traxler's direction, the fire department was centralized and completely mechanized, and the police department added enough squad cars so that the entire city, not just the downtown business district, was patrolled regularly.

Traxler oversaw needed extensions to the sewerage system and the accelerated paving of city streets. He instituted a system of buying gasoline, oil and other materials in bulk to save money, and he brought modern bookkeeping to city government.

It is fitting that Traxler Park—Goose Island at the time—is now named after him because Traxler was at the city's helm when many of its most significant parks were acquired—either by purchase or donation—and developed: Riverside, Palmer, Jeffris, Monterey, Lions Beach and Goose Island.

Saxe's Jeffris Theater, the same construction site where plumber Claude Cochrane was killed.

■ **Rock County** votes to hire its first "speed cop" to enforce traffic laws.

■ **May 19:** Janesville enacts its first code for electrical wiring. In June, the city will create the office of electrical inspector.

■ **May 21:** Rock County ranks eighth in the state for number of Prohibition fines levied.

■ **May 22:** Janesville starts crusade against dumping trash.

■ **July 18:** In response to public petitions, Janesville retains its streetcars.

■ **July 22:** "William Campbell, 80, Beloit, colored, killed when struck by a car driven

by Ivan Koch, Beloit, on the Beloit Road." Koch is convicted of manslaughter in the death and sentenced to a year in prison, Rock County's first prison sentence for vehicular manslaughter. On Aug. 5, Janesville truck driver George Hiller will hit and kill 13-year-old Norman Wright of Janesville, and a manslaughter charge is filed. But Hiller is not convicted in what is eventually ruled an accident.

■ **Sept. 2:** Labor Day festivities draw 3,000 to Riverside Park.

■ Anna Anderson of Janesville dies of poisoning from drinking bad moonshine liquor.

■ **Sept. 23:** Despite many years of fear that lifting tariffs would kill the local sugar beet



business, Rock County Sugar Co. is refining 170,000 pounds of sugar per day and soon will add equipment to keep up with demand. The company produces 7 million pounds of sugar in 1924.

■ **James O'Brien**, 30, Janesville, is killed at Riverside Park when his skull is crushed by a flying stump blown out by dynamite.

■ **Oct. 31:** Janesville paints 435 fire hydrants yellow; the city has been adding hydrants all year.

■ **Nov. 8:** City buys plows for snow removal.

■ **Nov. 16:** Janesville firemen start preparing their own meals at stations.

■ **Nov. 17:** William Campbell, the 55-year-old chairman of the Union Township Farm Bureau, drowns in a water tank on his farm.

■ Rock County won't plow rural concrete roads, but it does erect its first snow fence to try to prevent drifting on Highway 26.

■ **Dec. 29:** A severe cold snap, with lows ranging from minus 18 to 28 below zero, freezes the Rock River, and the annual ice harvest begins at its earliest date in years.

■ **Sometime in 1924:** More than 260 students play in school bands: uniform, girls, junior high, grade school and beginners, "the last playing that song which has become so well-known to the parents of Janesville, 'The Mamma Song.'"

Two and a half years ago, few homes were favored with the throes of the beginner on saxophone or snare drum, but today there is scarcely a residence street in the city that could not turn out a band of its own with almost full instrumentation."

■ Janesville Public Library circulation hits 91,264 for the year, up 10,155 from 1923.

■ Janesville native Joe Cantillon becomes assistant business manager for the Chicago White Sox.

■ M.P. Mouat wins epee competition at Yale University and fences well in national competition.

■ "Kenneth Bick (who will become principal of Janesville High School) displays good shooting eye for (University of) Wisconsin basketball, attracts attention of Coach Meanwell, but lightness keeps him off squad."

■ Milton completes its sewerage system and buys a motorized fire truck.

■ With 17 parks and a municipal golf course, Janesville is on its way to becoming "Wisconsin's Park Place."

■ The city paves more than nine miles of streets and alleys, and the Janesville Fire Department becomes fully motorized.

■ Automobiles kill nine Rock County residents, while train accidents kill three people.

## 1925

■ **Jan. 22:** Charles Patterson, Beloit, dies from what a coroner's inquest rules to be probable poisoning from bad alcohol.

■ **Jan. 24:** Fisher Body, the car body-building operation at the Janesville General Motors plant, starts increasing its work force, which soon reaches 400.

■ **Jan. 26:** Fire destroys the Whitewater Hospital for a loss of \$20,000, but no deaths are reported.

■ **Jan. 27:** The Janesville YWCA names seven directors and adopts a budget of \$9,809, for which funds must be raised.

■ **Jan. 29:** City school students are vaccinated to prevent an outbreak of smallpox. Janesville public school enrollment stands at 2,896.

■ **Feb. 4:** The Interurban Hotel on South Franklin Street is purchased for \$30,000 as the new site for the YMCA. The hotel is razed, and the site is where the Y stands today.

■ **Feb. 10:** The Rev. H.C. Hengel of Madison speaks in Janesville and urges religious education in public schools.

■ **Feb. 11:** Intercity bus lines start serving Janesville.

■ **Feb. 14:** A Valentine's gift for Janesville that will last for decades: The city orders 300 trees to plant in Riverside Park.

■ Fire in the main barn at the Rock County Fairgrounds kills seven race horses and does \$46,000 damage.

■ **Feb. 28:** City Council President William McCue is chosen to represent Janesville at the inauguration of President Calvin Coolidge. At this time, presidential inaugurations are conducted on March 4 instead of in the January after the election.

■ **March 2:** The Janesville Fire Department loses its first member to an on-the-job fatality. Edward Lichtfus, 39, is killed when he falls from the roof of the E.J. Welch home while fighting a fire. Firemen from 10 cities will attend his funeral.

■ **March 7:** "Tommy Koops, colored, Beloit, stabbed by Eugene Elliott at Buggs garage. Elliott not held." Koops, a porter at a Beloit hotel, drives into the garage and demands immediate service, but Elliott, "a native southerner," does not leave the car on which he's working. Koops, purportedly intoxicated, challenges Elliott and grabs him around the waist from behind.

Elliott has a knife in his hand and swings backward, stabbing Koops in the back. Elliott claims self-defense and is not arrested. Koops' wife contends she will get a warrant for the garageman's arrest but apparently does not. Koops' race is highlighted in two headlines and

referred to repeatedly throughout the Gazette's story, another reflection of the prejudiced attitudes of the time.

■ **March 17:** F.R. King, member of the Wisconsin Board of Health, talks to members of the local Izaak Walton League about the worsening problem of waterway pollution.

■ **March 19:** The Rock County Board selects the county's first female clerk, Sylvia Fero, who has served as deputy county clerk.

■ **March 23:** Ground is broken for a Northern Conveyor plant in Janesville on West State Street; it will employ about 40 people.

■ **March 28:** Janesville police get a new motorcycle for patrol work.

■ **March 30:** W.E. Gower and Mrs. E.E. Baile are killed when a train slams into Gower's taxi at the Five Points intersection in Janesville. A coroner's jury rules the railroads were negligent in the accident.

■ **April 1:** No April Fool's joke: The state's first tax on gasoline—2 cents a gallon—goes into effect.

■ **April 13:** A new ordinance allows Janesville City Hall to close on Saturday afternoons half of the year.

■ **April 20:** "Wine released from jail for use at hospital disappears en route."

■ **April 22:** County supervisors issue a fruitless call for residents to stop bootlegging liquor.

■ **May 1:** Thomas Coras shoots and kills Edith Wilkins, then commits suicide. Both are Janesville residents.

■ **May 4:** Fire in the enamel baking oven at the Chevrolet plant causes \$5,000 damage.

■ **May 15:** Students from the Wisconsin School for the Blind take three firsts in state music competition, including Jessie Vineer's top honors for violin.

■ **May 27:** Janesville Parent-Teacher associations sponsor the city's first clinic for pre-school children.

■ **May 29:** The city hauls 700 loads of rubbish during cleanup week.

■ **June 9:** En route from Minneapolis to Washington, D.C., President Coolidge waves greetings to Janesville from his private rail car.

■ Diplomas are awarded to 117 Janesville High graduates. Twenty-four graduate from St. Patrick's, a Catholic elementary school.

■ **July 4:** A tragic Independence Day in Beloit as 7-year-old Burdine Wakeman is burned to death while playing with fireworks.

■ **July 21:** Frank Kuckan of Beloit dies from injuries suffered while working at Fairbanks-Morse.

■ **July 26:** Janesville—and most of the Midwest—listens to its high school band, but this time the music is carried over the airwaves by Chicago radio station WGN. Owned by the



Chicago Tribune, the radio station's call letters stand for the Trib's self-given appellation, "World's Greatest Newspaper."

■ **Aug. 17:** Janesville cops declare war on "motor sheiks" who have become brazen in their attempts to flirt with girl pedestrians. Their name comes from the movie, "The Sheik," starring silent-film heartthrob Rudolph Valentino. "What these sheiks really need is a good beating with a billy-club," the desk sergeant says. "A few of these sleek haired lads may have a chance to explain their remarks to the judge—and we all hope they get the rock pile."

■ **Sept. 22:** Student nurses go on strike over conditions at Mercy Hospital. They contend that overwork has resulted in several nervous breakdowns.

■ **Oct. 20:** St. Paul Railroad tests an electric locomotive and coach in Janesville.

■ **Oct. 25:** WIBJ, a "Gazette-Jeffris radio station," starts broadcasting. The AM station predates WCLO, which will go on the air in August 1930.

■ **Oct. 28:** Janesville Police Department cuts officers' work day from 12 to 11 hours.

■ **Nov. 3:** Alfred Sarson, first person arrested for intoxicated motorcycle driving in Rock County, is fined \$100.

■ **Nov. 8:** The U.S. Marine Corps Band plays a benefit concert in Janesville to raise \$900 for the high school band.

■ **Nov. 27:** City Ice Co.'s team of horses is spooked and runs wild through Janesville streets, but no one is hurt.

■ **Dec. 2:** The Janesville Chamber of Commerce and American Legion combine to buy Christmas trees to line business streets.

■ **Dec. 13:** The up-and-down cycles of the auto industry again hit Janesville. Fisher Body, which added workers in the beginning of the year, starts a 10-day layoff.

■ **Dec. 19:** City selects Dorothea Oestrich as "city social welfare worker," first mention in the Gazette of a government social worker. She will start work Jan. 2, 1926, and deal with the same types of problems—mental illness, economic problems, domestic difficulties—as social workers today.

■ **Dec. 21:** City council OKs memorial plaques to honor war veterans at the Corn Exchange, northeast corner of West Milwaukee and North Franklin streets.

■ **Sometime in 1925:** Janesville paves another 5.82 miles of streets for a total of 18.86 miles.

■ Ten people die in auto accidents, two of which involved collisions with trains, and trains strike and kill two pedestrians.

■ Diphtheria cases drop to three in Janesville, a four-year low after averaging 23 a

year for three years, but a mumps outbreak afflicts 75 in the city after a three-year annual average of nine cases.

■ Police arrest two people for being "dope fiends."

■ Four 4-H clubs—one each in Janesville, Milton, Evansville and Orfordville—organize under the leadership of Wesley Wiseman, Leon Dunwiddie, Loyd Porter and Richard Egan.

■ Beloit High School wins the state basketball championship for the first time in the school's history.

■ More than 500 people shoot 13,276 rounds of golf at Riverside Golf Course.

■ Janesville wins the Southern Wisconsin Home Talent Baseball pennant for the second consecutive year.

■ Townsend Tractor, a Janesville farm implement manufacturer that started at South Franklin Street and Rockport Road in 1914, goes out of business.

■ Women's dresses are just below knee-length with straight or A-line waists. A year-end clearance sale advertises silk and wool dresses for \$12.50. Hosiery is silk, wool or chiffon, and the popular hairstyle is the short bob. Men's suits typically feature three-button jackets with wide lapels and baggy, cuffed trousers.

## 1926

■ **Jan. 4:** Janesville annexes northernmost section of Riverside Park.

■ **Jan. 7:** Movies in Janesville feature Gloria Swanson starring in "Stage Struck" at the Saxe's Jeffris Theater and Douglas Fairbanks Sr. in "Don Q, Son of Zorro" at the Beverly.

■ **Jan. 9:** "La Verne Huschka, 5, scalped in coasting (sledding) accident."

■ **Jan. 11:** Raids in Edgerton result in arrest of eight people as residents of "disorderly houses"—houses of prostitution.

■ **Jan. 14:** Rock County tries out a new snowplow.

■ **Jan. 21:** County board rejects a pension plan for its elderly employees.

■ **Feb. 9:** Miss Marion Hamlen, Janesville, accepts the post of national executive secretary of the YWCA for Latvia.

■ **Feb. 11:** Clifford Pearsall breaks a leg in an accident at the Chevy plant.

■ **Feb. 27:** Gambling punchboards again are ordered removed from Janesville stores.

■ **March 11:** Janesville Country Club votes to spend \$12,000 to expand the golf course to 18 holes.

■ **March 13:** The receiver for the now-bankrupt Rockford & Madison Interurban line abandons bus service between Rockford, Ill., and Janesville as the receiver concentrates on interurban train service. But the Mil-

waukee Road announces that its new Milwaukee-to-Kansas City train will stop regularly in Janesville.

■ **March 20:** Electric rail crossing signals are installed at Janesville's Five Points at a cost of \$6,000.

■ **March 23:** County approves rock pile at the county farm for prisoners to work on.

■ **March 25:** 242 more trees ordered for Riverside Park.

■ **April 1:** Chevrolet sets production quota of 380 cars a day, 10,000 a month, for Janesville operation.

■ **April 5:** Wisconsin Power & Light buys Janesville's New Gas Light Co.

■ **April 6:** Ardie Yahnke, Johnstown, wins first prize in a fiddlers' contest.

■ **April 8:** Two roadhouses are padlocked for a year because of repeated liquor violations. Four days later, Louis Knipp of Janesville voluntarily closes his soft-drink establishment after police seize liquor in a raid. The incidents are just some of many Prohibition violations throughout Rock County and throughout the year. Only two months go by without at least one Prohibition arrest. Penalties range from \$100 to \$500 fines and six months in jail to civil action to close establishments.

■ **April 19:** Margaret Woods is awarded \$25,000 in war reparations and \$3,500 interest because her husband, Dr. E.F. Woods, drowned when a German U-boat sunk the unarmed liner Arabic in 1915. Woods had volunteered to work in field hospitals two years before the United States entered World War I. How long Mrs. Woods must wait for payment is a mystery.

■ **April 22:** Rock County Board OKs construction of Highway 59 from Milton Junction to the Walworth County line.

■ **April 27:** Olaf Hanson, 25, is killed in a cave-in at Tractor City Sand & Gravel pit.

■ **April 29:** Chevrolet boosts the Janesville plant's daily production quota to 435. The daily quota fluctuates for several months, hitting a high of 466 for September and low of 386 in November.

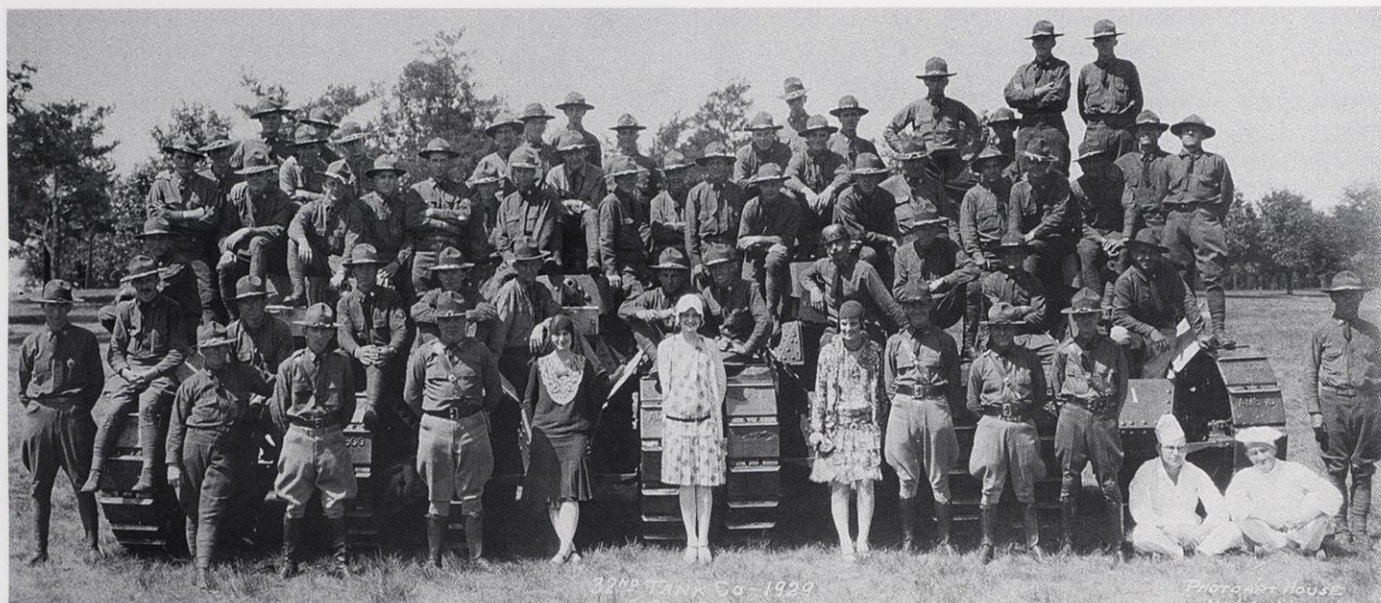
■ **May 5:** Though the county board favors one fair for the entire county, the stockholders of the Evansville fair refuse to sell their shares to Janesville folks, so the county will continue to have two annual fairs—in Janesville and Evansville.

■ **May 15:** The new Janesville High is judged eighth best in the country, and St. Patrick's is deemed best elementary school in the city.

■ **May 29:** Sale of 10 lots promises to develop Janesville's Garfield Street.

■ **Spring:** Janesville High baseball team loses only one game—to Racine—but avenges the loss. For the season, the team hits .353, fields .930 and scores 109 runs to the oppo-





How or why these three flappers—modern young women of the 1920s—got into Camp Douglas to visit members of the 32nd Tank Company of Janesville, the National Guard's first tank company, is unknown, but the tankers don't seem to mind their company. The military unit eventually will be known as Company A, 192nd Tank Battalion, and its bravery and suffering in World War II will be legendary. The flappers exemplify the style of the times: short hair, hats modeled on bathing caps, knee-length dropped-waist dresses and the audacity to venture onto a military base.

sition's 27.

■ **June 2:** Boy Scouts among the student body prevent a panic at the Wisconsin School for the Blind when a fire breaks out, burning the garage and five cars.

■ **June 10:** Lightning strikes a tree at the new nine-hole Riverside Golf Course and stuns the 13 men who gathered under it for protection from the storm.

■ **June 15:** Work starts on the \$100,000 Franklin Gardens auditorium on North Franklin Street. The building, which serves as a performance and dance hall, sports arena and eventually as a bowling alley, will stand until the fall of 1989.

■ **June 19:** Janesville's first stop-and-go traffic lights start operating at Main and Milwaukee streets. Milwaukee gets the right-of-way for 40 seconds; Main for 20 seconds.

■ **June 20:** The Milwaukee Road adds a train to Sioux Falls, S.D., with a stop here.

■ **June 22:** Janesville Vocational School, precursor to today's Blackhawk Technical College, moves into the old high school building (no longer standing) on South High Street.

■ **June 23:** Janesville's 32nd Tank Company moves into its new home, the old Lincoln School (no longer standing), which neighbors the vocational school on South High.

■ **July 1:** In a sign of things to come, Janesville is linked to Chicago and Madison by bus as well as train as commercial bus service starts. Passenger rail service eventually will give way to the highway with its cars and buses.

■ **July 7:** Rock County Sheriff Charles Burtis is removed from office for official misconduct, including intoxication.

■ **July 12:** First apparent water-skiing mishap in Janesville: "Miss Helen Rich brought to Mercy Hospital with left leg broken from water coasting accident."

■ **July 14:** More signs of civic progress: "Many detours in city because of paving."

■ **Rock County cracks down on slot machines; \$100 fine for possession.**

■ **July 18:** "Frank Laskowske wounds Oscar Bumgarner, a neighbor, and then dashes into his house and commits suicide in a fit of insanity."

■ **Aug. 3:** Janesville council makes it illegal to violate stop signs.

■ **Aug. 7:** First water hazard is constructed at Janesville Country Club—as if golf isn't tough enough.

■ **Aug. 17:** An ingenious scheme backfires on drinker Robert Cone. He is arrested for posing as a federal officer searching cars for alcohol.

■ **Aug. 20:** John Peterson of Johnstown is shot to death by Ralph E. Carter, who is sentenced to five to seven years in prison for manslaughter.

■ **Sept. 4:** Dr. Charles W. Blanchard, 62, 816 Sherman, Janesville, receives four to six years in prison after he pleads guilty to two counts of second-degree manslaughter resulting from the death of a 22-year-old Beloit woman and her unborn child after an abortion Blanch-

ard performed in a Janesville home. The woman paid \$150 for the "illegal operation."

When Blanchard, who was similarly charged in 1922, realized something was wrong, he called another physician, who ordered the woman taken immediately to Mercy Hospital. A second surgery was unable to save her life.

■ **Sept. 9:** Junior Boy Scout movement—precursor of Cub Scouts—starts.

■ **Sept. 13:** 700 attend dedication of new YMCA.

■ **Sept. 20:** William H. Appleby, former Rock County sheriff and Janesville police chief, is shot to death by a railroad engineer seeking a loan at Appleby's home on his retirement fruit farm near Mount Airy, Ga. The killer is sentenced to death by electrocution.

■ **Sept. 21:** An automobile census shows that every sixth Janesville resident owns a car, a 437 percent increase since 1918.

■ **Sept. 24:** Thousands jam the streets in downtown Janesville to hear telegraphed updates on the Jack Dempsey-Gene Tunney heavyweight championship fight "megaphoned" by leather-lunged men. Dempsey has been champ since 1919, but Tunney wins the bout. A rematch is in the works.

■ **Oct. 25:** City council regulates the keeping of livestock and poultry within city limits.

■ **Nov. 10:** The Rock County Board begins a five-day session in which it approves the first county expenditure—\$6,000—for snowplowing and OKs a \$200,000 bond issue for a tuberculosis sanatorium, the precursor to



today's county health center.

■ **Nov. 29:** A new General Motors plan extends \$1,000 life insurance to each employee.

■ Carl H. Kueck, 78, dies because of injuries suffered in an accident at Janesville Sand & Gravel.

■ **Dec. 4:** Thousands of kids enthusiastically greet Santa Claus during Janesville's first Christmas parade and pageant.

■ **Dec. 6:** Remodeling of Whaley-Overton Funeral Home is completed.

■ **Dec. 8:** Rock County crews plow roads for first time.

■ **Dec. 9:** J.P. Cullen & Son wins a \$550,000 contract on the University of Wisconsin campus in Madison.

■ **Dec. 11:** Fisher Body, which has been expanding its facility at the GM plant, announces it will add 400 workers after the first of the year.

■ **Dec. 23:** Railroad shop workers get a 3-cent-an-hour raise to 75 cents an hour.

■ **Sometime in 1926:** Concrete replaces brick paving on eight blocks of Janesville's Main and Milwaukee streets.

■ Flora Macloon donates a lot on South Jackson Street to the Janesville Art League for a gallery; the gallery still operates at 108 S. Jackson.

■ Milton installs street lights on Main Street.

■ Janesville has 85 factories turning out \$50 million in goods annually

■ Rock County records 150 convictions out of 191 Prohibition cases with fines totaling \$26,507 and an aggregate sentence of 251 months. Janesville's arrests again are back to pre-Prohibition levels, 784, with 169 for intoxication, 30 for drunken driving, four for liquor sales and two for alcohol transportation.

■ Eleven county residents die in car accident while four perish in rail mishaps.

■ Year-end prices for new Chevrolets range from \$510 to \$735.

## 1927

■ **Jan. 10:** "Janesville's Hero," a movie with an entirely local cast, filmed in the city and produced under the auspices of the Gazette, opens at the Beverly Theater. The two-reel comedy features a harried husband, Mr. Henpeck; Baby Ethel, a pretty visitor who turns his head, and the jealous wife in hot pursuit around the city. In another sign that nothing really changes: "Especially vivid is the scene of the auto chase in which both cars are smashed."

■ **Jan. 17:** Bell Telephone adds nine operators to handle increase in calls through the Janesville exchange.

■ **Jan. 18:** Raw milk is blamed for the spread of scarlet fever in Janesville. Through-

out the year, 168 people will be afflicted by the painful disease. Janesville averaged 28 cases a year for the three previous years, leading officials to describe the '27 outbreak as an "epidemic."

■ **Jan. 25:** WP&L raises the cost of lighting Janesville streets by 33 percent for an annual bill of \$38,000.

■ **Feb. 1:** Janesville sets a 90-minute parking limit on some streets.

■ **Feb. 4:** A.L. Larson, Janesville, breaks his leg while on the job for Security Sand and Gravel on Black Bridge Road.

■ **Feb. 11:** Mr. and Mrs. George S. Parker donate \$10,000 to the Janesville Art League for its new gallery. The Parkers hinge their donation on a matching gift, which is raised by the Janesville Federation of Women, \$6,500, and Art League, \$3,500.

■ **Feb. 14:** Herman Risch, Janesville, injures his hand in a corn shredder; he dies 15 days later of tetanus.

■ **Feb. 27:** The Gazette runs a feature story on Beulah Wolfram of Clinton because she is the "only lady barber in southern Wisconsin." Miss Wolfram cuts men's, women's and children's hair in Frank McLaughlin's Clinton barber shop and also captains the Clinton Aces women's basketball team.

■ **March 7:** S.S. Kresge signs a 30-year lease on a store at West Milwaukee and South River streets. The remodeled building was home to Rock River Charter School, the Janesville School District's alternative high school in 1999.

■ **March 18:** Melvin N. Clausen, 35, Stoughton, is shot to death by Janesville police officer John Butters when Clausen fails to stop on Butters' command. With his face blackened and initially armed with a rifle, Clausen is prowling near the railroad tracks, and Butters finds him in a backyard. Clausen runs, ignoring Butters' orders to stop and his warning shot.

As they run down North Academy Street, the patrolman shoots Clausen in the back. But he ducks around a corner and eludes police for 1½ hours. He dies without explaining his actions. Clausen's only word in the last hours of his life is "nothing" when the officer who finds him lying on ground asks what is wrong.

■ **April 1:** Janesville's first comprehensive traffic code goes into effect at midnight, and 40 arrests are made by noon. "Practically every provision of the new ordinances was violated."

■ **April 4:** Some 120 violators of the new traffic laws get off with a stern lecture from Judge Harry L. Maxfield.

■ **April 5:** Local GM plants boost their employment to a new high, 2,100 men and a few women among the office staff.

■ **April 13:** Raymond Walker knocks down a 5-year-old boy with his car while speeding to Mercy Hospital with another boy whom he had struck with his car at Garfield School. Both boys are badly hurt; Walker fined \$50 for speeding.

■ **April 14:** Inspectors report 1,100 fire hazards in the city.

■ **April 23:** "With his clothes ablaze, George E. Buchholz, 638 Harding St., was forced to jump into the river ... to save his life while his cottage was destroyed by fire."

■ **May 25:** St. Paul's Lutheran School breaks ground on a \$70,000 school at 164 S. Academy; enrollment at 105. The still-standing building eventually becomes offices for Blackhawk Credit Union and was in the process of being renovated into a private residence in 1999.

■ **June 11:** L.R. Creutz named as successor to Janesville School Superintendent Frank O. Holt, who has been selected registrar for the University of Wisconsin.

■ **June 18:** Janesville Floral buys two buildings on South Main Street that it will raze for a new store. Janesville Floral, which started in 1893, continued in business in 1999 at 1021 Mineral Point. Frankie's on Main Pizzeria is in part of the 1927 building.

■ **June 21:** P.W. Ryan and Sons gets the contract to grade Highway 59 from Milton to the Walworth County line. The company today is Ryan Inc., still involved in the earth-moving business.

■ **June 28:** Janesville playgrounds open for the summer, for the first time under city, rather than school district, control.

■ **July 1:** Footville contractors, the Kennedy Brothers, win a contract to gravel 1.9 miles of road in Riverside Park. Brothers William and Max Kennedy started the paving company that in 1999 was Rock Road Cos., owned and operated by the third generation of Kennedys in the paving industry.

■ **Aug. 31:** 39-year-old Elizabeth May Osborn, Beloit, dies from alcoholic poisoning from bad homemade liquor.

■ **Sept. 1:** Peter Garvin's team of horses gets away from him, and the 56-year-old Harmony farmer is crushed to death by the corn binder the team is pulling.

■ **Sept. 22:** Crowds jam the corner of Milwaukee and Bluff (Parker Drive) streets by the Gazette building to hear updates on the Gene Tunney-Jack Dempsey rematch. Tunney successfully defends the heavyweight boxing title because of the notorious "long count." The fight is one of the first under a new rule requiring a boxer who has knocked down his opponent to retreat to a neutral corner. Dempsey, trying to regain his championship, floors



## Crime turns violent during the decade

**T**he movie image of gangsters and cops trading machine-gun fire from vintage cars is a common representation of the Roaring '20s.

Prohibition and the profit inherent in contraband alcohol spawned such raw and open violence. While Janesville was spared such scenes, the decade here and in Rock County was the most violent of the century's first three.

Four murders—one in Clinton—killed Janesville people, and in two of the cases, the slayers committed suicide. Two people attempted murders, then committed suicide, and a Janesville man stabbed a Beloit man in a fight here but was cleared when he claimed self-defense.

Moreover, Janesville police and a city man acting as a Prohibition agent shot four men—three here and one in South Beloit, Ill. Three of the victims died from their wounds.

Alcohol, the chief lubricant of downtown Janesville in the century's first 20 years but illegal in the '20s, was at the root of at least three of the police shootings.

The other shooting—a homicide when Officer John Butters shot and killed Melvin Clausen on March 18, 1927—might have involved alcohol. But in the hours it took Clausen to die after he was shot by Butters, Clausen, a Stoughton resident, did not reveal why he was prowling in Janesville with a blackened face and a .22-caliber rifle.

Ignoring Butters' order to stop, Clausen ran. Butters shot Clausen in the back though he was unarmed at the time of the shooting—he had stashed the rifle—and made no threat to Butters.

On Nov. 1, 1928, Joe Wiedell of 1308 Mole also ran from city police—officer Walter Freese who had a warrant to arrest Wiedell because of his drunken assault on his wife. Freese fired three warning shots into the ground before he plugged Wiedell in the left leg.

Wiedell survived.

"It is a matter of home brew from beginning to end," Police Chief Charles Newman declared.

Being and driving drunk are what brought 32-year-old James Brennan, 313 N. High, into repeated contact with Patrolman James Ward on Sept. 5, 1928. Brennan resisted arrest, swung at the officer and paid with his life.

The first time they met that afternoon, Ward warned the obviously intoxicated Brennan to go home or be arrested. Brennan muttered and walked off.

Later, Ward, on foot patrol, saw Brennan driving drunk, and the officer went to get a patrol car to apprehend Brennan. At the coroner's inquest, a witness testified that Brennan nearly ran him down while driving drunk.

Witnesses described Brennan as a mean and dangerous drunk who had earlier that day accosted several residents to demand money—50 cents to \$1.50—from them.

"I had known Jim for some time," Chief Newman said at the hearing. "He was a good sort while he was sober, but when he was drunk, he was dangerous. I warned all the police officers to be on guard while he was drunk."

The third time Ward encountered Brennan, both were back on foot. Though Brennan was much bigger than Ward, the officer tried singlehandedly to arrest Brennan.

Ward tried to both pull and push Brennan along Wall Street toward the police station.

"You can't make me go. I can lick the whole police department," Ward testified that Brennan said.

Brennan swung at Ward several times. Backing away, Ward drew his gun, held it at his waist and told Brennan again he was under arrest. "Go ahead and shoot," Brennan challenged as he stepped toward the cop.

Ward fired once from the hip, and the slug caught Brennan just below the left eye. He died the next morning. The coroner's inquest cleared Ward, who expressed regret: "There was nothing else for me to do."

Prohibition directly caused the third homicide.

John Beyer Jr., 21, a Janesville resident, was sentenced to serve one to 14 years in an Illinois prison for manslaughter for killing unarmed bootlegger William Petroff in South Beloit.

Beyer was a so-called "liquor sleuth," a free-lancer operating undercover on both sides of the state line with an apparently bogus Wisconsin badge. He purportedly received a 20 percent bounty on any Illinois fines his investigations netted, but after the killing, lawmen disavowed him, maintaining he had not been deputized.

Beyer carried a concealed .32-caliber automatic when he entered the "soft drink parlor" in Petroff's home on Nov. 15, 1927, and bought two drinks of hard liquor from John Ray, who was acting as bartender. Beyer told authorities that when he bent to pick up a dropped dime, Petroff spied Beyer's badge and hand on his gun.

Beyer gave different versions of what happened next.

In one, he said that when Petroff attempted to deflect the gun or knock the glasses from his hand to do away with the evidence, the gun discharged, possibly struck first by Petroff's arm.

In court, he testified that he "squeezed the gun too tight" and it went off when Petroff lunged at him.

Beyer took Ray into custody and left Petroff bleeding on the floor, ignoring the wounded man's plea: "I'm dying. Get a doctor." When police arrived, Petroff said: "Don't ask me too many questions. I'm bad hurt, and I know I'm going to die. Good-bye."

The 36-year-old, World War I veteran, a native of Bulgaria, died in a Beloit hospital the next morning.

The defense tried to stack the jury with "drys," people favoring Prohibition, but Ray disputed Beyer's assertion that Petroff tried to knock away the drinks or the gun. Ray also testified that Beyer fired just after Ray put two glasses of white liquor on the bar.

Though the prosecution and defense disputed the facts of the case, one of the defense attorney's assertions cannot be disputed: "This case is a direct outgrowth of liquor traffic."

And illegal liquor trafficking was a direct outgrowth of Prohibition.

Tunney, but the knockout count does not start for several seconds because Dempsey persists in hovering over Tunney, who recovers to win the bout.

■ **Oct. 3:** Joseph Lustig Jr. is named city engineer. He eventually will serve two acting terms as city manager and be selected as full city manager in 1957, a job he will hold for 10 years.

■ **Oct. 10:** Tourist R.J. Davis of Phoenix, Ariz., stops on a road between Janesville and Beloit to help "two pretty girls," but instead he is robbed of his cash and car.

■ **Oct. 13:** A large crowd greets 12 airplanes on an American Legion flying tour of the country.

■ **Oct. 17:** Marvin Korber, stick-up artist and escaped federal convict, has his time on the

lam cut short when he is found in a Janesville rail yard with both feet cut off by a train. He winds up back in Leavenworth Prison.

■ **Nov. 16:** William Petroff, 34, South Beloit, Ill., is shot to death in a liquor raid there by John Beyer Jr., who is held on murder charges.

■ **Dec. 15:** Excavation begins for Janesville's enclosed, concrete reservoir. The 8-



million-gallon reservoir, west and south of Oak Hill Cemetery, still serves the city today.

■ **Dec. 28:** In a jealous rage, Merle Stamper, 35, Janesville, kills his wife, Ruth, 28, by slashing her throat with a razor and kills himself by jumping into the Rock River. In keeping with its practice of the time, the Gazette notes that the Janesville couple are "colored" and often refers to Stamper, a World War I veteran who was "severely gassed," as "the negro."

■ Dr. Arthur J. Knilans, a Janesville veterinarian, urges the city council to require that all dogs be inoculated against rabies before they may be licensed.

■ **Dec. 29:** A disaster of major proportions is averted when 300 people, trapped in smoke-filled halls, fight their way to safety when fire breaks out in McLellan Stores, 23-25 W. Milwaukee, Janesville. Smoke overcomes several people, including five firemen, but no one dies.

■ **Dec. 30:** WP&L announces it will discontinue direct electrical current to Janesville in favor of alternating current.

■ **Dec. 31:** Another death from alcoholic poisoning: Thomas Burchett, 30, Janesville.

■ **Sometime in 1927:** Two Janesville sisters, Jean and Catherine Buchanan, are set up with a \$150,000 trust fund by their uncle, Lord Wollavinton of England.

■ Edgerton High wins the Rock River Valley football championship with an undefeated season.

■ Janesville again wins the Home Talent League baseball championship of southern Wisconsin.

■ Janesville Country Club opens the first nine holes of its new 18-hole course with the second nine to be opened in 1928.

■ Janesville Public Library sets a record for circulation, 111,697 books.

■ Highway 51 is paved with concrete between Edgerton and Stoughton.

■ Rock County Circuit Court has its lightest criminal case load ever: one Prohibition case against Tony Evanoff of Beloit on a charge of possessing and transporting alcohol. About 100 liquor law violations are handled civilly because the authorities can shut businesses down and padlock buildings where bootlegging occurs for a year, which District Attorney George Geffs thinks is more effective than criminal prosecution. The numbers seem to back him up because the number of county liquor law violations drops by 100 during the year.

■ Janesville police set an arrest record of 1,115, of which 176 are alcohol-related and hundreds are traffic-related because of the new traffic code.

■ Automobiles kill 12 in the county; trains, two, and a new traffic killer emerges: One person dies in a motorcycle accident.

■ Junior police—who in the future will be called patrol boys and/or crossing guards—go on duty at Janesville schools.

■ Partners Harold Carlson and Francis Olson buy a Janesville greenhouse and rejuvenate the business as Fairview Plant Farm. The business continued in 1999 at essentially the same location, 2100 E. Milwaukee, as Fairview Florist, Patio & Garden Shop, owned by Carlson's son, Tom.

■ The Evansville Country Club buys 77 acres for its golf course, which will open in spring 1928.

## 1928

■ **Jan. 6:** Marine Capt. Victor F. Bleasdale of Janesville is active fighting Nicaraguan rebels in Central America. The leader of the rebels is Gen. Augusto Sandino, whose name will be adopted by the latter-day leftist Sandanistas of Nicaragua.

■ **Feb. 8:** Sheriff's deputies "swoop down on Beloit and South Beloit and arrest 15 liquor violators."

■ **Feb. 16:** W.F. Palmer, secretary-treasurer of Parker Pen, donates \$18,000 to the YMCA.

■ **Feb. 22:** The Janesville Lions Club votes to buy Goose Island and give it to the city as a park. The area now is Traxler Park.

■ **Feb. 24:** Howard Clitherto, 41, Janesville, advertising manager of Lewis Knitting, local underwear manufacturer, dies of burns in a fire that causes \$5,000 damage at the Lakota Club, 51 S. Jackson.

■ **March 19:** Janesville celebrates its 75th birthday as a city.

■ **March 26:** The Janesville Rotary Club decides to buy 15 acres, including Spaulding's Pond, as a camp for Janesville youth. Camp Rotamer continues today.

■ **March 29:** The first phone call linking Janesville with a foreign city: Kenneth Parker, Parker Pen vice president, calls his wife from London, England.

■ **March 31:** The Milwaukee Road runs its first gasoline-electric train from Madison to Beloit via Janesville.

■ **April 1:** The Janesville School Board votes to end bus service to city students.

■ **April 10:** H.W. Gossard Co. ends manufacture of women's corsets at 18 Court, Janesville, and moves equipment to Michigan.

■ **April 23:** One of the United States' most famous and beloved humorists, Will Rogers, performs at Franklin Gardens in Janesville.

■ **May 1:** In a sign of things that will keep coming, Janesville banks start charging a 50-

cent monthly service fees on checking accounts whose balances fall below \$100.

■ **May 18:** Betty Porter, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Porter, 446 N. Pearl, is chosen Miss Janesville in a beauty contest at the Jeffris Theater. Eleven days later, the 17-year-old lass is named Miss Wisconsin at the state beauty contest in Milwaukee.

■ **May 19:** The Boston Store, a new general store, opens at 214 W. Milwaukee.

■ Franklin Gardens, in operation for only two years, is adjudged bankrupt.

■ **June 2:** Peter A. Hammarlund, local contractor and carpenter, dies in a fall from a house under construction.

■ **June 14:** President Calvin Coolidge passes through Janesville on a train bound for Superior.

■ **June 16:** The Janesville Airport, under the control of the Kempton-Dudley Flying Service, is dedicated. The airfield is south of the city on Highway 51 where the Rock County Airport is now. Twenty planes of the American Legion tour land as part of the festivities.

Airplanes are relaying mail between Washington, D.C., and President Coolidge up north. The new Janesville airport serves as a refueling stop.

■ **June 18:** Carrie Jacobs Bond, composer of "I Love You Truly" and described as "beloved song writer" and "Janesville's first citizen," visits here and is made an honorary member of the Janesville Federation of Women.

■ **June 19:** Col. Charles A. Lindbergh, who the year before became the first solo aviator to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, makes an unexpected landing at the Janesville Airport. Lucky Lindy leaves a note for local aviator Delos Dudley, a former schoolmate at the University of Wisconsin. Dudley, who lives in Madison, is in a Watertown hospital, recovering from a broken arm and leg suffered May 1 when he was hit by an airplane propeller.

■ **June 22:** Rock County's rural schools graduate their largest class ever; 252 receive diplomas.

■ **July 3:** Joe Lanzotti shoots Harry Maylord of Janesville at Maylord's filling station in Clinton. Maylord dies 22 days later; Lanzotti, 19, Kincaid, Ill., confesses and is sentenced to 16 to 24 years at Waupun for second-degree murder.

■ **July 11:** Phyllis Van Pool, Elizabeth Trumpy and Vernon Bunting save 8-year-old Earl Bunting, 254 S. River, Janesville, from drowning in the Rock River.

■ **July 19:** The local chapter of the WCTU condemns games of chance played during picnics at Riverside Park.



■ **July 20:** 20 beginners take the first city-sponsored swimming class at Goose Island.

■ **July 27:** Footville, Orfordville, Milton and Edgerton join to employ a single mounted police officer to patrol the various municipalities. Harry Parrish of Janesville gets the job.

■ **July 31:** The first consolidated Rock County Fair opens in Janesville; the county no longer will have two or more fairs.

■ **Aug. 3:** Pilot F.H. Jenkins makes the first night landing at the Janesville Airport.

■ **Aug. 10:** Construction begins on St. Mary's Catholic School.

■ **Summer 1928:** The Gazette sports department organizes a 16-team rural league to play softball, still called "kittenball."

■ Under the direction of Ken Bick, who will serve the community as an educator for decades, the summer playground program draws 38,189 kids and the beaches attract 16,815.

■ **Aug. 14:** World lightweight champion Sammy Mandell of Rockford, Ill., scores a technical knockout over Johnny O'Donnell in bouts staged at the Janesville fairgrounds by local promoter Jimmie Croake.

■ **Aug. 21:** Interurban trains carry their last loads of freight along the Janesville-Beloit-Rockford, Ill., line. The state rail commission ordered freight service discontinued.

The state Highway Commission OKs the replacement of the Monterey Bridge over the Rock River in Janesville and offers \$89,000 in state funds.

■ **Aug. 24:** New equipment—bulletproof vests and teargas—are demonstrated for Janesville police.

■ **Aug. 26:** Patrolman Melvin Clark, on the job only a month with the Janesville department, is held up in an alley and has his gun stolen.

■ **Aug. 28:** George S. Parker, founder of Parker Pen, persists in his efforts to create a zoo in Janesville. Years earlier he offered a black bear cub to start a zoo; in 1928, he offers \$10,000 for a zoo in Riverside Park. No zoo develops.

■ **Sept. 4:** Harold Stone and John Garrigan, both of Janesville, have their legs crushed when they are pinned beneath a boxcar in the C&NW yards.

■ **Sept. 5:** Janesville Patrolman James Ward shoots James Brennan of Janesville when he resists arrest because he is drunk. Brennan dies the next day; Ward is exonerated.

■ **Sept. 8:** WP&L displays a new type of electric display sign that will become ubiquitous: neon.

■ **Sept. 18:** The Wisconsin School for the Blind opens its fall term with 110 students.

■ **Oct. 20:** Herman Rossader, 38-year-

old carpenter, dies of injuries suffered in a fall while working on the Janesville municipal reservoir.

■ **Oct. 29:** M.G. Jeffris donates 30 acres in the Spring Brook area to Janesville for use as a park. The land today is the site of Dawson Ball Fields and surrounding city-owned recreation and river preservation areas.

■ **Nov. 1:** Joe Wiedell, 1308 Mole, is wounded in the left leg while running from Janesville police officer Walter Freese. Freese, who fires three warning shots into the ground, has a warrant to arrest Wiedell because Wiedell assaulted his wife while drunk. "It is a matter of home brew from beginning to end," Police Chief Charles Newman declares.

■ **Nov. 15:** Parker Pen buys a large monoplane, the first to be used in Janesville for business purposes.

■ **Nov. 21:** A booze runner abandons 185 gallons of illegal cargo north of Leyden.

■ **Nov. 23:** Rock County Board boosts to three the number of deputies patrolling county roads for traffic violators.

■ **Dec. 6:** "Dance marathon ends as Merle Jacobson, Janesville, drops out after having danced with Abie Rubitsky, Edgerton, in Moose Hall for 224 hours to win city championship."

■ **Dec. 7:** A Beloit priest, Father T.O. Maguire, criticizes Prohibition for turning homes into breweries and setting the country back 50 to 75 years. On the same day, the Gazette reports that the most infamous gangster of Prohibition, Al "Scarface" Capone, is hunting deer near Winter, Wis.

■ Science students at Janesville High School have constructed a television set and announce plans to test it soon by trying to receive pictures from Chicago stations that make regular, though not extensive, broadcasts.

■ **Dec. 19:** Carrie Jacobs Bond's son, Fred Jacobs Smith, commits suicide at Lake Arrow-head, Calif., at age 46.

■ **Sometime in 1928:** Janesville GM plants rolls out 125,000 Chevys with new six-cylinder engines, and employment tops 2,600.

■ Traffic violations drop so Janesville arrests decrease to 750, but alcohol-related arrests rise to 231.

■ Bower City Canning, formerly Hohenadde Canning, closes and will stay out of business until 1936.

■ The Janesville School District acquires five sites for new elementary schools but will not build them for several years.

■ A terribly tragic year for traffic fatalities: Auto accidents kill 25 county residents while five die in rail accidents.

## 1929

■ **Jan. 5:** Janesville and Brooklyn farmers withold milk as Bowman Dairy reduces prices.

■ **Jan. 13:** Fire destroys the Rock County highway shop for a loss of \$9,800.

■ **Jan. 16:** Operating for 12 days, Rock County plows clear all main highways of snow.

■ **Jan. 20:** The Veterans of Foreign Wars establishes a post here, Kienow-Hilt Post 1621, named for John H. Kienow, a veteran of the Spanish-American War, and Frank E. Hilt, who was killed in World War I while serving with Company M in Europe.

■ **Jan. 24:** County board OKs another \$5,000 for snowplowing.

■ **Jan. 26:** In what will spell the death of the traditional annual ice harvest, C.S. Atwood, manager of City Ice, announces the impending installation of an ice-making machine.

■ **Jan. 31:** Count Felix Von Luckner, sea raider and German hero of World War I, speaks at Janesville High School.

■ **Feb. 12:** Milk prices rise a penny to 13 cents a quart in Janesville.

■ **Feb. 21:** The local WCTU goes on record opposing card parties held by Parent-Teacher associations in public schools.

■ **March 27:** A new hotel is assured for Janesville as \$100,000 in bonds is pledged.

■ **April 1:** Fire guts the Eagles clubhouse on West Milwaukee Street, and firemen risk their lives to save Alfred Scoon, who was sleeping and trapped on an upper floor.

■ **April 9:** The Janesville Chevrolet plant makes its 500,000th car.

■ **April 23:** Janesville water is chlorinated for first time as the new reservoir is put into operation.

■ **May 4:** Robert Kerl, a real dead-eye shooter, wins the city marbles championship.

■ **May 12:** The new St. Mary's School, built at a cost of \$160,000, is dedicated. The Collegiate Gothic-style building at 307 E. Wall still houses the school today.

■ **May 17:** Pinehurst, the county's tuberculosis sanatorium, has its formal opening. It will treat 89 patients in its first eight months.

■ **June 6:** Robert B. Brown, 416 Cornelia, is the first Janesville man to receive a U.S. commercial aviator's license.

■ **June 17:** J.P. Cullen & Son has the low bid, \$420,000, to build the University of Wisconsin Fieldhouse.

■ **June 22:** Janesville Boy Scouts win the competition at the first area Scout field day staged at Whitewater.

■ **June 25:** Continuing its push for water safety, the Gazette brings swimming lessons to landlocked Fourth Ward Park with a Red Cross



instructor and portable water tank.

■ **July 8:** The last electric streetcar runs in Janesville. WP&L purchased the Janesville Traction and replaced streetcars with buses.

The city begins removing streetcar rails.

■ **July 20:** Interurban train service from Janesville to Beloit—therefore Rockford, Ill.—is terminated, ending a transportation era of 27 years.

■ **Aug. 1:** Kenneth S. Parker buys a bi-plane for personal use.

■ **Aug. 17:** Adams School wins the “wheel-skate”—roller-skating—derby.

■ **Aug. 23:** “Monterey” is the winning name in a Gazette-sponsored contest to name the city’s newest hotel, a six-story Art Deco building constructed on the site of the old Grand Hotel at the corner of West Milwaukee and South High streets. The building still stood, vacant and awaiting renovation in 1999.

■ **Sept. 9:** Staged parachute jumps draw a large crowd to the new airport.

■ **Sept. 17:** William F. Palmer, co-founder of Parker Pen, donates 69 acres to the city for use as a park known as Black Hawk Grove. Today, the donation serves as the heart of Palmer Park.

■ **Oct. 3:** “Twenty-six steers, owned by the county, are killed in a train slaughter near the county farm.”

■ **Oct. 8:** Janesville flyer Herman Krause places second in air races staged in the city.

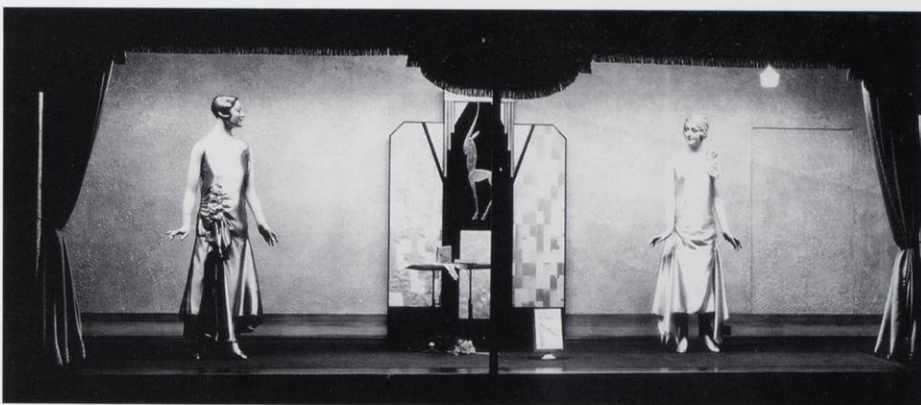
■ **Nov. 5:** Columbus Circle football team wins city’s amateur title.

■ The Wisconsin Supreme Court rules that a husband may not kill his adulterous wife if he finds her in an intimate encounter with another man. A Milwaukee man killed his wife and wounded her lover when he found them making love, and his attorney argued that the killing of a wife and her paramour found in an adulterous act was justified under all past laws. The Supreme Court ruling says in part that an English court has never “held that an outraged husband may take the law into his hands and slay except in the state of Texas.”

■ **Nov. 18:** Mrs. William Caniff, acting president of local VFW Auxiliary, is unanimously elected commander of Kienow-Hilt Post.

■ **Nov. 27:** Janesville junior and senior high students contribute more than 60 baskets of food for Thanksgiving distribution to poor families.

■ **Sometime in 1929:** Associated Apparels, formerly the Gossard Co., reopens its Janesville plant and makes brassieres and



The window displays of Janesville’s popular clothing store—J.M. Bostwick & Sons—reflect the fashions of the 1920s. The dresses pictured (1927 top and 1929 middle) are more formal and modest than those worn by the young flappers of the decade. Flapper dresses typically were knee-length while these are mid-calf with fuller, more decorated skirts.

Bottom: In 1929, local actors and actresses formed Janesville Little Theater, an amateur theater group that continues to perform today to the delight of local audiences. The photo above depicts a scene from “The Admirable Crichton,” a play set in the tropics and staged here in 1930.

other women’s undergarments.

■ The Lions Club presents Goose Island to the city as a park.

■ Traffic death toll for the year: 16 die by auto; five by train; one by motorcycle.

■ Janesville residents make and receive 10,789,000 phone calls during the year.

■ Janesville’s Hanson Furniture Co. closes, one of the first local victims of the Great Stock Market Crash of November 1929. The building at 251 Hyatt, later home to Ossit Church Furniture, still stands.

■ Also failing in ’29 were Parker Pen copycats, Williamson Pen and Corona Pen.







# 1930-1939

## DEPRESSION, DUST & DEFIANCE

### **Standing firm while facing hard times Janesville survives labor discord, the Depression**

*Depression, unemployment and displacement. Defiance in the face of cruel working conditions. Drought, dust and heat. Distant rumblings of war.*

"Hard times" is almost too soft a term to describe the 1930s in the United States, Rock County and Janesville.

By 1932, when the Depression hit Rock County the hardest, between a quarter and a third of all American workers had no jobs. In 1933, nearly 13 million people—of a total U.S. population of 120 million—were unemployed. A quarter of all farmers—blasted by drought, low prices and tariffs—had lost their land.

At the end of 1934, almost 10,000 Rock County residents—out of a population of 74,000—depended in whole or part on government relief. Nearly 2,000 Janesville residents—out of population of 24,000—were on the dole.

The local General Motors plants—Chevrolet and Fisher Body—employed 3,000 production and office workers at their height. But the factories were shut down frequently—the longest layoff being more than a year in 1932-33—and regularly operated with reduced work forces.

Janesville's major industries survived but

laid off thousands of workers. The worldwide slump slashed the amount of freight moved, so the railroads that employed hundreds of local people cut their operations.

Lack of business forced merchants and shopkeepers to lay off help. People who kept their jobs often had their pay cut, and local governments cut the salaries of their employees.

Mortgage foreclosures set records in Janesville, and one of four banks, Bower City Bank, failed.

Under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the federal government started borrowing and ran up deficits to pay for massive public works projects that took the edge off, but did not end, the Great Depression. FDR's public works programs and spending proved to be too modest to end the Depression. The massive federal deficits of World War II finished the Depression.

In Janesville, City Manager Henry Traxler and the city council proved to be visionaries.

In 1931, without outside help, the city

threw itself into park development—creating Palmer Park, Monterey Park and Stadium and improving Riverside Park—and continued to improve the city's infrastructure of streets and sewers.

"The most important work of the year, however, was not merely the permanent improvements but the fact that hundreds of unemployed men were given jobs for several months," The Janesville Gazette reported in its review of 1931. "Both the athletic field (Monterey Stadium) and the street opening jobs were instituted primarily as relief measures as most of the work could be done by hand at a reasonable cost and thus give scores of needy men enough work to keep them for a considerable period."

Janesville's program foreshadowed by a few years the New Deal's Works Progress Administration (WPA), Public Works Administration (PWA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), all of which improved Janesville and Rock County.

**Left: Victorious in their attempt to shut down Janesville's General Motors plants on Jan. 5, 1937, autoworkers whoop and holler as they leave the plant to start a snake dance that took them downtown.**

**Right: Raymond Richter sits on the back porch of his family's house, 609 S. Academy, Janesville, among the rabbits his father shot. In 1931, as the Depression deepened, wild game helped fill out many meals and stretch many families' budgets.**







**In the Depression, people did what they could to make a buck. The unnamed traveling photographer who took this picture walked through neighborhoods and used the Angora goat and cart as his gimmick to sell photos. Here, the Kealey kids—from left, Rita, Virginia, Ruth and William—pose for the camera. Their parents were William and Mary Kealey.**

The city council postponed tax payment deadlines and got behind a special committee's recommendation to create a "community union"—an early form of charities such as United Way.

Rock County relief roles swelled to levels never before imagined, and the county put many to work building and improving roads.

But despite the government programs and public and private charity, many people were poor and got by as best they could.

In 1930, Marcella Novella of Janesville was a girl of 10 in a family of seven living in Milwaukee. Her unemployed father eventually worked for the WPA, improving Milwaukee parks.

"I remember when my dad had to take the coaster wagon to get the (government surplus) food. We had to get our shoes and dresses from, like, a government store. ...

"When we went to school, the other kids would laugh and say, 'Oh, you're from the country. You got your country dress and shoes on.' In a way, it did make me feel bad, but there were so many others in the same way we were.

"With the (government) commodities, we didn't get too much variety," she continued. "Now, we have macaroni and cheese. We just had macaroni, and my mother mixed in a little milk to thicken it. I remember saying: 'Is this all we have to eat? Can't we eat anything else?' My mother and dad both cried.

"My mother didn't have two cents, two pennies, to buy yeast to bake bread for us. She took in mending to get those two pennies," Novella said, dabbing the tears that welled with the memories.

"She did a lot of mending of our clothes so we'd have something to wear," she continued. "My mother said it didn't make any difference how patched they were, as long as they were clean."

Because they were on relief, her family could not own a car or radio or have a telephone, Novella said. "They (officials) checked up all the time."

Much has been made of the millions of American farmers who left the land in the '30s, but in 1932, more people moved from the cities back to the country. The reason was basic: The

food was on the farms.

Howard Milbrandt, 75, of Janesville lived on his family's farm near Evansville.

"We always ate good, and my dad (Lee) had the farm paid off," Milbrandt said. "I can remember as a boy, guys walking 2½ miles to the farm to work for a dollar a day and their food.

"And when I say a day, I mean from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. But they got their breakfast, supper and dinner, and they could take that dollar back to their families."

Evelyn Thompson, 78, of Janesville lived on a farm near Footville and in Janesville during her girlhood.

"On the farm, we were able to make nutritious meals," she recalled. "We always had some meat. Mother canned a lot, and we had a big garden."

Her father was hurt in a serious car accident in '32, and when the family moved to Janesville the next year, her mother found work at Rock River Woolen Mills. The gardening continued, Thompson said, and "Mother was able to pay off all the bills. We didn't splurge on any big, fancy things."

A couple of years later, her family "splurged" on an electric refrigerator to replace the icebox, and a friend who would drop in to play Monopoly—a game spawned by the Depression—would comment every time the refrigerator kicked in: "See? There goes another 50 cents."

"I can remember Mother telling me there wasn't an Easter bunny, but if nothing else,



**Janesville was home to the Rock County Normal School, which trained teachers for one-room rural schools, during the century's early decades. The Class of 1930 was: front row, Ruth Young, Ruth Flock, Mary Ryan, Hazel Caldo, Marian Lyke, Ruth Schultz, Minnie Paulson, Beth Miller and Ruth Mason; middle row, Hazel Weber, Alice Shade, Helen Simon, Ella Jacobson, Kathryn Tracy, Adeline Bergerson, Astrid Felland and instructor F.J. Lowth; back row, Rosa Dary, Esther Pahl, Alberta Kagel, Florence Eddy, Bernice Kagel, Alice Hanewall, Carolyn Hillison and Wanda Jenson. The Rock County Board closed the school in 1933 as an economy move forced by the Depression.**



we could use coffee grounds to color eggs," she said.

At Christmas, the children always "got something," and Hanover Lutheran Church would give the kids paper bags "with oranges, apples, a popcorn ball maybe and a couple of pieces of candy."

When Thompson's father was able to work, he got a job at GM, only to be one of the sit-down strikers of 1937.

In the '20s, the American union movement all but died, and working conditions and wages improved slightly at best. Despite some of the bloodiest moments in U.S. labor history—the Republic Steel Memorial Day Massacre in Chicago, the Flint Sit-Down Strike, the Ford "Service Department" beatings of Walter Reuther and other UAW leaders at River Rouge, all in '37—the rank-and-file resurrected the union movement in the 1930s.

Janesville autoworkers played a key role in forcing GM to recognize the United Auto Workers.

FDR vowed to end Prohibition, and so it was no surprise that the Croake Brewery in Janesville started preparing to make beer again after Roosevelt's election in 1932—two days after his election.

Janesville favored the return of drinking, but it also relished the relative peace, quiet and respect that Prohibition brought to a previously wide-open city, so it strictly regulated bars and alcohol sales.

Wind storms, drought, heat and poor land management turned Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado and New Mexico into the Dust Bowl in the mid-'30s. The dusters made economic refugees of some 3.5 million people who left the Plains states looking for better lives.

Wind-blown dirt darkened skies here and settled on Rock County.

On May 9, 1934, the wind picked up in Montana and Wyoming and swept some 350 million tons of soil east. "By late afternoon, 12 million tons had been deposited in Chicago—four pounds of prime topsoil for every man, woman and child in the Windy City," according to "The American Century" by Harold Evans.

In Rock County south and east of Janesville, dust from that storm buried crops that hadn't already been burned by searing heat and drought.

The western dust storms continued through '38, and drought and extreme heat were common in Rock County throughout the '30s. The all-time high temperature in Gazette record books is the 110.5 degrees on July 13, 1936, and stretches of days with temperatures in the 90s and 100s were not uncommon. In 1932, the daily high temperature did not dip below 90 for 19 days—July 10-28—and

## Many factors contribute to Depression

The causes of the Depression will long be debated, and several factors, not just the Stock Market Panic of 1929, worked to put Americans out of work.

About 1.5 million Americans invested in the stock market, and 600,000 of them were speculators, borrowing money and buying stocks on margin, to bet on the house of cards that the stock market had become by 1929.

By late '29, the speculators had borrowed about \$8.5 billion, about half of all the public debt in the country, according to "The American Century" by Harold Evans.

While the majority of Americans did not directly invest in stocks, the companies that employed them also were huge losers in the crash, and the public followed the market with the same passion that it followed baseball. Besides savings and paper profits, the Crash of '29 wiped out public confidence. Many families already were in debt for the first time in their lives, buying cars and appliances on the new installment plan.

Farmers had not recovered from the agricultural depression of the early '20s, and recession in mid-'29—poor auto sales, falling housing starts and dropping manufacturing output—set the stage for the Great Depression.

Individual incomes for most Americans did not mirror the industrial bonanza of the '20s.

One calculation estimated that in 1930 a

third of the U.S. population lived below the poverty line, \$1,200 annual income for an urban family of four, according to "The American Century."

Official action and inaction deepened the Depression.

The Federal Reserve Board tightened the money supply when it should have been loosened. Politicians and the public favored balanced federal budgets when the government should have been borrowing money to put people to work on public projects.

President Herbert Hoover began the nation's first major federal works program, but in 1932, he also vetoed a big relief bill and proposed increasing taxes to balance the budget, according to "The American Century."

World War II with annual federal deficits in the tens of billions of dollars ended the Depression, not the relatively annual modest deficits—less than \$5 billion—of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.

Congress passed tariffs to protect American business and agriculture, but those tariffs raised the prices of needed materials. More damaging, they also provoked retaliatory tariffs that cut off the United States from world markets where American goods and food could be sold.

The cycle fed on itself: Lack of money to buy goods forced layoffs that deepened the shortage of cash.

reached or topped 100 on eight of those days.

In the face of all they had to contend with, it's not surprising that Americans—especially Mid-westerners well insulated by the vast continent—did not pay much attention to Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini in Europe and the Japanese militarists in Asia, despite the fact that the dictators' aggression and violent oppression regularly made headlines.

When they did concern themselves with foreign affairs, Midwesterners typically called for the United States to stay out of them. Wisconsin Sen. Robert La Follette Jr. was one of the most influential isolationists in Congress.

"I thought we should stay on this side of the Atlantic, and they should stay on their side," said 100-year-old Mae Thompson of Evansville. "I think it was the general feeling. After the

(first world) war, we were hoping there'd never be another one."

Also contributing to America's isolationism was the fact that many, if not most, families of German and Italian ancestry wanted to divorce themselves from the trouble in Europe, and so they became even more isolationist than their native-born neighbors.

"I had close friends who were proud to be of German heritage but who didn't want to talk about what was going on there," said 103-year-old Ella Dunbar of Footville. "They wanted to be American. They thought they would be accused of it (Nazism)."

But 1939 ended with Europe at war and Japanese invaders well-entrenched in China. War's distant rumblings grew louder and soon would engulf and deafen the United States.



# Sit-down makes GM sit up and take notice

## Workers make history during '37 work stoppage

The moment of truth and courage: 1 p.m. Jan. 5, 1937. "Finally at 1 o'clock, my partner (was) Coley Simmons, and I told him to go up and throw the switch on the line, and I said: 'Don't let anybody stop ya.'"

"So he went up and pulled the switch on the line, and I went down along the line and told the fellas, 'This is it.'"

"And some of 'em got right out and joined us, and some of 'em stayed on the cars working. Then we went up and down the line and told them working either come with us or get out. And some of 'em got scared and run, and they did go out and come back in later."

John Wesley "Wes" Van Horn, president of United Auto Workers Local 95 at the General Motors Fisher Body plant in Janesville from 1935 to 1938, described the most important moment in Janesville labor history—the start of the 1937 sit-down strike—in an oral history taped in 1976.

The tapes are part of the collection in the Hedberg Public Library's Janesville Room. Carrying inflections and nuances long heard in Janesville, the voices on the tapes are of the militant unionists who helped form the UAW but since passed away. Excerpts from the oral histories also are included in another source for this story, "50th Anniversary—UAW," by Local 95 members Howard Milbrandt, Richard Costerisan and John O'Meara.

The sit-down strike in Janesville followed by eight days the massive sit-down strike by 7,000 workers at a Fisher Body factory in Cleveland, Ohio, and by six days, the takeover of two Fisher plants in Flint, Mich., by 5,000 workers.

The sit-down was a new and illegal tactic—it violated the employer's property rights—but it worked. Rather than walk a picket line—dangerous because of violence from company goons and possible arrest by police and regularly ineffective

because of replacement by scab workers—workers took over the factories to stop production.

Rank-and-file workers actually led the sit-downs in Cleveland and Flint because of horrible working conditions, and UAW leaders, seeking recognition to organize all automotive operations, followed their members, according to "The American Century" by Harold Evans.

The strike in Janesville was over local issues but was sanctioned by the parent UAW, which chartered its first local here, Federal Labor Union 19059, in March 1934.

On his taped interview, Lou Adkins recalled the local's origins:

"We just had a meeting up here to Lein's filling station (then at the northeast corner of Milton and Mount Zion avenues) one night ... and we decided we was gonna have a union. ..."

"We were all poorer than church mice, and we had to take up a collection among the eight of us that were there in order to send a telegram to (UAW leader) Bill Green to send an organizer in."

Adkins remembered Waldo Luchsinger, John Getzinger and Strauss "Tampa" Ellis as being at the meeting. Others who were regular or frequent participants were Art Thompson, Paul Swenson Jr., Goldie Vick, Russ Johnson, Larry Kinser-vick, Earnest Tyrolt, Elton Cutts, Carl Nelson, Dick Halford, Alex Kettle and Bill Longfeld.

"We didn't know if we had the power to pull off a sit-down strike because we only had a 100 dues-paying members out of a possible 1,000 people," Van Horn said of the Fisher plant.

But working conditions had become unbearable for the total 2,700 production workers, the other 1,700 laboring in the Chevy plant.

"Before we got a union contract in 1937, it was a workhouse," Adkins said. "It was just close to a chain gang. ... We were tied down to the line, and we just couldn't get away. There was no chance for relief."

Workers were paid on a piecework basis for which only the company knew the formula. Workers were making 80 cents an hour before the strike, Adkins estimated, and local managers kept speeding up the line—to 70 vehicles an hour.

"There was no limit to what they'd have a guy do," he said. "If one guy could have built the whole car, they'd have him do it." ...

"Local management was shyshtering (not building to specifications) and fooling the public and fooling the corporation," Adkins said. "They were working for a bonus and doing things as cheap as they could. Trying to make 'em with

as few people as they could."

No seniority or true grievance procedure protected workers' livelihoods.

After layoffs, which were erratic because of GM management and frequent and often long because of the Depression, supervisors regularly hired relatives and drinking buddies ahead of laid-off workers.

If a worker didn't measure up to a foreman's expectations, the boss would scream and holler at the man.

"They'd say they got a 100 guys out in the bullpen waiting to take your job. That was the threat all the time," Adkins said.

One foreman's self-avowed expectation of a fair day's work was "load (the worker) until he fell down and then take just a little bit off," Eugene Osmond said.

The two locals held a mass meeting and listened to a UAW organizer from Racine, Van Horn said.

"We talked about strike, and we were more less skeptical (because of low membership), even some of the officers," he recalled. "Now the company had been expectin' us to do this right along, and they were watching us very closely."

Rather than let word of the strike timing leak out, Van Horn, Elmer Yenney, president of Local 121 in the Chevy plant; and the vice presidents kept it to themselves.

"We figured the people were all hepped up, we'd pull it right the next day," Van Horn said. "And we'd pull it at 1 o'clock because at 1 o'clock we'd all be working, the line'd be running, and the bosses all'd be in eatin' dinner."

Of eight or 10 men in his paint booth, only he and one other fellow walked out, Don Dooley said.

"What we did was walk up and down the lines like a demonstration, trying to convince everybody else to quit working," Dooley said. "There was an awful lot of commotion and excitement, a lot of turmoil, too. ... The manager (Dennis Hurley) was out there trying to talk to Van Horn: 'Get these people back to work.'"

Van Horn said, "You're gonna recognize the union before this is over." ...

"It wasn't planned at all. If it was, most of us didn't know what the plans were. What we knew was we were gonna stay in the plant 'til it was settled. ... A lot of (other workers) were scared. They thought this is the end of our jobs."

And I gotta be honest and say I thought it was, too. This was it: Either it was gonna be better, or I was out of a job.

And I'm sure that some who followed



**A look at the final Chevrolet production line during a 1937 open house at the plant.**





**A meeting of union and public officials led to the conclusion of the sit-down part of the sit-down strike and the evacuation of the General Motors factories in Janesville. Seated, left to right, are Wesley Van Horn, president of the Fisher Body union; City Manager Henry Traxler and Elmer Yenney, president of the Chevrolet union. Standing, left to right, are Louis Adkins, Deputy Sheriff Max Kennedy, Howard Thompson, Sheriff James E. Croake and Chief of Police Charles Newman.**

wasn't entirely sold on the union but thought we might as well go with 'em. ...

I was concerned. I had a family. But I also knew I had to decide which way I was going and stay that way. There was no turning back. Once I laid down my tool and quit my job, there was no turning back."

Most GM workers and most Janesville residents—including strikers' families—did not originally support the strike.

"Most of the people in Janesville felt you should be glad you had a job because the plant had been shut down for over a year (1932-33)," said Ralph Hilkin, who later helped organize the local firefighters union. "It was a real hardship on the community. I don't think there were too many people who realized the torture that you went through throughout the day to keep up to the line. ..."

"Unless you had an understanding wife, she wouldn't be in favor of a strike because, after all, we were just getting back on our feet and now you want to go on strike. I think this was the feeling in families and throughout the community."

Osmond recalled: "A small percentage of the people sat in and shut the plant down. Between 300 and 400 of us shut the plant down. Of 240 people in our area ... there were three of us that stayed in."

One of the sit-downers who earned the admiration of his comrades was Mel Jordan, Osmond said.

"He crawled out the fence to check on his sick child. He found out the child was not as sick as he thought, and he crawled back in."

Union leaders were relieved that management did not know how low their membership

was. As soon as the sit-down began, the Loyal GM Alliance, denounced soundly as a "company union," sprang up here, and the majority of other workers eventually either joined the Alliance or signed its back-to-work petitions.

"The Alliance came in right during the sit-down strike," said Dooley, who had not heard of the group before the strike. "It probably started forming the day of the sit-down because all during that (six-week strike) period, Alliance buttons started appearing. ..."

"No doubt there was a certain amount of belligerency involved in by some people because there was hard feelings between those who were striking and those who were staying on the job. There were a lot of slurs made back and forth, maybe some threats. No doubt, we were mad. We were belligerent. If we hadn't been, we wouldn't be to the point we were."

Workers pushed and shoved each other, and at least one gate guard had tacks thrown in his face. Alliance members were given pipes and iron bars, Osmond recalled, and he was confronted by two club-brandishing men, whom he ignored. But physical violence was rare here.

Rock County Sheriff James Croake, respected as being fair by UAW members, deputized foremen and supervisors at GM's insistence, but he told them they could only protect property and forbade them guns.

Denied entry to the cafeteria and its chairs, union members rushed the room and kicked in the doors.

Food and cigarettes were tossed over walls and smuggled through holes in fences, and Adkins pushed aside Chevy plant manager Frank Fitzpatrick when he tried to block Adkins from re-entering the plant with boxes of sandwiches.

Of the Alliance, Osmond said: "Their goal was to get the plant back to work before we got an agreement. They were as militant in reverse as we were in progress. They were as adamant to get it started again as we were to shut it down. That's why we sometimes had to go out and do nose-benders: Punch somebody in the nose."

At an Alliance meeting of 200 to 250 people, "we went in and took the meeting over and told 'em we'd sign 'em up into the union. Only six or seven went home; the rest joined the union. It was not as much intimidation as persuasion," Osmond said. "We told 'em what they could expect from both sides."

The sit-downers shared a strong feeling of brotherhood, Osmond said.

"It was 'How ya doing? I got an extra sandwich; do you need it?' It wasn't a case of let Joe

do it or let Jim do it. It was: Let's get down there and do it," he said.

"It was never asked who should lay on the track so the train couldn't move along (with incoming parts). Somebody just got down on the track and laid there—'til we got smart enough. One of the railroad guys told us: 'You guys are foolish for doing that. Just get a log or get some piece of material there. We won't run over it, and we won't take it off.'"

The sit-downers were prepared for a long haul. The sit-down strikes in Cleveland and Flint were already days old.

But the sit-down part of the strike in Janesville lasted only a little longer than nine hours because City Manager Henry Traxler proved to be an impartial mediator who persuaded the unionists to give up the plants and management not to produce any vehicles or ship any products until a national settlement was reached. Part of the deal was inspection of the plants by a neutral committee.

At 10:15 p.m., the strikers left the plants.

"We had a snake dance right up Milwaukee Street in Janesville," Van Horn recalled. "We practically took over the town. Nobody tried to stop us. We had no interference, not even from the law or anybody else. They just left us alone and let us have our party."

The real celebration came with the national agreement signed Feb. 11 that recognized the UAW and got a nickel-an-hour raise for workers.

But that was not before the "Battle of the Running Bulls" in Flint on Jan. 11. Deputies and police officers, known as "bulls," stormed one of the plants with teargas and clubs. Sit-downers repelled them with fire hoses and volleys of heavy car hinges. The cops opened fire, wounding 14 strikers, but determined strikers again forced them to run.

The Alliance met its end in Janesville on "Button Day," Feb. 26, 1937. The rival groups had been wearing buttons proclaiming their allegiances and had been jeering each other in the plants. Violence erupted in the plants that Friday and spilled over to the community, forcing Croake to close taverns in and near Janesville over the weekend.

"Dinner pails were flying. Fists were flying," Osmond said. "People were having Alliance buttons taken off. There was one kid; I don't recall his name. He wasn't very big, but he got his share of the buttons. He got more than anyone else; he was the champ. He worked some people over to get 'em, but it was the end of the Alliance as an effective group."

"That violence was necessary. Some good things—people have to get hurt to get 'em done in a democracy."



# 1930-1939

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1930

■ **Jan. 13:** Chevrolet is making 450 cars a day here. The daily production level will approach 700 cars in May, but both the Chevy and Fisher Body plants will be on temporary shutdown because of slow sales for a week in late June.

■ **Jan. 18:** Two passenger trains crash head-on in Janesville, but major tragedy is averted as only three men are injured when both engines careen down the embankments near the Franklin Street viaduct. Milwaukee Road engineer John Higgins will be found responsible for the wreck.

■ **January:** The Rock County Board votes to continue the new procedure of night patrol of county roads by sheriff's deputies.

■ **Feb. 5:** The Lions Club formally presents Goose Island (Traxler Park) to the city.

■ **Feb. 15:** Janesville firemen rescue three: Mr. and Mrs. James Moore and their daughter—when gas fills their home at 1213 W. State.

■ The Monterey Hotel (vacant and awaiting renovation in 1999) welcomes its first guests.

■ **Feb. 25:** An airfield on Milton Avenue, operated by local aviator Henry Krause, is

chosen as the new municipal airport, supplanting the Kempton-Dudley Airport at the site of what in 1999 was the Rock County Airport. Nevertheless, the federal government orders that mail planes will continue using the airport on Beloit Road (Highway 51).

■ **March 8:** After several months at higher rates, Saturday prices for a shave and a haircut are rolled back to 25 cents and 50 cents, respectively.

■ Air mail service to Janesville starts.

■ **March 24:** Miss Betty Star saves seven children from a fire in the Judson Wolevar home near Goose Island (Traxler Park).

■ **March 30:** Vice raids—for liquor, gambling and prostitution—net 24 suspects at two Janesville addresses: 10 N. Main and 18 S. Jackson. Glen Hamilton, 8 S. Jackson, will be fined \$200 and costs for operating a “disorderly house,” house of prostitution.

■ **March 31:** New Roosevelt Elementary School, 316 S. Ringold, costing \$100,000 for 10 rooms, opens with an enrollment of 350 pupils.

■ **April 19:** Lewis E. Heitter, a race track bookie from Rockford, Ill., who was kidnapped in Janesville on April 12, is returned home after the ransom is paid.

■ **May 7:** Pat Dawson of Marengo, Ill., is named new high school athletic coach, succeeding E.H. Gibson. He eventually will become athletic director for the school district.

■ **May 9:** Milton and Edgerton hire two Janesville men, Robert Goocher and Raymond Krueger, as motorcycle traffic cops. A few days later, an assistant Rock County district attorney orders Goocher off the job because he is a minor.

■ **May 14:** Charles R. Burtis, former Rock County sheriff, is sentenced to five years in federal prison for interstate auto thefts. His trial is in South Dakota.

■ **May 17:** Violinist Anthony Dongarra of Janesville places third in statewide competition sponsored by the Wisconsin Federation of Music Clubs.

■ **June 3:** A booze runner escapes after wrecking his car and leaving 175 gallons of contraband near Beloit.

■ **June 10:** 800 men are reported out of work in Rock County.

■ **June 21:** A new bath house, costing \$6,000, and beach open at Goose Island (Traxler Park).

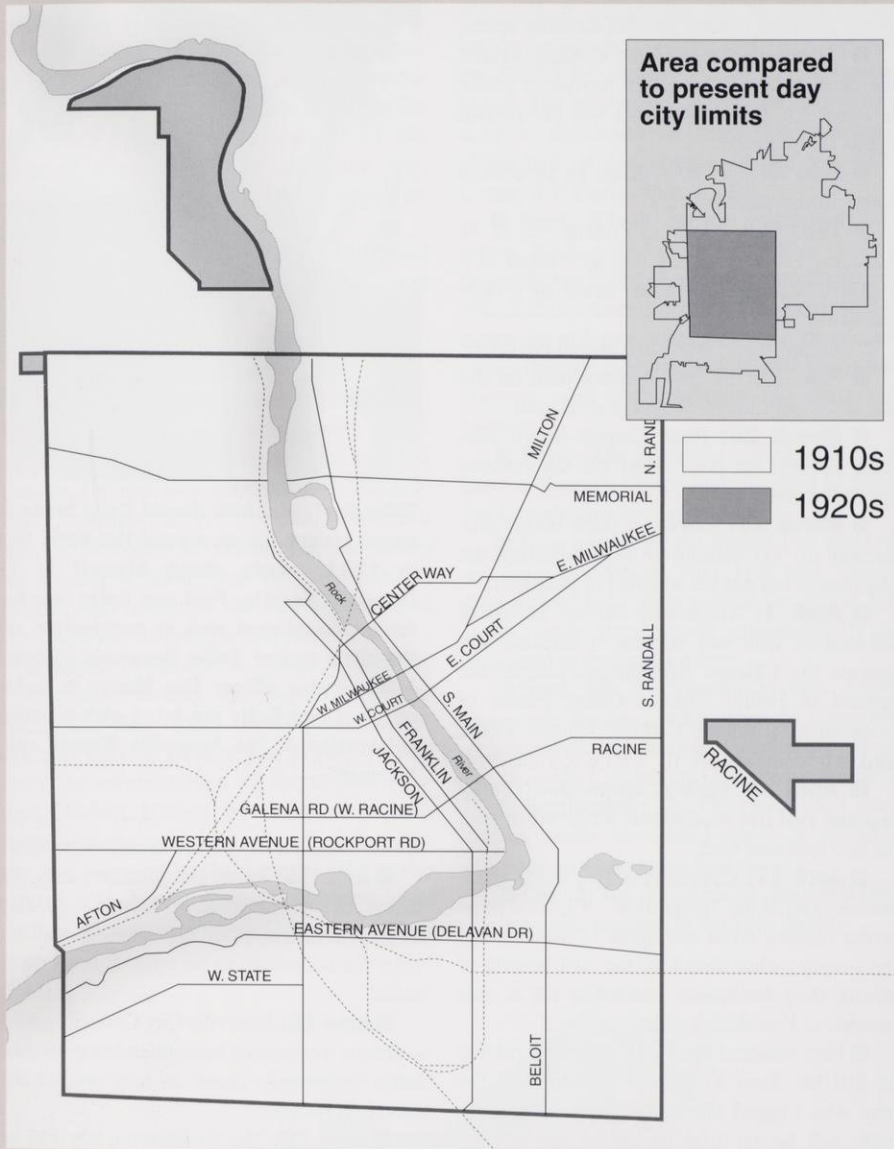
■ **June 26:** The cornerstone for the new



Janesville postal workers took time from their appointed rounds to pose for this picture in 1930.



# Janesville in 1930



**Janesville's city limits in 1930.**  
Some of the street names have changed since then.



**Area of city:** 7.94 square miles



**Number of churches:** 15



**Number of schools:** 13. One is Janesville High School, one is the Wisconsin School for the Blind and the rest are elementary schools.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 18.16  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 49.06  
**Miles of water mains:** 64.30



**Population:** 21,628



**\$1 in 1930 has buying power of \$9.74 in 1999**

Trinity Episcopal Church is laid. The church still stands at the corner of East Court and South Wisconsin streets in Janesville.

■ **July 16:** Caddy Clifford Lackner, 15, suffers a broken nose when hit by a golf ball at Janesville Country Club.

■ **July 20:** The temperature hits 104, breaking a 12-year-old record for Janesville. The long summer heat wave causes the deaths of two Beloit residents: 6-month-old Arthur Orozco on July 18 and 74-year-old Albert M. Andre on Aug. 2.

■ **Aug. 1:** WCLO begins AM broadcasts

from the third floor of the old Gazette building. Two weeks later, the new station adds Walter Goetzinger, a blind musician, to its staff.

■ **Aug. 20:** Rock County stages the first all 4-H fair in the nation at the fairgrounds in Janesville.

■ **Aug. 29:** The first air crash fatalities in Rock County occur when a plane goes down between Janesville and Milton, killing student pilot William E. Hinkle, 28, of 923 N. Bluff (Parker Drive), and passenger Thieron Miller, 23, of 921 Benton.

■ Chevrolet adds a new 1.5-ton truck to its

Janesville assembly schedule.

■ **September:** The new Wilson Elementary School, costing \$200,000, opens on Western Avenue (Rockport Road). It has 20 rooms and a combined gym/auditorium.

■ **Sept. 13:** John Zastoupil, 34, is killed when a falling 2.5-ton casting pins him to the floor at the Rock River Engineering Co. plant, 302 N. Main.

■ **Sept. 20:** The new Monterey Bridge carrying Center Avenue traffic over the Rock River opens with much pomp and ceremony.

■ **Oct. 14:** The Wisconsin Supreme Court



affirms the Janesville Municipal Court's decision that a 76-year-old man, Silas Bliven, must pay a fine of \$250 and serve 30 days in the county jail at "hard labor"—usually the rock pile—because he illegally possessed alcohol.

■ **Oct. 24:** Fisher Body ends a shutdown and layoff of several weeks duration.

■ **Oct. 27:** World-renowned violinist Jascha Heifetz gives a concert in the Janesville High School auditorium.

■ **Oct. 29:** 100 civic leaders call for the establishment of a central welfare agency to register people needing help during periods of unemployment.

■ **Nov. 13:** 10-year-old Ellen Chavis, who lives in a railroad boxcar on South Pearl Street with her mother and father, is burned severely when their coal stove explodes.

■ **Nov. 15:** Reflecting the ever-softening market for cars, the 1931 Chevrolet models are introduced at prices \$20 to \$40 less than '30 models.

■ **Nov. 18:** Federal agents and county deputies raid Otto Matschke's place north of Beloit and seize a large still and 300 gallons of moonshine.

■ **Dec. 20:** Despite the layoffs at GM, Janesville merchants report brisk holiday business.

■ **Dec. 31:** The number of Rock County families receiving aid for dependent children—"the mother's pension"—increases to 170 from the 150 at the end of 1929. Benefits range from \$5 to \$75 a month.

■ **Sometime in 1930:** Three area men are selected as captains of University of Wisconsin varsity teams: William Henke, Janesville, track; Johnny Paul, Milton Junction, basketball co-captain; and Louis Oberdeck, Edgerton, crew.

■ Stuart Shadel of the semi-pro Milton Junction Crescents hits for a .403 average to be the Southern Wisconsin Baseball League batting champ.

■ Parker Pen Co.'s local employment surpasses 700, and the company builds an addition to its factory (One Parker Place) at East Court and Division (Parker Place) streets.

■ Rock County Municipal Court handles 80 official cases involving juvenile delinquents, and another 30 are handled without permanent records being made. "The most gratifying feature of the juvenile work was that in only nine cases was there a second complaint."

■ The Janesville School District closes the old Douglas, 420 Linn, and Webster, 203 Lincoln, schools.

## 1931

■ **Jan. 1:** Retail milk price drops a penny to 11 cents a quart.

■ **Jan. 9:** Retail butter price falls to its low-

est level since 1913: 25 cents a pound.

■ **Feb. 2:** City of Janesville buys riverfront property south of Wilson School that will become Monterey Park.

■ A home for nurses and nursing students at Mercy Hospital, costing \$80,000, formally opens.

■ Council President Henry C. Klein, former fire chief, proposes Janesville provide a public defender for poor defendants, but the council rejects the proposal.

■ **Feb. 6:** Egg price drops to 18 cents a dozen, lowest price in years.

■ **Feb. 22:** "John O'Connor, 73, 21 N. Academy, eccentric dwarf, dies as a result of a fractured skull received when struck by a vampire driver."

"Vampire driver" refers to a hit-and-run driver.

■ **Feb. 26:** A new Armory, built on the site of the old Lincoln School, is dedicated.

■ **March 26:** Rock County Board allocates \$25,000 for poor relief for the remainder of the year.

■ **March 27:** Chevrolet plant boosts production to 500 vehicles a day, indicating the Depression has not yet widened or deepened.

■ **April 1:** Archbishop Samuel Stritch of Milwaukee, who will become a cardinal and oversee the Chicago Archdiocese, attends the funeral of Father Charles Olson, pastor of Janesville's St. Mary's Catholic Church. Olson died of pneumonia.

■ **April 3:** Federal agents and county deputies raid five roadhouses, arrest seven people and impound beer.

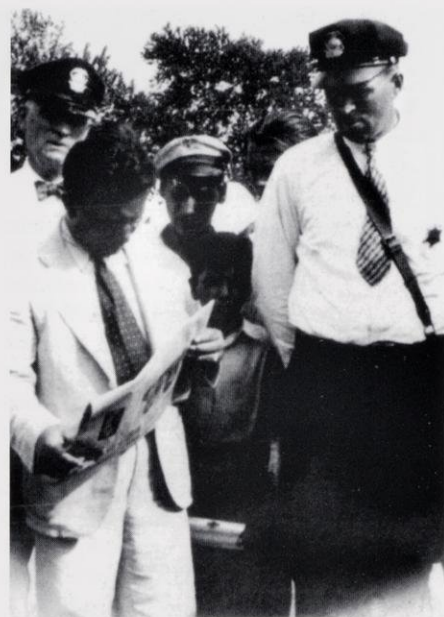
■ **April 17:** Operators of five Beloit roadhouses close at the "suggestion" of federal prosecutor Stanley Ryan and agree to move out of the county rather than face the civil penalty of having their businesses padlocked for a year because of Prohibition violations.

■ First National Bank of Edgerton is robbed of \$10,000. John O'Malley, identified as the man who slugged the cashier and grabbed the cash, will be on trial in Sparta for another bank robbery as the year ends.

■ **May 11:** Clifford Conn of Crandon is nabbed by Janesville cops with 90 gallons of moonshine in his car, the largest single seizure to date of illegal alcohol by the local department. He is fined \$700 and sentenced to two months in jail.

■ **June 5:** Gov. Philip F. La Follette, Progressive and son of former Gov. "Fighting Bob" La Follette, speaks to the United Commercial Travelers convention in Janesville and attacks chain stores. He vows that the state will try to level the playing field for independent businesses by taxing and regulating chain stores.

■ **June 12:** Palmer Park, a gift from William F. Palmer, co-founder of Parker Pen,



**Wiley Post, who with Harold Gatty broke the speed record for an around-the-world flight in 1931, reads about himself in *The Janesville Gazette*. Post and Gatty flew here for a promotional visit in conjunction with the city's annual Dollar Days sale in August 1931. Police officer Tom Morisy is looking on. Post and Gatty are feted with a parade, celebration at the Janesville Airport and a banquet.**

opens. Though a city park, it is east of city limits.

■ **June 13:** Janesville's first and only bank failure of the Depression: Bower City Bank closes on orders from the state; it will take years for depositors to be paid 88 cents on the dollar.

■ **June 15:** Janesville City Council endorses a citizens' committee recommendation to establish a "community chest" to help needy individuals and families.

■ **June 29:** The temperature hits 106, and the day's low is 88, making the day the hottest in a seven-day heat wave. Eight people in the Janesville vicinity die from the heat. Between May 27 and Sept. 20, the area swelters through 56 days when the temperature is 90 or above. Seventeen days have temperatures over 100.

■ **July 13:** Janesville council members OK construction of an athletic stadium costing \$9,000 at the new park behind Wilson School. The home of local high school football games and track meets eventually will be named Monterey Stadium.

■ **July 15-19:** Heat streak: Five straight 100-degree days.

■ **July 19:** Thousands attend the Gazette-Red Cross water carnival at Riverside Park.



For years, the Gazette teamed up with the Red Cross to promote water safety and swimming instruction.

■ **July 22:** Joseph Bleasdale, 70-year-old proprietor of the Willowdale store five miles west of Janesville on Highway 20 (Highway 11), is shot twice during a holdup by unidentified bandits. He dies three days later at Mercy Hospital.

■ **July 31:** Royalty comes to Janesville: Prince and Princess Svasti, parents of the queen of Siam (Thailand), and their son, Prince Arjuna, visit Mr. and Mrs. George Parker here.

■ **Aug. 6:** Aviators Wiley Post and Harold Gatty, who earlier in the year broke the speed record for flying around the world, are feted in Janesville with a parade, celebration at the Janesville Airport and banquet.

■ **Aug. 19:** Albert Cooper, 20, Burr Oak, confesses to killing store-owner Joseph Bleasdale and is sentenced to life at hard labor at Waupun. He had two accomplices in the robbery: Eva Butler, 20, of 535 Main, who gets a five-year sentence at Taycheedah for aiding and abetting a felony, and Alvin Grinde, 26, Melrose, who receives a life sentence for being an accessory to first-degree murder.

■ **Sept. 7:** Thomas R. Amlie of Elkhorn, a progressive seeking the Republican nomination for the House of Representatives, addresses 1,000 at a Labor Day picnic here and blasts the administration of Republican President Herbert Hoover for failing to remedy national unemployment. Amlie will defeat conservative George Blanchard for the GOP nomination and go on to be elected to Congress. In the election, Democrat George Herzog of Racine

finishes third as Socialist O.J. Bouma outpolls him 2-1, but the Socialist draws only 515 votes in Rock County.

■ **Sept. 17:** The fairgrounds in Janesville are sold in two tracts to Gerald E. Cunningham for \$26,500 for 38 acres including the exhibition buildings, and to J.J. McCann for \$7,070 for 8.6 acres fronting Milwaukee Street. The Milwaukee Street property eventually is developed as single-family houses; about half of the remainder was the Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds in 1999.

■ **Sept. 21:** A tornado slashes northeast across Rock and Jefferson counties, missing Janesville but killing 48-year-old farmer Hugh A. Whitford two miles north of Milton Junction. The storm hits at 8 p.m., injures 11 other people and causes damage estimated at \$500,000. The twister destroys many farm buildings and affects 265 families.

■ **Sept. 26:** Janesville's 32nd Tank Company, a National Guard unit, is called to patrol the tornado area to prevent looting.

■ Four men enter the Parker Pen plant, tie up night watchmen Paul Hill and Charles Bowers and hold them captive for almost four hours while they search unsuccessfully for gold used to make pen points.

■ **Sept. 29:** The "community chest" recommendation becomes reality when 50 community organizations and leading individuals organize the Janesville Community Union to aid the needy.

■ **September:** The Chevrolet plant closes for six weeks. The stated reason is inventory; the poor economy is the true cause.

■ **Oct. 2:** The school board eliminates raises for Janesville teachers in the 1932 budget.

■ **Oct. 15:** Capt. Victor Bleasdale of the U.S. Marines presents the Rock County Sheriff's Department with a Thompson submachinegun in appreciation for the department's work in apprehending the killers of his father, Willowdale store owner Joseph Bleasdale.

■ **Oct. 18:** Fire of undetermined origin starts in a WCLO studio and causes thousands of dollars in damage to the radio station and the Gazette building in which it is housed.

■ **Nov. 1:** Air mail service shifts from the Kempton-Dudley Airport south of Janesville to the city airport on Milton Avenue. Northwest Airways is the carrier.

■ **Nov. 12:** The Rock County Board votes to borrow \$400,000 from the state—to be repaid with gasoline taxes—to pave Highways 14 and 140.

■ **Nov. 13:** "Two high school students, Delton Wilkins, 21, of 511 Wilson, and Donald Dobson, 17, Beloit, receive first aid treatment at hospital, and 14 post-high-school hoodlums are locked in city jail when Beloit and Janesville students mix in near riot on eve of annual football game between two schools."

■ **Nov. 16:** Chevrolet and Fisher Body recall workers.

■ **Nov. 30:** Duane and Paul Dixon, 32 and 22, respectively, and John Shelby, 22, all of Beloit, are sentenced to at least a year each in the Green Bay Reformatory for stealing chickens.

■ **Dec. 5:** Three boys are injured when hit by cars in the Chevrolet-Fisher Body Jubilee parade.

■ **Dec. 10:** 3,000 donate to the Community Union drive, but their \$45,000 in donations is \$10,000 short of the goal.

■ The county board cuts salaries for appointed employees effective in 1932 and for elected employees effective in 1933. Those making \$100 to \$200 a month will be cut 5 percent while those making more than \$200 a month will be cut 10 percent.

■ **Dec. 11:** A syndicate of Chicagoans, headed by La Mar Alberti, leases the bankrupt Franklin Gardens. Mrs. Alberti reopens the renovated building New Year's Eve as Chateau La Mar, "southern Wisconsin's beautiful new dance palace."

■ **Dec. 17:** Janesville puts 50 unemployed men to work leveling a hill near St. Mary's Church.

■ **Dec. 18:** Production at the GM plants, once 700 cars a day, is set at 200, reflecting the worsening Depression.

■ **Sometime in 1931:** Rock County deputies raid 25 establishments for liquor or vice violations.

■ Twenty-eight county residents die because of car and/or truck accidents. Only one person,



A tornado ripped through Rock County on Sept. 21, 1931, killing one man, injuring 11 other people and damaging numerous rural buildings including the home of Herman Rupnow near Lake Koshkonong between Milton Junction and Edgerton.



a Baraboo man, dies in a train accident in Rock County, but the county suffers 16 suicides, including one in which a Beloit woman jumps under a train.

## 1932

■ **Jan. 9:** Janesville police arrest 14 gamblers in raids on South River and North Main streets.

■ **Jan. 11:** Janesville's Richard Ellis American Legion Post joins the legion's nationwide effort to find jobs for unemployed. When the post opens its bureau 16 days later, 150 men apply for work. A hundred local business leaders pledge their support to the effort.

■ **Jan. 25:** Janesville council deadlocks 3-3 on ordinance that would permit public dancing on Sundays.

■ **Feb. 8:** Citizens Bank in Delavan is robbed of \$6,000 by Donald Loftus. Loftus, who later was captured, shoots Edgar Sikes in the leg; Sikes had come in response to the alarm.

■ **Feb. 23:** Because of the Ellis Legion Post's program, 58 men and 12 women find permanent jobs; 25 people get temporary work, and 400 householders offer part-time domestic, maintenance and yard jobs.

■ **Feb. 26:** A citizens' committee recommends that the best way Rock County can spend \$95,000 in state aid for the jobless is to put men to work building and repairing highways. County supervisors eventually allocate part of the money for road work but designate the lion's share for direct relief to families. The county also hires a full-time investigator to check for fraud.

■ **March 1:** Charles Schaffner, employee in a roadhouse east of Janesville, is found dead there with a pool of blood nearby. A few days later, William Unrine and Ben Kachel, both of 15 S. Academy, admit fighting with Schaffner, but his death is attributed to heart trouble, not violence. Unrine and Kachel are sentenced to 30 days for drunkenness.

■ **March 2:** City of Janesville reports spending \$25,500 on relief for the poor in February.

■ **March 9:** Local garages plan to reduce labor costs by 15 percent to spur employment of mechanics.

■ **March 14:** Council OKs \$10,000 to renovate Janesville's Carnegie Public Library. Part of the reason is to provide jobs. Two weeks later, the council uses the same tactic when it approves the completion of Monterey and Goose Island (Traxler) parks, including the dredging of a lagoon at each park.

■ **March 18:** Bandits again target Citizens Bank in Delavan when three robbers hold bank president W.R. Topping and his family captive during the night. The gang later was captured and sentenced in Illinois.

■ **March 21:** Rock County opens a poor relief office in Janesville.

■ **April 1:** 100 men start work on county roads as part of poor relief plan.

■ **April 5:** Rock County Democrats favor Franklin D. Roosevelt in the primary election. Janesville votes in favor of, but Rock County opposes, repealing Sunday blue laws, which typically are laws based on moralistic or religious views, such as prohibiting dancing or business on Sundays.

■ **April 15:** The Chevrolet plant returns to a five-day work week "after a period of slack operations."

■ **April 25:** Despite city voters rejecting blue laws, the council again fails to lift the ban on Sunday dancing.

■ Local Red Cross receives a freightcar filled with flour from the federal government to distribute to the poor.

■ **May 2:** Mrs. Paul Nita of Evansville and her 5-year-old child burn to death when their car overturns and catches fire on a road between Janesville and Delavan.

■ **May 6:** The Janesville Chamber of Commerce sponsors small garden plots on the city's vacant lots to help the jobless and needy.

■ **May 7:** Rupert E. Fessenden, Rock County's chief deputy, finds the largest illegal liquor distillery ever discovered in southern Wisconsin on the old Frances Willard estate south of the Wisconsin School for the Blind, a classic irony because Willard was one of the founders of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Nuzio Ingrassia, Everett Dacollo and August Giusti are arrested. Giusti is eventually released when his alibi checks out.

■ **May 9:** City council adamant: No dancing on Sunday.

■ **May 11:** County OKs another \$60,000 for relief work.

■ **May 14:** First National and Merchant & Savings banks install teargas systems as protection against the bank robberies and burglaries sweeping the nation.

■ **June 7:** 13-year-old Lewis Phillips narrowly escapes drowning while rescuing Clifford Nunn, 15, 415 W. Milwaukee, from the Rock River.

■ **June 22:** County allocates another \$26,200 for poor relief.

■ **June 24:** Iva Dene Latzke, 455 N. Chatham, wins a \$110 scholarship from local women's clubs to attend a Madison summer school for industrial workers.

■ **June 26:** Ernest Lou, 1103 W. State, dies from injuries suffered in a fall from a ladder at the Chevy plant, where he worked as an engineer.

■ **June 27:** Fire destroys a hangar and six airplanes at the Janesville Airport; damage is \$35,000.

■ **July 7:** "Theodore Fisher, 55, strangled

on soup and alcohol."

■ **Aug. 8:** In austerity moves forced by the Depression, the Janesville School Board reduces salaries of teachers and other employees 10 percent, cuts the band and orchestra to half-time activities and reduces insurance coverage.

■ **Aug. 25:** Depression continues to drain Rock County as supervisors must transfer \$50,000 from other funds to poor relief.

■ **Sept. 1:** The other shoe falls: Chevrolet announces the closing of its Janesville plant and its sister operation, Fisher Body.

■ **Sept. 20:** George W. Blanchard, Edgerton, wrests the GOP nomination for U.S. 1st District representative away from incumbent Thomas Amlie.

■ **Sept. 29:** County board votes to borrow \$400,000 for poor relief for the winter.

■ **Oct. 6:** Banks loan Rock County \$200,000 for operational expenses through the end of the year.

■ **Oct. 21:** Red Cross receives 3,000 yards of cotton from federal government for poor relief.

■ **Nov. 5:** President Herbert Hoover makes a last-minute campaign whistlestop here and advocates protective tariffs on imported goods.

■ **Nov. 8:** Hoover narrowly carries Janesville, 4,770 to 4,284, vs. Roosevelt, but FDR wins the presidency. George Blanchard of Edgerton is elected to Congress.

■ **Nov. 10:** Reconditioning of the Croake Brewery in Janesville starts at a cost of \$25,000 in anticipation of the end of Prohibition, a plank in Roosevelt's platform.

■ **Nov. 15:** Janesville Airport Corp. disbands because of slow business; future of airfield and air mail service is uncertain.

■ **Nov. 23:** Strapped by the costs of poor relief and lower tax revenues because of falling property values, the county board discontinues night patrols, cuts the salaries of the sheriff, undersheriff and chief deputy, and reduces meal money for prisoners by a nickel a meal.

■ **Dec. 1:** The Rock County Medical and Dental societies close their free clinics in Janesville and Beloit, refusing to serve the poor without compensation from the county.

■ City bus service is cut.

■ **Dec. 2:** Bright spot in the gloom: Parker Pen employs 750 for its holiday rush, more than in 1931.

■ **Dec. 6:** The flying Krause Brothers, Herman and Carl, decide to continue operations at Janesville Airport—at least until spring—assuring continued delivery of air mail.

■ **Dec. 22:** 1,000 needy children receive sweets and gifts at the local VFW bazaar because of the generosity of individuals and the work of relief organizations.

■ Rotary Club gives presents to 165 father-



less children at the club's Christmas dinner.

■ **Dec. 29:** 200 Rock County farmers form a group to criticize spending on education and highways and to demand reduced county government costs.

■ **Dec. 31:** Mortgage foreclosures in Rock County set an annual record at 142; in the previous year, 99 were filed.

■ **Sometime in 1932:** Janesville School District closes the old Jackson School, 423 Delavan.

## 1933

■ **Jan. 9:** Rock County hires a professional social worker, Rosamund Gilchrist of Milwaukee, to oversee relief efforts.

■ **Jan. 12:** County receives \$200,000 from bond sale for relief work and \$25,555 in the first federal relief funds, which are channeled through the state.

■ **Jan. 16:** In a mass meeting, Janesville residents call for a city adult recreational program with Pat Dawson as director and Mildred Townsend as assistant director.

■ **Jan. 23:** Janesville City Council extends deadline for tax payments from February 1 to March 22.

■ **Jan. 24:** "Exceptionally large crowd at courthouse as Rock County Taxpayers' Organization demands tax reduction."

■ **Feb. 7:** Rock County Board reduces the annual salary of the superintendent of rural schools from \$2,280 to \$1,600 and of supervising teachers from \$1,650 to \$1,100.

■ **Feb. 15:** "Mrs. Rene DeBok, 524 Center, miraculously escapes serious burns and injury when she falls down a flight of stairs from a small kitchen engulfed in flames as gasoline fumes explode when she cleans clothes (with gasoline) at her home."

■ **March 1:** First Janesville adult community recreation program: A mixed chorus of 69 people meets to rehearse.

■ **March 3:** All Wisconsin banks close for a statewide "holiday" to stop withdrawals—essentially runs on the banks by frantic depositors anxious to get their money. Thirty-two other states have called bank holidays, and FDR does the same for banks nationwide March 7. He also calls an emergency session of Congress, which passes the Emergency Banking Act on March 9.

■ **March 7:** Janesville banks reopen to accept new deposits and make change.

■ **March 11:** Northwest Airways discontinues passenger service on mail flights between Madison and Janesville and Chicago.

■ **March 13:** Their confidence in banks restored because of the new federal legislation and FDR's first "fireside chat," in which he explains the banking system and new law in

warm and confident tones, Janesville residents flock to local banks to deposit the gold and gold certificates they have been hoarding—in opposition to a federal anti-hoarding program. First National, Rock County and Merchant & Savings banks resume full services after receiving governmental authorization.

■ **April 4:** In referendum, Janesville reflects national sentiment by voting 11,365 to 5,774 to repeal the U.S. Constitution's 18th Amendment, the Prohibition amendment and the only constitutional amendment ever repealed.

■ **April 6:** Janesville council holds a special meeting to grant beer licenses to 29 taverns, hotels and restaurants; eight distributors, and 11 operators.

■ **April 7:** Many in Janesville sample 3.2 percent beer on the first day—since the start of Prohibition in Janesville on July 1, 1919—that federal law allows the sale of beer with an alcohol content of more than 0.5 percent.

The 18th Amendment will be repealed officially on Dec. 5 when Utah's vote provides the two-thirds majority needed to pass the 21st Amendment that rescinds the 18th.

■ **April 20:** George S. Parker resigns as president of Parker Pen to become chairman of the board, and his son, Kenneth, becomes company president.

■ **May 10:** 50 young men from Janesville and 20 from elsewhere in the county leave to join the "federal forest army"—the Civilian Conservation Corps, one of FDR's employment programs under the New Deal.

■ **May 16:** Seventy-five members of the 32nd Tank Company and 121st Field Artillery Band, also based in Janesville, are mobilized to quell potential violence in the Wisconsin farmers' statewide milk strike called to protest low prices. Milk dumping is the chief strike tactic. The next day, Pvt. Harry Wolfe, 1206 W. State, a tank company member, is beaten badly in a milk strike fight in Waukesha County.

■ **May 31:** All air mail and passenger service to Janesville is discontinued.

■ **June 6:** Rock County Normal School, the teachers' training institution, closes as an economy move. County supervisors refuse to allocate any county money or to accept state help.

■ **June 12:** State orders retail milk price raised from 8 to 9 cents a quart with most of the increase earmarked for farmers.

■ **June 27:** "Gazette thermometer reaches 109, highest temperature it has ever recorded; storm causes thermometer to drop 30 degrees within an hour, from 100 to 70. Farm buildings burned, crops flattened, telephone lines damaged in sudden electrical and hail storm." For the month, only three days (23-25) have highs below 90, and 11 days have highs of 100 or above.

■ **July 7:** Signs of economic recovery report-

ed: Number of families on relief declines 265 in June as compared to May, and Janesville bank deposits increase \$50,000 in first six months of the year.

■ **July 29:** Because of an increase in demand for cloth to upholster auto seats, Rock River Woolen Mill increases its staff to 75. Within two weeks, the number hits 200, but employment will fluctuate for months.

■ **Aug. 4:** Harry F. Jones, builder and original owner of Franklin Gardens, buys back the building, known as Chateau La Mar.

■ **Sept. 10:** The World's Fair in Chicago is a boon to railroads: One scheduled C&NW train through Janesville must come in five separate sections to accommodate the rush of fairgoers. The fair also provides jobs to about 200 Janesville autoworkers. Laid-off because of the Depression, the local GM workers assemble four cars an hour on a demonstration assembly line. They receive a new uniform and tie each day and are paid \$7 a day, but they must pay for their own lodging and meals.

■ **Sept. 14:** Janesville cops smash 15 slot machines seized at local bars.

■ **Sept. 17:** Archbishop Stritch of Milwaukee celebrates an outdoor Mass attended by 5,000 here, and he urges support of FDR's National Recovery Act (NRA).

■ **Oct. 10:** A large number of jobseekers are on the doorstep when a federal employment agency office opens at 114 E. Milwaukeee.

■ **Oct. 16:** More federal help for the needy arrives in Rock County: 30,000 pounds of salt pork and money to refinance farm mortgages.

■ **Oct. 17:** County's delinquent property taxes of \$216,079 are almost double delinquencies of the previous year.

■ **Oct. 18:** Janesville barbers have been cutting prices as well as hair, and on advice from the local NRA compliance board, the barbers end their price war and settle on 35 cents for a haircut.

■ **Oct. 24:** The most famous woman aviator of all time, Amelia Earhart, speaks to the Janesville Woman's History Club as the group celebrates its 57th anniversary. Four years later, she will be lost as she tries to fly across the Pacific Ocean. Earhart's body has not been found.

■ **Nov. 1:** State orders increase in the retail price of milk to 10 cents a quart.

■ **Nov. 23:** County civil works committee puts 350 men to work on federal employment projects. The next day, the federal public works program OKs \$45,000 to build a sewage treatment plant in Janesville.

■ **Nov. 24:** 30,000 people attend the parade, dance and other festivities celebrating the re-opening of the Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants.



■ **Nov. 28:** 200 men are at work here on federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects: trimming trees and building the sewage plant, storm sewers and the retaining wall on the east bank of the Rock River in downtown Janesville.

■ **Dec. 4:** With the return of distilled liquor, the Janesville council drafts a "drastic liquor control law" that prohibits serving liquor—distilled spirits, not beer—at bars and limits liquor service to tables. Backrooms and "blinds"—closed booths—are prohibited. The only place where packaged liquor may be sold is at a municipal dispensary; bars may not sell packaged liquor. The next day, the city is quiet as the 18th Amendment is repealed.

■ **Dec. 8:** 450 men work on local projects under federal programs. The number will double in six days.

■ **Dec. 20:** 600 at work at Chevrolet, and 100 on the job at Fisher Body—mere fractions of GM employment at its height, but confidence is returning to Janesville as merchants report the best holiday sales in three years.

■ **Dec. 22:** Protests force the city to rescind the part of the council's liquor ordinance that banned card games in bars.

■ **Dec. 30:** Clair Hurley, 22, of Milton, is killed while helping to fight a fire on the J.A. Austin farm when a gasoline can in the burning garage explodes. Hurt in the blast are Leslie Knopes, a Milton Junction fireman manning the hose with Hurley, and Chapin Hull of Milton Junction, who is standing nearby.

■ **Sometime in 1933:** The main road linking Janesville to Evansville and Madison is designated U.S. Highway 14.

■ Kittenball (softball) reaches new heights as Janesville and surrounding communities follow Footville's lead and light diamonds for night games.

■ Internationally famous golfers Walter Hagen and Gene Sarazen play the Janesville Country Club course on separate occasions. Hagen cards a 68, breaking by one stroke the record held by local champ William G. Lathrop. Sarazen shoots a par 72.

■ Beloit High basketball team has a perfect 10-0 conference season before winning the state championship for the second straight year. "Johnny Watts, Beloit negro forward, set an all-time Big Eight (season) scoring record, 97 points."

■ Nunn-Bush builds a shoe factory in Edgerton; the city also adds a new sewage treatment plant.

■ For the first time in its history, Evansville votes "wet," but it goes through the year without legalizing

the sale of any alcohol save beer. Evansville also constructs a water treatment plant.

■ Rock County Board increases to 62 supervisors.

■ Former Janesville resident Arno Cammerer, one-time Parker Pen employee, is named director of all U.S. national parks.

## 1934

■ **Jan. 1:** Two unidentified young women go through the ice while skating on the Rock River near Riverside Park and are saved from drowning by three local youths: Charles Hinkle Jr., 16, of 470 N. Main, and Donald, 18, and Rolio Buggs, 16, of 634 Sutherland.

■ **Jan. 6:** Janesville area farmers join in regional milk strike to protest a 70-cent cut in their price for milk to \$1.25 per hundred weight. The local Bowman Dairy, which normally takes in 90,000 pounds of milk daily, receives only a "generous saucerful" for the three small kittens adopted by dairy workers.

■ **Jan. 9:** Number of public works employees assigned to Janesville under federal works program cut by about half to 811.

■ **Feb. 5:** Bowling for Chambers-Owen Cubs, anchorman George Kay sets a new three-game record for Janesville: 729 pins.

■ **Feb. 6:** A.F. Hall, 93, a retired jeweler and one of Janesville's five remaining Civil War veterans, dies at his winter home in St. Petersburg, Fla.

■ **Feb. 14:** Highway 20 (the Monroe-Janesville-Delavan road) is renamed Highway 11.

■ **March 16:** Janesville grocer F.O. Samuels, angered when one of two stickup men pushes his wife, grabs a hammer and slugs one of the thugs in the head. As the robber falls to the floor of the store at Eastern Avenue (Delavan Drive) and South Jackson, the other would-be thief swings his sawed-off shotgun at Samuels, but the gun hits the counter, goes off and sprays its pellets into the robber's own legs. The gunmen flee—one running, one limping—and get away in a new Chevy. The attempted theft is one of six in the city on this day.

■ **March 17:** GM announces it will cut workers' hours from 40 to 36 a week and raise wages to cover the lost hours. The 2,300 workers at the Janesville Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants will be affected, and GM announces it will increase the work force here by about 500 in April.

■ **March 31:** The federal CWA program ends, to be replaced by the Public Works Administration (PWA). In the past four months, Rock County

spent almost \$950,000 of federal money providing 49,481 man-weeks of work. Of the total, more than \$237,000 was spent on projects in Janesville.

■ **April 3:** Measles epidemic sweeps Janesville as 232 new cases are reported, bringing total to 937.

■ **April 18:** Three "popular Edgerton youths" are hurt when their car loses a wheel and skids off Highway 26 north of Milton. Robert "Brick" Miller, 21, manager of the Edgerton Country Club and former four-sport star at Edgerton High, suffers a fractured skull and dies the next day. In 1927, at age 14, Miller quarterbacked the football team to an undefeated season. The other young men are Earl Grassman, 21, son of state Assemblyman Edward Grassman, and Underhill Jensen, 21.

■ **April 19:** Dr. Ella Fay, a physician in Whitewater for almost 40 years, is arrested on a second-degree manslaughter charge because a Lake Mills woman on whom she performed an abortion died of post-operative complications.

■ **June 3:** Clarence Johns, 26, 321 N. Franklin, is shot and killed by farmer Jesse Schwerin, 47, on a Porter Township farm owned by Johns' father, August. The next day, a six-man coroner's jury exonerates Schwerin, ruling the homicide justifiable because Schwerin thought Johns was a chicken thief. Schwerin knew the younger Johns, who earlier asked him for chickens. Between 1 and 2 a.m., Johns runs from the chicken coop toward Schwerin and does not stop when the farmer fires a warning shot from his pistol. Schwerin shoots Johns in the chest.

■ **June 4:** Appearing in Janesville Municipal Court on a charge of drunkenness, Mr. and Mrs. John Webber, 508 W. Milwaukee, turn to the prisoners' row of chairs and call their bull dog to the bench. Judge Charles Lange says the dog can stay where he is, to which Webber replies: "Well, he was with us when we were arrested, and he was just as drunk as we were."

■ **May 3:** Roberta Cox of Janesville earns the highest Girl Scout honor, Golden Eaglet. She is the fourth Janesville girl to earn the honor since Girl Scouts started here in 1924; the others were Beth and Doris Petters and Mamie Malbon.

■ Janesville's first project under the new federal Public Works Administration (PWA) starts as 20 men begin repaving Highway 51 from the Monterey Bridge to the south city limits.

■ **June 26:** A Milton-Edgerton kittenball (softball) game erupts into an argument, and Dr. F.C. Meyers, manager of the Meyer's Dentist team, uses "rather strong language" that leads to his arrest for using obscene language and payment of \$24.60—all court costs—because of the long list of witnesses called at his trial.



Walter Hagen



Gene Sarazen



## A dark day for Jefferson's 'sunshine lady'

**T**hough an admitted ex-bootlegger, she also was the "sunshine lady" of Jefferson, crocheting for her Lutheran church and helping the community's needy.

Her weakness was an affection for a manipulative, abusive, evil man.

He was Jefferson County's "Public Enemy No. 1" and a former Ku Klux Klan enforcer in Indiana. He was acquitted of kidnap, rape and murder in the sensational case that helped end the KKK's political and popular influence in the '20s. He stabbed one Jefferson County man and tried to shoot at least one other.

Earl Gentry lived with Carrie Gill in Jefferson for seven years, until July 1, 1934, when he was found shot through the head by his own gun.

Gentry, 47, was found in his car not far from the bungalow he shared with the 59-year-old widow.

Within days, Carl Church, an itinerant painter living in Fort Atkinson's hobo jungles, confessed that he killed Gentry because Gill asked him to and paid him \$60. Gill was kind to him when he had been sick, Church said, and he was not at all sorry for killing Gentry because he deserved death for his many abuses to Gill.

Gill also signed a confession—without an attorney present and without being advised that her statements could be used against her—but she soon recanted, setting the stage for one of the most sensational southern Wisconsin trials of the 1930s.

Attorneys for both sides got the all-male jury they wanted because they thought female jurors could not stomach some of the testimony.

At one point in the trial, the language was so strong that several women left the courtroom. One potential juror was dismissed because he was an ex-Klansman.

Gill pleaded innocent by reason of temporary insanity, maintaining that she was driven crazy by the many physical, psychological and emotional abuses that Gentry inflicted on her, including "sexual tortures" to try to make her submit to Gentry's demands for sodomy.

Her attorneys argued that Jefferson County authorities ignored Gill's pleas for help because they were afraid of Gentry, a 6-foot-3, 230-pound brute who carried a knife and bragged of the violence he had done and would do.

The prosecution argued that Gill was jeal-

ous because Gentry had transferred his affections to her niece, Josephine Probst, an "attractive, 23-year-old school teacher," according to The Janesville Gazette.

One expert witness for the prosecution testified that Gill had gunpowder residue on her right hand, while Church did not, implying the widow, not the painter, fired the fatal shot.

Gill's defense team made much of Gentry's past with the KKK.

In 1925, Gentry was one of two Klan bodyguards charged with D.C. Stephenson, grand dragon of the KKK in Indiana, in the kidnapping, rape and murder of Marge Oberholzter.

Stephenson kidnapped the young Oberholzter in her hometown of Indianapolis and took her to Hammond, Ind. Stephenson repeatedly raped and sexually tortured her for days, allegedly in Gentry's presence. The KKK leader then did not seek medical attention for Oberholzter when she swallowed poison to try to commit suicide to end her ordeal.

Oberholzter died soon after Stephenson let her go. He was sentenced to life imprisonment for second-degree murder, and his horrific crimes ripped away the Klan's charade of patriotism and devotion to Christian ideals.

Gentry was acquitted of crimes related to the kidnapping and to a charge of arson in the burning of Stephenson's house, either to eliminate evidence or to collect insurance. But Gentry mentioned the young torture/murder victim when he intimidated Gill, according to trial testimony.

At trial, Church recanted his confession, saying that his and Gill's original plan was simply to tie up Gentry and coerce him to confess that he tried to force sodomy on Gill starting in 1931. But he fell asleep, Church said, and woke up to find Gentry confronting him, not the ambush he had planned. He was forced to kill the much-bigger Gentry, Church testified.

Eight psychiatrists, called "alienists" in the newspaper, testified, and they split as to whether Gill was sane when she and Church hatched their plan. Five thought she was sane.

But the 12 men of the jury did not split. After deliberating five hours, they found Carrie Gill innocent of complicity in Gentry's murder.

"I have sinned, I know, but I have not murdered," Gill said. "Now I shall work and pray in repentance and thanksgiving."

■ **June 28:** Desperados rob the Bank of Milton. It is the first of three bank robberies in the county for the year, and the other two target the State Bank in Milton Junction: Aug. 10, when robbers make off with \$400, and Oct. 9, when the heist's haul was \$1,000.

■ **July 1:** Wisconsin's new unemployment insurance law, requiring employers of more than 10 people to pay 2 percent of total payroll to an unemployment compensation fund, goes into effect. GM executives immediately debate continuing operations here.

■ **July 4:** 14-year-old John Collins of Milton loses his right eye and suffers a broken nose, possible skull fracture and cuts when the firecracker he places under an old iron kettle blows the kettle to pieces. Collins has had an eventful eight days because he walked into the Bank of Milton holdup the previous week and briefly was held captive.

■ **July 18:** Nine-day heat wave starts with lowest high being 94 and six straight days of 100-plus highs, the peak being 108 on July 25.

■ **Aug. 4:** Buehler Bros. Grocery, 8 N. Main, (phone number 1013) advertises sirloin steak for 12 cents a pound, beef tenderloin for 18 cents a pound, four pounds of ground beef for a quarter and a pint jar of mustard for a dime.

■ **Sept. 2:** Thomas and Elger Carey of Janesville—wanted for numerous holdups in Beloit, Madison, Elkhorn and Sheboygan; a kidnapping in Madison; and stolen auto parts ring in Janesville—are arrested at a resort in Minnesota.

■ **Sept. 17:** Construction starts on Janesville's sewage treatment plant on the river off Western Avenue (Rockport Road); local contractor T.S. Willis won the \$71,000 contract.

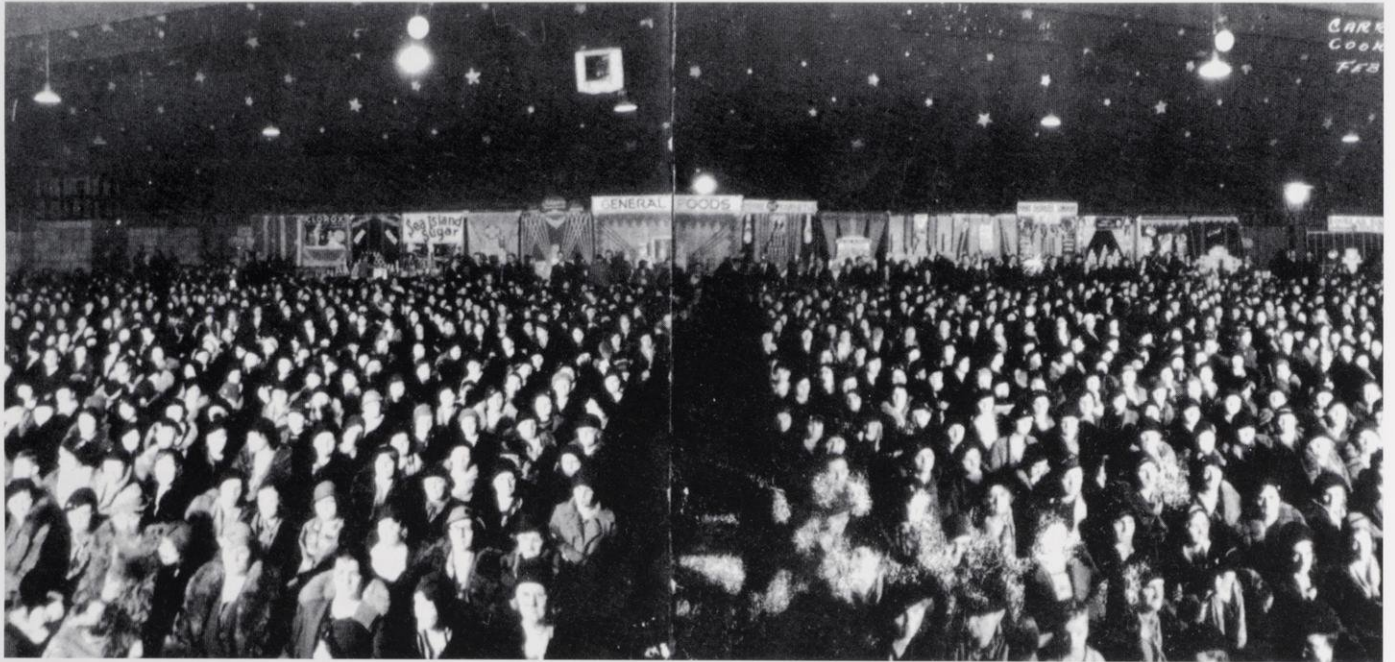
■ **Sept. 18:** Relief figures reported for August show a drop in the number of Rock County families on the dole—down to 1,499 from 1,781 in July. The total number of people receiving aid in August is 5,815. The number of Janesville individuals rises a little, though: up to 1,599 compared to 1,502.

■ **Sept. 25:** A pet cat jumps on the chest of F.G. Baumeister, owner of the Hall's Park Hotel on the south shore of Delavan Lake, and alerts him to the smell of smoke. Baumeister and his brother, Charles, escape the blaze, but the 50-year-old landmark hotel burns to the ground with a loss of \$20,000.

■ **Oct. 9:** Federal drought relief—seed and feed—to Rock County farmers surpasses \$10,000; aid started in the spring.

■ **Nov. 1:** In another effort to find work for the unemployed, the new Federal Housing Authority is loaning money to repair or renovate houses, and the Janesville Junior Association of Commerce (Jaycees) solicits





The Gazette's annual cooking schools drew hundreds of interested people, most of them women. The 1934 school, also sponsored by Carr Grocery, was conducted in Franklin Gardens.

515 projects from local homeowners.

■ **Nov. 6:** Uncharacteristically, Rock County votes Democratic in the governor's election, but Progressive Philip La Follette, who finishes third here, wins the race. His brother, Robert, is elected to the U.S. Senate, carrying Janesville but finishing a close second in Rock County. Progressive Tom Amlie of Elkhorn is returned to Congress as 1st District representative.

■ **Dec. 17:** Salil Wells, a 20-year-old Albany nurse and housekeeper, offers herself in marriage to a "Clark Gable-type" man who will deposit \$20,000 in her impoverished, sick parents' name. Though she wants a Gable-type, "30 to 35 years of age, at least 6 feet tall and weighing 175 to 205 pounds," she prefers blond or red hair. Her description of herself for prospective bridegrooms includes: "Height, 5 feet, 7 inches; weight, 130; hair, brown and curly; eyes, brown; dimpled cheeks and pouting lips; waist, 29 inches; bust, 36 inches; hips, 36 inches ... and she wears size seven shoes."

■ **Dec. 24:** Not so merry a Christmas for the Louis Krug and Richard Woods families of rural Janesville. A late-night fire destroys the duplex house they shared. All family members, a housekeeper and hired hand—nine people in all—escape injury but can save only the clothes they are wearing.

■ **Sometime in 1934:** Since June, 430 Walworth County farmers apply for federal aid because of the drought.

■ Car and truck accidents kill 37 people on Rock County roads.

■ National re-employment service finds

work for 1,000 men and women here.

■ Janesville amends "drastic" liquor ordinance of 1933 to allow drinking at the bar, instead of just tables, and the length of bars is no longer restricted. But women are still barred from drinking at the bar.

■ Federally funded, city-supervised workers install dugouts at the Riverside Park ball diamond and tennis courts at Palmer Park.

■ Milk price actually paid to farmers rises 34 percent over the year to an average \$1.25 per hundredweight.

■ Operated by Wisconsin Power & Light, city bus service shows a \$1,000 loss for the year.

## 1935

■ **Jan. 7:** The hiring of a second night deputy allows Rock County sheriff to restore 24-hour patrol and response.

■ **Jan. 21:** Five Janesville boys, ages 13-16, are arrested for a string of burglaries, including the thefts of cigarettes, whiskey and blankets. While in the police station, one of the boys tries to crack the safe in the chief's office.

■ **Jan. 31:** Rock County monthly relief costs hit a new high of more than \$98,000 as almost 10,000 people are supported at least in part by the public charity.

■ **Feb. 11:** Janesville's three stores selling packaged liquor—Meyer's, Van's and Haskins'—petition the city council to limit the number of package liquor licenses to three. The council accepts the petition without action.

■ At a session of the "Janesville safety school"—a community group that meets regular-

ly to discuss various hazards—Gazette editor Stephen Bolles recommends that eyesight exams be part of the state's licensing process for auto drivers.

■ **Feb. 13:** In an effort to stop gasoline price wars, Wisconsin establishes a minimum price of 16 cents per gallon.

■ **Feb. 20:** Under the direction of Chief Dan Torrisi, who as a Beloit detective broke the Palmero murder case in Janesville in 1916, Beloit cops raid 12 taverns and seize 17 slot machines.

■ **February:** Ossit Bros. Furniture Co. moves here from Milwaukee. By the end of the year, it will employ 40 men.

■ **March 1:** Ruth Reed, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Reed, 1213 N. Vista, wins Janesville's seventh-grade spelling championship by correctly spelling "clamorous."

■ **March 3:** While setting off aerial bombs as part of the promotion for the movie "Devil Dogs of the Air," starring Jimmy Cagney and Pat O'Brien, Jeffris Theater employee Ulysses G. Bahr, 316 Dodge, has a bomb go off in his face, seriously burning him and threatening his eyesight.

■ **March 4:** WCLO carries a presentation by Mercedes Taliaferro, a "young colored student at the University of Wisconsin." Her talk is titled "The Negro Brings His Gifts," referring to positive contributions African-Americans make to U.S. society.

■ **March 13:** Former Rock County Sheriff Charles Garey is one of four men arrested on charges of taking bets—bookmaking—on horse races.



■ **March 14:** A dust storm that blinds and chokes five states also affects Janesville, "the first experienced here since last summer. ... The sky was dark and dirty all morning, sometimes exhibiting peculiar green or yellow colors."

■ **April 2:** Spring Valley is the only Rock County township to vote to stay dry; prohibit alcohol sales.

■ **April 18:** City of Janesville drops its case against George Kay, operator of the Blue Bird tavern, for serving a woman a drink at the bar, instead of a table as required by local ordinance. Similar offenses warranted warnings, not arrests, city attorney Robert J. Cunningham says.

■ **May 30:** Clay Weatherly, who moved to Janesville from Rhinelander and played full-back for the Janesville High football team in 1927, is killed when his race car careens over a wall at 110 mph during the Indianapolis 500. At this time, mechanics ride with drivers in the Indy 500, and Weatherly's mechanic, Edwin Bradburn of Los Angeles, suffers a broken back. Weatherly, whose parents did not live here, was active in many school activities and was auto racing for three years before racing—and dying—in his first Indy 500.

■ **June 5:** GM officials visit their Janesville operations as part of a national tour in the wake of widespread strikes to ascertain work rules and procedures. Some of the rules are time-and-a-half paid to Fisher Body employees who work more than nine hours in one day or more than 48 hours in a week and to Chevy employees who work more than 48 hours a week. The work day is nine hours. Production workers earn 60 cents an hour.

■ **July 2:** "Dark, petite and vivacious," Maxine Fisher, 1207 Ruger, is crowned queen of Janesville's centennial celebration. She was selected by popular vote. Ruth Schmidt and Jane Theurer place second and third, respectively.

■ **July 5:** The original plan calls for the Chicago White Sox to play the Cleveland Indians in an exhibition game as part of the Janesville centennial, but the contest between Major League teams could not be arranged. Instead, the Chicago American Colored Giants of the Negro League whip the Madison Blues, 7-2. Baseball is hugely popular, and, in the absence of TV, the Gazette reports on Page 1 stories of the All-Star and World Series games with inning-by-inning, play-by-play accounts.

■ **Aug. 27:** A "business opportunities" classified ad in the Gazette offers a fully equipped Lake Geneva tavern, Wally's, for sale for \$600.

■ **Sept. 19:** Another sign of recovery: Sales figures for the year show 1,918 new cars sold in Rock County with 827 going to Janesville folks and 675 to Beloit residents.

■ **Oct. 21:** The Janesville High honor roll

## Louis' challenge goes unanswered

The "Brown Bomber," heavyweight fighter Joe Louis, made a promotional stop in Janesville on Nov. 4, 1935, as he was on his way to the world championship.

Louis, "negro heavyweight whose left hook has returned boxing to a big business basis," was the titular "second," cornerman, to middle-weight Young Joe Gans, The Janesville Gazette reported.

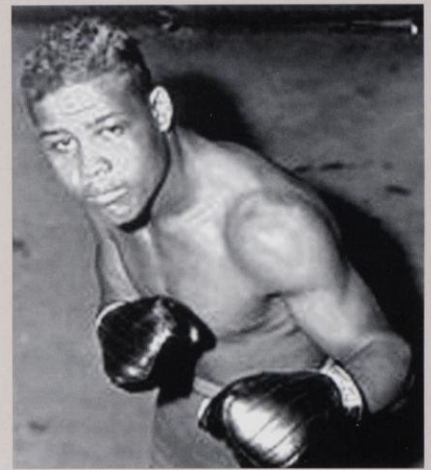
Gans, who had the same promoters as Louis, was knocked out in the bout at Franklin Gardens.

Louis, who already knocked out former heavyweight champs Primo Carnera and Max Baer, was not yet champion and drew what the Gazette described as a poor crowd of fewer than 1,000 to the local fights.

Louis, "regarded as the uncrowned champion," wore a "neat fitting brown suit" and "his big brown shoes (are) shined to mirror brightness," the newspaper reported.

Louis obliged those in the appreciative audience who called for a speech.

"Standing on the shelf, just outside of the ropes and leaning on the upper strand, Joe, wearing his Sunday smile, in a soft



voice said: 'I'm no speaker, but I challenge anybody in the house.'

"And there were no heroes present. No one even accepted the challenge in a whisper."

About 18 months later, Louis KO'd James Braddock for the championship, and the "Brown Bomber" defended the title for 12 years—the longest tenure of any heavyweight champ—until his retirement in 1949.

for the school year's first six weeks recognizes 57 girls and 38 boys. To make honors, students must have a B or better average in the required four subjects; some students take five subjects.

■ **R.S. Harper** of Janesville is unsuccessful in three days of pheasant hunting, but as he drives back to the city, a pheasant flies through the car window and hits Harper in the head. The luckless bird winds up as Harper's dinner.

■ **Nov. 1:** Janesville's Myers Hotel sways and houses tremble about 12:05 a.m. as an earthquake centered in Ottawa, Canada, sends shock waves across 17 states and three Canadian provinces.

■ **Railroad brakemen** Leonard O. Stetler, 29, 428 N. Pearl, is crushed to death between the couplings of two freight cars in the train yard at the Fisher Body plant.

■ **Nov. 5:** New stockyards are installed in Janesville by the railroad tracks near South Pearl Street. Two new pens for cattle and other livestock to be shipped by train or which must change trains form the foundation of the new stockyards, which replace the old yards on North Bluff (Parker Drive) Street.

■ **Nov. 6:** Famed evangelist Billy Sunday, who preached often in Janesville, dies in Chicago, and Janesville Police Chief Charles Newman remembers him fondly from when

the two were teammates on the Chicago Cubs.

■ **Nov. 18:** A series of talks starts here to explain a new government program: Social Security.

■ **Dec. 4:** William Bender, a 15-year-old "child of the road," is ordered by a Janesville judge to return to his New York home. The young vagabond has traveled across the United States four times, hitchhiking and hopping freights. Such "bumming tours" are common because U.S. unemployment remains high—11 million at this time from a population of 120 million—and men take to the road to seek jobs. Sometimes, they take their families with them; often they desert their families.

■ **Dec. 10:** An outbreak of scarlet fever quarantines 25 people in Janesville.

■ **Dec. 23:** A last-minute Christmas buying rush hits Janesville stores as local GM employees learn they will share \$68,000 of holiday bonuses, the checks to be distributed on Christmas Eve.

■ **Sometime in 1935:** The average cost of a new house is \$2,700 compared to \$4,000 in 1930.

■ **GM's Janesville employment** reaches 3,000, and production sets a record of 115,310 Chevrolet cars and trucks.

■ **Doty Manufacturing Co.,** manufacturer of appliances and machines since 1874, closes;



## Neighbors battle over use of park

**O**n May 1, 1936, the “Battle of Columbus Circle,” a Janesville neighborhood, hit Page 1 of The Janesville Gazette.

“Most of the circle is split into factions over the row, which is fast assuming the proportions of a good-sized feud,” The Janesville Gazette reported. “And it seems that it isn’t the ‘little things that start big wars’—it’s the little and big children.

“‘Shrubs vs. Children’ is the name of the battle with the proud mamas and papas on the one side and the childless seekers after beauty on the other.”

The conflict over the triangular park at the north end of the oval neighborhood off East Milwaukee Street had been simmering for years.

The neighborhood kids used the park for

ball games, which didn’t sit well with the childless lovers of landscaping.

“The residents who have children in their homes place pride in their offspring above pride in their surroundings, it is charged, and allow the children to run willy-nilly over the park, which, the childless faction allows, was placed there for its aesthetic value rather than for its playground facilities,” the newspaper reported.

The childless neighbors called the police in the past, but the kids could hear the cop’s motorcycle, so they broke up the games before he arrived, then resumed when he left.

“Armed with righteous indignation” and permission from the city, the neighbors without children planted the park with shrubs. They hired a professional landscaper who

planted the bushes where home plate, the pitching mound and baselines were for the kids’ baseball games.

“And so the Columbus Circle Tigers, or whatever they call their baseball nine, awoke one morning to find, instead of a diamond, a nicely planted park,” the Gazette reported.

But the final salvo remained to be fired.

“With a definite lack of finesse but with an admirable skill and dexterity, the fathers of Columbus Circle, without the law or a landscape gardener, proceeded to undo what the others had done,” the paper reported.

The dads dug up the shrubs and left them in neat bundles on the lawns of the lovers of landscaping.

Columbus Circle kids still played ball in the park in 1999.

part of the facility still stands at 301 N. Main.

■ **Janesville Cash Furniture** opens a second store on North Bluff Street (Parker Drive). “We did a 50 percent greater business in 1935 than in 1934. We expect this condition to continue in 1936,” owner Joseph Siker says.

## 1936

■ **Jan. 1:** City employees’ salaries—reduced several years ago by 15 percent for most and voluntarily by 28 percent by City Manager Henry Traxler for himself—are restored to previous levels.

■ **Jan. 13:** Janesville School Board restores half of pay cut forced on teachers in 1933.

■ **Jan. 17:** “Riff Raff” is playing at the Myers Theater, and though Spencer Tracy is in the movie, top billing goes to Jean Harlow. “She’s got a new thrill for you. She’s a honey-brown bombshell now—gayer, scrappier, more alluring than ever before.”

■ **Feb. 24:** Janesville council limits beer licenses to one per 750 residents, about the same ratio in 1999. The council vote puts the city-wide limit at 30 beer bars, but the city has 37 bars. Council members allow all bars to remain open, saying they will let business attrition lower the number to the limit. Nevertheless, they grant two new licenses.

■ **March 3:** A new state code sets minimum wages for construction workers in Janesville higher than in many other locales: \$1 an hour for masons, 80 cents for cement finishers, 85 cents for carpenters and 55 cents for laborers. Accounting, office and clerical workers in construction trades are guaranteed \$14 a week.

■ **April 1:** A new form of public aid—the old age pension, essentially the first Social Security payments—pays an average \$16 monthly to 285

government-approved Rock County residents. At this time, the federal government pays half the benefit; the state picks up 30 percent, and the county 20 percent.

■ **April 2:** Foundry worker Edmund P. Null, 25, is crushed by a tractor on the job at Fairbanks-Morse in Beloit.

■ **April 15:** Two Rock County flood control projects—erecting floodgates at the Indianford and Fourth Street (Centerway) dams—are included in federal legislation.

■ **April 16:** Fritz Hoffman, son of the owner of the Butterfly Club, rural Beloit, is shot and killed by one of three bandits who rob the tavern and its customers of \$300. A shotgun slug rips away much of the 25-year-old Hoffman’s right leg, and he bleeds to death en route to the Beloit hospital. Two of the robbers match the description of the highwaymen who robbed two motorists two days before, and their method of operation—slashing tires—is the same. Several suspects will be questioned over the next three years, but spotchecks of Gazette files revealed no arrests.

■ **May:** Janesville Country Club installs a 70-by 30-foot swimming pool.

■ **May 1:** Continuing his 37-year tradition, George Grimm, judge in Rock and Jefferson counties, is the first man to wear a skimmer—white straw hat—on the first day of summer white hat season.

■ **May 30:** Fireworks at dawn herald the start of Beloit’s three-day festival to celebrate the city’s centennial, which includes a pageant staged by 1,500 people.

■ **June 19:** Besides being an honor student, Marvin Barckley, 117 E. Milwaukee, graduates from Janesville High without missing a day in three years of high school.

■ **June 25:** In Lake Geneva, “Bobby Tyner, 13-year-old negro lad from Chicago, retained his western marbles championship by defeating Dick Hammersley, Lake Geneva, in the finals of the four-day (five-state) tournament.”

■ **June 26:** Charles A. Drawheim, roadmaster for the Milwaukee Road, dies of injuries suffered four days earlier when a crane bucket loading gravel at Wheeler Pit (Delavan Drive and Wright Road) swung too far and hit him in the head.

■ **July 1:** Two unkempt, revolver-brandishing robbers heist \$5,200 from the Bank of Albany after ordering four bank employees and five customers to lie on the floor of a rear room.

■ Women’s summer beach fashion is much changed from the cover-all look of 20 years previous: One-piece wool—believe it or not—bathing suits exposing nearly the entire leg are on sale at Janesville’s Kresge store for \$1.69; midriff-baring halters cost a quarter.

■ **July 4:** Pyrotechnical expert William E. Grady of Elgin, Ill., is injured when one of his skyrockets explodes prematurely as he helps shoot fireworks for Janesville’s community celebration at Riverside Park, and 2-year-old Joyce Mary Rohloff, 225 N. Terrace, suffers a badly burned neck and back when burning embers from a skyrocket fall on her neck at the park.

■ **July 13:** All-time high recorded temperature for Janesville: 110.5 degrees.

■ **Aug. 12:** Norma Benson, “Miss Delavan,” reigns as queen of Delavan’s 100th birthday celebration.

■ **Aug. 13:** A freight train derails a mile east of Janesville on the Milwaukee Road tracks, and 18 cars, 13 of them oil tankers, burn in the ensuing spectacular blaze. Loss is estimated at \$150,000, but no one is injured.



■ **August:** Gerda Odegaard, rural Evansville, is chosen the county's "healthiest girl" in annual competition at the Rock County 4-H Fair.

■ **Sept. 7:** During a Labor Day baseball game in Brooklyn between the Albion Tigers and Cooksville Orioles, the temporary bleachers collapse, injuring 24 people and sending three to the hospital.

■ **Sept. 15:** A violent storm sweeps through Walworth County, and a lightning bolt kills Darien farmer Clyde M. Putnam, 43.

■ Men's fashions feature the return of the double-breasted suit as the style leader and a reduction of the pleats, yokes, tucks and shirring that gussied up men's jackets.

■ **Oct. 28:** Republican vice presidential candidate Frank W. Knox charges the FDR administration with corruption and cronyism as he addresses 1,100 people in a whistlestop speech in Janesville.

■ **Nov. 3:** For the first time in 74 years, Rock County votes Democratic in a presidential election. The county's 17,987 votes for FDR eclipse the 14,689 for Republican Alf Landon, and Janesville and Beloit both vote for Roosevelt as he wins in the largest national landslide in history. Walworth County remains in the GOP column, but Landon's 1,500-vote margin is the slimmest in many years, and Elkhorn votes in favor of a Democratic president for the first time in its history. Despite the FDR avalanche, Progressive Philip La Follette—known in headlines simply as Phil—is re-elected governor of Wisconsin.

■ **Dec. 10:** Three taverns in Turtle Township—including the Butterfly and Shopiere bar—are raided for selling liquor because residents voted the town dry in a referendum.

■ **Sometime in 1936:** Janesville's Chevrolet plant sets an all-time record for production—139,957 cars and trucks—and invests \$500,000 in expansion, one of the major reasons the Gazette reports the city to be in full recovery from the Depression at year's end. The plant employs 3,000 people.

■ Dr. Carl N. Neupert, who practiced in Janesville for many years, is picked as Wisconsin's supervisor of public health.

■ Janesville receives the OK for a new \$200,000 post office on Dodge Street between Franklin and Jackson streets; the building housed Kealey Pharmacy and other offices in 1999.

■ The county's monthly relief roll drops from 1,203 cases and a cost of \$27,328 in January to 367 cases and a cost of \$17,440 in November.

■ Melvin Waggoner wins the second annual Centennial Golf Tournament at Janesville Country Club by shooting a 67, which breaks by one stroke the record set by world-famous tour pro Walter Hagen in 1933.

■ Eugene Dallman and Barbara Catlin are the men's and women's winners in the first Janesville tennis tournament.

■ The year's weather is "freakish," the Gazette reports. The first three weeks of January are moderate but followed by a month of "sub-zero weather. ... Prospects were bright for an unusually large harvest because of the heavy snowfall, but April, May, June and July did not bring the usual rains and a bad drought was experienced." May and June are hot but just a warm-up—literally—for the sizzling heat waves that follow. Christmas is "green" with a high of 56.

■ The Bucholz brothers—Otto and C. Herman—close their Janesville shop that makes and repairs horse-drawn wagons.

■ After being vacant for eight years, the former Hohenadle/Bower City Canning Co. is reopened as Janesville Canning.

## 1937

■ **Jan. 8:** An ice storm paralyzes traffic in southern Wisconsin, but schools remain open. An unnamed Janesville Junior High student dons ice skates and skates the two miles to school from his rural home only to find that he forgot to bring his shoes, so he must skate back to get them and skate in again. "His tardiness was excused. Several girls, wearing snow suits because of the weather, forgot their skirts and also found themselves in embarrassing positions."

■ **Jan. 15:** Janesville Police Capt. William Ford, 383 N. Chatham, is chosen as the department's new chief. In his last official act as chief, the retiring Charles Newman issues his annual report for 1936 in which he states: "The greatest problem in this city is the regulation of traffic and the reduction of juvenile delinquency."

■ **Jan. 20:** Rock County Board OKs hiring two motorcycle deputies to be the rural highway patrol assigned specifically to traffic duty. The sheriff's department has not systematically patrolled county roads for traffic violators in 10 years, and regular deputies have enforced traffic laws as they see violators, chiefly drunken drivers.

■ **Jan. 30:** By two votes, the Rock County Board repeals the 10-year-old dance hall ordinance that prohibits dancing in taverns and alcohol in licensed dance halls. "The only law now operative is a general state statute prohibiting drunken persons from attempting to dance."

■ **Feb. 1:** An injunction halts enforcement of the law banning "digger" games as gambling in Rock County. The games involve trying to snag a prize with a toy crane, and they are banned along with punch boards, slot machines and pinball games. Pinball is allowed as long as no prize, not even a free game, is offered.

The injunction eventually is dissolved, and digger machines are impounded as gambling devices.

■ **Feb. 5:** 4-year-old Phyllis Gunderson of rural Beloit, hearing the plight of victims of massive flooding in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, demands that her parents—Mr. and Mrs. John Gunderson—take 50 cents of her savings to donate to flood relief. Phyllis earns the money by carrying a small bucket of milk to a neighbor each day; 50 cents represents about two months of her errands.

■ Raymond Scott, member of the La Prairie 4-H Club, is judged the best handler and trainer of colts in statewide 4-H competition.

■ **Feb. 28:** First payments by employers of Social Security taxes deducted from workers' wages are due.

■ **March 13:** With several arrests for speeding and reckless driving, Janesville police interrupt what they call the "tavern rush" of traffic streaming into the city along Beloit Road (Highway 51) between midnight and 2 a.m. Chief Ford reports that most accidents in which people are injured here occur on the Monterey Bridge between midnight and 2 a.m. and are



Edward VIII, King of Great Britain, gave up his throne on Dec. 11, 1936, to marry the woman he loved, American divorcee Wallis Warfield Simpson, whom the British government would not accept as queen. Edward's brother, George VI, assumed the throne and gave Edward the title of Duke of Windsor, and the duke and duchess left England in self-imposed exile. In their travels, they visited Janesville by train; the duke is at left and the duchess is emerging from the train car.



## Beer prices prompt picket of picket

Pickets picketed the picket on May 21, 1937, as the dispute between the AFL (American Federation of Labor) and CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations) spilled over to the tavern industry in Janesville. The organizations will eventually merge in 1955, but in the '30s, they were rivals whose disputes often led to violence.

The Tavern Keepers Association, affiliated with the AFL, wanted the price of beer raised from 10 to 15 cents a bottle, but the Fitch tavern at the corner of Center and Western (Rockport Road) persisted in selling dime beer.

The sole, lonely, hired AFL picket marching back and forth in front of the bar went unchallenged during the morning, but a shortage of engines put the Chevrolet workers, CIO members, off the job early.

They were eager "to quench their thirst as summer weather finally hit Janesville," the Gazette reported.

The CIO pickets took turns harassing the lone AFL picket and going inside to drink dime beer, but the AFL man "refused to stop his endless pacing."

directly related to speed.

■ **March 15:** The deadline for filing federal income tax returns is today (not April 15 as in the later part of the century), and hundreds of Janesville residents face penalties for filing late. Some 700 city folks visited the post office in the past week to file directly with deputy IRS collectors on duty, but hundreds, if not thousands of others, wait to the last minute to file by mail.

■ **April 9:** In a crackdown on drunken driving, Rock County deputies arrest four drivers on a single Friday night. All plead guilty the next day. They pay fines of \$85 and costs or are sentenced to 60 days in jail and lose their licenses for three months.

■ **April 10:** 36 Janesville property owners file for installation of curb and gutter under the federal WPA program under which property owners pay only for material and the WPA picks up the labor cost. The cost to property owners is about 35 cents a foot, half the full assessment.

■ **May 1:** Bank robber Leo F. Mellon of Dubuque, Iowa, has his 15-year sentence for

robbery commuted to 10 years by Gov. Phil La Follette. Mellon confessed to the heist of the State Bank of Milton Junction on Oct. 9, 1934. He and accomplices Melvin Leist and John Hauff, both of Rockford, Ill., planned to also rob three Janesville businesses—Monterey Hotel, Jeffris Theater and Croake Brewery, Mellon said in his confession.

■ **Dick Murphy**, representing St. Patrick's Catholic School, wins four events and places second in the fifth to win the citywide grade school swimming meet staged in the YMCA pool. St. Pat's wins school honors.

■ **Janesville High** initiates 42 scholars into its chapter of the National Honor Society.

■ **June 1:** Addition of four officers allows the Janesville Police Department to go to three eight-hour shifts. Rookie cops make \$125 a month.

■ **June 13:** Edward Helgeson, 814 Center, jumps fully clothed into the Monterey Dam raceway to rescue 8-year-old Charles Brown, 804 Center, who was pushed into the Rock River accidentally by playmates. Helgeson holds the boy with one arm and a stump with the other until help comes.

■ **July 1:** Town of Turtle, which has allowed only the sale of beer, now allows sale of distilled liquor.

■ **July 3:** Corn Exchange, a short street (no longer existing) that makes a triangle with West Milwaukee and Franklin streets (where the Doughboy Monument is), becomes Janesville's first one-way street as an experiment for the three-day holiday weekend. Only northbound traffic from Milwaukee to Franklin is allowed along the one-block street.

■ **July 4:** The first Independence Day in Janesville history on which the city prohibits the sale of fireworks within city limits.

■ **July 6:** The clerks' union and Janesville shopkeepers agree to end the four-week experiment of closing on Saturday nights. Stores will remain open Saturday evenings but close Wednesday afternoons.

■ **Aug. 13:** "The treacherous Turtle Creek swimming hole at the Shopiere Dam claims the lives of two children ... Grace Ludwig, 14, and Harold Fritz, 10, who reside on neighboring farms three miles west of Shopiere at Lather's Corners."

■ **Aug. 17:** City of Janesville announces steps to increase the flow of water in the new artesian well in the southern part of Riverside Park.

■ **Aug. 30:** Nationally known lecturer Janette Serrec starts a four-day "charm school" at Janesville's Apollo Theater under the sponsorship of the Gazette and WCLO. The presentations are augmented by Serrec's "Charm Chat" broadcast on WCLO and hosted

by the radio station's "stylist" Villette Du Cray. Serrec urges women to "dare to be your age. No woman need ever be ugly, withered and old. Age should be only a ripening, not a withering of the beauty of a woman."

■ **Sept. 17:** The Janesville High Bluebirds trounce Hall Township High of Spring Valley, Ill., 20-0, in the first night football game played at Monterey Stadium. Lights were installed two weeks before.

■ **Sept. 30:** Donald W. Dorn, 9, only son of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Dorn, dies of infantile paralysis (polio), the first such death in Janesville since 1928. Dorn is one of three city children afflicted with the disease, which is at epidemic proportions in Chicago, forcing quarantines and school closings.

■ **Oct. 14:** "Heidi" starring child acting sensation Shirley Temple opens at the Myers Theater.

■ An advertisement for the 1938 Double-X Philco radio touts an inclined control panel: "No Squat. No Stoop. No Squint."

■ **Nov. 1:** Wisconsin farmers are paying their lowest interest rate in years—an average 5.5 percent—on mortgages and loans for seed, feed and equipment.

■ Number of Janesville kids vaccinated for small pox reaches 1,000 after a case is reported in the city.

■ In the wake of Halloween pranks, the unnamed boys who put a buggy on top of the McCarthy-Hugill grocery store at St. Mary's Avenue (Memorial Drive) and Caroline Street promise to take it down.

■ **Nov. 19:** Cooks preparing for Thanksgiving dinner in Janesville will pay 38 cents for a top-grade turkey, 35 cents for a chicken, 32 cents for a duck and 28 cents for a goose.

■ **Nov. 20:** Joseph A. Craig, the man responsible for bringing GM to Janesville and a patron of 4-H, gives the county fairgrounds in trust to the Rock County 4-H Club and Livestock Exposition, the group overseeing 4-H in Janesville. Craig acquired control of the fairground's 35 acres about six years previous.

■ **Nov. 21:** Mary Raybor receives word that her son, John Harry Raybor, was killed in Spain about two weeks before. Raybor, 37, fought with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade—a collection of American idealists, Communists and Socialists—against the fascist rebels led by Gen. Francisco Franco for about four months until he was machine-gunned in a skirmish.

■ **Dec. 6:** Hubert Learn, 56, and his son, Lowell, 21, are found shot to death on their farm northwest of Edgerton in Dane County. The coroner there rules that the elder Learn killed his son, then shot himself.

■ **Dec. 30:** Four women and a man are arrested in a prostitution raid on the Lucille



Hotel, 523 Wall, Janesville. The women are described as "manager of the hotel," "a Beloit negress," "an Indian woman" and "white, who said her home is near Joliet, Ill."

■ **Sometime in 1937:** The Jeffris Theater, 319 W. Milwaukee (vacant Park Place Theater), is completely remodeled.

■ Judges in Rock County grant one divorce for about every three marriages: 427 marriages, 165 divorces.

■ The small summer resort on Lake Koshkonong in Newville has been expanding with an influx of tourists from Illinois building cottages in the Mallwood Estates, Highwood and Hickory Hill subdivisions. What was just a resort stretching a few hundred feet on the lake now numbers more than 400 homes and cottages.

■ For the first time in 25 years, Janesville High beats Beloit in football. The 14-0 victory helps the Bluebirds tie Madison East for the Big Eight conference championship.

## 1938

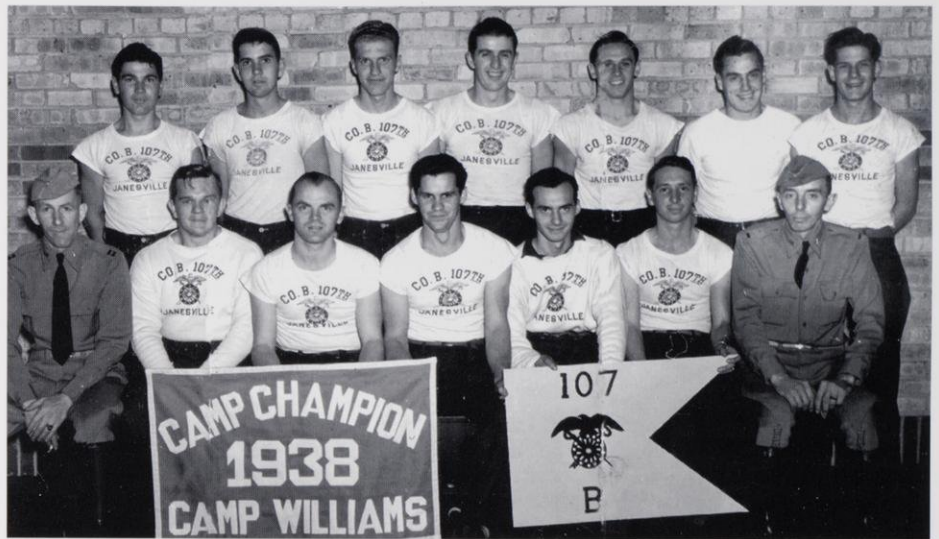
■ **Jan. 4:** Recession strikes deeper into Janesville as the city's GM plants go to a four-day, 28-hour week and 200 are laid off at the Chevy plant. FDR's first New Deal involved deficit federal spending for public works and started the country on the road to recovery. But in 1938, partly in the belief that the Depression was over and partly in response to conservative political and editorial criticism, he balances the federal budget, and a recession thwarts the recovery.

■ **Jan. 19:** A gasoline explosion and fire tear apart the Bennison and Lane Bakery garage at 73 S. Franklin, and employees "beat death to the door," escaping serious injuries.

■ **Feb. 15:** Judge Ernest P. Agnew lowers the standard fine for speeding in Janesville municipal court from \$10 to \$7 over the objections of city attorney Robert J. Cunningham. The lower fine and court costs amount to \$10.70, of which Agnew says: "Most people think it's plenty to pay."

■ **Feb. 24:** Fire destroys the North Milton Rural School on Highway 26 just north of town. It is the second rural school destroyed by fire in a month; the Mouat School east of Janesville burned in January.

■ **April 3:** Mortimer Carrier, a junior at Edgerton High School, receives a letter from G. Allen, a passenger on the steamship Britannic, docked at the Caribbean island of Trinidad off the coast of Venezuela. Allen writes in response to a note Carrier put in a bottle, which he dropped into flood-swollen Saunders Creek running behind his home on Feb. 6. The bottle traveled down Saunders Creek into the Rock River, then into the



The 1938 kittenball (softball) champs of National Guard units training at Camp Douglas were members of Janesville's Company B of the 107th Quartermaster Regiment.

Mississippi River and finally into the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea to wash up on the island's beach.

■ **May 23:** Fire destroys the grandstand at the Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds. Loss of the grandstand solidifies public opinion behind the idea for Rock County to buy the fairgrounds from the trust set up the year before by Joseph Craig. The county buys a little more than half of the trust's 35 acres, and a \$45,000 WPA project will build many of the permanent buildings on the grounds.

■ **May 31:** Almost 600 people have signed up for bicycle licenses because of a new Janesville ordinance, and no bicycle horns remain to be sold in the city. The supply of bike lights also runs low.

■ **June 2:** Discovery of rabies forces the quarantine of all dogs in Magnolia, Center, Plymouth and Spring Valley townships for 90 days. In nine days, the quarantine is extended to the city of Beloit and Newark, Beloit and Turtle townships. Dogs must be confined, tied, leashed or muzzled.

■ **June 9:** Sheriff James E. Croake impounds digger games from a carnival operating east of Janesville and warns the operators to tone down displays of nudity in its midway shows.

■ Janesville High graduates its largest class to date, 267.

■ **July 1:** Torrential rains—almost 6 inches in 14 hours in Walworth County and 3 inches in 24 hours in Janesville—swamp crops, wash out rail tracks and bridges, and damage roads.

■ **July 13:** A gasoline explosion ignites a blaze at Janesville's Gower Flats, 975 S. Jackson, and six people suffer burns. Four are hospitalized.

■ **July 19:** The Barnes-Sells Floto Circus—

with acts from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus such as Frank "Bring 'Em Back Alive" Buck and his Caravan of Recently Captured Beasts from Distant Wilds and Gargantua the Great, "Largest and Most Ferocious Gorilla Ever Seen on this Continent"—plays in Janesville.

■ **Aug. 16:** Ardis Arnold of Milton is crowned dairy queen of the Rock County 4-H Fair.

■ **Aug. 20:** A wind storm wrecks the Janesville Canning plant, nearly ripping off the entire third story that housed the cream corn department.

■ **Sept. 28:** Safecrackers, known as "yeggs," are unsuccessful in their attempt to open the treasurer's safe in the Rock County Courthouse.

■ **Oct. 12:** Owen "Squirt" Trevorrah, 30, "one of the all-time greats of Janesville High School and professional (industry-sponsored) football," is found dead, the victim of apparent suicide.

■ **Oct. 22:** Dick Post of Footville wins his sixth county title by husking a record 24.5 bushels of corn in 80 minutes. Two days later, he husks 1,868 pounds in 80 minutes to win the state championship, and he will finish fourth in the nationals at Sioux Fall, S.D.

■ **Nov. 9:** Republican Stephen Bolles, editor of the Gazette for 18 years and still editor, wins the 1st District congressional seat. At this time, journalism and partisan politics go hand in hand. In the 1990s, a Gazette editorial employee would have to resign his or her job to run for office.

■ **Dec. 5:** 8-year-old radio station WCLO of Janesville affiliates with WLS of Chicago to bring new programming, much of it country and west-



## 'Narcotic menace' has Rock County going to pot

An Afton couple, Carmen and Mercedes Saldana, were arrested Aug. 31, 1938, on federal charges of possession and sale of marijuana, the second such arrest made in Rock County in 1938.

The first involved Thomas Gomez, 43, of 936 S. Jackson, Janesville, who was jailed for sale and possession of marijuana cigarettes in February.

These were the first pot busts found in reviewing Gazette retrospectives and scanning daily papers from the beginning of the century. At this time, Wisconsin had not outlawed marijuana, but it was a federal offense to possess marijuana without a tax stamp.

During Prohibition, alcohol, not drugs, made the headlines. But after Prohibition ended in 1933, the federal agents who enforced the ban on alcohol turned their attention to drugs. This was no coincidence. The Depression had deprived millions of Americans of their jobs, and the federal government did not want to lay off its agents.

The Feds also began a public relations campaign that featured movies such as the laughable "Reefer Madness" to demonize

marijuana.

The Saldanas were Mexican immigrants, but the 30 pounds of dried weed the authorities reported finding was not from Mexico but was found growing wild near Hanover, Carmen, a railroad section hand, told officers.

"Marijuana weed has grown prolifically in Rock County for a number of years, but only recently have residents become conscious of what the weed is," reported the Gazette, which initially described marijuana as a "weed containing narcotic properties."

The Feds used a Racine woman to make contacts in the Mexican community in south Milwaukee County, who led her to Mercedes. She pleaded guilty, saying she alone was responsible for the sale. She eventually was sentenced to three months in jail and fined \$200 while her husband was acquitted.

The Racine woman bought three pounds for \$24 from two intermediaries, also arrested and charged. They paid Mercedes \$3 a pound for the drug.

In reporting the start of the trial, the Gazette struck a more alarmist tone, describing marijuana as the "Mexican loco weed which has suddenly become a dreaded narcotic menace in this territory."

ern music, to Janesville listeners.

■ **Dec. 7:** The bodies of 15-year-old Mary Cunningham, Milton Junction, and farmhand Curtis Hansen, 35, are found in Hansen's car in woods north of Janesville. Two days earlier, Hansen abducted the popular Cunningham girl, whom he killed before committing suicide. Hansen also apparently killed Everett "Ret" Pierce, 73-year-old resident of Harmony Township, and cashed the elderly man's old-age pension check. Evidence points to Hansen's doping Pierce's drink with strychnine, and Pierce died of exposure after he was dragged to a barn and buried under boards and straw in a strawstack.

■ **Sometime in 1938:** Brownie, the mutt who follows the Janesville street sweeper, gets a medal from City Manager Henry Traxler.

■ Recession cuts production at the GM plants to 83,786 cars and trucks, far below 1937's 110,800—a production level reduced by the sit-down strike and several subsequent strikes—and the 140,000 of 1936, a recovery year. Total employment here is 2,500, down 500 from early 1937 levels. GM starts the first

supplemental unemployment benefit plan for workers, allowing employees to receive 60 percent of normal pay minus other compensation and/or wages during layoffs.

■ Lights are installed on tennis courts at Riverside Park.

■ Money from PWA (Public Works Administration) is paying for a new post office and schools in Janesville. At year's end, construction is under way on the new post office (Kealey Pharmacy and other offices), the new Adams and Washington schools (at current locations) and a renovation of Roosevelt School (at current location).

■ The new "superhighway," the four-lane Highway 51 between Janesville and Beloit, is completed.

■ The animated "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" tops best-movie lists in Janesville and across the nation.

■ City kittenball (softball) games move from the fairgrounds to Monterey Park where the city has installed backstops and lights.

■ Janesville is drenched with 50.13 inches of precipitation for the year, about 20 inches

more than average.

■ Janesville Fence and Post Co. changes its focus to retail hardware and appliances; Harris Ace Hardware stores continued in 1999 in three locations.

## 1939

■ **Jan. 7:** John Mally, a Janesville fireman for seven years, is discharged for "conduct unbecoming an officer, fireman or gentleman" because he twice used money collected for fellow firemen's meals—\$268 total—to pay his own bills.

■ **Jan. 13:** What a cast! James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, Pat O'Brien, Ann Sheridan and the Deadend Kids star in "Angels with Dirty Faces," playing at the Jeffris Theater.

■ **Jan. 29:** Bruno Saari of the Ishpeming Ski Club wins the ski jump event as Beloit inaugurates a 128-foot steel-side ski jump at Big Hill Park on Afton Road.

■ **Feb. 10:** A spectacular fire at the Spa tavern, 7 N. Main, fills downtown Janesville with smoke and threatens the entire Jackman block. Loss is \$2,400, but no one is seriously injured.

■ **Feb. 16:** City Engineer Joseph Lustig Jr., who eventually will become city manager, proves his forward thinking by telling the community in a radio broadcast that some day major highways will be routed to skirt Janesville, rather than run through it, to alleviate traffic congestion.

■ **March 16:** Another fire strikes Janesville's downtown when the Singer Sewing Machine store and others in the Merchant & Savings block (first block west of the Rock River on West Milwaukee Street) burn with damage of \$3,800, the city's largest fire loss of the year.

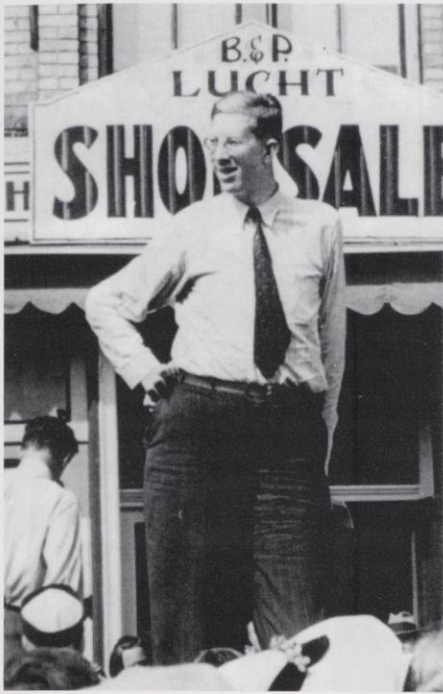
■ **April 3:** While searching by plane for 9-year-old drowning victim Jack Sheridan, 303 S. Academy, two Janesville men—John "Pete" Tumelson and William Bouziane—are injured when their monoplane slices through a high-power line over the Rock River and plunges into the water. Both men recover.

■ Dr. J.H. Burdick—87-year-old retired Milton physician, one of the founders of Milton Electric Co. and a former trustee of Milton College—is killed when the car his wife is driving careens off a road near Rockton, Ill., and crashes into a tree. Clara Burdick, 69, the doctor's second wife, is critically injured and taken to a Rockford hospital.

■ **April 4:** Because the state bowling tournament is in Janesville, local taverns are allowed to open after the polls close on election day. Closing bars on election day was a longstanding practice.

■ **May 20:** Vernon Rinehimer, 48, an Afton carpenter, is shot to death as he races across the street to help his brother, Charles,





**The B&P Lucht Shoe Store in Janesville could not fit Robert Pershing Wadlow with shoes because the very tall man, a boy actually, from Alton, Ill., wore size 37AA. Wadlow was 8-foot-11 and weighed 439 pounds; he visited Janesville in the '30s to promote the shoe store. Part of the promotion was that if someone could reach a \$5 bill on Wadlow's head, he or she could keep it. Young Bill Ford of Janesville tried but failed. Wadlow, the world's tallest man, was 5 feet tall at age 5. He died in 1940 at age 22.**

who is being held up by two youthful robbers in the Afton general store and post office. As they flee with a take of less than \$3, one of the thieves fires three shots, one of which hits Rinehimer in the chest. Roy Herde, 21, Jefferson, and Arnold W. Putnam, 24, the triggerman from Milwaukee, are caught within days and eventually sentenced to life. Their attempt to break out of the Rock County Jail in November is thwarted. Shortly after their arrest, the pair must face Rinehimer's family and friends at the county jail, and Rinehimer's mother, Mrs. A.C. Rinehimer, forgives Putnam, her son's slayer.

■ **May 21:** Mr. X arrives in Janesville. Really Ernest Johnson, 22-year-old college student from Minnesota, Mr. X is a hitchhiker who is suddenly afflicted with amnesia and finds himself here. He is "kept comfortable" in the county jail, where he is found to be athletically and musically inclined, but the opportunity to exercise his abilities does not stir his memory. Mr. X is transferred to a Madison

hospital, where he is found by his father who comes to the area because he saw his son's photo in a newspaper. Johnson eventually recovers his memory.

■ **May 27:** Gerry Yeomans, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Yeomans, 48 Marshall Place, reigns as queen of the University of Wisconsin senior ball.

■ **June 20:** Norway's Crown Prince Olav and Crown Princess Martha visit Whitewater.

■ **June 21:** A tornado tears through Walworth County, forming west of Delavan near the intersection of Highways 14 and 11, wrecking buildings on a dozen farms but causing no reported injuries.

■ Allen D. Hayes, 441 N. Pearl, reports for duty as a plebe (first-year cadet) at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

■ **July:** Lions Beach opens in Janesville. Development of the beach was fast, much to the appreciation of city kids, because the beach at Goose Island (Traxler Park) had to be closed because of high levels of algae in the river. The future of the Goose Island beach is in doubt.

■ Judge Ernest Agnew rules that breath tests are admissible evidence in drunken driving cases in municipal court. They have been used ever since.

■ **July 8:** Walter H. Trush, 29, Beloit, is burned to death when the Army truck in which he and five comrades are riding to Camp Douglas overturns north of Oregon.

■ **Aug. 7:** Pilot Newell Hardy of Rockford, Ill., is unable to get his plane out of a flat tailspin, and it crashes into a cornfield near the Rock County Airport. Hardy escapes with only minor injuries.

■ **Sept. 1:** A Gazette headline shouts the news the world has been anticipating with dread: "HITLER INVADES POLAND." Japan's invasion of China in 1937 started what would become global conflict, and virtually all of Europe was now involved. World War II begins.

■ **Sept. 5:** Burglars use so much nitroglycerine to blast open the safe at Oswald Jaeger Baking Co., 959 S. Jackson, that they blow up or burn almost half the safe's contents of about \$500. Parts of the exploding safe penetrate the building's roof.

■ **Oct. 4:** Newspaper ad for the Buzum-Hi girdle made by Gossard, formerly a Janesville company, asserts: "Fashion is economizing on waistlines! Buzum-Hi extends above the waistline to smooth away disfiguring bulges." The Buzum-Hi sells for \$5.

■ **Oct. 6:** Rock County Buick, 12 Court, advertises that it also will sell GMC trucks. At 3636 E. Milwaukee in 1999, the dealership still sold Buicks and GMC trucks as well as Hondas.

■ **Oct. 26:** Frank Grossman, Route 2, wins the hog calling contest at the annual Harvest Festival in Janesville.

■ **Nov. 23:** The first of two Thanksgivings in 1939. FDR has proclaimed Nov. 23 Thanksgiving to lengthen the Christmas shopping season and boost the still flagging economy. But Janesville celebrates on the traditional day, the last Thursday of the month, Nov. 30.

■ **Nov. 25:** Band directors from throughout Wisconsin gather here for their convention. Hosting them is the 121st Field Artillery Band, based in Janesville and commanded by Warrant Officer Ervin J. Sartell.

■ **Dec. 1:** Deer season closes, and Eugene Richards, 612 Caroline, is reported the first Janesville hunter to bag his prey: a 12-point buck shot near Boulder Junction.

■ **Dec. 12:** The gym in Evansville's new high school, a \$220,000 PWA project, is dedicated.

■ **Dec. 26:** Janesville's J.M. Bostwick & Sons store advertises "Loretta Young Loves" —A-line, knee-length dresses named for the Hollywood star—for \$1.69.

■ **Sometime in 1939:** Paving of eight miles of Highway 51 between Janesville and Edgerton causes residents to think paving Rock County highways and roads is virtually complete. The exception is two miles of Highway 51 from the Janesville north city limits to the county property on Highway 14, scheduled for work in 1940. The county has 172 miles of concrete road, 173 miles of blacktop and 700 miles of gravel township and local roads. Though paving is deemed complete, the gravel roads eventually will be paved.

■ Working with the village of Milton, the village of Milton Junction installs a sewer system, sewage disposal plant and water mains. The two villages eventually will merge into the city of Milton.

■ Orfordville installs a sanitary sewer system, an \$80,000 PWA project.

■ Otto "Bud" Ambrose sets a Janesville bowling league record with a 757 series.

■ Co-captains Jim and Art Walsh of Janesville lead the UW boxing team to a national collegiate championship.

■ Charles Weber of Janesville High wins the state high school discus championship, and Carleton Hughes and Lorent Johnson win the state high school tennis doubles crown.

■ Janesville residential construction—82 houses with a value of \$304,800—achieves the highest level since 1931.

■ Rock County Sugar Co. goes out of business.

■ Rock County Sheriff's Department begins dispatching by radio.



*we here highly resolve that these  
shall not have died in vain . . .*



**REMEMBER DEC. 7th**



# 1940-1949

## WAR & REMEMBRANCE

### Fighting the war at home and abroad On the front lines and the production line, Janesville is in the thick of the battle

*Janesville hurled itself into World War II with courage, fervor and resolve.*

The war, of course, involved thousands of cities, towns and hamlets on five continents and numerous islands. The facet that sifts Janesville into a smaller, but more tragic, category is The Janesville 99, the men of Company A and Headquarters Company, 192nd Tank Battalion.

Not only were these men from one place, the Janesville area, but they also were National Guardsmen activated in 1940 and assigned to the Philippines, so they were fighting from the outset of the United States' direct involvement in the war. Moreover, they endured some of the war's worst conditions and tortures.

Under orders, Company A surrendered to the Japanese invaders of the Philippines along with 70,000 other American and Filipino defenders of the Bataan Peninsula. The POWs were subjected to one of the most infamous horrors of the war, the Bataan Death March. Already worn down by months of combat, malnutrition and jungle diseases, the POWs were forced to march 60 miles under tropical sun with little, if any, water and food and at the mercy of regularly brutal and sadistic guards.

Sixteen thousand men died on the Death March. Remarkably, only one from Janesville, Lt. Kenneth Bloomfield, died during the torturous ordeal. But of The Janesville 99, 64 died in the war—from combat, from disease, in a mas-

sacre of prisoners, from a beating, from their own submarines sinking Japanese "hell ships" carrying prisoners and from unknown causes.

But the heroic and awful tale of the Tank Company is only one war story of many lived by residents of Janesville and Rock County.

Before the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, southern Wisconsin men volunteered for combat with the Royal Canadian armed forces, which fought since 1939 with other troops from throughout the British Empire.

At least one Rock County man, Allen Fritzke of Edgerton, experienced combat over the Burmese jungles with one of the most flamboyant outfits of WWII, "The Flying Tigers," a group of volunteer mercenaries fighting with the Chinese against the Japanese.

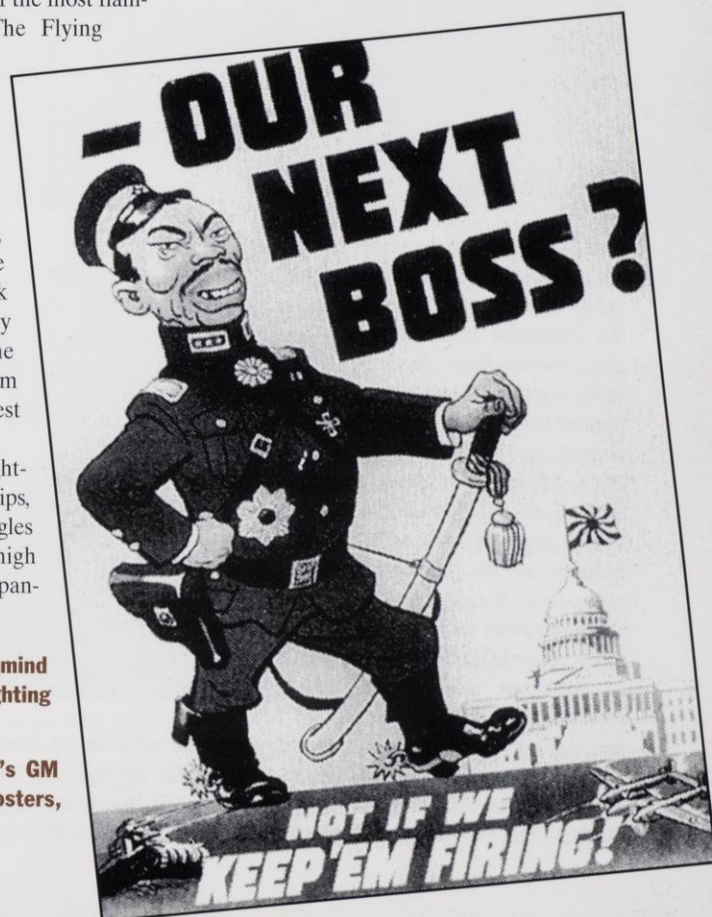
Rock County men served in every branch of the Armed Forces. Rock County women volunteered as WACs, WAVEs, USO workers, military base hostesses and nurses. Rock County people served in every theater of the war—from the South Pacific to Alaska, from North Africa to Italy to northwest Europe.

They flew bombers and fighters, manned deck guns on ships, slogged through steaming jungles and trudged through thigh-high snow. Confronted by fanatic Japan-

ese troops, they island-hopped through the Pacific Theater and died on the Japanese soil of Okinawa. Confronted by Hitler's Panzer divisions, they breached the Atlantic Wall on D-Day and fought their way to Germany.

They trained other troops in the United States and abroad. They transported supplies and kept records.

They killed and captured the enemy, helped and saved their buddies. They liberated Nazi death camps. They won medals for bravery, including the nation's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor.



**Left: Posters were a common method to boost morale on the homefront and remind folks living in Janesville and throughout the United States why they were fighting World War II.**

**Right: The Oldsmobile Division of General Motors, which operated Janesville's GM facility to make artillery shells during World War II, distributed propaganda posters, such as this one caricaturing a Japanese warlord, to its factories.**





**Top:** U.S. soldiers surrender to Japanese forces after the fall of Bataan, a peninsula on the Philippine island of Luzon. **Middle:** Four Marines carry a wounded buddy from combat in the jungle of Guadalcanal to an aid station. **Right:** After World War II, Maj. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright, who commanded the defense of the Philippines after Gen. Douglas MacArthur evacuated and who was forced to order the surrender of American and Filipino troops, visited Milwaukee and some of the survivors, including Janesville veterans of Company A, 192nd Tank Battalion. Wainwright is seated at right in full uniform with decorations; next to him is Owen Sandmire of Sextonville; the third seated man is unidentified. In the back row, from left, are Wayne Buggs, Lew Wallisch, Phil Parrish, all of Janesville; unidentified; and Leo Dorsey of Janesville.



Receiving the medal posthumously was Sgt. Gerald Endl, a Fort Atkinson native who lived in Janesville with his new bride just before reporting for duty. A young man with the unassuming looks of the boy next door who was wounded earlier in the war, Endl saved six of seven wounded men under his command on July 11, 1944.

During a retreat from an ambush on New Guinea, the seven soldiers were cut off from Endl's platoon, which he was commanding because the lieutenant had been killed. Endl went back alone with a tommy gun, blasted his way into the midst of the wounded and single-handedly fired cover for troops who pulled three of the seven to safety.

One by one, Endl carried his other four comrades back, rescuing three before a Japanese machine-gunner was able to draw a bead on him and the seventh soldier.

Refusal to report for service was rare here. Spotchecks of The Janesville Gazette turned up mention of only three men conscientiously objecting to draft registration and only two evading military service.

More common were cases of all or most of the young men in a family serving in the Armed Forces.

On Jan. 2, 1945, Mr. and Mrs. James Shwery of Janesville were lucky to have two sons and a son-in-law home for the holidays. Lt. Arthur Shwery was awaiting reassignment after flying his assigned missions over Europe; his brother, Lt. Roy Shwery, had received his wings and was awaiting assignment. A third brother, Halie, was a private with the armored infantry.

Their brother-in-law, Flight Officer Oliver Webb, was a bombardier/navigator. Webb had three brothers serving overseas: Arnold, a corporal in the South Pacific; seaman DuWayne on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific, and Morris, a private with the infantry in Europe.

The community hung on the news of its neighbors in the military. If a local man was killed, wounded, captured or missing in action—and his family shared the War Department message with the newspaper—the story went on Page 1. New assignments, promotions and training accomplishments were reported on inside pages. Draft lists and rosters of inductees were printed.

The worst of World War II, of course, was the death it delivered. Destroyed buildings and bridges—even cities—could be and were rebuilt. Destroyed lives are lost forever, remaining only in the memories of loved ones.

World War II killed in many ways other than combat. Janesville and Rock County lost military men to accidents that occurred in training and travel and to diseases with foreign names such as beriberi and dengue fever.



The Rock County War Memorial at the Rock County Airport lists 188 county men who died in WWII combat, but the list is not complete. At least two names are not listed. At the end of 1945, the Gazette compiled service deaths from all causes. It listed 134 men from Janesville and another 83 from county communities or who moved from county communities.

Death in World War II occurred on a colossal scale. More than 43.3 million people, military and civilian, died, most of them killed. Death was intentional and accidental, individual and en masse. Men—and women on the Russian Front—killed each other with malice and regret and without any feeling at all.

An American rifleman in France, Belgium, the Netherlands or Germany in 1944-45 had a four in five chance of being killed or wounded.

The United States suffered some 307,000 deaths because of the war; of those, 292,131 people were killed in combat, according to "The American Century" by Harold Evans.

Death took the old, the middle-aged but most often the young, whose lives were bright with promise and potential.

On April 27, 1945, Mae and William Thompson were eating their evening meal in their Magnolia Township farmhouse when Bill Dixon and "another Legion boy knocked on the kitchen door and came in. He said, 'We have bad news for you,'" recalled Mae, now 100 and living in Evansville.

The youngest of her two sons, Howard, a 19-year-old Army infantryman, had been killed on Okinawa.

"He had four men with him, and he was shot," Thompson said. "They rushed him to the (field) hospital, but he died on the way from loss of blood."

It was the moment that Thompson had dreaded since Howard—"a good-sized fellow ... always attentive to his (carpentry) work"—was drafted and left Janesville on a cold, damp morning.

His last words to his mother were: "Bye, Mom. See you later."

"He didn't want to go, but there was no want-to to it. You just went," Thompson said. "Every day, you thought about it (death). Every night, you prayed about it."

Even after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Thompson remained opposed to the war.

"I figured you keep on your side of the fence, and we'll keep on ours," she said, and so the loss of her youngest boy was especially agonizing.

"It's still hard to talk about," Thompson said. "You can just see him. ..."

"Howard, I think, was liked by everybody. We got a letter from the priest in his unit, telling how good he was."

She felt bitter toward the U.S. government and the Japanese.

"But I think they had to do what their government told them, too. I just feel as though it was something that didn't have to happen—taking our boys. It was all for nothing."

The liberated millions of Europe and the Far East undoubtedly had—and have—the opposite view. But no one can deny the anguish of parents—whether American or Japanese, British, German or Russian—who lose their children to humanity's most hellish endeavor, war.

World War II devastated Europe, the Soviet Union, China, Japan, the Philippines and other Asian countries. Its flanks guarded by oceans, the continental United States was spared the war's ravages of property and the environment.

Americans did not have to endure the terror bombings of the Battle of Britain, the starvation of the siege of Leningrad, the rape of Nanking or the annihilation of Dresden and Nagasaki.

But Americans had to cope with the absence and death of loved ones, rationing and short supplies of most common goods and the ardors of war industry production.

Janesville was in the thick of war production.

The local General Motors Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants shifted to the control of GM's Oldsmobile division, and women workers—renowned as Rosie the Riveter—and older men cranked out 16 million artillery shells in three years. Their motto was: "Keep 'Em Firing."

Parker Pen workers made fuses. Janesville Cotton Mills manufactured bandages. Gilman Engineering made machines to make war machines. Hough Shade employees turned out curtains to black or dim windows against air raids. Residents from all walks of life helped can vegetables rather than let the crops rot.

As incongruous as it sounds, Ossit Church Furniture had a war contract—making special seats for air-testing chambers.

In 1939, the Depression-dogged United States still had 9.4 million eligible workers unemployed. In 1943, a labor-strapped nation was making one ship a day, one airplane every five minutes.

U.S. economic output mushroomed 25 times from \$1.5 billion in 1940 to \$37.5 billion in 1943, "The American Century" reported.

Janesville war workers labored through long shifts and over the holidays. Toughened by the economic hard times of the Depression, residents took rationing in stride.

"You really didn't suffer for anything," Thompson recalled. "You just had to take care of what you had."

The best of the United States shined brightly in World War II, but all was not positive.

Rosie the Riveter made an average 60 percent of her male counterpart. Prejudice and racism remained rampant as evidenced by the internment of Japanese-Americans in U.S. concentration camps, the segregation of blacks and whites in the military and race riots in 47 cities.

The Japanese atrocities committed on their sons, husbands and brothers enflamed and embittered Janesville residents, many, if not most, of whose attitudes already embodied the nation's racial biases. Reflecting those prejudices, the Gazette continued to identify people of color by their race, and the newspaper referred to the Japanese as Japs or Nips without shame or second thought.

While the Nazi persecution of Jews and others made Page 1 news before the United States entered the war, reports of battles and local men in combat pushed news of the Nazi genocide to inside pages later in the war.

Of course, the war was not the only thing happening to Janesville in the 1940s. People married, had kids, sent them to school, divorced and died natural and accidental deaths. They played ball, shot golf, danced, acted and went to the movies. They killed each other over jealousy, fought fires and dug out of blizzards.

Another fire on the Milwaukee Street Bridge lay waste to a big part of Janesville's downtown business district.

A police scandal kept folks talking through late 1941 into 1942. John Arnold, an officer who apparently intended to leave the force, charged in the Gazette that Police Chief William H. Ford ignored reports of officers drinking and being drunk on the job and driving drunk; that Ford allowed illegal poker games and horse-race bookmaking to go unchecked; that Ford dismissed some cases made by officers.

In a series of hearings in which a lot of police dirty laundry was alleged, City Manager Henry Traxler and the Janesville Police and Fire Commission backed the chief, who denied all of Arnold's charges.

The commission fired Arnold for being "subversive," and Traxler blasted critics in the police department for being disloyal.

When the war ended, the city rejoiced with noise, confetti, dancing, fireworks and alcohol.

Using their new benefits under the G.I. Bill, returning veterans flocked to colleges and resurrected the local construction industry, which had been moribund because of wartime lack of building materials.

The veterans and their wives got busy creating the Baby Boom.

Stepped by the Depression, scarred by World War II, Janesville was ready for the relative calm of the 1950s. But another war still had to be waged.



## Recalling the war with one of The Janesville 99

The fall of Bataan and the tortures of the infamous Death March were still a month away when Pfc. George McCarthy's unit took to the jungles of Luzon, the main Philippine island.

McCarthy was an 18-year-old from rural Janesville whose "intention, ever since I was a little kid, I was gonna be a soldier."

He enlisted in the National Guard when he was 17.

McCarthy became a soldier's soldier, operating for three years as a jungle guerrilla.

He was one of The Janesville 99, the men of Company A and Headquarters Company, 192nd Tank Battalion, who fought to defend the Philippine Islands from Japanese invaders in late 1941 and early '42. But McCarthy was attached to another unit, the Provost Marshal's Office at Fort Stotsenberg on Luzon, where he was not a full military policeman but stood guard at various posts.

Between noon and 12:45 p.m. on Dec. 8, 1941 (Dec. 7 on the United States' side of the International Dateline), "we heard airplanes," McCarthy recalled. "One fella said, 'Come out and see the Navy; they're here to help us.' It was the Navy, all right—the wrong goddamn Navy. They were Japanese bombers, and all hell broke loose.

"I went outside and watched the fighters, Zero fighters, come in. They were low—and they were good. They did all the damage. I saw one hanging there with that meatball (Rising Sun insignia) on the wing, and I thought, 'Oh, boy!'"

Three days later, the Japanese invaded the islands. In four months, outnumbered, outgunned U.S. and Filipino forces would surrender after a fierce defense of the Bataan Peninsula on Luzon. A month later, the island fortress of Corregidor surrendered to the Japanese on-slaught.

Ninety-six of McCarthy's Janesville comrades surrendered on Bataan. Two—Capt. Walter Write and Sgt. Ivan Wilmer—had been killed in the fighting. But McCarthy already was a guerrilla fighter. The guerrillas were men from the Provost Marshal and other units, Filipino Scouts with the U.S. Army, regular Philippine Army troops and civilians, both American and Filipino.

"Our base was Mount Pinatubo. Camp Sanchez. Mount Pinatubo was the spookiest damn place I've ever been. I can't explain it.

It's a volcano, extinct then. It was quiet. All you could hear was the wind."

The guerrillas' primary mission was reconnaissance.

"We'd get sent to do certain things, like one time there was a lot of truck traffic from Subic (Bay) to Iba. They wanted to know who was in the trucks, not how many, but whether they were officers or enlisted men," McCarthy said.

He didn't know who gave the orders, how they were relayed or how the information got out, other than the "Bamboo Telegraph," a makeshift system of scraps of paper,

word of mouth and conch shell horns relaying messages out of the jungle.

"How the hell they got word out, I don't know," said McCarthy, a tall, solidly built man who returned to Janesville. "They blew the horns when the Japs came. They'd sound like 'pooh, pooh, pooh.' When you heard them horns, you better head for the bushes."

And the orders weren't really orders because they were phrased as suggestions or questions, he said.

"They had to be. All American troops in the Philippines were supposed to be surrendered. If we got caught, you could pretty well figure on it (execution). They beat the shit out of you first."

The guerrillas suffered many casualties, and McCarthy's commander from the Provost Marshal's Office, Col. Claude A. Thorpe, was captured and shot to death in a Japanese prison, Fort Santiago in Manila.

"The first thing the Japs would do when they'd come on a barrio, a little village, is open fire," McCarthy said. "If anybody ran, they'd kill 'em. They thought they were guerrillas."

Because the guerrillas were outnumbered and armed with only light weapons, "the only time we fired at the Nips is when we had to," McCarthy said. "We could fight when we were cornered, but otherwise we didn't ...

"When you heard bamboo cracking, knocking against each other, you better get out fast. You didn't even want to hear 'em trip it (make-shift alarms of bamboo). They could be awful quiet."

McCarthy declined to discuss his personal combat experiences, but his general comments indicate he was intimately acquainted with the fighting.

"When those damn balls (bullets) go over

your head, you can hear 'em crack," he commented.

McCarthy was wounded five times. He was hit three times by shrapnel—from a grenade, mortar and bomb—and shot twice, once in the thumb by a Japanese soldier and in the foot by a Filipino comrade playing with a small-caliber pistol.

With no medical supplies, "I used red peppers to treat wounds," McCarthy said. "They'd keep the flies out. Otherwise, they'd lay maggots in your wounds. ...

"At the time, I could run real fast, but I also could fight. I wasn't scared of either, running or fighting. My weapon was a BAR (Browning automatic rifle)."

The BAR was essentially a light machine gun that could be handled by one soldier. On full automatic, the BAR could rattle off its 20-round clip of .30-caliber ammo in 2 seconds.

"I developed a bounce finger," McCarthy recalled. "I could get down to six rounds in a burst. One trick we used to do is get some Nips way off and shoot at them. We used to use pieces of wood to raise our sights so we could aim that far. There was no way to hit 'em, but when that ball went over their heads, they'd scatter."

Ammunition was fairly easy to come by because of all the military personnel in the region—"Bataan was full of it; it was laying all over"—and the guerrillas would stash the ammo in watertight gin bottles.

McCarthy came close to being captured by the Japanese several times.

"One time I was in a house, and the Nips were right in the street. The river was on the other side, so I couldn't get out," McCarthy said. "Another time, I was hiding in a chicken coop with the Japs right outside. The damn mites were eating me up. Chicken lice, those things are miserable. I was more bothered by the mites than the Nips.

"I knew I was almost captured, but the Nips didn't."

Eluding Japanese patrols was far from the only hardship or danger that the jungle posed.

"I swam the Pampanga River in the rainy season," McCarthy said. "I don't know how deep it was, but it was mighty damn fast."

He helped another GI, who couldn't swim, get across by making a float from his blanket and a tarp known as a shelter half.

"He held it, and I pushed him ahead. I'd never do that again. I could have drowned him and me. ...



**George McCarthy**  
18 years old in  
1942



"I wasn't captured by the Japanese, but I was captured by the Huks, the Communists (anti-Japanese guerrillas). They captured me because I was an American, but they didn't disarm me. They walked me around (for weeks). Their commander, Comrade Inchik, kind of took notice of some of the things I did."

Asked what those things were, McCarthy replied: "I'd rather not say."

He continued:

"I don't know if I'd call it bravery; you can't be foolish. A man's got to look out for himself in the jungle. Whenever I went some place, the first thing I'd do is fill up my water bottle. The second thing was to check on how many ways out there were, so I knew what the hell I was getting into. ..."

McCarthy once went three days without water.

"My mouth felt so damn dry. It's hard to describe what it felt like, but it's bad," he said. "I know what it means to be hungry, and not just hungry at night. I mean hungry the day before, the day you were hungry and the next day, too. That's hungry."

McCarthy's weight dropped from more than 170 pounds to 136 during his three years in the bush, but, being the adolescent he was, he grew from 6 feet to 6-foot-3.

"We fished a lot," McCarthy recalled. "We used goggles carved out of wood. You'd get a piece of glass and seal it in with beeswax.

That makes 'em waterproof."

Bending over with his face in the water, McCarthy would use a finger sling-shot made of a piece of inner tube to shoot fish or eels with arrows fashioned from fence wire.

McCarthy planted a garden in the native village where he often stayed and became an expert on 22 kinds of bananas and plantains from the size of a woman's finger to a man's forearm.

"Some you couldn't eat because of all the seeds. Some were square, but, boy, were they sweet. ...

"We ate anything and everything that was edible. We did eat snakes and bats but not as a steady diet. You always had a funny feeling in your stomach; you were always a little hungry. We'd get full up on rice when we got it. We had papaya, mangoes, corn, which we ate dried, pounded and roasted. You had to watch out for coconuts; they could make you sick—dysentery."

McCarthy did not get dysentery, but he did come down with malaria, dengue fever and beriberi.

Typically, the guerrillas operated in three-man squads with one automatic weapon and two rifles among them, but McCarthy often was alone for days or weeks in the jungle. Other times, he lived with the natives, four or five different ethnic groups. One group was variously called the Atas, Bulagas or Negritos,

which is Spanish for "little black ones."

"They were about 4-foot-6, and all built like football players," McCarthy said. "They were tough fighters—even among themselves. They were pagan, believed strictly in themselves. We respected each other. They were armed with everything you think of, (homemade) gas-pipe shotguns, bows and arrows."

"I could speak their lingo. You learned it, or you had no one to talk to. I had a hell of a time with English when I got back. I had to think what to say."

The first Janesville man from the 192nd to get back to the States, McCarthy called home to let his family know he was safe. He asked about his brother, Donald, who had joined the Marines, and he asked about his Airedale, Rags.

Donald survived the war. When McCarthy came home to his folks' farm near Leyden in March 1945, Rags did not recognize him, an event that McCarthy understood but which still caused a catch in his voice.

He had a number of dogs over the years since, many of them named Rags.

After the war, McCarthy joined the Navy and served a two-year stint, then rejoined the Army, eventually retiring as a master sergeant with 22 years of military service.

Of his personal combat experiences in the Philippine jungles, all that McCarthy would say for the record was: "It wasn't horrible, but there were parts that were very bad."

## Janesville man clings to life and the mast of the USS Arizona

Russ Warriner was trapped, alone and naked on the tilting mast of the sinking USS Arizona.

The explosions that ripped apart the battleship Dec. 7, 1941, had blown off his clothes and killed nearly all his mates.

All he had left were his watch and his fear.

The ladders to his battle station, 100 feet above the burning oil and water, had been blown away. Black smoke billowed around him. Broken and twisted steel lay below.

Five other survivors on the sky control platform escaped down a line tossed up from a nearby ship.

Warriner, a 25-year-old first class seaman, could not. His hands were too badly charred to grasp the rope.

In 1991, Warriner relived the horror of Pearl Harbor for an article in *The Janesville Gazette*. He died Nov. 30, 1998.

Within a minute of learning of the Japanese attack, Warriner raced across the ship and up the five flights of stairs to his lookout.

"I was finishing up breakfast, had one leg

off the bench in fact, when I felt the ship shudder. A sailor ran through and yelled, 'The Japs are here,'" he said.

From the mast, where his job was to spot enemy ships and planes, Warriner had a perfect view of the harbor. He watched a sister battle-



Smoke rolls from the burning hulk of the USS Arizona as the ship sinks Dec. 7, 1941. The attack on Pearl Harbor propelled the United States into World War II.



ship, the monstrous USS Oklahoma, roll over after a direct hit.

But minutes later, at 8:12 a.m., the harbor view was forgotten.

An armor-piercing bomb struck the Arizona near its No. 2 turret. The bomb sliced through the steel deck and exploded into a fuel tank. Fire flared for seven seconds before reaching 1.7 million pounds of explosives in the ship's magazine.

More than 1,000 sailors died instantly, including perhaps 50 on the platform with Warriner.

Warriner lost his clothes and his balance. He fell onto the platform. His hands swept through fiery magnesium remaining from incendiary bombs. His hands nearly burned off.

"I was trapped. There was no way down for me," he said quietly, a distant look in his eyes.

He doesn't know what happened next.

Another explosion might have knocked him unconscious and off the mast.

When Warriner came to, he was up to his neck in saltwater and oil on the deck near the stern of his sinking ship.

Nearby, men were trying to launch a raft. One dropped a tool, and Warriner automatically reached for it.

"That's when I realized how badly I was hurt. I couldn't feel anything but pain," he said.

A lieutenant flagged down a small motor boat. The coxswain, the only one on board,

protested at being stopped.

Warriner discovered his legs and arms were also burned. He couldn't walk. His shipmates helped him aboard the smaller vessel, which carried him 200 yards to a pier on Ford Island.

Boats used by the islanders bobbed around like rubber ducks, making it impossible for Warriner's boat to pull close to the pier. The coxswain dumped Warriner into the nearest craft.

Somehow, Warriner crawled from boat to boat, waiting for them to bump together so he could use them as stepping stones to get to the pier.

Somehow, he managed to grasp the piling supporting the pier and shimmy up.

Somehow, he escaped the showers of bullets from the strafing Japanese planes as he lay there, in view of a concrete bunker where women and children crowded in safety, afraid to help him.

Finally, one young man did, rushing out with a blanket, wrapping Warriner up and carrying him inside.

During a lull in the bombing, the group ran to a nearby mess hall. They carried Warriner and laid him on the floor with other wounded because the tables were full.

A doctor noticed Warriner was "bleeding like crazy in the head."

"I never felt it," he said.

"The Lord was with me. There's no other explanation," said Warriner, a retired piano tuner who lived in Beloit Township. Miraculously, he

had perfect pitch despite the concussion of the bombs that burst so near to him.

His wife, Elsa, said that for a long time, she wouldn't let him see film of the Arizona's destruction.

"It still affected him so much, and his nerves were so bad. I hadn't seen it either, until just recently. It was horrible because I knew where he was standing. And all that ammunition. Well, it's a miracle he survived," she said.

Elsa met Warriner when he returned to Wisconsin in early 1942. He stayed at her family's farm to avoid the attention he was getting in town as a Pearl Harbor survivor. The couple married that September; eventually they raised two children.

Plastic surgery repaired Warriner's hands, although strength never returned to them and blood circulation was poor.

Hospital staff at the Great Lakes Naval Base in Illinois gave him "royal treatment," he said. He was the first of the wounded back, and being from the Arizona made him a celebrity.

The gold Hamilton watch that he wore when he escaped the ill-fated Arizona remained his memento. He bought it at a Honolulu jewelry store a few months before the attack.

Under its crystal, uncracked by Japanese bombs and 1.7 million pounds of explosives, the hands still revolve in perfect time.

—Judy Immel

## Christmas '44: No peace on Earth, especially in the Bulge

Joe Broderick was a prisoner of war, singing Christmas carols and marching to a German prison camp.

Frank Douglas and Bob Homan were des-

perately sick, vomiting their Christmas meals.

Victor Fuchs was in a foxhole, directing artillery fire and thinking of his mother.

"On Christmas Eve, my mother always

insisted we sing that song, 'Silent Night,'" Fuchs recalled. "I thought, 'What a silent night this is!' Artillery shells banging on both sides. The screams and everything else that goes on."

In 1944, the four Rock County men and many others from the area were fighting the Battle of the Bulge in the wooded hills of Belgium's Ardennes region. The eventual Allied victory doomed Nazi Germany to defeat and unconditional surrender.

In 1997, the veterans recalled their experiences for *The Janesville Gazette*.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 1944, the battle was far from resolved. The young soldiers from Rock County did not know if they would ever again enjoy the holidays with their loved ones.

Bob Homan's Christmas 1944 experiences made him "realize what it's all about. It's family, and I've got a big family. I appreciated being home with my family the next year," the retired Janesville cement contractor said.

But on Christmas Eve 1944, Homan was happy just to have a roof over his head. For eight days, his platoon had moved from position to position, covering the American withdrawal with mortars.



Looking for German paratroopers, soldiers from the American First Army cautiously search the Ardennes Forest in Belgium on Christmas Eve 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge.



Then 19, Homan brushed with death before and after that Christmas. Before the holiday, his unit was retreating when they heard an approaching German tank.

As the GIs clambered onto a jeep, one of the soldier's guns discharged accidentally, wounding him in the back of the head. Homan and a buddy jumped out to help the wounded man, but the jeep driver took off.

"We carried him a mile or two. I never found out who he was or if he lived or not," Homan said, emotion choking his voice. "We figured he was dead, but we weren't going to leave his body there. I was just hoping we wouldn't get hit like that."

But on Jan. 9, 1945, Homan got hit by what he thinks was a land mine.

"It wounded about nine of us and killed one," he remembered. "He was right alongside of me. It just blew him right up. He might have protected me."

Shrapnel tore through Homan's left cheek, teeth and the back of his nose, and his reaction, though it sounds strange, was not uncommon for wounded GIs.

"When I got hit, I got kind of a relief feeling, that I was out of it for a while. Even though I was hit pretty bad, there was relief that I would not be there."

Homan eventually volunteered to return to his unit.

On Christmas Eve 1944, his unit occupied a small town.

"We were just lucky to be inside, out of the weather for a day or two. On Christmas Day, we went to the basement and found some canned meat. We made a feast of it. To this day, I wish we hadn't done that. We got so sick."

Frank Douglas, too, was sick on Christmas 1944.

His company was relieved on Christmas Eve and slept on the floor of a 17th century chateau instead of in foxholes.

"There were just 12 or 15 of us. That was all that was left of F Company," said Douglas, then a 19-year-old sergeant, now a retired Craig High School teacher.

"The next day we got Christmas dinner, turkey, dressing, the whole nine yards. They sent enough for 50 guys. We really pigged. By that night, I was just barfing up my guts. Whether the food was bad, or we ate too many sweet cookies, or just the relaxation of stress, I don't know."

Douglas and his comrades did not celebrate Christmas Eve with carols or stories.

"It was very quiet. Every guy turned inward. We just fell down and fell asleep."

Four days later, on Dec. 28, the enormity of their losses became evident.

"We hadn't had any mail for five or six weeks. All the mail for F Company was delivered to us. I got nine packages and a whole bunch of letters," Douglas said.

The mail pile was huge, about 8 feet square and 3 feet deep. Most of the letters were addressed to dead men.

"We didn't really say anything," Douglas remembered. "We gathered it up and took it to an orphanage. There was no way in God's world we were going to send those boxes back to the sender. The (death notice) telegram was bad enough. A month or two later, they would have gotten back the Christmas gift. That would have been a dagger in their heart."

"The number of casualties had suspended the survivors' sense of loss," Douglas said. Since D-Day, June 6, 1944, 1,000 men had gone through his company, which had a listed strength of 200 soldiers.

"It's the ultimate guilt trip: Why am I still alive? It's all been a damn bonus for the last 53 years."

Joe Broderick sang carols on Christmas Eve 1944. He and his comrades were trying to sustain their morale. They were prisoners of war.

"'Silent Night,' 'Jingles Bells,' 'Joy to the World,' anything we could think of. All the guys tuned in. The Germans got mad at us for making so much noise, but we didn't care."

"I sang in the choir for years (afterward), and that always made me think about that," said Broderick, a retired insurance and real estate agent who was born and raised in Janesville.

"One guy in our group—I never found out who he was—every night would read a Bible passage," Broderick recalled. "It looked like he had studied for the ministry. That night, he read from the Bible about Christmas. I think my faith helped a great deal. I really do. That's why I enjoyed that guy reading at night."

After fighting and retreating for four days, Broderick's officers decided to surrender on the night of Dec. 20, rather than lose any more men.

On Christmas, Broderick's POW group was marching in zero-degree weather, singing carols and "jumping up and down to keep our feet warm. I don't think there was a man who didn't have frozen feet."

He remembered marching by "all the dead

GIs along the side of the road, like cords of wood, stripped of their clothes and boots."

Broderick spent his captivity with three comrades. They would sleep together each night, sharing their overcoats, blankets and body heat.

"When somebody wanted to turn over, everybody would have to turn at once. Every other night, you had to sleep on the outside."

On Christmas Eve 1944, the Germans launched the last of the four attacks that made up their Bulge counteroffensive. Twenty-year-old Victor Fuchs, a forward observer, was "involved in one hell of an artillery battle."

The irony of his predicament was that he had fought for seven days and had been relieved just the day before.

"We were surrounded until the morning of the 23rd. We had pulled back to high ground and were able to hold it for seven days," said Fuchs, a retired electrician. "In a sense, we were prisoners of war. We just hadn't given up yet."

"On the 16th, the colonel threw away his .45 (pistol) and grabbed an M1 (rifle) like everyone else. Morale was pretty low. He announced: 'I'll shoot the first man who stands to surrender.' That put us between a rock and a hard place."

That wasn't where Fuchs and his pals initially thought they were. They had arrived on the front lines the day before the Germans' first attack.

"We figured by the first of the year or shortly into the new year, the war would be over."

For them, it had just started.

"The attacks would come in waves. They'd attack, then stop for maybe five or six hours. Then we might be under small arms or artillery fire for 12 hours. They were giving it to us; we were giving it right back to them."

On Dec. 23, the 82nd Airborne fought through the Germans surrendering Fuchs' unit.

"They made a hole for us to get out. We finally got back to some buildings and just flopped."

But before dawn on Christmas Eve, "they were shaking us out of bed to get back to the line. It was the cruelest thing that happened during the war. I didn't think they would do that to a human being," Fuchs said.

"But now the 82nd that had saved us was under fire. We went back in support of them. Artillery was in demand."

"To the Germans, it didn't make any difference it was Christmas Eve. It was far from a silent night."



## Homefront warriors fight their own battles

During World War II, Don Reichard was the best-dressed ninth-grader at Beloit's Lincoln Junior High School.

"I was elected best-dressed because I didn't have any overalls or jeans," he said. "They just weren't available. All the denim was being used to make military fatigues."

That was life on the home front during World War II. Rationing was a way of life, and much of what wasn't rationed was in short supply.

America had mobilized its military, its industry, its people and its spirit to defeat the Axis. And, although the battles were waged half a globe away, virtually no part of life in Rock County was untouched by the greatest war the world has ever known.

Meat, butter, sugar, fats, oils, coffee, canned foods, shoes and gasoline were rationed. Cars, washers, sewing machines, refrigerators and other appliances weren't manufactured and weren't available. Rubber tires could be bought only after a two-page form was completed, reviewed and approved.

"They always told me to eat my meat, whether I liked it or not, because it was rationed," said Shirley Sisk, Darien, who was a 10-year-old farm girl when war broke out.

She remembers well the warning on the back of ration books: "If you don't need it, don't buy it."

"I had just one sweater, but you made do," Sisk said. "I was so glad when the war was over; I could get a new sweater."

Sisk's farm family was a little better off because they raised beef, chicken and hogs and we made butter at home.

People in town supplemented their diets with victory gardens.

"If you didn't have a garden, you had a pretty damned good reason not to have a garden," said Reichard,

former Rock County veterans officer.

Almost all big-name cigarettes, such as Camel, Lucky Strike and Chesterfield, were bought by the government to be included in soldiers' rations. Civilians had to buy other, cheaper brands.

"I remember standing in line for my father because he'd want cigarettes," said Leota Wirkus, 332 Kellogg, who was then a young mother with a husband in the Army. "I remember I got him some cigarettes made with coffee beans."

Not all shoes were rationed.

"In the summer, I got a pair of shoes that weren't rationed," Reichard said. "They weren't made of leather; they were made of cardboard. I went out in rain, and they fell apart."

Women's nylons and silk stockings were impossible to get. Silk had been imported from Japan, and the government bought all the nylon DuPont could produce. Instead, women resorted to leg makeup to paint on the illusion of wearing stockings.

Tons of scrap metal and other material were collected for the war effort.

In July 1942, streetcar rails were torn from Janesville streets, loaded onto railroad cars and shipped off to help Uncle Sam's war effort. Beloit donated Civil War and World War I cannons from its city parks.

"It's interesting today, with recycling and people saving their tin cans. We did that for four years during World War II on all canned goods," Reichard said. "What amazed me was that a large amount of the scrap we collected was World War I relics—German helmets, shell casings and disarmed hand grenades."

Sisk remembers scrounging for scraps of aluminum foil.

"We looked for foil anywhere we could get it—cigarette packs, gum wrappers. We would

bring our balls of foil to school, and people would see whose was bigger," she said.

Mary Farley, 1804 W. Rugby, remembers going door to door collecting grease. The grease contained saltpeter, an ingredient in gunpowder.

"We would put the tins in our old wooden wagon and take them to a collection point. If it were a hot summer day, the grease would melt and spill over into the wagon, making it smell of rancid bacon grease forever after," she said.

Early in the war—before it became clear that enemy aircraft didn't have the range to reach Wisconsin—blackouts were practiced. Lookouts were posted round the clock on the roofs of buildings to watch for enemy aircraft over Beloit, Janesville and other cities.

"The blackouts were announced in advance. We knew they were coming," Reichard said. "Air-raid wardens walked around with their helmets, gas masks and arm bands. They made sure no light was visible from a house. If there was, you'd get a knock on your door. The city cooperated and turned off the street lights."

Rock County sent more than 2,500 men and women into the military during the war.

A household with a member in uniform displayed a banner with a blue star in the front window. The star was silver if the soldier, aviator or sailor was missing in action; gold if killed.

Everybody wrote letters.

"In school, we had a regular time that we wrote these letters to the servicemen," Sisk said.

One-page letters were written on special V-Mail forms. After being mailed, the letters were opened and photographed and the film shipped overseas. There, the letters were reproduced from the rolls of film and distributed.

Letters sent home by soldiers received the same treatment. The intent was to conserve precious cargo space on ships.

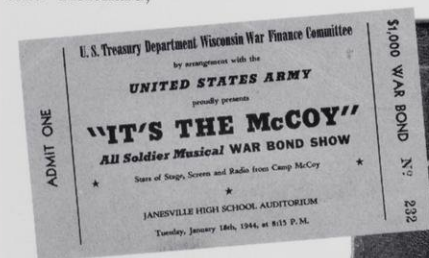
"When we got an answer, they had photographed the letters, or something, and shrunk them," Sisk said. "If they'd said something that could be construed to be giving away a secret, it was all blacked out."

When local men were killed, a telegram brought the bad news.

Wirkus worried that a telegram would come naming her husband, Harold, or her brother, Chloran "Bud" Tanner, both serving in the South Pacific.

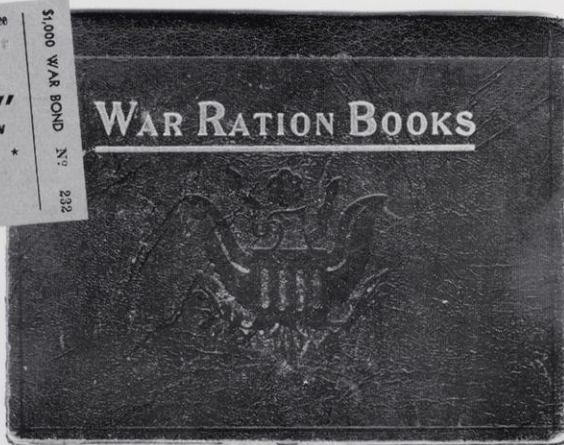
"Nobody liked to see Pud Harper coming up the street," Wirkus said. "He was the one who delivered the telegrams. If you saw him driving up your street, you just hoped and prayed he wasn't stopping at your house."

"Some days were very difficult," she said. "You did a lot of praying. When you didn't hear



Material and food necessary for the U.S. effort to win World War II—such as gasoline, sugar and meat—were rationed, and civilians kept ration books, right, in which their allotments and use were recorded. Many different

kinds of promotions were used to sell war bonds, including a traveling show from Camp McCoy that appeared at Janesville High School (Marshall Apartments).





anything, you'd say that no news is good news.

"I don't think there was a family that wasn't affected by World War II," Wirkus said. "Everybody had somebody in their family or a close friend in the military. It was apprehension that you lived with most of the time."

Just as the rest of the nation, Rock County shifted to war production.

Companies proudly advertised lists of employees serving in the military. Women, who entered the work force in unprecedented numbers, filled in for men leaving for the military.

Almost all war material moved by train. The Milwaukee Road railroad moved twice the tonnage through Rock County in 1943 than it hauled in 1939.

"I remember sitting at railroad crossings, and you'd think you were going to be there for the rest of your life," Reichard said. "It would be tank after tank after tank on flat cars on their way to somewhere."

The government financed the huge expense of fighting a world war by selling war bonds.

It took 187 stamps to fill a booklet, which

could then be traded for a \$25 war bond that matured in 10 years.

The war ended when Japan surrendered in August 1945. The streets filled with people celebrating.

"One element was downtown drinking, and another element was in church praying," Reichard said.

"The war was over. It was the end of a way of life. Things were different after 1945 than they ever were before."

—Sid Schwartz

## Bataan survivors live with death, endure hell on Earth

**H**erb Durner sucked a pebble to soothe his parched mouth. He worked the stone around his swollen tongue, trying to find enough saliva to swallow.

As he marched, the boiling sun cooked the shirt off his back.

His small canteen didn't hold much water, and he didn't know if the Japanese would allow him to refill it.

So he rationed the life fluid in drops.

Bob Stewart tied a towel around his neck, moistened one end with saliva and kept it in his mouth.

The men tried anything to stave off constant thirst during the hottest month of the year in the Philippines.

In 1992, The Janesville Gazette recollected Durner's and Stewart's unforgettable memories of the Bataan Death March. Durner died May 26, 1995. Stewart still lived in Janesville.

In April 1942, the Japanese completed their conquest of the Philippines by brutally overtaking the Bataan Peninsula after the surrender of Allied troops.

They captured 70,000 American and Filipino prisoners, including Durner and Stewart, and marched them 60 miles without food, water or rest to hellish prison camps.

Some 16,000 prisoners died from starvation, maltreatment and disease.

Exhausted POWs who fell out of the march were bayoneted or shot to death. Thirst-crazed men who drank from roadside ditches were beaten or killed. The line of march was littered with scores of headless corpses, decapitated by Japanese swords.

"I don't need a script to remember," Stewart said. "It's indelible in my mind. I wish I could forget, but my dreams always bring things back to me."

Durner, a retired electrician, and Stewart, a retired postal carrier, were among the 99 soldiers from the Janesville area that served with Company A and Headquarters Company of 192nd Tank Battalion. The battalion was a National Guard outfit sent to defend the island

of Luzon, the largest of the Philippine Islands, in late 1941.

On Bataan Peninsula, U.S. and Filipino troops held out for more than three months without reinforcements against relentless Japanese forces.

Japanese air power prevented Allied troops

and 32 men. He proceeded to the east side of the peninsula, where his orders were to defend an Allied airstrip from the advancing enemy.

"I told my crew this is a one-way trip. We'll hold out as long as we can," Durner said.

But as he moved on the airstrip, he was ordered to return to company headquarters.



**Maj. Gen. Jonathan Wainright, without hat near the base of the airplane's stairs, flew to Milwaukee to meet survivors of the defense of the Philippines and Bataan Death March, including Janesville veterans of Company A, 192nd Tank Battalion. When Wainright stepped from the plane, he looked at the veterans, said, 'My little handful of men,' and wept.**

from bringing supplies from Manila. With each passing day, the food dwindled. In January 1942, rations were cut in half. By February, food was halved again, and desperate soldiers foraged for snakes and lizards in the jungle.

Not only did malnutrition take its toll, but there was no medicine to treat the soldiers suffering from malaria and dysentery.

Despite their weakened condition, the men held their ground.

On the night of April 8, Durner, a tank commander, left company headquarters on the west side of the Bataan Peninsula with eight tanks

The following day, Maj. Gen. Edward P. King, in charge of battle-spent American and Filipino troops on Bataan, surrendered to the Japanese.

Many troops were dismayed.

"I was pretty disgusted," Durner remembered. "There wasn't a man there who wanted to quit."

Durner and his crew spent the next few hours breaking the gas lines on their tanks and firing ammunition into their engine compartments to destroy them before the Japanese arrived.



Then, they sat and waited. Japanese troops arrived a day later.

"They had their rifles, with bayonets at the ends, pointed at everyone. They were meaner than mad dogs and shoved us around," Durner said. "They had a lot more prisoners than they ever thought they'd have and weren't organized or ready for us."

The captive Filipinos and Americans, sick and starving, were herded off to Mariveles at the tip of the Bataan Peninsula, then forced to march inland in groups of 500 to 1,000 men.

"Some of us didn't have any shirts. I started with part of a shirt, but it didn't take long for our clothing, soaked with sweat, to bleach white from the sun, then rot off. Most of us had shoes, but they were green with mold from the sweat that dripped down our legs," Durner said.

"One day the soldiers took us to some artesian wells and made us stare at them, but we were not allowed to drink any water. On another day, they made us sit for hours in the sun. They wanted to bake us. It wasn't unusual for the temperature to be over 100 degrees.

"A certain amount of hate against the enemy built up in me every day," Durner said. "But I became determined to make it through this mess and to get back to the States. I figured that if they didn't get me in combat, they weren't going to get me this way."

Stewart, who was in a different group of Bataan prisoners, made the march with Carl Nickols, also of Janesville. At one point, Stewart felt faint and fell.

"I could hear our chatty guard, who was prone to using his bayonet, bringing up the rear. Then, I remembered something my old football coach told us: 'When you feel faint, get on all fours and hang your head down so the blood comes to your head.' I did that, and just as the guard was coming up behind me, I was able to get up.

"But it happened again. I did the same thing to revive myself. In all, I fell three times. I remember thinking that Christ on his way to Calvary fell three times. I firmly believe that just by having that thought it gave me the strength to go on.

"After the third time, I lay on the shoulder of the road with my head on the bank. I could hear the footsteps of guys walking by and the guard coming closer. Then, I saw his bayonet come down and just miss my nose. I say it was an act of God that he did not kill me. He let me stay at the side of the

road with Nickols."

The column of POWs moved on. Eventually, Stewart and Nickols meandered on until they came to a well, where they drank deeply.

Soon, a truck filled with Japanese soldiers came along and stopped by the well.

"The soldiers motioned to us to come to the truck. They gave us all their canteens to fill with water. Then, they gave us what looked like hard Christmas candy and drove off.

"We put the candy into our mouths. It was the funniest sensation I've ever had in my life. I could feel the life come back into my arms and legs. The sugar was like an intravenous injection. It gave us new life. We kept on walking until we caught up with our column."

Heat prostration, dehydration, dysentery, hunger and tropical disease killed many men before they arrived more than a week later at Camp O'Donnell.

But life only got worse at the prison camp.

One spigot provided a water trickle no bigger than a lead pencil. Men stood in line for up to 10 hours to get a drink. In the beginning, lack of food and disease killed 20 American soldiers and 150 Filipino soldiers a day. After two weeks, the death rate climbed to 50 a day among the Americans and 500 a day among the Filipinos.

"It was the call of death to be in O'Donnell," Stewart said.

Men were needed to dig graves, and Japanese soldiers pegged Stewart for the gruesome detail. In the hot jungle, Stewart, himself emaciated, dug 12-foot square holes, 4 feet deep, to bury his comrades.

Surrounded by death and suffering, Stewart counted on his memories to sustain him.

"I was overseas for four years," he said. "For 3½ years, I survived by remembering life in the States and by thinking how carefree my life had been until that point."

POWs on work detail received more food than those who were sick. But not much more. Men who once weighed 200 pounds dropped to 97.

"We ate rice mostly and a watery soup with green vegetables," Stewart said. "If you got sick, your ration was cut in half. It was pretty much the end of the trail because you got no medicine or attention to get well."

One night, Stewart risked his life to smuggle a bag of rice to starving prisoners. On another day, he watched a fellow POW catch a rat in a bamboo cage, dress out the animal and cook it.

But things got even worse.

In August 1944, Stewart was loaded onto a Japanese "hell ship" in Manila for transport to a labor camp.

More than 1,000 POWs were put in a 40-by-40-foot hold.

"We were placed there shoulder to shoulder, front to back, so that you couldn't move. I remember the command our guard gave us: 'Make yourself comfortable.'

"Every day, as men died from sickness and starvation, more and more room opened up in the hold."

Dead men were dumped over the side. When they hit the water, suction from huge propellers in the ship's stern pulled the bodies back into the blades and cut them up.

Twelve days later the ship arrived in Japan, where prisoners faced more hard work, cruel guards and lack of food.

Durner, too, left the prison camp in the Philippines to be transported by hell ship to a work camp.

"We ran into a typhoon outside of Formosa. I believe it may have saved us from Allied bombers, who could not see the ship between the waves," he said.

Japanese ships carrying POWs were not marked, so Allied planes had no way of knowing about the human cargo.

Many Allied troops, including 14 from Janesville's Company A, were drowned when their ships were torpedoed by American submarines.

When the war ended, the survivors of Bataan came home.

But Durner could not be the man he once was.

"I used to be a carefree fellow," he said. "After going through that ordeal, I lost my smile. I still don't smile much today. I stand on the serious side of life."

For Stewart, time made it harder to talk about the events of a war five decades ago.

"I'm not sure why, except that I realize how lucky I am that I survived. So many of the fellows that we knew and were as close to as brothers didn't make it home. It makes me wonder why I made it when those guys didn't.

"It seems like I had an open line to the man up above, because I don't know who else I can give the credit to. I asked for help many times, and my prayers were answered," Stewart said.

"I want people to remember the guys who gave their lives. They gave the supreme sacrifice.

"There's no way to give any more."

—Anna Marie Lux



# 1940-1949

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1940

■ **Jan. 6:** State humane agents and Walworth County deputies raid a cock fight at Wallace Bruce's Shamrock tavern on Delavan Lake and arrest six men, including Bruce. Bruce pays a fine and costs amounting to \$61, and the other five are fined \$1 each but also assessed \$110 each in legal costs. A crowd of 150 men, mostly from the upper Midwest, was at the bar gambling on the fighting roosters, and authorities think the fights constituted the semifinal round of the Midwest championship. Forty years earlier, the inhumane "sport" of cock-fighting was socially acceptable.

■ **Jan. 26:** A fight over "kibitzing" at a card game leaves Willard Wright, 28, Beloit, dead of a knife wound and Lacey Pegues, 32, Beloit, locked up on a charge of murder. The Janesville Gazette continues its practice of identifying non-white people by their race—in both cases, Negro—reflecting the continuing racial prejudice of the era and area.

■ **Feb. 10:** The Janesville Sportsmen's Club organizes with Rudy Sterk as its president. Before the year is out, the name will change to Janesville Conservation Club, and members plan to plant trees and shrubs along Highway 51 north of the city.

■ **March 17:** Janesville cops trade fire with career criminals George Lanahan, 57, Los Angeles, and Ray Conley, 34, Wyoming, as the police thwart the duo's attempt to blow the safe of the Rock County Service Co-Op on North Bluff Street (North Parker Drive). No one is injured, though Lanahan's single shot misses Officer Clinton Casberg by inches. Casberg fires eight shots in return and waits for backup to arrest the pair.

■ **April:** Janesville's new electrical code requires rigid metal conduit for new construction and for rewiring wherever possible.

■ **May 1:** Janesville's measles epidemic hits 120 cases.

■ **May 16:** A New York survey shows that 64 percent of Janesville families—3,674 households—have incomes beyond that needed for the basic necessities of life: food, clothing and shelter.

The Gazette plays the story on Page 1 as evidence of economic recovery, but the between-the-lines story is that 36 percent of the city's families still live below the subsistence, or poverty, level.

■ **June 4:** On the day Dunkirk, the Belgian

port through which 338,000 Allied troops escape, falls to the German advance, the Gazette carries on Page 1 the stirring words of the new British prime minister, Winston Churchill:

"We shall fight on the seas and the oceans. ... We shall fight on the beaches. We shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields and in the streets and in the hills. We shall never surrender."

■ **June 5:** A "ferocious rat, 14½ inches in length," chases and tries to bite a Janesville man near North Bluff Street (North Parker Drive) and Fourth Avenue (Centerway) despite being twice kicked off the sidewalk. Fishermen rescue the man by killing the rat with their poles, and city officials worry that the city's rat population, believed to be in the thousands, is infected with rabies.

■ The battling Walsh brothers, Art and Jim, conclude their amateur boxing careers with a three-round exhibition against each other in the St. Mary's School gym. The Janesville twins have been boxing amateur, Golden Gloves and intercollegiate for 21 years, having started at a St. Mary's bazaar, and led the University of Wisconsin team to a national title in 1939.

Both will become lieutenants in the military. Art will serve with the Marines on Okinawa, and James will be the Army's military governor over an area of Austria after V-E Day.

■ **June 13:** "Husky, bronzed" Walter Sparks, 19, of Clinton arrives in Toronto, Canada, after hitchhiking there to "get a crack at Adolf." Sparks is willing to give up his U.S. citizenship to join the Royal Canadian Air Force. He wants to be a pilot, "but if I can't get in that way, I'd just as soon be a grease-monkey."

■ **July 1:** The barking of their dog saves Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Malone, 1124 Blaine, from asphyxiation by gas escaping from the kitchen stove. The dog rouses Mrs. Malone, who finds her husband unconscious in the kitchen. Partially overcome herself, she crawls to the door, where her cries alert neighbor Walter Lindemann, who calls the fire department.

■ **Aug. 9:** A countywide rat extermination campaign is agreed to, and every municipality is urged to cooperate.

■ **Aug. 12:** The 11th annual Rock County 4-H Fair opens, and for the first time, night events are scheduled because new floodlights have been installed at the fairgrounds.

■ **August:** Five cases of polio are reported in Janesville; seven more will be reported in September. The 12 cases constitute an epidemic.

■ **Sept. 1:** Footville farmer Arthur M. Easton, 56, accidentally shoots and kills himself while hunting rats.

■ **Sept. 2:** The fourth bombing in Walworth County in a month damages five buildings, including the Lake Geneva movie theater next to the alley where the black-powder bomb detonates. The blast frightens 800 movie-goers but injures no one. Earlier, similar bombs rocked the Hotel Geneva, Kelley's Tavern in Lake Geneva and the Como Hotel on Lake Como.

■ **Sept. 27:** The wife of GOP presidential candidate Wendell Willkie makes a "fleeting platform appearance" here but says nothing as the candidate's special train refuels in Janesville en route to New York. The night before in Madison, Willkie charged that President Franklin D. Roosevelt is moving toward dictatorship.

■ **Oct. 15:** Two of Janesville's three National Guard units—the 121st Field Artillery Band and Company B, 107th Quartermaster Regiment—are mobilized for federal service.

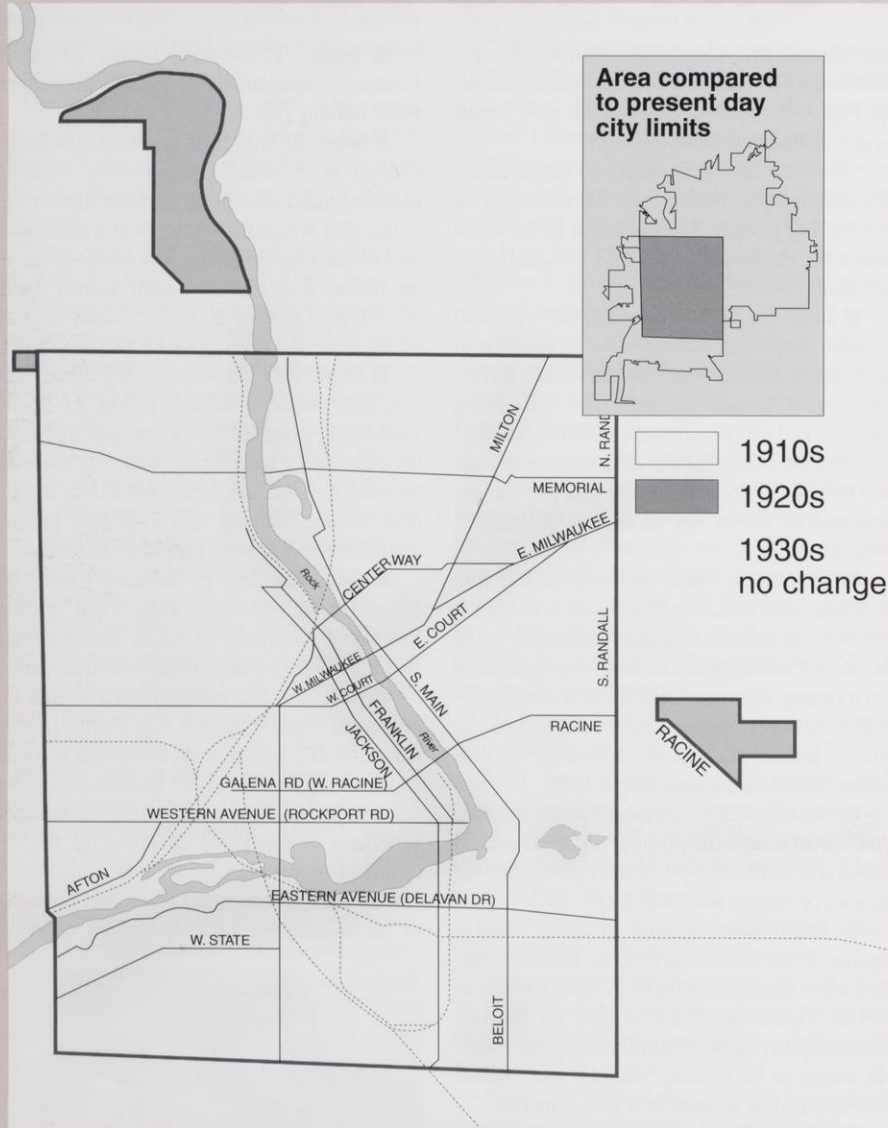
■ **Oct. 16:** Registration starts for the first peacetime military draft in U.S. history. In Rock County, 9,422 men sign up, compared to 12,000 expected. In Janesville, the number is 2,646 of 4,000 expected. Only three men in southern Wisconsin are reported to object to the first round of registration. A Janesville man insists that an affidavit noting his objection be attached to his registration card. A student at White-



Sgt. Kenneth Bienash shows Pvt. John Higgins the bolt action on a .22-caliber rifle at the Janesville Armory. Both were members of Company B, 32nd Quartermaster Regiment, a National Guard unit that was mobilized for federal service Oct. 15, 1940.



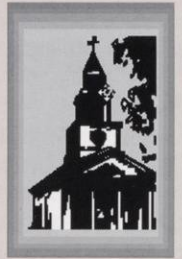
# Janesville in 1940



**Janesville's city limits in 1940.**  
**Some of the street names have changed since then.**



**Area of city:** 7.94 square miles



**Number of churches:** 17



**Number of schools:** 11. One is Janesville High School; one is the Wisconsin School for the Blind; the others are elementary schools.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 31.66  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 56.58  
**Miles of water mains:** 73.88



**Population:** 22,992



**\$1 in 1940 has buying power of \$11.59 in 1999**

water State Teachers College and an Elkhorn resident also declare they are "conscientious objectors." By year's end, only two men—James H. Kayser and Charles L. Mathews—are drafted and inducted into service.

■ **Nov. 5:** FDR wins the unprecedented third presidential term but loses Rock County, which he carried in 1936, to Willkie, 20,066 to 17,438. Roosevelt narrowly wins in Wisconsin, one of the 39 of 48 states he carries.

Sen. Robert La Follette Jr., a Progressive and a leading isolationist in Congress, finishes second in Rock County but wins re-election. Voters

in the 1st District return Republican Stephen Bolles, former Gazette editor, to Congress by a 3-1 margin.

■ **Nov. 21:** Janesville and the rest of Wisconsin celebrate Thanksgiving a week earlier than the traditional fourth Thursday in November. In 1939, FDR moved the holiday up a week to lengthen the traditional Christmas shopping period and boost the economy, still flagging from the Depression.

■ **Nov. 25:** The 32nd Tank Company, whose name has been changed to Company A, 192nd Tank Battalion, is mobilized and inducted into

federal service. The tankers are scheduled to be gone for a year, but it will be the end of the war before only 35 of "The Janesville 99" will return home after defending the Philippines, enduring the Bataan Death March and slaving in Japanese work camps.

■ **Dec. 5:** Expansion of Riverside Golf Course to 18 holes is assured when Janesville City Manager Henry Traxler announces the agreement to buy 83.5 acres for \$16,900.

■ **Dec. 24:** "MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!" proclaims the Gazette's front page, which also carries a full-page line drawing of a



candle-topped Christmas tree superimposed over the text. This will be the last truly merry Christmas for five years because many southern Wisconsin sons will be fighting for their lives until World War II ends in summer 1945.

■ **Sometime in 1940:** Annual production at General Motors twin plants—Chevrolet and Fisher Body—is 124,398, the highest since 1936. Corporate-wide voting by workers establishes the United Auto Workers of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) as the union for GM workers. A week's paid vacation is approved for GM employees.

■ Gilman Engineering Works "blossoms as a full-fledged industry," whose chief product is a tool-room machine combining many functions, an invention of George Gilman. Thirty men work at Gilman, 214 N. First (Wall Street).

■ Janesville builds 109 new houses, the most in one year since 1929.

■ A new type of locomotive—the diesel engine—is put into service on the Milwaukee Road.

■ The Janesville Fire Department installs its first two-way radio on a truck.

■ Among the most circulated books at the Janesville Public Library are: for fiction, Richard Wright's landmark book on the African-American experience, "Native Son," and for non-fiction, "Mein Kampf" by Adolf Hitler.

■ No human rabies cases are reported in the city, but several among dogs force the state to quarantine Janesville dogs—confined, leashed or muzzled—for most of the year.

■ Suzanne Snively, 202 Jackman, becomes the first Janesville girl to win a state golf championship when she takes the junior title at the women's state tourney in Milwaukee. Snively also is a straight-A student at Janesville High.

■ Elton Broege of LaPrairie 4-H and Elizabeth Boyd of Lima 4-H are judged the county's outstanding 4-H members for the year.

## 1941

■ **Jan. 7:** 300 people attend a conference on juvenile delinquency in Beloit, where they hear that a state survey has recorded 370 cases of juvenile crime in Rock County in the past year. All speakers concur that correction must start at home.

■ **Feb. 12:** Susan Weiss, a native of Vienna, Austria, whose parents moved to Janesville and who now attends high school here, has lived in England during the ongoing German air assault known as the Battle of Britain. She describes to a local club how she feels now that she's in the States: "A police car's siren sounded like an air raid alarm, and often, upon hearing one, I would grab warm clothing and prepare to duck into the air raid shelter. Even after arriving in America, I



**Movies were a great escape for civilians dealing with rationing and the rigors of war production in the '40s, and they also were another place to buy war bonds.**

often caught myself pulling down the blinds and making sure the door was closed tightly when coming into a lighted room."

■ **March 1:** Janesville industrial workers lead the state in average weekly wages: \$36.63.

■ **March 20:** Janesville stores unveil new window displays and floor exhibits showing off new fashions for spring. The changing of window and floor displays "from the more somber winter clothing ... to the colorful garments of warmer weather" is an annual event coordinated with the Gazette's publication of a spring fashion review. A-line dresses and skirts are just below knee length and feature checks, floral prints and pleats. Men's jackets are three-button and single-breasted with wide lapels.

■ **March:** WCLO radio changes its frequency from 1200 kilocycles to 1230 kilocycles.

■ The first premature baby to occupy Mercy Hospital's new "spe-

cial incubator department" is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Brown, rural Janesville. The newborn weighs in at 2 pounds, 2 ounces.

■ **April 5:** Unionized Janesville carpenters seek a pay raise from \$1 to \$1.125 an hour.

■ **April 7:** The Janesville council regulates pinball machines. They may not be located within 600 feet of a school, and no one younger than 18 may play pinball unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

■ **May 1:** City Manager Henry Traxler buys the first U.S. defense bond sold at the Janesville Post Office. Sold to raise money for the war effort—the United States is drafting men even though it is not yet at war—the Series E bond costs Traxler \$18.75, and he can redeem it for \$25 in 10 years.

■ **May 3-4:** Janesville's first and only team in organized, professional baseball—the Janesville Cubs, affiliated with the Chicago



**Dizzy Dean, baseball great pitched against Janesville Cubs**



Cubs farm system—plays its first practice games against Joe Green's Chicago Colored Giants and takes two out of three from the Windy City team. On May 17, the Cubs win their first league game 5-0 at Wisconsin Rapids and go on to finish seventh with a 38-72 record.

■ **June 6:** The Janesville Health Department reports finding "physical defects" in 128 of 160 preschool children examined by doctors in the annual "summer round-up." Tooth defects lead the list with 82 followed by 55 kids with flat feet and 53 with tonsil problems. Thirty-two children have poor posture.

■ **July 2:** Playing on their home diamond at the Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds, the Janesville Cubs lose an exhibition game 7-2 to the Chicago Cubs. The highlight of an otherwise lackluster game—Chicago musters only eight hits—is the three innings of pitching by Chicago coach Dizzy Dean, a baseball legend. Dean displays masterful control over his "nothing ball" and treats the crowd to clever banter over the public address system. This is his last competitive mound appearance, and the banter will serve him well because he will leave the Cubs in eight days to start broadcasting games for the St. Louis Browns (Baltimore Orioles).

■ Marion Fraser, 24-year-old drugstore clerk, is killed when the chemicals she is mixing for a homemade Fourth of July bomb explode. The blast blows out the windows of George Schwartz's drug store in East Troy, where Fraser worked.

■ Mrs. F.W. Donovan, wife of the manager of the Great Atlantic and Pacific (A&P) Tea Co. grocery in Beloit, is wounded in the shoulder during a daylight hold-up by two gunmen who get away with \$400 cash.

■ **July:** A drive to collect aluminum for the war effort gathers 5,330 pounds in Janesville and a total of 17,641 pounds in Rock County.

■ **Aug. 6:** Elkhorn is treated to its first world movie premiere because local resident Kay Harris stars in "Tillie the Toiler."

■ **Aug. 20:** Lt. David A. Van Epps of Williams Bay is the only American serving in the air wing of Great Britain's Royal Navy. In a letter excerpted in the Gazette, the Yank aviator, who "washed out" of the U.S. Army Air Force in 1939, writes of the American tunes played and toasts by his British comrades on his aircraft carrier on the Fourth of July. Van Epps will transfer back to the U.S. Army Air Force in 1943 and fly more than 70 missions as a fighter pilot escorting bombers. On Easter 1944, he will be reported missing in action, but 13 months later, Van Epps, now a captain, will be liberated from a German Luftwaffe-run POW camp.

■ **Sept. 17:** Rollin Norton Jr., a Minnesota resident held in the Janesville city lockup for car theft, twists the lock off his cell door and walks

to freedom, only to be apprehended a few hours later in Edgerton. New locks are installed on cell doors.

■ **Sept. 27:** The Duke and Duchess of Windsor—formerly King Edward VIII of Great Britain and American divorcee Wallis Warfield Simpson—stop here as they take a train to Canada; their return trip in October also brings them through Janesville.

■ **September:** Over the objections of downtown merchants, Janesville council members authorize a six-month experiment of parking meters for 1942.

■ **Oct. 2:** So Janesville High School students won't spend so much time trying to learn the World Series scores, Vice Principal Ken Bick sets up a special scoreboard in the main hall and updates the scores between classes. The Brooklyn Dodgers take Game 2 to even the series with the New York Yankees.

■ **Oct. 15:** Veterans of Foreign Wars Kienow-Hilt Post 1621 occupies its new (and current) quarters at 1015 Center, formerly the Rock-Aire Hotel and before that the Chevrolet Club for GM employees.

■ **Nov. 7:** "High school football yells with profanity in them may be all right in Beloit, but they don't go here," the Gazette begins in reporting the conviction of James E. Schmitt, 21, of Beloit whose rowdy cheers in downtown Janesville got him arrested for unnecessary noise. Judge Ernest Agnew decides that Schmitt's cheering—"with one naughty word in it"—deserves a conviction but also a suspended sentence. "If this defendant is guilty, no doubt so are several hundred others," the judge says.

■ **Nov. 13:** After much controversy and two previous no votes, the Rock County Board decides to buy land south of Janesville for a county airport. No site is chosen, but a site at or near the private county airport about four miles south of the city limits in 1941, not owned by the county, is suggested. The site will become Rock County Airport.

■ **Nov. 22:** Company A of the 192nd Tank Battalion lands in the Philippines. Commanding Company A is Capt. Walter Write of Janesville; commanding the 192nd Battalion's Headquarters Company is another Janesville man, Capt. Fred T. Bruni.

■ **Dec. 8:** The United States wakes up at war with Japan after the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. Three days later, Germany and Italy declare war on the United States, which reciprocates. The Gazette incorrectly reports that Pvt. John Fletcher, 32, of 727 Milwaukee, an aviation mechanic stationed at Wheeler Field in Hawaii, is the first Janesville man killed in the war.

On Dec. 26, Fletcher's parents, Mr. and Mrs.

J.L. Fletcher, receive a fantastic Christmas gift, another telegram—this one from the Red Cross not the War Department, which sent the first telegram—informing them their son is alive and well. The smoke and confusion of war lead the Gazette to report in its year-end edition that Seaman Donald Hymers, 236 N. Washington, reportedly killed in the Pearl Harbor raid, is the city's first serviceman slain in World War II combat.

A spotcheck of Gazette files did not find a correction on the Hymers fatality story, but a year later, after War Department reports become more reliable, the Gazette reports that Capt. Write, killed in action in the Philippines on Dec. 24, 1941, is Janesville's "first Gold Star of the war." When servicemen are killed in action, their families change the color of the stars on service flags hanging in their windows. The service flags display a blue star for each man in the military, a silver star if the man is missing in action and a gold star if the man was killed.

■ The rabies quarantine on Janesville dogs, in effect with only a few interruptions since December 1939, is lifted.

■ **Dec. 11:** In a spirit of patriotic cooperation, AFL Local 19593, representing Parker Pen workers, votes to forgo overtime pay, premium wages for night work and restrictions on working hours so the local factory can spend more time on defense work. The next day, UAW Local 121, representing workers at the Chevrolet plant here, adopts a resolution urging that auto factories be devoted 100 percent to the manufacture of arms and munitions and pledges financial and manpower support to the Red Cross and civilian defense efforts.

■ **Dec. 15:** The Gazette devotes all of Page 7 to air raid advice from the Office of Civilian Defense. The major headings are "Keep cool, Stay home, Put out lights, Lie down, Stay away from windows, You can help."

■ **December:** "Bright work," the addition of chrome to automobiles, is forbidden by federal law as chromium is needed for the war effort, and the change to a new paint trim and uncertainty over the factories' war roles halts automobile assembly at the Janesville GM plants. Truck production continues. Employment is reported at 2,000, several hundred of whom are laid off as the year ends.

■ **Sometime in 1941:** Rock River Woolen Mills, employing 270 people, turns its production entirely to military uses, supplying the Army and Marine Corps with suiting and lining for uniforms.

■ Parker Pen employment rises to 1,295 as many workers turn to defense jobs, making fine machine parts such as bomb caps and radio and airplane components. The company buys 15 acres north of city limits on Highway 51, which eventu-



## Fire rages again on Milwaukee Street Bridge



**The Milwaukee Street Bridge fire of 1942 destroyed five buildings, including the Tallman building that housed the Woolworth store, above. The store was rebuilt and eventually renovated into the Janesville Athletic Club Riverfront Centre.**

League bowlers at Cannon's Bowling Alley rolled their first set of games the night of April 14, 1942.

Then the alley's pin boys pitched in to help fight one of the most spectacular fires in Janesville history, which raged right across Milwaukee Street.

The city's second Milwaukee Street Bridge fire destroyed the Sutherland building on the southwest end of the span, the sole structural survivor of the 1913 blaze that obliterated all the other Milwaukee Street buildings constructed over the Rock River.

The '42 fire also leveled the Tallman building housing the Woolworth store and three other buildings. Three more buildings were damaged.

The buildings on both sides of Milwaukee Street were home to many stores, shops and offices. In all, 15 businesses burned to the ground or were heavily damaged.

Numerous firefighters, police officers and spectators were hurt, most with minor injuries, and 13 suffered injuries serious enough to warrant mention in *The Janesville Gazette*.

One was a 57-year-old visitor from Springfield, Ohio—identified both as C.H. Ross and C.H. Roth—who fell in the river and was rescued by two firemen from the “double threat of drowning and being scorched by roaring flames under the bridge,” the newspaper reported.

Another was Beloit Fire Inspector William Mayo, who suffered a compound fracture of his left arm when he fell 15 feet trying to jump from a collapsing roof to a solid one.

An 8-year-old burglar started the fire when he used matches to find his way around the darkened W.T. Grant department store, 9-11 W. Milwaukee, as he tried to find the batteries, light and so forth to assemble a flashlight.

“Flames shot 100 feet into the air, and the glow could be seen as far away as Milton and Beloit,” the *Gazette* reported. “Smoke choked the entire city. Heat could be felt for many blocks.”

“Scores of smaller roof fires were started by burning embers blown all the way to Fourth Avenue (Centerway), but roof watchers extinguished them.”

Burning timbers floating downriver were put out before they could ignite the frame buildings on the Court Street Bridge.

The only things that saved Dubes Jewelry Store and many other buildings from destruction were a 12-inch firewall between Dubes and the Woolworth store “and concentrated fire department action on the Odd Fellows Hall at the rear” of the burning buildings, the *Gazette* reported.

Local restaurants donated food and coffee for the firefighters from eight departments.

Also getting the free grub were the auxiliary firefighters and police officers trained for World War II civil defense. The bowling alley pin boys helped Boy Scouts run refreshments to frontline firefighters and clear goods out of threatened stores.

Soldiers in uniform helped direct traffic. The Sears store allowed volunteer firefighters to use its entire stock of garden hoses to put out the roof fires.

But not everyone helped the greater good.

Robert Valle, a soldier from Beloit, volunteered to remove some of the jewelry from Dubes to a safe place. But he actually removed a cigarette lighter and two pairs of opera glasses for himself. He was arrested and pleaded guilty to theft.

The 1913 fire occurred in almost exactly the same site, the south side of the bridge but on the east end. At that time, the Milwaukee Street Bridge was wooden as were many of the surrounding buildings.

The bridge was rebuilt, using concrete. The 1942 fire did slight damage to the bridge; it reopened in two days. The Woolworth store (Janesville Athletic Club Riverfront Centre) was rebuilt by November, but the '42 fire also prompted the city to eventually clear the Court Street Bridge of buildings.

The 1942 blaze remains one of the most costly in city history, \$363,000 at the time, or \$4.2 million in 1999 dollars.



ally will be the site of the Arrow Park factory.

■ Even Ossit Church Furniture is doing war work: making special seats for air-testing chambers.

■ The Wisconsin Employment Service's Janesville office finds work for 3,300 people, 500 more than in 1940. Still seeking work through the office are 1,697 people, including 1,202 men; the year before ended with 2,070 looking for jobs.

■ College senior Allen F. Lovejoy, 58 Jackman, wins the Patterson Prize, "highest competitive award made at Yale University," and Robert L. Avery, 512 Oakland, is elected to the national scholastic honor society, Phi Beta Kappa, at the University of Wisconsin. After graduation, Lovejoy volunteers for military service.

■ Pearl Dawson, head matron at the Wisconsin School for the Blind, becomes the first Janesville woman to enter Army service during the year; she becomes a hostess at Fort Custer, Mich.

■ For the first time, corn borers show up in Rock County, one of 26 Wisconsin counties hit by the insect pests.

## 1942

■ **Jan. 1:** Over the objections of downtown merchants, the city of Janesville installs parking meters for a six-month experiment that satisfies officials, who decide to leave them in. The meters—a penny for 12 minutes, a nickel an hour—net the city \$20,000 by year's end.

■ **Jan. 3:** Parker Pen gets a contract for 35 million parts for anti-aircraft shell fuses, a sub-contract from Borg Corp., Delavan.

■ **Jan. 8:** Dickie Stanley, 10, of 404 North (Johnson Street), breaks a first-floor window and runs barefoot for two blocks in the snow to a grocery store to report a fire sweeping through half the duplex in which his family lives. Another family lives with the Stanleys, and members of a third are staying overnight, all in half the duplex. Stanley finds the fire—started by the young Merritt brothers, Ronald and Donnie, who were playing with matches—and yells a warning to other residents. The other side is damaged by heat and smoke, but firemen keep the flames from spreading.

Nine people "miraculously" escape death; six of them jump from a second-story window. Four people are hurt including Stanley's 13-month-old brother, Kennie, injured when he was thrown from the second floor, and James Brady, 920 Cornelia, a passer-by who catches several of the jumping or thrown residents.

■ **Feb. 16:** Headline across the bottom of the Gazette's Page 1: "All Men 20-45 Not on 1940-41 Draft Lists Must Register Before 9 Tonight." Rock County registers an additional

5,455 men; Walworth County, 1,968.

■ **March 18:** The Gazette prints a list of 1,550 city and rural men ages 20 to 45 who registered in the latest draft wave in the order they will be drafted, which is determined by a lottery. Harold J. Baum, a former city man living on a farm north of Edgerton, is the first man listed.

■ **March:** General Motors division Oldsmobile takes over Janesville's Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants and starts converting them to make artillery shells.

■ **April 3:** Rock County residents hear a tremendous explosion and see a bright flash across the sky, but the phenomenon is not military- or industry-related. A meteor falls somewhere in the region.

■ **April 9:** After months of overly optimistic reports of success and victories by outnumbered U.S. and Filipino forces, Bataan falls. The survivors of Janesville's tankers in Company A and Headquarters Company of the 192nd Tank battalion become prisoners of war. The island fortress of Corregidor will hold out under incredible bombing and shelling—on May 4 alone, 16,000 shells blast the island—but it also surrenders on May 6.

■ **May 1:** Alfred Jacobson, 62, of 236 Water, suffers severe burns, which will prove to be fatal the next night. An eyewitness, Lidia Lawrence, who is living with the Jacobsons, will testify that Jacobson's wife, Sena Jacobson, 57, threw a lighted kerosene lamp at him after he threw a bottle or a smaller, unlit lamp at her and injured her head. All of the people involved have been drinking.

With his clothes afire, Jacobson runs to the home of his brother, Leslie, 322 Water, who tears off the burning garments and seeks help. Sena, who has 17 children, is charged with first-degree manslaughter. Her attorney attacks Lawrence's credibility, and the jury, apparently accepting Sena's story that a cigarette probably ignited the davenport on which her husband sat, acquits her on June 24.

■ **May 4:** Sugar rationing, a half pound per person per week, starts in Janesville. Residents have four days to register for ration books, either as individuals or family members. Residents have been barred from buying sugar for a week to prevent a run on supplies. On the honor system, residents must declare how much sugar they have on hand, and any household with more than 2 pounds of sugar per person must relinquish stamps from its new ration books for amounts over the limit. Almost 23,000 residents register, and they must provide physical descriptions of family members so if ration books are lost, the finders won't be able to use them.

■ **May 29:** Single-engine, olive-drab Army airplanes—their number a military secret—arrive in Janesville for use in an Army Air Force

glider pilot training school. Headquartered in Janesville, the training unit initially uses landing fields just north of Emerald Grove, on Shopiere Road six miles south of Janesville in LaPrairie Township and between Highway 51 and Afton in Beloit Township.

■ **June 23:** Mrs. Phillip B. Morrissey, Elkhorn, becomes the first Walworth County woman admitted to the practice of law. Reflecting societal biases that women are secondary to their husbands, the Gazette does not report Mrs. Morrissey's first name despite her accomplishment and involvement in civic groups.

■ **July 4:** Southern Wisconsin's war industries continue operations through the Independence Day holiday.

■ **July 8:** Janesville first "small" war industry, J.A. Strimple Co., is making small scooters, called power cycles, for workers to get around inside huge factories.

■ **Aug. 3:** War kills in strange ways: Lightning electrocutes Pvt. Edgar Thompson, 20, of 213 Water, while he is on maneuvers with his outfit in Louisiana.

■ **Aug. 13:** Media contributes to violence: "Two South Janesville (Delavan Drive and Beloit Avenue) boys have undoubtedly seen one too many Tarzan moving pictures. Apparently enchanted by seeing the jungle man dive on the backs of vicious animals and stab them to death, the boys (9 and 12) started a similar game on the J.H. Hugunin farm. The youngsters' prey was a sheep."

■ **August:** Full-scale production of artillery shells starts at the Oldsmobile plants, whose motto is "Keep 'Em Firing." Censorship orders prevent the Gazette from reporting what types of shells and how many people are working at the plants. Most of the shells are 105mm howitzer rounds, and the plants employ at least their pre-war-time highs of 3,000 people total. A World War I veteran working at Oldsmobile comments: "Most of us can't get into the actual fighting for one reason or other. But we've got an important job to do here—and believe me we're doing it."

■ **Summer:** 60 farms near Edgerton are growing belladonna, a poisonous plant with medical and surgical applications, as part of the war effort under the direct auspices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

■ **Invasion!** Not of any enemy territory but of Janesville by hordes of black crickets, the first such infestation since 1939. The crickets apparently are Janesville Cubs fans because they regularly swarm the field.

■ **Sept. 15:** Allen "Turk" Fritzke, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Fritzke, returns home to Edgerton for a two-month rest after serving as a gunner in southeast Asia with one of the most



colorful, successful outfits of World War II: the American Volunteer Group, also known as "The Flying Tigers." The volunteers are ex-servicemen—250 mostly American pilots, navigators and gunners—who are mercenaries hired by the Chinese Army before the United States enters the war to fly the P-40 fighters and other aircraft for which the Chinese have no trained crews.

Under the command of Maj. Gen. Claire Chennault and including air aces such as Greg "Pappy" Boyington of U.S. Marine Black Sheep Squadron fame, the Tigers are credited with downing 286 Japanese planes in seven months. The Tigers disbanded July 4 so members could rejoin the U.S. military. Fritzke, who reports the Tigers got a \$500 bonus for every downed enemy plane, re-enlists in the Navy.

■ **Oct. 3:** 40 Boy Scouts from Janesville's nine troops scour the city seeking pledge cards for salvageable war materials, especially metal and rubber. One troop collects pledges for 2,200 pounds of material, including 1,400 pounds of precious rubber, in the first hours of the drive, which will last for seven days.

■ **Nov. 2:** Rock County women are volunteering for military service along with the men. The latest enlistees in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC, later shortened to WAC) are Mrs. Delmon Bushaw, whose husband is a Company A tanker believed to be a POW, and Rose Siker, who graduated from the University of Wisconsin in June.

■ **Nov. 12:** Rock County supervisors vote a 10 percent pay raise for all non-elected courthouse employees.

■ **Nov. 21:** Rosie's on the job in Janesville: The Gazette's weekly Saturday photo page features local women who have taken over what was considered "man's work" before the war. The local Rosie the Riveters, the name given to women war workers, are pictured operating lathes at Gilman Engineering, running milling machines and drill presses at Parker Pen, learning welding at the vocational school and driving truck for Jaeger Rapid Delivery Service.

■ **Dec. 1:** Gasoline rationing starts in Janesville. The rationing also is designed to conserve rubber by limiting the number of tire-wearing miles Americans drive. The day before, Janesville filling station attendants had a frantic day topping off the tanks of local drivers. Motorists are limited to four gallons per week, and traffic in Janesville is noticeably lighter.

■ Farmers in the Janesville and Clinton areas pledge to raise at least 3,360 acres of hemp (marijuana) to be used to make rope and burlap for the war.

■ **Sometime in 1942:** Between June and December, Rock County residents buy \$3.37 million in war bonds, almost \$175,000 above its

quota, the fourth highest in the state behind Milwaukee, Dane and Racine counties. Gazette newspaper carriers sell and deliver war savings stamps, which sell for lesser amounts than bonds and are accumulated to be redeemed for bonds.

■ With gas rationing in effect, Janesville adds city bus routes, runs buses on 20-minute schedules that extend past 11 p.m. and operates four special buses to accommodate the night shift at the Oldsmobile plant.

■ Armed guards patrol the WP&L general substation in Janesville and city reservoir to prevent sabotage. They have orders to shoot trespassers.

■ The first Janesville woman commissioned in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps is Esther Rowlands, 309 S. Main; her rank of third officer is equivalent to second lieutenant. Ruth Marcus, 333 Forest Park, is the first Janesville member of the Navy Auxiliary, WAVES, to complete yeoman's training. But two young women from Evansville are the first from Rock County to join the service: Helen Tait in the WAAC and Eloise Eager in the WAVES.

■ Twenty-two nurses from Mercy Hospital volunteer for Army Nurses Corps.

■ Victor Bleasdale, now a colonel in the Marines "somewhere in the Pacific area," is Janesville's highest ranking officer in any service branch.

■ With a low bid of \$2.64 million, J.P. Cullen & Son wins the contract to build 101 hospital buildings for the huge expansion of Camp McCoy near Sparta.

■ Hough Shade (HUFCOR) adds black-out and dim-out curtains to its products.

## 1943

■ **Jan. 3:** Malcolm O. Mouat, 70, dies. Mouat was a prominent Janesville native who practiced law here for 47 years.

■ **Jan. 20:** Rock County's third blackout test is considered successful but not as effective as one in November. More people violate the order to turn out the lights or shade every window so no light shows because warning signals fail. More than 1,000 civil defense workers—air raid wardens, 235 in Janesville—volunteer in the county.

To test Mercy Hospital's dim-out capacity—lights on low but shielded by drapes—Dr. R.C. Hartman performs a Caesarean delivery on Mrs. Lawrence Godfrey of Milton, who gives birth to a son.

■ **Feb. 27:** Three of Janesville's four movie theaters are showing morale-boosters: "Yankee Doodle Dandy" with Jimmy Cagney at the Myers, "Immortal Sergeant" with Henry Fonda at the Jeffris, "Texas to Bataan" with cowboy stars The Range Busters at the Beverly.

■ **March 1:** A new form of food rationing

using points—so many per person per month, 48 this month—goes into effect. Families are allowed to pool points with rationed goods costing specific numbers of points, 14 for a can of green beans, for example. Meat, cheese and butter are added to the list with rationing to start later. People get 16 points per week for meat, butter and cheese; the average "cost" of each is eight points.

Cheddar cheese sells for 37 cents a pound; T-bone and porterhouse steak for 42 cents a pound. Frying chickens are not rationed, \$1.33 each, and neither are lake smelt, 10 cents a pound. Over the March 20 weekend, many Janesville butcher shops close because of a run on meat in advance of the start of rationing. Coffee is taken off the rationed list July 29, eight months after it went on, and stoves are added to the list Aug. 24.

The typical gasoline ration is cut from four to three gallons per week, and in September, the shoe allowance is reduced from three to two pairs per person per year. Production prohibitions include heels over 2 inches, patent leather and metal-spiked golf shoes.

■ **March 19:** The Janesville School Board votes a \$150 annual pay increase for each of the district's 165 teachers, janitors and office workers; the raise follows a \$100 boost granted at the start of the year.

■ **March 31:** Randolph P. Lorentzen, 32, Janesville, is sentenced to three years in federal prison for draft evasion. Lavina Hager, clerk of the local draft board, testifies that Lorentzen refused to report for service, saying he would only fight in the "North American sphere of influence, which he bounded by Iceland, Alaska, Hawaii and the Panama Canal." The judge offers to dismiss the case if Lorentzen reports for induction, but he refuses.

■ **April 19:** The Janesville City Council passes its first dog control ordinance, ordering dogs chained or in the "immediate control" of someone at least 16 years old during the summer. The reason is to keep the canines out of the ever-present victory gardens. Some two-thirds of Janesville residents plant about 4,000 victory gardens to augment their diets and the nation's supply of food, much of which is going to the military and overseas to help the Allies.

■ **April:** The Second War Loan drive sets a goal of \$3.36 million in bond sales for Rock County; its residents respond by buying \$5.2 million. Janesville's share is \$2.7 million.

■ **May 5:** City Manager Henry Traxler appeals to Janesville residents to burn their combustible trash such as non-salvageable paper, leaves and shrubbery cuttings because the labor shortage, gas rationing and rubber conservation are making it hard for the city's weekly trash collection.



■ **June 4:** Janesville High graduates 327 seniors, 26 of whom are already in the service. One of them, Paul Richards, is on leave from the Navy and picks up his diploma. The other 25 certificates are presented to the graduates' parents.

■ **June 15:** 40 Jamaicans arrive in Janesville to help Fall River Canning (formerly Hohenadle) process bumper crops of peas, corn and tomatoes—112,000 cases of peas, 101,000 cases of corn and 11,000 cases of tomatoes. "Janesville's experiment with imported colored workers was highly successful, it was reported." The crops are so huge, and labor is in such short supply, that many men and women from all walks of life, encouraged by employers or employers themselves, work short shifts so the crops won't spoil before canning. The Jamaicans leave Oct. 1.

■ **June 20:** Janesville Municipal (River-side) Golf Course opens as an 18-hole course. On Oct. 9, Beloit pro Alvin "Butch" Krueger establishes the course record with a 66.

■ **Summer:** A Janesville landmark is lost when Harry Babcock moves his popcorn stand, a fixture for many years at the corner of South Main and Court streets, indoors to a small shop.

■ **July 1:** A record Rock County hay crop is reported, and the call is out for help. Farmers prefer men and boys who can drive horses, but any help at all is appreciated.

■ **July 20:** Parking meters, hailed as the cure for Janesville's downtown parking problems, are ruled unconstitutional by Municipal Judge Ernest P. Agnew. He dismisses a violation charge against Harold T. Scheele on the grounds that meters were meant more for revenue than regulation and that they regulated parking incidental to travel, an American right. The city council appeals the decision and orders continued enforcement, but confusion is so great that enforcement stops until Nov. 17, soon after Circuit Judge Jesse Earle overrules Agnew's decision.

■ **Aug. 9:** 175 boys from Wisconsin, Illinois and Michigan come to Janesville to show off their baseball skills and talent for the Brooklyn Dodgers, who are conducting a three-day scouting and training camp. Helping to judge the talent is George Sisler, a retired baseball legend who twice batted over .400 to win the American League batting title when he played for the St. Louis Browns (Baltimore Orioles) in the '20s.

■ **Aug. 11:** For one night only, Lawrence Welk brings his champagne music to Lake Lawn Lodge on the north shore of Delavan Lake. Tickets are \$1.25 at the door.

■ Home on leave after 13 months in the

Pacific Theater, Cpl. Don Bickle of Janesville comments on the toughness of the Japanese: "Of the 1,500 to 1,800 Japs who were fighting on Tulagi, we took only 14 prisoners." The others fought to the death or committed suicide.

■ **Sept. 7:** Beloit cracks down on speeders: Charles Obligato, Beloit, is fined an unusually stiff \$1 for every mile per hour he was over the speed limit on Highway 51. His total fine is \$34.75—\$4.75 in costs and \$30 for driving 65 in a 35-mph zone.

■ **September:** The Third War Loan drive sets a Rock County goal of \$6.47 million in bond sales; in what has become typical fashion, residents buy \$7 million in bonds. Janesville again invests \$2.7 million in the campaign for victory. Besides buying bonds, city residents are donating to the local War Fund charity, which supports the USO (United Service Organizations), helps homeless refugees abroad and needy families of servicemen at home and buys small comforts such as soap and sweets for POWs.

■ **Oct. 15:** August Nightengale's filling station at 1131 Center, Janesville, is burglarized, and the thieves take six quarts of oil, two tire testers, \$30 cash and the big prize: gas rationing stamps good for hundreds of gallons of fuel.

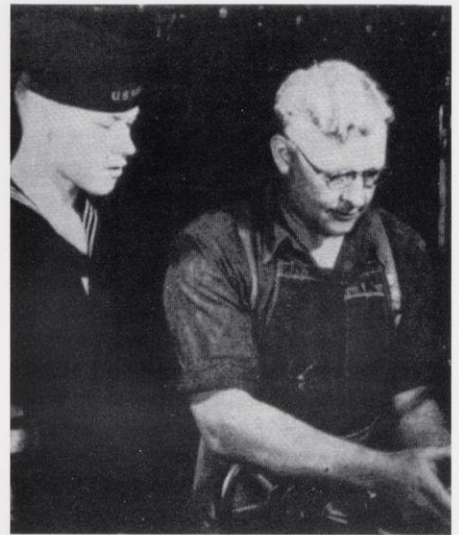
■ **Oct. 22:** The Battling Bluebirds beat Beloit, 7-0, in football. Janesville High wins only one other game all year, but the Gazette reports: "Any Janesville High School sports season that includes a victory over Enemy No. 1, Beloit, is a howling success."

■ **October:** The new wonder drug penicillin is used for the first time in Janesville to successfully treat a patient stricken with streptococcus septicemia. The military uses most penicillin, the supply of which is administered by the National Research Division Committee on Chemical Therapy.

■ **Nov. 4:** The top legal price for ground beef—hamburger—in the Janesville area is 27 cents a pound, and ground round steak may not cost more than 41 cents a pound, announces A.W. Agnew, chairman of the local War Price and Rationing Board.

■ **November:** Mr. and Mrs. E. J. McCabe, 611 N. Garfield, receive the dreaded War Department telegram: Their son Walter was killed somewhere in the southwest Pacific, the first Janesville Marine to be killed in action.

■ Bower City Bank, which failed in 1931 as a victim of the Depression, is officially declared defunct. Depositors have received 88 percent of their savings paid in small percentages over the years.



**Paul Swenson Jr., a seaman second class in the Navy, watches his dad, Paul Sr. of Janesville, make a 90mm artillery shell at the city's GM facility, which was under Oldsmobile supervision during World War II.**

■ **Dec. 1:** The Swedish mercy ship Grips-holm lands in New York, carrying 1,223 U.S. citizens repatriated from Japanese concentration camps in southeast Asia. Meeting their wives for the first time in years are Sterling Beath, former Evansville resident, and Benjamin Leland Anderson, whose two brothers live in Milton Junction. Both were missionaries in the Orient before the war broke out.

■ **Sometime in 1943:** Ellen Diotte, 1363 Willard, volunteers more than 1,000 hours to Mercy Hospital as a nurse's aide, helps each time the Red Cross blood donation is here and works full time as a mother, homemaker and Linotype operator at the Gazette.

■ City of Janesville establishes a retirement plan for 116 workers not covered by other pension plans.

■ Grading work is under way on the new Rock County Airport (current site) on 697 acres. The federal government has picked up the lion's share of the cost, \$675,000 of the \$798,000 allocated to date.

■ Construction drops to a new low in Janesville—\$32,500 for the year—because of wartime restrictions on building materials. No new houses are built.

■ The last trace of what was known as Riverside roller-skating rink—on South River Street, not in Riverside Park—vanishes when the Bladon Motors garage, 55 S. River, is razed to make room for a new garage. Constructed in 1885, the building served as lecture and dance hall, vaudeville theater, exposition center for autos and chickens and a basketball court, but since World War I, its primary use was a garage.

■ The 33 women of the Janesville Red Cross



**George Sisler, former American League batting champ visited as part of scouting camp**



Canteen Corps serve coffee and doughnuts and pass out apples, cigarettes and postcards to every group of draftees leaving the city. They see more tearful farewells than anyone else in the city.

■ **Employees at the Oldsmobile, Parker Pen and Rock River Woolen Mills factories receive the Army-Navy "E"—for effort—award for their war work.**

## 1944

■ **Jan. 16:** Fire causes \$2,000 damage to Rock Prairie United Methodist Church, 7½ miles east of Janesville on County A. The cause is believed to be an overheated smoke pipe from the coal furnace in the basement.

■ **Jan. 28:** Japanese atrocities against POWs captured in Bataan and on Corregidor, including torture, beheadings for helping comrades, intentional starvation and being forced to work to death are revealed by the Army and Navy. The United States, especially communities such as Janesville who have men held as POWs by the Japanese, is enraged. Any thoughts of mercy for Japan evaporate as one congressman calls for Japan to be "bombed out of existence."

■ **January:** The Janesville YWCA opens Swing Club, offering after-school dancing, games and other recreation for junior high students.

■ **Feb. 8:** In Janesville's first black market case of the war, Slater A. Pribble, operator of a filling station on West Milwaukee Street, is found guilty of two charges of improper gasoline sales and is fined \$50 and costs. The fines are suspended, though, when the six-person jury recommends leniency because of the federal agents' investigative methods. Driving a passenger car, they twice bought gas using rations stamps for a truck, not a car. But Pribble testifies he thought he was helping a soldier because the driver was dressed like a military man home on furlough.

■ **March 22:** The typical gas ration—the "A" ration—is cut from three to two gallons a week in the Midwest, including Rock County, and the far West.

■ **March 24:** Wendell Willkie, the unsuccessful Republican Party presidential candidate in 1940, makes five speeches in Rock County as part of his swing through southern Wisconsin in search of the 1944 GOP presidential nomination. The large audiences at his five appearances here are "attentive, sober and thoughtful." He criticizes FDR's New Deal administration as being corrupt with power and calls for international cooperation to make a better world when the war ends.

■ **March 27:** Three members of a Brodhead family of six are killed instantly, and two will die later because their skidding car is hit by a Rock County Highway Department

## Age-old motive, brand-new weapon

**N**ovall Carr should have watched his back—literally. Carr, 37, was whistling as he unloaded his City Ice & Coal truck in the 1100 block of Janesville's Ravine Street just before noon April 1, 1944. Then Benjamin Vincent murdered him.

Vincent, 44-year-old owner of two Janesville taverns, ran down Carr with his 1938 Dodge, pinning him between the sedan's bumper and the back of Carr's ice truck.

Vincent's motive was as old as humanity. Carr had been seeing Vincent's wife, Margaret. The Vincents had been separated for nine years. But, though Margaret was known to date other men, they still had a business relationship, and he still pined for her.

Margaret operated one of Vincent's taverns, the Loop, 414 W. Milwaukee. Vincent handled the other, the Checker Inn, just north of Janesville on Highway 26 in a string of bars known as "Rum Row."

Vincent's weapon was as new as the 20th century. The case was the first in Wisconsin in which an automobile was the murder weapon.

Carr, 37 N. Academy, was the father of three children by two wives. He recently separated from the second, Evelyn. He did not die immediately. He called a woman over to him to say, "Ben said he'd get me, and he did. I'm dying."

Standing nearby, Vincent interjected: "That isn't true. I did not."

He told police that as he approached the ice truck, his accelerator stuck and that he saw an oncoming car that didn't allow room to avoid the truck and Carr.

Witnesses at two hearings, though, testified they saw no third vehicle and that Vincent appeared to be driving 30 to 40 mph. The witnesses also said they did not

hear Vincent sound his horn or his tires screeching from brakes, that the car appeared in good working order and that Vincent increased his auto insurance just before the crash.

Most incriminating, though, was Evelyn Carr's testimony about a meeting with Vincent that he had requested.

Vincent wanted Evelyn to persuade her husband to come home and leave his wife alone.

"It's got to stop. I can't lick him in a fight, but I'll get him in a different way," Vincent told her, Evelyn testified.

When she told Vincent, "You'll have to get away with it," he replied: "With my money, I can get myself out of it," Evelyn testified.

But the best that Vincent, one of the "area's most prosperous tavern owners," could do was arrange a plea bargain.

The case dragged on until Thursday, July 20, when Vincent pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of second-degree murder.

Circuit Judge Jesse Earle accepted the deal in part because he planned to leave for vacation that weekend and a trial would have to wait.

"By this we not only save the county from a long and unwholesome trial, but in my judgment, this case would not have come out any differently than it does now," Earle said.

He doubted the jury would have convicted Vincent of first-degree murder. While Carr's murder was entirely unjustified, the judge said, "Carr, as a frequent companion of Vincent's wife, was not blameless and their association was regarded as a factor in the murder and in the court's agreement to accept a second-degree murder plea." The Janesville Gazette reported.

Vincent was sentenced to 14 to 17 years at Waupun.

gravel truck on Highway 11 three miles west of Orfordville. Dead are Joseph R. Pfiffner, 36; his wife, Anne, 33; a son, Anthony Charles, 4. Joseph Jr., 7, dies the next day, and his 6-year-old sister, Mary Anne, succumbs the day after that. The only survivor from the Pfiffner family is 2-year-old Louis.

■ **May 26:** Burglars make off with the ration stamps good for 1,800 gallons of gas from the F.P. Gerloff filling station, 966 Center.

■ **May 29:** The Janesville City Council amends the draconian dog ordinance of 1943, removing the provision that all dogs must be tied

up or under the direct control of a person older than 16 between May 1 and Sept. 1. The new law provides for a fine of up to \$50 or a maximum jail term of 30 days for the owner of a dog that damages property or injures a person.

■ **June 1:** WP&L turns over control of the Janesville Bus System to the Beloit couple that bought it, Arthur and Mabel Gale. The Gales soon sell their interest in what is now the Janesville Bus Co. to Charles Ahner, who also owns the Fond du Lac Bus lines.

■ **June 2:** Students in the Edgerton High School citizenship class pack two trucks with



items they collected for the war-devastated Russian people: 4,000 pounds of clothes, 497 pounds of shoes and 169 kits filled with household supplies.

■ **June 3:** In recognition of the city's extensive war production, the 27th Victory freighter launched in Portland, Ore., is named Beloit Victory.

■ **June 6:** At 3:05 a.m., the Janesville Fire Department, alerted by the Gazette, sounds the old steam fire siren at the Bowman Dairy, 216 Center, to signal the Allied invasion of northern Europe. Many men from southern Wisconsin are fighting on the Normandy beaches in the largest invasion ever. It's D-Day—the "D" stands for "day," just as the "H" stands for hour in "H-Hour," the scheduled time of an attack. Soon after the siren wails, which is heard clearly only by west side residents, Trinity Episcopal Church rings its bells. Some residents probably hear the news earlier because radio broadcasts shortly after midnight quote German media announcements of the invasion, but most radio stations put little credence in the announcements until they are confirmed by Supreme Allied Command. WCLO returns to the air shortly after 3 a.m. as a squad car picks up a station engineer and takes him to the transmitter on the city outskirts.

It's D-Day for more than the troops: Mr. and Mrs. John O'Leary, 606 Park, Janesville, have a newborn baby boy, and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Scott, rural Janesville, have a baby girl.

■ **June 20:** Camp Janesville is established at Western (Rockport Road) and Crosby Avenues as 250 German POWs are brought here to help pick and can peas, tomatoes and sweet corn. The camp is a small town of tents to house Tommygun-toting guards and the POWs, many of them from the defeated Afrika Corps led by the "Desert Fox," Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. Another 150 prisoners are assigned to a camp at Jefferson. Mostly in their mid-20s, the Germans "look just about like any group of servicemen," many residents comment. The POWs perform their work well, but the harvest and canning still require more help from high school students, soldiers from Truax Field, full-time war workers who work short shifts and the imported labor of 75 Jamaicans, 80 Mexicans and 40 Barbadians. The POWs are transferred to an undisclosed camp Sept. 25. Camp Janesville will reopen for the 1945 picking and canning season.

■ **Aug. 31:** Three well-known Janesville men drown in Lake Wisconsin, "a backwater of the Wisconsin River ... between Madison and Portage." The victims are Walter J. Bloedel, 42, of 1226 Maple Court, warehouse foreman for Carr's grocery stores; Ervin M. Brown, 42, of 449 N. Pine, recently retired from the truck-

ing business because of poor health; and E. Leslie Pine, 52, of 1506 Highland, well-known sportsman and 25-year employee of the Gazette mechanical department.

Not until Bloedel's car, still loaded with camping equipment, is found on Sept. 3 are the men considered to be in danger. No one witnesses the incident, but the evidence—a boat with a full tank of gas but a broken rudder control, one oar, many fishing lines, one baited with a minnow—suggests the men, "all able swimmers," started to fish before setting up camp, hit an underwater obstruction, could not row to shore and exhausted themselves trying to swim from the middle of the lake.

■ The second polio case in a week, the third for the summer, is reported in Janesville. The 26-year-old female victim's family is placed under a 10-day quarantine.

■ **Sept. 1-15:** Fear of a polio epidemic grips Janesville. The city's fourth case—a 7-year-old boy—is reported Sept. 4, and the first death of the year, Edmund Chipman, a 30-year-old carpenter, 1212 S. Jackson, occurs Sept. 13, a week after he was stricken. Wisconsin has recorded 177 cases and 14 deaths, and strict quarantines of children are in effect in the Milwaukee area. Because of the quarantines, Waukesha High School calls off a football game scheduled against the Bluebirds in Janesville on Sept. 15.

Development of the Salk vaccine to prevent polio, or infantile paralysis as it's often called in the '40s, is still nine years away. If it did not kill, polio could paralyze its victims, completely or partially. Some victims recover fully, but polio is the scourge disease of the United States at the middle of the century.

■ **Sept. 4:** John P. Cullen, 77, founder of J.P. Cullen & Son, dies, and his son, Mark A., takes over the construction business. The elder Cullen was a builder since 1886, when he helped construct a 400-foot wooden bridge over the Rock River.

■ **Sept. 26:** The limit on pen production is lifted, but Parker Pen continues to restrict its production of pens and actually asks consumers to buy fewer Parker "51" pens so it can concentrate on making fuses for new weapons: rocket missiles, air-to-ground rockets launched from airplanes. Parker Pen is the first manufacturer of the fuses.

■ **Oct. 16:** Feathers fly at a Janesville council public hearing on whether to limit fowl and small animals such as rabbits to a total of 20 combined per household within city limits. Fifty people, most opposing the law, attend the meeting, and one, George E. Minard, 51, of 2301 Western (Rockport), becomes extremely vocal and unruly and spends the night in the city lock-up. The council defers action on the law, which also would limit the number of dogs a household

may have to two, but the council does OK Willard Woodman's request to expand his grocery, then at 922 Milton.

■ **Nov. 7:** Rock County votes for Republican Thomas Dewey 18,470 to 16,761 for FDR, but President Roosevelt is elected to a fourth term. His vice president is Harry S. Truman. FDR wins 10 of 14 wards in Janesville and carries the city, 5,317 to 4,897.

■ **Nov. 13:** Arnett Joyner, 16, of Sharon is kidnapped and robbed as he hitchhikes home from Darien High School. Authorities search for three men believed to be escaped military prisoners or POWs who take Joyner's clothes and about \$20 and leave him bound and gagged in an outbuilding at the Maple Grove School near Carver's Rock in Bradford Township.

■ **Dec. 2:** Like many consumer products hit by the war, cigarettes are in short supply, and so it's not surprising that cigarettes are the principal target of burglars who hit three Janesville businesses: Swiss Maid dairy store, 633 N. Washington, and two filling stations on North Washington Street.

■ **Dec. 18:** The Battle of the Bulge, Germany's last-ditch effort to forestall total defeat, is raging, but Mr. and Mrs. C.J. Knilians of Delavan have reason to celebrate: Their son, Lt. Hubert Knilians, is home on leave after having flown 50 combat missions, 305 flying hours, without a co-pilot for the Royal Canadian Air Force. Knilians joined the Canadian military to get into the war in 1941 and won the British Distinguished Service Order. Piloting a Lancaster bomber, he bombed Berlin, Hamburg, V-missile sites, submarine pens and German positions on D-Day. On his fourth mission, Knilians' rear gunner was killed by a blast that tore away much of the aircraft. On seven missions, he made it back to base flying on three of four engines. Knilians volunteers to fly P-47 Thunderbolt fighter-bombers for the U.S. Army Air Force when his leave, ordered by doctors because of battle fatigue, is over.

■ **Sometime in 1944:** By year's end, 127 Janesville women have enlisted in the military.

■ War casualties continue to mount: At least 36 Janesville men and at least 60 men from nearby communities are killed in 1945; the numbers do not include the 42 reported missing in action or POWs for whom there is no news. Besides the tankers of the 192nd Battalion, at least 21 men from the Janesville area are reported prisoners of the Germans. The number at year's end is almost certainly higher because the Battle of the Bulge is still in doubt, and many Americans were captured, some just briefly, during the weeks-long engagement.

■ With a 6-10 record just good enough to get into the regional high school basketball tournament at Edgerton, the Janesville Bluebirds



beat three conference champs to take the regional title. But the Battling 'Birds lose to Tomah, 36-29, in the sectional tourney.

■ Gilman Engineering Works wins the Army-Navy "E" Award, and Oldsmobile, Parker Pen and Rock River Woolen Mills have stars added to the previously awarded flags, indicating continuing meritorious work.

■ Dexter Olin, Janesville painting contractor for 18 years, opens a paint and wallpaper store at 103 N. Main.

■ In Rock County, 922 volunteers spend 113,400 "painstaking" hours to prepare 754,000 surgical dressings for the military.

■ Volunteers and married nurses returning to the profession help Mercy Hospital treat 3,076 patients and deliver 560 babies as the hospital deals with more cases and less help. Waiting rooms must be converted to patients' rooms.

■ Rock County's total investment in war bonds approaches \$49 million.

## 1945

■ **Jan. 21:** The Medal of Honor is awarded posthumously to Sgt. Truman C. Olson of Cambridge for almost single-handedly stopping a German counterattack on the beachhead in Anzio, Italy, on Jan. 30, 1944. Twice wounded, Olson nevertheless manned his machine-gun for 36 hours. He killed 20 Germans and wounded many others.

■ **Jan. 30:** A car driven by Raymond Urbanowski strikes a Janesville Pure Milk Co. delivery wagon on South Main Street at Second (Van Buren) Street, spilling milk bottles over the street and freeing the horse. The horse trots away, but, good steed that it is, it follows its normal route, where police catch up with it.

■ **Feb. 3:** American troops make a daring raid into Manila to capture the Santo Tomas prison camp, and Lt. Marcia Gates of the Army Nurses Corps, the only Janesville servicewoman held prisoner by the Japanese, is liberated. She was captured when the Philippines fell in early 1942.

■ **Feb. 5:** U.S. soldiers break into Bilibid Prison in Manila, and among those freed is Pvt. Carl Nickols, a Janesville tanker with the 192nd Battalion. He is the second member of the 192nd to be liberated. Sgt. Dale Lawton, whose brother Vernon is a Janesville cop, was freed a few days earlier.

■ **Early March:** To save coal, the federal War Production Board orders a midnight curfew on taverns, places of amusement and non-essential establishments. All lighted display windows and electric signs also are ordered extinguished, creating a Janesville-wide "brown-out." Janesville bars already have a midnight closing, but the curfew cuts an hour off rural tavern operations, and midnight movies are eliminated until

the curfew is lifted May 8.

■ **March 9:** A "morals cleanup drive" is under way in Janesville as eight Janesville men, ages 20 to 35, are arrested on charges ranging from contributing to the delinquency of minors to statutory rape. The cases involve two Janesville girls, both 16, who are judged delinquent for having consensual sex with some of the men, and in one case, being allowed in a tavern owned by one of the defendants. A couple, a Milwaukee woman and a Janesville man, are arrested on a charge of adultery, but they plead guilty to the lesser charge of lewd and lascivious conduct. The man is fined \$125, and the woman, who has a prior criminal record, is sentenced to 60 days in jail.

■ **March 19:** Janesville is deeply saddened when Sgt. Dale Lawton returns and tells the community that at least 50 local men from the 192nd Tank Battalion are dead. The community knew that 19 men had died, but it held out hope that some, if not most, of 33 others listed as missing in action had survived. Lawton is able to confirm the deaths of 31 tankers.

■ More tragedy for the area: Rabbi A.L. Rosenblum of Beloit learns that his parents, three of six sisters and one of two brothers are victims of the Nazi Holocaust. A sister and brother still are unaccounted for in Poland.

■ **March 28:** In a ceremony in Janesville attended by 800 people, the Medal of Honor is awarded posthumously to Staff Sgt. Gerald L. Endl, a former resident of Janesville and Fort Atkinson. On July 11, 1944, Endl's platoon came under intense Japanese machine-gun, rifle and grenade attack on New Guinea, and his commander was killed, leaving Endl in charge. During the course of the firefight, 12 of Endl's men were hit, and seven of the wounded were cut off from the platoon.

Endl went forward alone and single-handedly lay down covering fire so his troops could rescue three of the wounded. One by one, Endl then carried three more of the wounded to safety. As he was returning with the seventh man, a burst of machine-gun fire killed them both. Endl's widow, Anna Marie (Goethe), 811 Prairie, accepts the nation's highest honor for her fallen husband.

■ **April 2:** A shortage of newsprint (paper) forces a nationwide allotment. Rather than reduce its number of pages, many devoted to war news, the Gazette freezes circulation at 18,903 to meet the requirement, but military personnel still can sign up for the paper.

■ **April 13:** Flags fly at half-staff in Janesville as the city, "stunned like the rest of the nation over the sudden death of President Roosevelt," mourns the loss of the 13-year leader who guided the United States out of the Great Depression and to the brink of victory in

the most horrible war the world ever experienced. The next day, a Saturday, is proclaimed a day of mourning by the new president, Harry S. Truman, and Janesville stores and all Rock County taverns and amusement places close at 3 p.m., the time of FDR's funeral, and stay closed for the duration of the services. Local churches conduct memorial services, and residents weep openly at the loss of their president.

■ **May 7:** Col. Gen. Alfred Jodl of the German High Command signs an unconditional surrender, and Lt. Gen. Walter B. Smith signs the document for the Allies. They use a Parker "51" pen to finish five years, eight months and seven days of fighting in Europe and North Africa. The Allies celebrate V-E (Victory-Europe) Day, but Janesville, mindful of the fierce fighting still needed in the Pacific Theater, is subdued. Taverns and bars close immediately at 9:10 a.m. when the news—received at 8:35 a.m.—is confirmed and whistles blow throughout the city.

Celebrants have no place to go but the streets as the "city takes on a Sunday-like appearance," and a heavy rain soon dampens their ardor. A few factories close briefly, but most keep on turning out the shells, fuses, uniforms and bandages needed to continue the war against Japan.

■ **May:** The name of the Wisconsin School for the Blind is changed to the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped to accurately reflect the students it serves.

■ **June 13:** Janesville police excuse a parking ticket for an unnamed city woman who tells the desk officer that she was in line waiting to buy still-rationed meat and that she feared the meat would be gone if she left the line to put another penny in the meter.

■ **July 2:** Dan Conley, former Janesville resident who has been visiting his aunt, Kathleen Buchanan, 335 North (Johnson), returns to his unit, the Scottish Essex Regiment of the Royal Canadian Army. Conley volunteered for the Canadian military in 1939 and participated in the daring but doomed raid on the French port of Dieppe on Aug. 19, 1942. Of 5,000 troops who got ashore, half were killed or captured.

Conley was a POW for two years, escaping from Stalag 8-B a week before the Russians liberated it. When Conley reached Russian lines, the Red Army took him to Moscow and detained him for a week while making arrangements for his return.

■ **July 4:** Five people are hurt when fireworks at the Beloit community celebration at Waverly Beach explode on the ground. Near the end of the show, someone accidentally drops a lighted flare on the fireworks platform, and the remaining unfired skyrockets are ignited. Three of the injured are hospitalized, and the two most





**A weekly Boy Scout meeting in Janesville in 1945: As identified in a "Pictorial History of Janesville, Wisconsin," published in 1995, the Scouts and their leaders are: front row, from left, Kaye Don Parsons, Sammy Judd, Gene Warren, Ronald Hasse, Wayne Snyder, Staritori Steuri, Karl Thom, Arvice Steinmetz, second row, Everett Dickuisou, Eugene Tainter, William Cress, Charles Scheid, Charles Weber, Myron Parsons, third row, Albert Hunter, David Bell, Scott McCalmont, Willis McDonald, Alvin Gould, LeRoy Gsell, Bruce Steinmetz, fourth row, Russell Johnson, Glen Hunter and Merle Warren.**

seriously hurt are Ernest Hatley, rural Janesville, and his 4-year-old son, Erwin.

■ **Aug. 6:** "New Atomic Annihilation Bomb is Released on Japan by U.S. Army," the two-deck banner headline trumpets across the Gazette's Page 1. "The atomic bomb is the answer, President Truman said, to Japan's refusal to surrender." The bomb that levels Hiroshima is the power of 20,000 tons of TNT and produces 2,000 times the blast of the most powerful bomb ever dropped before.

It will be revealed later that former Janesville resident, Dr. E.C. Cruetz, and his wife participated in the Manhattan Project to build the first atomic bombs.

■ **Aug. 9:** Airmen attacking other targets in Japan see the atomic blast that destroys Nagasaki up to 250 miles away. The atmosphere in Janesville, anxiously awaiting the end of the war and learning daily of casualties and deaths of Tank Company POWs, is tense.

■ Mrs. Wilbert Ryan, 324 Milton, mother of five including a Marine recently returned from the Pacific, has her arm crushed while operating a hydraulic press to cut bandages at Janesville Cotton Co.

■ **Aug. 11:** Three Delavan workers at the Borg plant, two of them medically discharged veterans, are arrested in an extortion plot in which they threatened the president of the Harvard (Ill.) State Bank with death unless he forked over \$40,000. Arrested are Burdell M. Boardman, 20, Delavan; Carl S. Garman, 32, a discharged veteran, Delavan, and William M. Huber, 40, rural Elkhorn. The FBI arrests the

three, who reportedly sign confessions and will appear in federal court.

■ **Aug. 14:** At 6:01 p.m., official news of Japan's surrender hits Janesville, and within minutes the streets fill "with a noisy throng which sent up a din lasting till well after midnight. ... A happy shouting crowd which overflowed from the sidewalks into the streets reflected the gladness with which everyone received the news that peace finally was at hand." The crowd finds party hats, costumes—hula girls and Uncle Sams, for example—and every sort of noise-maker. Revelers form impromptu musical bands and fill the streets with an ankle-deep layer of paper, much of it homemade confetti from waste paper and law books that "fell in a steady rain. ... Even toilet paper—practically impossible to purchase in local stores in recent weeks—hung in long festoons."

Churches conduct thanksgiving services. Police allow residents to fire off their hoarded Roman candles and skyrockets that night, but not the next day. Janesville celebrants wreck at least 12 vehicles; 11 people need hospital treatment for injuries. But of the many taken off the street by cops for safety's sake, only six are held for court.

Stores and restaurants close, leaving many without food for their celebration. Contrary to earlier plans, taverns were going to stay open, but Illinois closes its bars in the early evening, and "half-intoxicated crowds" flow across the state line to Beloit. The influx of drunken celebrants alarms Rock County officials, and they order county taverns to close. "The closing of

bars failed to dry up the celebration unduly, however, and reserve supplies laid in against just such a contingency appeared in volume."

■ **Aug. 15:** Rationing of gasoline, fuel oil and canned fruits and vegetables is lifted immediately.

■ **Late August:** War contracts are canceled, and factories start preparations to return to peacetime production. The Janesville GM plants return to Chevrolet and Fisher Body control from the Oldsmobile division, which turned out 16 million artillery shells in three years of war production. Most of the shells were 105mm for howitzers, but the combined plant also made 90mm, 3-inch armor-piercing, 3-inch solid-shot and 4.7-inch high-explosive anti-aircraft shells.

In less than a month, Parker Pen is back in business full-time. "We simply unscrewed the machinery, pushed it to one side and went to work on pens," company president Kenneth S. Parker says.

■ **Sept. 5:** Marine Pfc. Lawrence L. Ryan, 20, survives four bouts of malaria and the invasions of the Solomon and Gilbert islands but dies of polio contracted at a U.S. base after coming home on emergency furlough to see his mother, Mrs. Wilbert Ryan, 324 Milton. Her arm was crushed Aug. 10 while cutting bandages at Janesville Cotton Co. The next day, Mrs. Ryan undergoes another operation to try to save her arm.

■ **Oct. 5:** Marine Sgt. David Timpany, 24, arrives home in Janesville after being held prisoner by the Japanese longer than any other Janesville resident—since the day after the war



started, Dec. 8, 1941. In 1941, he was stationed at a U.S. embassy in China when he was captured. Timpany tells of beatings, torture and slave labor at the hands of his Japanese captors.

■ **Oct. 22:** The first post-war Janesville-made vehicle, a Chevy truck, rolls off the assembly line.

■ **Nov. 21:** UAW Locals 95 and 121 strike the GM plants here as part of a nationwide strike over working conditions and a wage increase to replace lost war overtime. The peaceful strike will last 113 days and get autoworkers an 18½-cent per hour raise, an increase of about 17 percent while the UAW had been seeking 30 percent.

■ **Sometime in 1945:** Rock County's total investment in war bonds reaches \$54.9 million, of which Janesville contributes \$20.7 million.

■ The total of surgical dressings prepared here by Red Cross volunteers reaches almost 1.6 million.

■ Some 2,000 Rock County men return to civilian life; 1,316 of them to Janesville. October is the biggest month so far for returning veterans.

■ Meeting the requirements of a new state law, Rock County establishes its first home for juvenile offenders in Milton Junction.

■ Local farmers experiment with a new insect killer—DDT—and think it has the potential to revolutionize pest control. It will—as well as damage and threaten the environment.

## 1946

■ **Jan. 1:** Robert Wright, a Janesville sailor on leave from Great Lakes (Ill.) Naval Base, suffers a skull fracture and is killed in a toboggan accident, and Norman M. Richter, 24, an Army veteran of the European Theater, dies of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning as he sits in a running car in his family's garage, 915 Blaine. The death appears accidental because Richter, who forgot his key to the house, opened a window and door in the garage to vent the car exhaust while he waited for his family to awaken and let him in.

■ Rock County begins a pension program for its workers who do not fall under the federal Social Security program. Workers contribute 5 percent of their pay, which the county matches.

■ **Feb. 11:** The movie doesn't get the billing of the classic it will become, but "Stage Coach" starring John Wayne and Claire Trevor is playing at Janesville's Beverly Theater.

■ **March 8:** The worst blizzard since 1936 paralyzes southern Wisconsin as residents must dig out from drifts 1 to 4 feet high. Doctors call for snowplows—one in Rock County, three in Jefferson County—to clear their way to rural

homes so they can deliver four blizzard babies.

■ **March 13:** The national UAW strike against GM settles, but local issues—including shift preference and working conditions—keep workers off the job at Janesville's Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants. The plants' full employment of hourly workers is set at 2,100 people, but because the plants were converting from war to peace production at the time of the strike, only 759 were working then.

Local GM workers return to their jobs March 25 after local issues in their contracts are settled. Their first product is a truck because conversion to cars—under way when the strike began in November—is not complete.

■ **April 18:** Represented by Janesville Barber Union Local 700, the city's hair-cutters raise the price of a haircut from 75 cents to \$1 and of a shave from 50 to 75 cents.

■ **April 23:** GM adds a second line in the Chevrolet plant to assemble only trucks but must abandon production on it Oct. 20 because of a labor shortage.

■ **May 1:** The first Janesville-made, post-war car—a four-door Chevy sedan—rolls off the assembly line.

■ **May 17:** Trains are not the killers they once were in Janesville, but they still can be deadly. Marie Richter, 44, a Parker Pen employee, is killed when the car in which she is riding is struck by a Milwaukee Road freight train at the unsignaled crossing at Beloit Avenue. Another passenger, Bessie Tainter, 37, of 914 Prospect, is in critical condition, and the driver, her son, Arland, home on leave from the Merchant Marine, also is injured.

On the same night, a Chicago & North Western freight train derails at the Franklin Street viaduct. Seven cars leave the rails; several hundred feet of track are torn up, but no one is injured.

■ **June 5:** An early morning fire sweeps the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago, killing at least 58 people and injuring 200, and four Janesville women run from the burning, smoke-clogged building. Leaving their belongings in upper-floor rooms but saving their lives are Mrs. Herbert Haase and Ada Gardener, both buyers for the J.M. Bostwick and Sons store, and Dolores Olson and Ruby Malkie, sisters who work in the office of Janesville contractor T.S. Willis.

■ **June:** Bob Hiller buys Parkview Bakery in Milton Junction from Ralph Blake for \$900. He first operates out of the Wedge Inn (no longer standing) on North Washington Street in Janesville but moves a couple of times before setting up Rollin Pin Bakery, 19 N. Arch.

■ **July 1:** The federal Office of Price Administration, which regulated prices and rents during the war, ceases to exist, and costs jump in many parts of the country. Janesville landlords

and merchants say they will adopt a "wait-and-see" approach before marking up their apartments and wares. Within four days, though, proposed rent increases throughout Rock County average 47 percent. The national public outcry over sharply increased prices, especially for meat and other food, prompts Congress to reinstitute the agency, which starts to raise prices gradually.

By Nov. 1, U.S. food prices average about 50 percent higher than they were June 30. Janesville's June prices are bologna, 23 to 35 cents per pound; bacon, 42 cents per pound; American cheese, 47 cents per pound; lard, 18 cents a pound; peanut butter, 25 cents per pound; potatoes, 10 pounds for 39 to 45 cents. In June, ads for steak and ground beef are rare.

In November here, bologna sells for 43 cents per pound; bacon, 59 cents per pound; American cheese, 55 to 69 cents a pound; lard, 53 cents per pound; peanut butter, 55 cents a pound; potatoes, 10 pounds for 55 cents. In November, ground beef sells for 39 cents a pound, and sirloin steak costs 55 cents a pound.

■ **August:** As part of its polio prevention program, Janesville sprays playgrounds, beaches and other public gathering places with poisonous DDT powder to kill germ-carrying flies.

■ **Sept. 11:** Mercy Hospital completes a four-story, L-shaped addition at a cost of \$662,000 that can accommodate 100 more patients.

■ **Sept. 17:** Donald MacFarlane, 43, owner of the MacFarlane Pheasant Farm, is stricken with polio and is being treated at Mercy Hospital. Janesville's second victim of the "polio season," MacFarlane is partially paralyzed. The first victim, George Hilt, 27, a Navy veteran, died Aug. 30.

■ **Sept. 18:** Before firemen can position their equipment, strong winds whip flames through the sheds of the Schaller & McKey Lumber Yard, 923 Pleasant. The lumber yard is destroyed; 11 neighboring houses and four garages on Linn Street are damaged by fire and heat. The loss is \$80,000, but no one is reported injured.

■ **Oct. 12:** Ford H. Ashcraft, 38, a former Janesville resident and ex-employee of Fisher Body, is convicted in Illinois of murdering his wife, Lucille Black Ashcraft, also a former Janesville resident and mother of five, by stopping his car in front of a speeding train in Zion, Ill. Ashcraft's defense was that the act really was planned as a double-suicide pact, which he reneged on when he saw the train bearing down, but he could not free his wife before jumping clear. Crucial testimony is provided by Lulabelle McClellan, 18, a Rock Township resident, who tells the jury that she and Ashcraft had an affair and that he proposed marriage in



the weeks before the murder.

■ **Employment** reaches an all-time peak of 8,700, 1,300 above war levels, in the Janesville area's 19 leading businesses.

■ **Nov. 9:** A DC-3 lands at the new Rock County Airport with 198 fenders for the Chevy plant, whose parts are dwindling because of strikes at supplier plants. The plane is the first to land at the new airport with a freight shipment for any Janesville factory. Airport manager John Fredendall is pleasantly surprised to find that the pilot is New Yorker J.D. Smith, who was a flight instructor in Florida with Fredendall during the war.

■ **Dec. 11:** The Janesville Optimists Club is chartered with a primary objective of helping boys become good citizens.

■ **Sometime in 1946:** After years of stagnation forced by wartime shortages of building materials and spurred by G.I. Bill loans to veterans, Janesville residential housing booms with 117 homes built with a value of \$1.8 million. A new four- to five-room house costs about \$8,500, twice the pre-war price.

■ Gilman Engineering moves into its new (current) building on at 305 E. Western (Rockport Road).

■ Janesville Cotton Mills doubles its work force to operate two shifts as it becomes the No. 1 producer of cotton insulation in the country.

■ Janesville Mills, 413 S. Pearl, enjoys its first full season processing soybeans into meal and oil. The company started in 1945 but too late to do much work on the seasonal soybeans.

■ Libby, McNeil and Libby of Chicago buys the Fall River—once Hohenadle—Canning Co. and plans a new building for Janesville.

■ The Janesville Brick and Fuel Yards, 1801 W. Court, (precursor to Janesville Brick & Tile) resumes business under new ownership after being idled by lack of materials during the war.

■ Fred Fox and his son, Stanley, start the Fox Body Co., making bodies for trucks, especially milk delivery trucks. Fred is the grandfather of the Fred Fox who in 1967 starts LeMans Corp., at 3501 N. Kennedy in 1999, which warehouses and distributes parts for motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles and personal watercraft.

■ Going back to school on the G.I. Bill, 211 veterans swell Milton College's enrollment to 327 and force the hiring of eight new faculty members and erection of barracks for temporary housing.

■ Though the team kept playing during the war, the Janesville Cubs were not associated with professional baseball in 1943-45 because the Wisconsin State League disbanded. In '46, the league reforms, and the Cubs, again affiliated with the Chicago Cubs, finish sixth.

## 1947

■ **Jan. 24:** Rock County supervisors boost salaries for elected officials. The sheriff's annual pay rises from \$4,680 to \$4,800, and the county clerk's from \$3,900 to \$4,500.

■ **Feb. 3:** The night temperature is zero, and a 5-day-old boy is left on the doorstep of Mr. and Mrs. Albert J. Hansch, 1416 Beloit. Two days later, John Wolfram, 23, and Helen Onak, 22, both from Rockford, Ill., present themselves as a married couple and try to claim the baby at Mercy Hospital. Arrested and jailed for abandonment, the couple marry in the home of Sheriff Miles C. Sweeney, in the same building as their jail cells, on Feb. 28.

Saying the couple deserves a chance to start a new life, Judge Ernest Agnew tempers the pair's one- to three-year reformatory terms with four months in jail and probation. The Wolframs sob upon hearing their jail terms, and the first one to comfort them is Mrs. Hansch.

■ **February 1947:** St. Patrick's School adds a kindergarten, a first for Janesville's two Catholic schools.

■ **March 15:** Now playing at the Myers Theater: "Jimmy's new picture, and it's wonderful! James Stewart and Donna Reed in 'It's a Wonderful Life.'" Ever seen it?

■ **April 7:** A nationwide strike by telephone operators and maintenance workers over wages hits Janesville, suspending all but emergency service, provided by management personnel for 31 days until the strike is settled.

■ **April 30:** An 8-ton Rock County gravel truck, driven by Harlow Burtness, Orfordville, goes out of control in the 200 block of Janesville's East Milwaukee Street when the brakes fail. The truck bounces from car to car until it smashes through the window of People's Drug Store, northwest corner of Main and Milwaukee streets. The six cars and truck that the gravel truck struck careen into other cars and the window of Jeffers Appliance, 8 N. Main.

■ The Chevrolet plant resumes production on the truck line installed—and abandoned because of a labor shortage—in 1946.

■ **May 2:** Four World War II veterans are killed, and two others hurt seriously in a head-on collision on the three-lane "superhighway" of Highway 51 between Janesville and Beloit. Dead are Lyle E. Warner, 22, Beloit, driver of one of the cars; two of his three passengers—Robert C. Axelsen, 19, Sparta, and Thomas Gjerseth, 21, Beloit—and Donald Phillips, 23, Evansville. Phillips is a passenger in a car driven by John Higgins, 27, of 309 S. Academy, who survives as does Harold Griffin, 20, Sparta.

■ **May:** Janesville digs a new well on the high school site (Marshall Apartments) that

can pump 6 million gallons of water in 24 hours. The new well alone can deliver more water than the city has ever used.

■ Rudy Vallee, singer and comedian of radio and movie fame, visits friends of the Parker Pen Co. and entertains 250 at a Janesville Country Club dinner.

■ **June 1:** Roll-Rite Co. of Janesville, maker of magnetic automobile flashlights since September 1946, changes its name to Gibbs Manufacturing and Research, moves to 450 N. Main and starts developing and making precision scientific instruments for the fledgling atomic energy industry.

■ **June 9:** A weakening U.S. economy and market uncertainty prompt Parker Pen to put hourly production workers on a four-day, 32-hour weekly schedule.

■ Fourteen years after the repeal of Prohibition, the Janesville City Council still will not allow women to be served alcohol at bars in taverns. Women may be served at tables in taverns—but not at the bar—and 27 tavern owners petition the council for a change. Police report that the current law is practically unenforceable, so council members go a step further and prohibit women standing or sitting at bars in taverns.

■ **June 16:** Eighth Army Headquarters in Japan, which is under U.S. occupation, announces that Pvt. Louis W. Rockwell, 20, Beloit, has been sentenced to life imprisonment for fatally shooting a Japanese girl in the back.

■ **July 2:** Fire, accompanied by frequent explosions from a storage area for oil and acids, destroys the northern half of Trent Tool Manufacturing's Plant No. 1 in East Troy. Twelve volunteer firemen suffer minor burns when acid mixes with water from their hoses and runs over their shoes. The cause is initially undetermined, and a damage estimate is not immediately available.

■ **Aug. 4:** A quarter-page newspaper ad proclaims: "MORE PEOPLE ARE SMOKING CAMELS THAN EVER BEFORE!" Featuring photos of a purported housewife, the ad touts the taste and gentleness of the unfiltered cigarettes: "Your T-zone will tell you. ... T for taste. ... T for throat. ... See if Camels don't suit you to a T."

■ **Aug. 5:** The Little kids celebrate their birthday. The two brothers—George and Gerald—and a sister—Gertrude—are not triplets, but their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Little, had each child on Aug. 5: George in 1939, Gerald in 1941 and Gertrude in 1942.

■ **Sept. 2:** The third case of apparently non-paralytic polio in Janesville in a week is diagnosed as 6-year-old Marilyn Teal, 1050 Jerome, is admitted to Mercy Hospital. The





**Mary Ann Hulick, left, and Dorothy Whitcomb accompanied the Chevrolet Motor Division float in the 1947 World Trade Parade, highlighting the international scope of Janesville businesses.**

other two victims are Marilyn Quade, 5, and Wayne Anderson, 8, 215 S. High. Health officials look for a common link between the cases, but none is immediately apparent.

■ **Sept. 3:** The federal War Assets Office sells the government-owned hemp mill on Highway 14 two miles north of Darien to Walworth Foundries. The mill consists of 20 acres where marijuana was grown and seven buildings that turned the hemp into rope and burlap for the war effort.

■ **Sept. 30:** "The second appearance of a sex maniac in the 200 block of South Franklin Street in five days" is reported to Janesville police by two women who are accosted by a man who exposes himself and follows them to one of their homes, where they find safety and he departs. The earlier incident involved a man who flashed a gun and made "indecent proposals" to a young woman but who had a change of heart, saying: "I should be ashamed of myself" before offering her a ride home. The only reported similarity in the cases is the location, but Chief Jasper Webb thinks one man is responsible.

■ **Oct. 5:** A rented two-seat airplane flown by Kenneth Northley, 20, Beloit, crashes in the yard of Earl Doudla's house, 321 Cherry, Evansville, and clips the house and a tree, but Northley and his passenger, Betty Chambers, 16, Beloit, escape serious injury.

■ The Silver Queen makes her final voyage as a pleasure boat on the Rock River. Since 1939, the barge, outfitted with a dance floor for a deck, sailed from a dock at the south end of Janesville's Riverside Park, carrying countless sightseers and late-night dancing parties.

The Queen's skipper, E.H. Ulius, plans to replace her with a surplus LCT, landing craft tank.

■ **Oct. 10:** WCLO-FM broadcasts its first programming with 5,000 watts of power at 99.9 on the FM dial. On the air 12 hours a day, WCLO-FM will become today's WJVL-FM.

■ **Oct. 31:** William Attlesley, 1216 Center, carries \$2,200 cash during the day but only \$150 when he's confronted at night by a robber as he parks his car in his garage. But the thief doesn't even get that because Attlesley hits him in the leg with a tire iron and the robber drops Attlesley's wallet.

■ **Nov. 12:** The Brunsell kids of Evansville save each other from a fire that sweeps through their second-floor bedrooms. Carmen, 10, yells to awaken her father, Leo, sleeping downstairs, then runs through the flames to rouse her 13-year-old brother, Gordon. Unable to use the flaming stairs, Gordon uses a blanket to lower Carmen through a window to the ground 15 feet below, then jumps to safety.

■ The Rock County Board OKs creation of the post of assistant district attorney.

■ **Dec. 5:** Two sisters married to two Janesville brothers give birth to sons within five hours of each other. Raymond and Frances (Urbanowski) Lloyd are proud parents of Gary Richard, and Robert and Isabel Lloyd are happy to have Gene William.

■ **Dec. 24:** For the second year, WCLO puts aloft its "flying cross" to celebrate Christmas Eve. An airplane lighted with a brilliant red cross flies over cities in Rock, Walworth and Jefferson counties and relays via a public address speaker the Christmas carols broadcast by WCLO-FM.

■ **Sometime in 1947:** Ros-A-Lou Brassiere Co., 330 N. Franklin, adds production of hotel and service uniforms to its many lines of bras and employs about 80 people.

■ Janesville adds 102 new houses.

■ Three groceries come to Janesville: National Tea at the former site of Green Motor garage, 23-25 S. Main; Badger Food Market in the former Carr store, 22-24 N. Main (Janesville Sport Shop); and IGA, which replaces three small stores, 21-25 S. River St.

■ More than 100 members of UAW 121 representing the Chevrolet plant start a blood bank for Janesville.

■ A replacement for the Racine Street Bridge is under construction, and Janesville buys property fronting Wall and High streets between North Jackson and North High, razes buildings and constructs its first free parking lot, which can accommodate 132 vehicles.

■ Beloit High School wins the state basketball championship.

■ Janesville High has two state track champs: Rolland Sultze sets a state record of 50.4 seconds in winning the 440-yard dash, and Paul Hannewall is the state's top miler with a time of 4:35.7.

## 1948

■ **Jan. 1:** Fireman James Burhans makes a daring rescue of custodian Benjamin Vine as fire rages through Kienow-Hilt Veterans of Foreign Wars Post, 1015 Center, less than an hour after the club's New Year's Eve party breaks up. Vine is unconscious in a hallway on the second floor, and extreme heat and smoke prevent Burhans from entering the first window



he breaks on the second floor. The fireman eventually enters another window and crawls 100 feet down a smoke-clogged hallway, opening windows along the way for ventilation, until he finds Vine. Other firemen help carry Vine, who recovers from his injuries. A cigarette discarded by a reveler in a stuffed chair is thought to be the cause of the \$10,000 fire.

■ **Jan. 9:** Skirts are full and mid-calf-length, falling from wasp waists highlighted by padded shoulders. The wasp waists can be achieved with Life girdles, \$7.50 and up. Skirts sell for \$5.98 to \$10.95 at Bostwick's, and wool jerseys cost \$3.95 each. Heels are high: 3 to 5 inches.

■ **Jan. 14:** Fire nearly burns Lima Center off the map. Destroyed are Gates Brothers lumber company, Dadmun Feed Mill, Earl Reese's general store, the post office and Della Bowers' home. All that's left standing in the rural community of 150 are the town hall, telephone office and two welding and auto repair shops. The cause of the \$75,000 fire is unknown.

■ **Feb. 12:** School officials and residents discuss the annexation of South Janesville on Prairie Road (area around Beloit and Kellogg avenues) two miles south of city limits so that about 50 elementary students can attend Janesville schools.

■ **March 17:** A measles quarantine on their relatives' home in Janesville forces a "young Indian, his wife and three small children" to move in to the Janesville city lock-up as temporary quarters. The proud mother is embarrassed at the accommodations and refuses to give her name to a reporter, and she asks the police to keep the family's identity confidential. The family is from Ashland, and the father, a farm hand, is offered a job at a local farm.

■ **April 16:** World War II has been over for almost three years, but veterans are still coming home: Hollis Gunyon, killed in the war, is buried with full military honors in Elkhorn. Chairs are put in every available place in the Methodist Church to seat the many friends of the popular son of Mr. and Mrs. V.M. Gunyon.

■ **May 12:** The estate of Albert A. Wareham, 79-year-old recluse who died of malnutrition Jan. 19 in Walworth, is estimated at \$100,000.

■ An eight-month wave of petty crime stops with the arrest of eight Evansville boys, ages 15 to 17. They broke into three rural schools and public buildings and had "petting parties" with girls in the kindergarten of a grade school.

■ **May 13:** Two warehouses of the Green Tobacco Co., 210 Academy, burn for a loss of \$750,000, Janesville's most costly fire to date. Several firemen sustain minor injuries, and two narrowly escape major injuries. Curtis Avery of the Janesville department is bruised but not trapped by falling bricks, and Edward Polglaze

of the Beloit department has glass shards fall on his head, only moments after his captain put a helmet on him. The cause of the fire is unknown.

■ **June 3:** George and Russell Gilman, father and son respectively, sell their interest in Gilman Engineering and Manufacturing Corp. to three Parker Pen executives, Kenneth Parker, Bruce M. Jeffris and P.J.E. Wood.

■ **July 2:** The state Department of Public Welfare declares that the Rock County Jail's six-inmate female section is unfit for women and recommends they be housed at approved jails elsewhere. The department also finds the men's four-inmate cells to be dark, obsolete and redolent with an "intolerable" odor. The state recommends replacing all mattresses, providing mattress covers, placing garbage cans in cell-blocks, replacing food-serving pans, using aluminum or stainless steel drinking cups and having prisoners scrub the cellblocks daily.

■ **July 14:** With an eye toward a "bug-free city," Janesville tests a DDT fogging machine that quickly emits a "smokescreen of insect-killing fog." City officials hope to persuade the county to buy the machine for use by all municipalities or to buy it jointly with Beloit.

■ **July 19:** Fire consumes the Rural Electric Association office and Bowman Dairy at Center Avenue and Holmes Street and damages nearby homes for a loss of \$100,000. Five firemen sustain minor burns; the cause is under investigation.

■ **Aug. 7:** A Janesville police car and city bus collide at Jackson and Milwaukee streets, and the bus careens through the window of the Parish and Bailey Drug Store on the corner. The squad, driven by Officer Laurel Kapke, was speeding through the intersection against the traffic signal but with its flashing red light and siren on while responding to an accident call. The police car sideswiped two cars before stopping. Kapke's partner, Officer Robert Homan, is hospitalized overnight, and the bus driver, James Lagerman, 520 S. Franklin, and two passengers are treated and released.

■ **Sept. 1:** Otto Buttke, 66, of 1320 Jerome, is in critical condition at Mercy Hospital because of a head injury suffered on the job at Fisher Body. Buttke apparently tried to move through a narrow space between two car bodies on the assembly line and was struck by a low-hanging overhead fan, causing a compound skull fracture.

■ **Sept. 18:** Certain comic books are decried as a harmful influence on children and teens and should be outlawed, former children's librarian Mrs. D.J. Harkins tells the Janesville Parent-Teacher Council. Western and True Comics are good, she says, but horror and, especially crime, comics "impair the health of younger children by loss of sleep because of hor-

rible pictures and older children dramatizing the content even to making for crime in the teenage group." Harkins acknowledges that psychiatrists are split on the harmful effects of comics but adds: "On the whole parents agree they are a waste of time and without value to the child." A bill to outlaw objectionable comics is expected to go to the state Legislature soon.

■ **Oct. 31:** In Clinton, "Manuel M. Ochoa, 26, a Mexican railroad maintenance gang employee, was ground to bits by a North Western passenger train as he lay on the track there." Authorities believe Ochoa, who was drinking before the predawn accident, might have become confused and fell asleep on the tracks.

■ **Nov. 1:** In Evansville, Mrs. Stephen McCann Sr., 85, is killed near her home in Evansville by a passenger train. Her companion, Miss Celia Bradley, is struck and injured. The two women were walking along the tracks.

■ **Nov. 2:** In his surprising election victory, President Harry S. Truman carries Janesville by 607 votes but loses Rock County by 916 votes to New York Gov. Thomas E. Dewey.

■ **Nov. 24:** In Rock County, 1,680 people receive Social Security benefits totaling \$40,000 a month.

■ **Dec. 7:** Janesville continues its experiment with "all-corner (four-way) stops." Only a month before, the city installed its first "all-corner" stop signs at five intersections, and now the intersection of South River and Pleasant (West Court) streets will get them.

■ **Sometime in 1948:** Building in Janesville continues its post-war boom as 131 houses are built, making 350 in three years.

■ Paul Hannevall of Janesville sets the high school half-mile record of 1:58.7 at the state meet.

## 1949

■ **Jan. 8:** Lt. Col. Bill Haviland, a Janesville Air Force pilot, and Lt. Harry Howell of Florida fly their F80C Shooting Star jets from Chicago to New York, 711 air miles, in one hour, 21 minutes and eight seconds, the fastest time to date.

■ **Jan. 10:** The city of Janesville buys 50 acres on Randall Avenue between Racine Street and Ruger Avenue for a new high school (Craig). Cost is \$45,000, and negotiations are ongoing to buy another 11 acres to make the site square.

■ **Jan. 18:** Milton Junction residents vote 275 to 239 to incorporate as Rock County's fifth village, joining Clinton, Orfordville, Footville and neighbor and sometimes rival, Milton.

■ **Feb. 9:** George L. Schoonover, 19, of Janesville, is found guilty of manslaughter by a jury in Rockford, Ill. On Dec. 11, Schoonover got in fistfight outside Blackhawk Gardens, a tavern in South Beloit, Ill., with Donald





In the 1940s, City Cab Co. was located at 14 N. Locust, Janesville, where an auto body repair shop in 1999 incorporates City Cab into its name.

Balderson, whom he did not know. Balderson, a South Beloit, died in the Beloit Hospital from a brain bruise. The jury deliberates eight hours, first voting 9-3 for acquittal but eventually convicting Schoonover on the 14th ballot. Schoonover faces one to fourteen years in prison but is put on probation.

■ **Feb. 10:** In a new wrinkle in the Gazette's ads, an advertisement for the new Playtex Living Girdle features photographs of "Miss Jan Klinger, Flexees Foundation Expert" wearing only the girdle and a bra. Previous ads used drawings to show women's undergarments. Klinger will appear at Bostwick's: "Bring her your figure difficulties. She'll be glad to help you." The girdle costs \$3.95 to \$4.95 for "extra large with garters."

■ **March 4:** Harold Hilton, 48, former newspaperman in Janesville and Beloit, is found dead along railroad tracks a half-mile from Mendota State Hospital, where he had been a patient for some time. Apparently struck by a train, Hilton got his first news job for the Gazette in 1924, then was telegraph editor for the Beloit News before working for papers in Minot, N.D.; Mason City, Iowa; Milwaukee; and Sturgis, Mich.

■ **March 26:** The transformation of Janesville's telephone system from operator-placed to self-dialed calls is complete. Janesville phone rates are boosted 24.3 percent Aug. 11.

■ **April:** Construction starts to put a roof over the grandstand at the Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds.

■ **April 12:** Southern Wisconsin skywatchers are treated to a double feature. While out to see a total eclipse of the moon, a "dull reddish affair that left the moon visible though obscure," residents also see a colorful display of the aurora borealis, the northern lights.

■ **May 9:** Thomas Gates, 25, who slashed his mother's throat in her Janesville home, 126 E. Eastern (Delavan Drive), on May 5, 1943, and was treated in a mental hospital and sentenced to one to two years in the reformatory for assault with a lethal weapon, is charged with stabbing his wife twice in Rockford, Ill. The woman is hospitalized in serious condition.

■ **May 10:** Traffic moves over the new Racine Street Bridge in Janesville for the first time, and workers start taking out the old span.

■ **June 9:** Janesville contractor T.S. Willis wins the \$218,000 general contract for the new Rock County Jail (under renovation in 1999).

■ **June:** California Spray Chemical Corp., a subsidiary of an unnamed national petroleum company, starts making powder insecticides in the old Rock County Sugar plant, on Eastern Avenue (Delavan Drive) beyond city limits, for distribution in the Midwest.

■ **June 21:** Southern Wisconsin's first outdoor, drive-in movie—Hi-Way 26 Outdoor Theatre—opens on Milton Avenue with a 33- by 46-foot screen.

■ **July 5:** Joseph M. Quinn, 4, son of William and Harriet Donnelly Quinn, dies at Mercy Hospital of lockjaw (tetanus infection), which developed after he fell and bumped his head eight days before.

■ **July 6:** The Janesville Fire Department's new aerial truck costing \$27,000 and with an 85-foot ladder arrives in the city.

■ **July 20:** Jerry Wells, son of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Wells, wins the Janesville Soapbox Derby, staged on the Monterey Bridge hill, and goes on to represent Janesville in the national race in Akron, Ohio. Wells will grow up to be a mechanic and auto dealer.

■ **Sept. 5:** Clarence Thiele, 56, Milwaukee insurance executive, crashes his water plane into the new Four-Mile Bridge—the previous span

collapsed a few years previous—north of Janesville on the new Highway 14 on take-off. Thiele is hospitalized for shock and serious cuts. He landed the pontoon plane on the river without problem but hit the center span going about 40 mph on take-off.

■ **Oct. 13:** Water and mud are thrown hundreds of feet into the air as a spectacular explosion in the bed of the Rock River near Indianford blasts a trench for installation of a natural gas pipeline from Texas. The concussion kills many fish.

■ **Nov. 3:** Some 1,240 people converge on Luther Valley Church near Orfordville to eat 1,000 pounds of lutefisk, 2,000 meatballs, 1,000 lefse and "innumerable Norwegian cakes."

■ **Dec. 30:** "Janesville's First Lady," Mrs. Julia (Stow) Lovejoy, 220 St. Lawrence, (YWCA) celebrates her 100th birthday. She earned the title by virtue of her many civic endeavors such as founding the city's first kindergarten in the old All Souls Church and the local chapter of the Daughters of American Revolution and playing a key role in the development of the city's first hospital, staffed only by a nurse in a house on Mineral Point Avenue. Mrs. Lovejoy visited Janesville in 1879 and met the prominent builder and lumberman, Allen Perry Lovejoy, who helped to build the baby city. Her husband settled here in 1850, moving from Maine. They married in 1880.

■ **December:** Bennison and Lane Bakery, 19 N. High, introduces a new product, "Brown 'n Serve" rolls that are prebaked except for the browning and packaged in cellophane-topped boxes. Just pop the rolls in the oven and serve them piping hot seven minutes later.

■ **Sometime in 1949:** Kittenball becomes known as softball.

■ About 2,650 local GM workers turn out about 150,000 cars and trucks, a new high, and earn \$8.65 million.

■ Speed limits, the first in years, 65 mph during the day, 55 mph at night, are set for main roads in the Janesville area.

■ Janesville residential construction sets a yearly record: 144 houses.

■ Janesville residents own about 30 of the newest entertainment appliance, the television set, which costs \$450 to \$550 with the tower antenna needed to pick up signals from the only stations broadcasting, which are in Milwaukee, Chicago and Davenport, Iowa. TV owners love them; others could care less.







# 1950-1959

## BOOM IN BUSINESS & BABIES

### **Janesville enjoys a smooth ride** **City experiences tremendous growth in business, housing, population and sense of community**

*In the 1950s, Janesville's housing market boomed; its downtown bustled, and its growing families bonded in a shared sense of community sharpened by the ordeals the young parents endured and survived during World War II.*

The '50s were a happy time among the returning veterans," said Marv Roth, former builder, city council member and executive vice president of the Janesville Chamber of Commerce.

"We didn't have a whole lot of money. We all started from zero. But there was a lot of camaraderie. It was a good time—people having babies, raising families. There were a lot of house warmings."

"And we had a lot of house parties and played cards at each other's houses."

"The other side of that coin is that we were very aware of those who didn't come back, the Tank Company (The Janesville 99) in the Philippines, for example. That kind of filtered through everything. ..."

"That sense of camaraderie really helped the sense of community."

The first 10-year reunion of Roth's 1940 Janesville High graduating class amplified the sense of the loss, he said. Out of a class of

350 boys and girls, 10 percent, or 35 graduates, all young men, had died in the war, Roth estimated.

"That was a shocker to those who had moved away and came back for the reunion to find out how many we lost," Roth said.

He worked for the contracting partnership formed in 1933 by his father, Frank, and Frank's partner, Walt Holdorf. As he sat in the kitchen of the house they built at 1533 Tyler, Roth looked out the window with his mind's eye and ticked off houses they built in 1948 in Janesville's first subdivision, Fair Vista, bordered by Fremont Street and Randall Avenue and Racine Street and Vista Avenue:

"That's a GI loan, that one isn't, the next two are GI loans, the one behind them is a GI loan."

Roth was referring to the low-interest loans afforded veterans by the GI Bill. The loans helped create many more subdivisions throughout the '50s.

At least four years in the decade set annual city records for housing construction, and the 354 houses built in 1959—a record to that date—brought the number of new houses constructed in Janesville since the end of World War II to 2,907.

The new homes ended a housing shortage that was created by a lack of building materials during and for

some time after the war and which forced many returning veterans to start their new families in federally funded metal Quonset huts. In addition, a number of families were living in garages converted into small cottages.

"There were Quonset huts, veterans' temporary housing, all over town," Roth recalled. "They met no (building) code really. There was just a firewall between two units."

The veterans and their young brides started the Baby Boom, and Janesville exemplified the national trend. The city's population exploded from 24,899 in 1950 to 35,164 in 1960.

People moving to the city contributed to the 41 percent burst in population, but births created most of the new Janesville residents, 7,889 of the 10,265 increase in population.

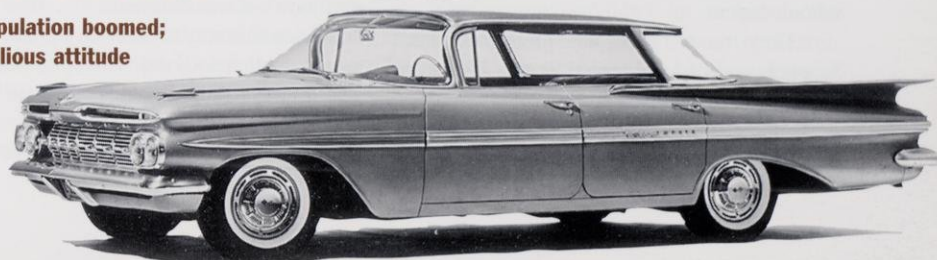
In 1950, 580 babies were born in the city, and the number of annual births grew throughout the decade to 964 in 1959, according to the state Department of Health and Family Services.

The extent of school construction also reflects the community's burgeoning population of children in the 1950s. From 1952 to '58, the



**LEFT: A 1959 Chevy nears the end of the line at the Chevrolet plant in Janesville. Americans made two-thirds of the world's manufactured goods in the 1950s.**

**The 1950s was a decade of change in Janesville. The population boomed; business was strong, and rock 'n' roll reflected the rebellious attitude of youth. Cars made at the twin General Motors plants here illustrate the decade's modernization, going from the rounded 1951 Chevrolet, top right, to the sleek, finned 1959 model at right.**





city added at least 64 elementary classrooms: 20 in additions to Washington, Roosevelt and Adams schools in 1952; seven in the new St. William's Catholic School in 1953, and 37 in the new Jefferson and Lincoln schools in 1958.

Furthermore, the new Janesville High School, now Craig, opened in 1955 for grades 10-12, and the old high school, which also housed junior high classes, became strictly a junior high, Marshall.

"We were booming," Roth's wife, Betty, said of the couple's nine children.

Janesville's first true shopping centers, Creston Park on Milton Avenue and Sunny Side on what is now West Court Street, opened late in 1958 and immediately began to draw business and activity away from downtown. Until then, the central city was not only home to most retail businesses and shops but also was the hub of local entertainment.

"It was so busy on Friday night, you couldn't find a place to park," Bert Schenck said.

Schenck, a Korean War veteran, started barbering in 1957 as the second chair in the shop he operated in 1999 on North Main Street. Then, three barber shops neighbored each other on the block.

Schenck and Jeff Thomas met in Schenck's barber shop to talk about the decade. Thomas, an orthopedic surgeon, graduated from Janesville High in 1958.

Downtown Janesville was where people shopped for just about everything, including groceries and clothes, the men recalled.

"And a lot of people lived downtown," Schenck said. "There were apartments above all the businesses."

Janesville was not so dependent on private vehicles, he remembered.

"When I came here (in '54 to work for General Motors), there were two great big cab companies, City Cab and Vets Cab, and the buses were always full," Schenck said. "Then it got to be kind of a rich town, and everybody got a car."

Traffic congestion prompted Janesville to transform four main downtown streets—Milwaukee, Court, Franklin and Jackson—from two- to one-way on July 16, 1956. Young people almost immediately saw that they could cruise the long loop created by Milwaukee and Court.

"The circuit" was born.

"That was the place we'd go and hang out," said Thomas, who rode the circuit as a high school student.

"They never gave me any problems," Schenck said of local teens. "It was kids from out of town that started all the trouble."

In later years, downtown merchants complained of rowdiness, vandalism and dangerous

## BABY BOOM

A look at the number of births by year during the Baby Boom of the 1950s. Janesville alone had nearly 8,000 births at this time.

YEAR	WISCONSIN	ROCK COUNTY	JANESVILLE
1950	82,034	2,119	580
1951	87,819	2,434	661
1952	88,941	2,460	663
1953	88,408	2,484	672
1954	91,570	2,685	768
1955	92,333	2,656	833
1956	93,496	2,921	916
1957	96,398	2,950	921
1958	95,950	2,881	911
1959	98,518	2,860	964

driving by circuit-riders. But in the '50s, cruising was just another element of a downtown that percolated with nightlife: four movie theaters, dance halls such as the Odd Fellows Lodge (upstairs at 22 N. Main), many supper clubs, restaurants, pool halls and bars.

One story recounted by many Janesville long-timers is that of Sam & John's Lunch Room, 207 W. Milwaukee. Older kids who knew the drill would persuade their younger brothers and sisters to count the hot dogs turning on the rotating grill in the front window.

One of the Romas brothers, Sam or John, would invariably feign rage and charge out of the shop to chase off the curious, counting kids.

"They'd chase 'em with a cleaver," Schenck recalled.

The YWCA operated Swing Lobby as a weekend social center for junior high students, and the YMCA ran Cabaret for senior high students, Thomas recalled.

The music for the teens' dancing was the new creation, rock 'n' roll, "and more mellow music," Thomas said. "Girls would sit on one side, and the boys would go over and ask them to dance. Sometimes it was a Dutch thing where the girls would ask."

"But you'd never go together, and you'd never go home with a date. It was always a group thing."

Roth was one of the many parents wary of rock 'n' roll.

"I was afraid of it at the time. It was the rebellious attitude," he said. "For those of us who came back from the service, having had a regimented life—do this, do it this way, do it now—it was different."

"I was that way myself—to a point. Our kids saw that other kids didn't have so many rules, and they questioned things, 'Why do I have a bed time when so-and-so doesn't?'"

One of the reasons for Janesville's strong

sense of community, Thomas said, was that the city was smaller and people knew each other better.

"It made it different. We were raised by the community," he said. "If my father was away, Dr. Milton Donkel across the street was my father and vice versa."

The city also enjoyed the fruits of one of the most prosperous decades in American history.

U.S. economic output doubled between 1946 and 1956, and personal income nearly tripled between 1940 and 1955, according to "The American Century" by Harold Evans.

In Janesville, employment, production and income grew steadily, the good times fostered by the twin General Motors plants of Fisher Body and Chevrolet, Parker Pen, Gilman Engineering, Gibbs Manufacturing, Hough Manufacturing and many smaller enterprises.

With 6 percent of the world's population, the United States was consuming a third of the world's goods and services during the decade, but it also was producing two-thirds of the world's manufactured goods, "The American Century" reported.

The number of two-car families doubled, and 83 percent of American families had TVs, according to Evans' book.

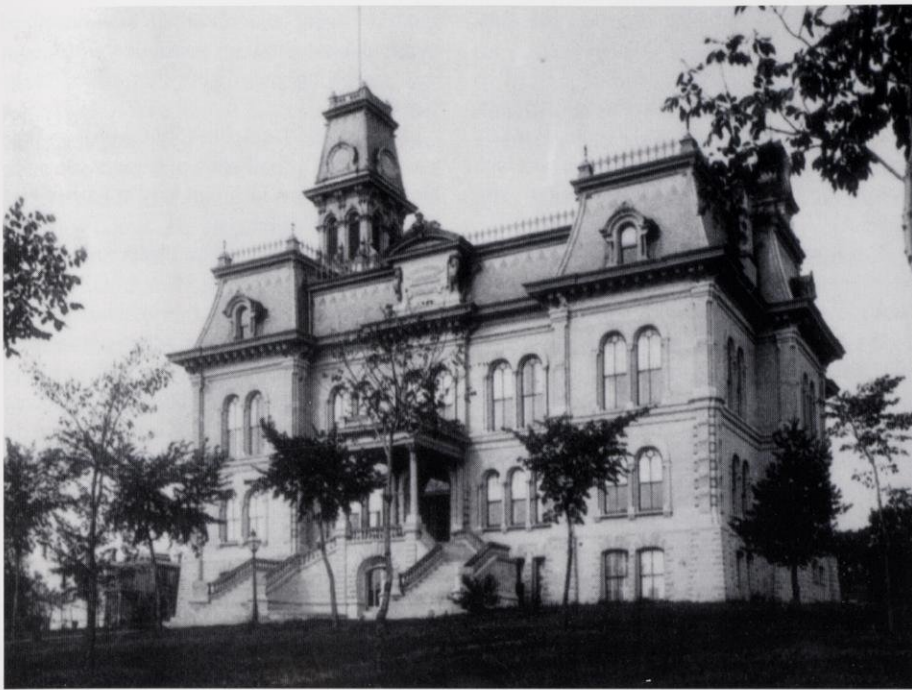
In the decades before cable TV, viewers relied on antennas to pick up the broadcast signals.

"My uncle Pete always said he had the best (TV) reception because he had the highest tower," Roth said, "but I never thought it was any better than ours with a rooftop antenna."

The Roths remember laughing to the wit and wackiness of Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca and making time to watch "The Ed Sullivan Show" every Sunday night.

"The Gene Autry Show" was the favorite of Mae and William Thompson on their farm in Magnolia Township. Mae, 100 and living in





**The Rock County Courthouse underwent a transformation in the '50s. The old building was razed and a new courthouse went up in its place, an example of the decade's move to all things modern.**

Evansville in 1999, remembered being tickled to see and hear "The Singing Cowboy" at the Rock County 4-H Fair on Aug. 8, 1958.

She and her husband liked Autry's western songs, Thompson said, and the show "was the first one to come out that we were able to get. We had a separate tower for TV. We had rabbit ears (antenna in the house) at first, but they didn't work very well."

Early in the '50s, the only TV stations whose signals could reach Rock County—and some were weak—were based in Chicago, Milwaukee and Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

But, while Janesville and Rock County probably were more sheltered than many communities, the '50s were not the entirely bland and pleasant years nostalgically recalled in reruns of "Ozzie and Harriet."

White Americans practiced segregation in the South and racial indifference in the North. Parents were concerned that their restless children would become the criminals and juvenile delinquents portrayed in movies such as "Blackboard Jungle," "The Wild One" and "Rebel Without a Cause."

Americans dreaded the disease polio, which

could kill or cripple its victims.

They fought the Korean War.

That experience, combined with the rabid and reckless "Red-baiting" of anti-Communists such as Wisconsin Sen. Joe McCarthy and members of the House Un-American Activities Committee, convinced Americans there was a worldwide Communist conspiracy to control the globe.

When the Soviet Union launched the first orbiting satellites—Sputniks—in 1957, Americans feared—erroneously—that the Soviets were light-years ahead in science and technology.

Sputnik and the Soviet Union's ability to make atomic bombs made Thompson nervous.

"You wondered what was coming next," she said. "I thought they were going to take everything over. I thought they'd drop it (A-bomb) down on all of us. They were hiding behind the bushes, you might say."

Janesville reinstituted its World War II Civil Defense organization. A documentary about the atomic bomb was shown at one of the first meetings.

Rock County prepared to be a reception area for people fleeing Milwaukee, presumed to be an atomic target of the USSR. Signs designating basements as shelters from nuclear fallout still hang on the walls of many public buildings.

Regarding McCarthy, Roth said:

"Some people thought he was doing a great job. Others said he was barking up the wrong tree. He was very impressive as a speaker. He had that voice. You had to listen because you couldn't hear anything else."

Rock County's worst polio epidemic was in 1950—at least 38 cases and at least five deaths.

Many victims who survived polio had to live all or part of their remaining lives in iron lungs, large steel tubes that used air pressure to expand and contract the victims' paralyzed lungs.

Roth saw a boy in an iron lung in the '40s, and "it scared the hell out of me," he said. "I couldn't imagine anything worse than that. You'd see polio cases here in town, little kids, and you'd look at your kids and were so relieved.

"What a pity it was to watch those kids with their crooked little legs."

No one knew—and no one knows—exactly how the disease virus spread and why epidemics broke out.

"Our parents wouldn't let us go to the beach, wouldn't let us go to the movie theater, to popular places because they were afraid of polio," Thomas said. "We were so frightened. We had a classmate at Roosevelt School who died."



In 1954, Rock County was one of many throughout the country to field-test the Salk anti-polio vaccine on children.

"My daughter (Patricia) was in the class, and the first to get it," said Dr. John Holmes of Milton, whose house calls included visits to polio victims. "None of the kids had any reactions that I know of. It was what we had to start with, and I felt assured we were on the right track."

"I thought we were going to get the upper hand on the epidemic, and after the vaccine, there were no more epidemics."

The coming of the Salk vaccine, Roth said, "was like someone saying now that they came up with a fast cure for cancer, no radiation or chemotherapy."

Thomas was a member of a Janesville High School Student Council committee that recommended a student code of conduct on

matters such as drinking, driving and staying out late.

He remembers the code as an effort to take the edge off the traditional Beloit-Janesville rivalry, which often became rowdy before and after games between the two high schools and which occasionally boiled into violence.

But Janesville and southern Wisconsin teens were rambunctious and delinquent on more than game nights.

On Halloween 1959, an "unruly mob" of 500 Janesville teens marched through downtown. They threw eggs, pumpkins and other objects at school officials and police, wounding one officer. They set small fires, opened fire hydrants and vandalized cars and buildings. One cop felt compelled to toss a tear-gas grenade into the melee.

The Janesville Gazette often reported that

gangs of teen boys assaulted and terrorized other children and of police learning about and preventing gang fights, then called "rum-bles."

In 1956, the Janesville City Council enacted an ordinance prohibiting possession of many kinds of weapons including any knife having a blade 3 inches or longer.

"City Manager George Foster said he had the ordinance prepared when Chief (Jasper) Webb informed him that switchblade knives, metal knuckles and other types of weapons not covered in city ordinances had begun to make an appearance in the city, particularly in the hands of minors," the Gazette reported.

The American civil rights movement hit its stride in the 1950s. The U.S. Supreme Court issued its landmark decision to end school segregation on May 17, 1954, but the reality was still years in coming.

## Coonskin caps to hula hoops: Fads flourish in the '50s

Everyone had a hula hoop. Well, maybe not everyone. But on street after street, in park after park, at recess and after school, girls and boys alike swayed back and forth and side to side as they wiggled their hips and tried to keep the spinning hoops rotating around their waists. Once the hoop dropped to a hoopster's hips, it usually clattered to the ground, only to be picked up and spun—again and again and again.

In the late '50s, the hula hoop was a craze in Janesville and across the United States.

"It had a marble in it that would make a whooshing sound when it went around," said Judy Mann of Janesville. "It was the craze at the time."

It was the craze, but it was not the only craze of the '50s. There were others. Many others.

Fads have recurred cyclically through American history. Bearskin coats, flapper caps, goldfish-swallowing and flagpole-sitting of the '20s. Tie-dyed T-shirts and bell-bottomjeans of the '60s. Disco and sideburns in the '70s. Jogging and Smurfs in the '80s. Swing-dancing and Beanie babies in the '90s.

But the '50s seemed to be the fulfillment of the fad. Whether it was Davy Crockett's coonskin cap or 3-D movies, fads flourished.

Bob Coon remembers the days of Davy Crockett well.

"We had to go down to Good Enough Records in Janesville to get the Davy Crockett records when they came out," said Coon, who lived outside of Orfordville in 1999. "It

was a big thing because we didn't get into town much."

The Crockett craze began when Walt Disney's weekly TV show, featuring Fess Parker as the "King of the Wild Frontier," aired on Dec. 15, 1954.

But being a fad, national sales went south on coonskin caps by July 1955.

By 1958, all of the hoopla was for the hula hoop.

Modeled after bamboo hoops that were popular with Australian children, the hula hoop was brought to the United States by Wham-O, a California toy company.

Within six months of the invention, 30 million hula hoops had been sold and 40 imitations of the Wham-O original were in production, according to "This Fabulous Century," a Time-Life publication.

"I had a hula hoop," Coon said. "All of the kids did."

The craze caught on so strongly that Janesville crowned a hula hoop champion in 1958. The honors went to Carolyn Borchert.

"Deepies" were another big fad of the '50s. Today, they are known as 3-D movies.

The trademark red- and blue-lensed glasses were introduced to the general public for "Bwana Devil," which premiered on Nov. 26, 1952.

Three-D movies "scared your socks off when things would come flying at you," Mann said.

While people loved the optical illusion 3-D movies presented them with, horrible plots ("Bwana Devil" told the story of a man-eating lizard that harassed railroad workers in Africa)

doomed the fad, which died out by the end of the decade.

But 3-D wasn't the only fad to affect the movies in the '50s.

Local residents nostalgically recall warm summer evenings at the drive-in.

"They were fun," said Joni Bozart, who ran Carousel Consignments in downtown Janesville in 1999. "We'd always have more people in the car than you could fit, just to go to the drive-in."

Kay Sutton, who grew up on a farm near what is today Milton Avenue, lived right next to the Hi-Way 26 Outdoor Theater and reaped the benefits of it.

"We always had a pass to go see the drive-in whenever we wanted because we lived right there," she said.

Coon remembered driving with his parents into Orfordville to see that town's version of the drive-in.

"We'd watch movies in back of Sagan's store," Coon said. "We sat on benches outside this old store and you just watched movies" shown on the store's exterior wall.

Looking back, Bozart and others think there was a great innocence to the decade.

"It was a fun time," Bozart said. "Of course, your schools had bomb shelters."

"It was almost like a new age," added Roxanne Nelson, a former Janesville resident living in Eau Claire. "It was before we were worried about another war."

"It's nostalgia. It goes back to the simpler times," Mann said. "Everybody's childhood is kind of magical."

—Jeff Bollier



Spotchecks of the Gazette found only one segregation complaint issued in Rock County: In 1950, the state of Wisconsin charged that the city of Beloit barred Negroes from a city swimming pool used by whites and that whites were excluded from swimming in a second "Negro pool."

Beloit denied the allegation, and no further mention was found of the alleged practice.

In stories that did not deal with racial issues, the Gazette continued to identify African-Americans by race, but it was common journalistic practice. The Associated Press did it as well, reflecting the nation's latent biases.

But the city and county appeared more racially tolerant in the 1950s than in earlier years.

In the 1920s, Rock County was a hotbed of racism and Ku Klux Klan activity. No mention of local KKK shenanigans was found in reviewing Gazette editions of the '50s, and the newspaper criticized the white supremacist group in an editorial Jan. 28, 1958.

But the county also was not a hotbed of civil rights activity in the '50s. The Gazette editorial did not outright condemn the racist and violent KKK. The spotchecks did not find

stories of local activists campaigning vigorously for the civil rights of blacks.

The few black families who lived in Janesville generally were treated with respect, said Roth, Thomas and Schenck.

"I never felt ostracized or anything like that," said Eric Beck, born in 1950 to one of the city's handful of black families. "I never had any negative memories of childhood. Maybe it was being protected by other (white) people. They seemed to accept us."

Occasionally, he heard a racial slur, Beck said, but they always came from out-of-town kids, not adults or the youngsters he grew up with.

His family, he said, was not focused on the civil rights movement.

The Gazette dutifully reported on racial issues elsewhere in the country. But because few African-Americans lived in the city, most Janesville residents did not take the civil rights issue to heart, Thomas said.

Roth thinks that the de facto segregation that existed between Janesville and Beloit, which had and has the largest African-American population in the county, resulted from the blacks finding more jobs in Beloit.

Though Janesville factories and businesses employed some African-Americans, Roth said, blacks could find more work in Beloit because more jobs there were unskilled and the blacks lacked training because they had been victimized by inferior education in the South, where many, if not most, came from.

Roth was familiar with discrimination because, as an Army officer, he was assigned to lead black units that had exemplary training records but which were relegated to menial or tough and dirty duties when they received their regular assignments.

"In my mind, that was criminal because it wasn't equal treatment," Roth said. "At that time, based on skills developed through training, they were good troops, but they did not receive the credit they deserved."

In the last year of the decade, a bright and engaging young politician named John F. Kennedy visited Janesville. Readers of the Gazette, already familiar with far-off places such as Korea and the Philippines, were becoming acquainted with an exotic place called Vietnam.

The city was headed for the turbulence of the 1960s.



# 1950-1959

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1950

■ **Jan. 3:** Wisconsin Power & Light customers in Edgerton, Milton and Milton Junction are converted from manufactured gas to natural gas for heating and cooking. The conversion coincides with an ongoing change in Janesville and Beloit. The conversions are not without temporary drawbacks, though. The stench of skunk oil is added to the otherwise odorless natural gas so utility workers easily can detect leaks. Many Janesville "housewives" are holding their noses.

The utility promises lower costs because natural gas burns more efficiently, but in seven weeks, Janesville consumers, angry over increases of 5 to 35 percent, ask the city council to investigate gas rates. The probe's initial results show that most consumers' gas bills have gone down and that many gas units have not been adjusted properly for the new fuel.

■ **Jan. 6:** "The first automatic transmission in the low price automobile" is featured as Harrison Chevrolet, 208 E. Milwaukee (no longer standing), shows off new 1950 cars. The Powerglide transmission has been a closely guarded secret of General Motors, except to the 2,800 or so Janesville Chevy workers, who have been installing it for about a month.

■ **Feb. 6:** Ken Bick, principal of Janesville High School, asks the city council to prohibit beer sales or distribution to anyone younger than 21. The legal age to buy beer in Janesville is 18, but it is 21 in Beloit, which prompts Beloit teens to drive to Janesville to get beer. Bick describes teen drinking as one of Janesville's "pressing problems."

At a later meeting, tavern owners and some parents object to a new law, saying city teens simply will drive to other communities in the county where 18-year-olds legally can buy beer. "Laws won't make young people quit drinking beer any more than it will stop cigarette smoking," beer distributor Don Holcomb tells the council.

■ **February:** Officers chosen to guide Janesville High's Honor Society are seniors Tom Carlson, president; Ruth Thompson, vice president; Joan Henning, treasurer; and Phyllis Fitzsimmons, secretary.

■ **March 6:** The Janesville council passes the ordinance requiring people to be 21 before they may buy or procure beer.

■ **March 17:** The state of Wisconsin charges that the city of Beloit discriminates against African-Americans by maintaining two segregated swimming pools and that four black youths were



Left to right, Victor Skelly, Alex Andreski and Carl Myhre demonstrate the Janesville Fire Department's new portable iron lung on an unknown 'victim' in 1950. Janesville's unions teamed together to donate the apparatus to the department.

barred from swimming in the "white" pool the preceding summer. The state also charges that whites have been excluded from the "Negro pool." The state maintains that it has unsuccessfully sought for eight months a declaration from Beloit officials that segregation will be halted.

In reply to the charges, City Manager A.D. Telfer says: "Through long-standing custom, the white and colored races in Beloit have used separate swimming pools. The city authorities want to make it clear, however, that they fully recognize Wisconsin law gives the right of any individual of either race to the use of either pool."

■ **March 18:** Mr. and Mrs. Neil Scott save their four children from a fire that destroys their home at Magnolia Corners, and Mrs. Scott's brothers, John and James Barrenger, save her husband from the blaze. Mrs. Scott rescues daughters, Judy, 8, and Neila, 5, from the smoke-choked first floor by kicking out a window and lowering them and herself to safety. Scott makes his way through flames and smoke to the second floor and drops Lewis, 3, into the arms of his wife and Norma, 2, into the arms of James Barrenger, who just arrived on the scene of the early morning fire.

Burned and overcome with smoke, Scott col-

lapses, and his brothers-in-law climb two ladders to get to him. They bring him down with the help of three unidentified passers-by. Scott, 43, dies the next day in Mercy Hospital.

■ The Janesville Cubs' second black player, outfielder James Lewis, is assigned to the local club by its parent organization, the Chicago Cubs. First baseman Milt Bohannon was the Janesville team's first African-American player. Jackie Robinson broke the Major Leagues' color barrier three years earlier with the Brooklyn Dodgers.

■ **March:** The first attempt to raise the "mammoth"—75- by 65-foot—screen at the new Mid-City Outdoor Theatre on Highway 51 south of Janesville fails when the screen is damaged. It will be rebuilt and erected in April.

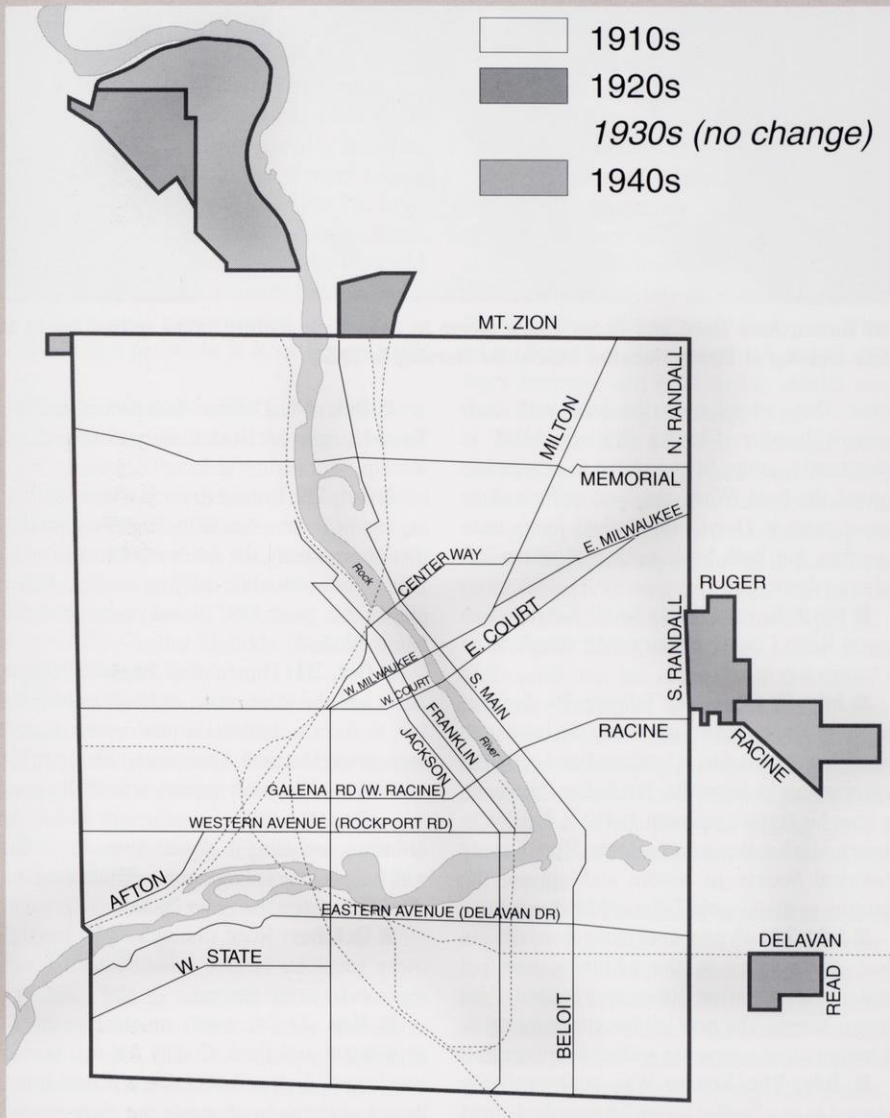
■ **April 4:** Evansville votes 619 to 552 to allow bars to sell hard liquor.

■ **April 18:** Union carpenters in Janesville, Beloit, Fort Atkinson and Lake Geneva return to work after a seven-day strike over wages. They accept contractors' offer of a \$2-an-hour wage, an increase of 10 cents an hour for Janesville, Beloit and Fort Atkinson carpenters and 15 cents for carpenters in Lake Geneva.

■ **May 7:** Wisconsin Sen. Joseph McCarthy, leader of what eventually will be revealed as a



# Janesville in 1950



**Janesville's city limits in 1950.**  
Some of the street names have changed since then.



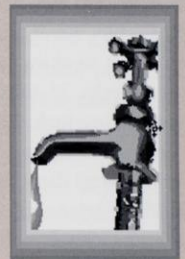
**Area of city:** 8.286 square miles



**Number of churches:** 17



**Number of schools:** 12. One is Janesville High School; one is the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped; the others are elementary schools.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 31.71  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 64.81  
**Miles of water mains:** 181.06



**Population:** 24,899



**\$1 in 1950 has buying power of \$6.76 in 1999**

spurious, vicious and politically motivated "fight against infiltration of Communism in government," speaks in Janesville to the Wisconsin Federation of Young Republicans. "It is a bare knuckle job, which is long overdue, but no matter how much McCarthy bleeds, it will continue until there has been a thorough housecleaning in the State Department," McCarthy says before turning his wrath on the Capital Times of Madison:

"The Capital Times, in my opinion,



**Wisconsin Sen. Joseph McCarthy**

does a more effective job of spewing forth to the homes of its subscribers the Communist Party line sewerage (sic) than any publication other than the New Masses and the Daily Worker."

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defined McCarthyism as a "mid-20th century political attitude characterized chiefly by opposition to elements held to be subversive and the use of tactics involving personal attacks on individuals by means of widely politicized indiscriminate allegations

especially on the basis of unsubstantiated charges."

From 1950 to 1954, McCarthy's witch hunt makes headlines, skews political opinion and foreign policy and frightens both the public wary of the Soviet Union and academics and others who value the free exchange of ideas. McCarthy lies about his charges and sources and does not uncover a single Communist in government.

In 1954, the U.S. Senate condemns McCarthy for "conduct contrary to the senatorial traditions." He dies of acute alcoholism May 2, 1957, at age 48.



■ **May 14:** The Rock County Airport finally lands regularly scheduled passenger service through Wisconsin Central Airlines, which averages about 100 flights a month in and out of the airport and carries almost 2,000 passengers by year end. Northwest Airlines lands a huge cargo plane on First Flights Day, but after the event, Northwest does not issue a schedule, and any cargo stops it makes are unscheduled.

■ President Harry S. Truman makes a seven-minute stop in Janesville while riding a train from Madison to Chicago. A crowd of 5,000 gathers for a glimpse of the president, who is not scheduled to make a speech. Nevertheless, Truman acknowledges the crowd: "Thank you very much, thank you very much. I didn't expect this. You are very generous."

■ **May 27:** Fire destroys a large barn at the Rock County Farm, and two draft horses, the county's last working team, are killed. Also lost are two trucks, 25 tons of corn, 200 bushels of oats and many tools. Loss is more than \$25,000. The fire hastens the construction of new buildings, including a steel dairy barn.

■ **May:** Arlene Brown, 14-year-old student at St. Mary's School in Janesville, correctly spells "acoustics" to win the Wisconsin State Spelling Bee, but "anemone" is Brown's downfall in the National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.

■ **June 1:** Mildred (Gapen) Parker, wife of Kenneth Parker, president of Parker Pen, dies; she was stricken with polio in February 1949. Among her numerous civic and social involvements, Mrs. Parker worked as a nurse's aide at Mercy Hospital during World War II and headed the local committee of the United Negro Colleges Fund.

■ **June 3:** Two Janesville boys—Robert Brandt, 122 Charles, and Robert Welch, 108 Grant—prove their honesty when they find an old leather bag in which several hundred dollars worth of war bonds are wrapped. The bonds belonged to Joe Kaunzner, a stonecutter who was found dead in his small cabin on Grant Street in February. The boys turn the bonds over to the police, who inform the lawyer handling Kaunzner's estate.

■ **June 22:** Janesville Police Chief Jasper Webb orders a crackdown on speeders and meter cheaters. Downtown business employees have been abusing the police practice of giving a warning and an extra 10 minutes on parking meter violations with some employees not putting any money at all into the meters until the warnings are issued. And while cops have been lenient on motorists driving 40 mph in a 25-mph zone, they now will write tickets for those driving 10 mph over the 25-mph limit.

■ **June 25:** Brothers Daryl and Anthony Tripke, 10 and 8, respectively, drown in Lake Koshkonong not far from their Charley Bluff



Pat Turner, Joan Reed and Peggy Close pause to have their picture taken before beginning their training at Mercy Hospital School for Nursing in 1950.

home. They rowed onto the lake with their younger brother, Charles. Anthony, clad in swim trunks, jumps in the water to dog-paddle around the boat. When the boat drifts and he cannot reach it, Daryl, fully clothed, jumps in to save him, but both boys, neither of whom can swim, go down.

■ North Korea invades South Korea, which means Rock County military men soon will be in harm's way again.

■ **July 8:** George K. Tallman, 76, dies and leaves an estate valued at nearly \$1 million to benevolent, charitable, educational and religious organizations in Janesville. Just before his death, he gave his family's mansion at 440 N. Jackson to the city, which makes a deal with the Rock County Historical Society to restore and operate the structure as the Lincoln-Tallman Museum.

■ **July 26:** 43 prisoners move from the old Rock County Jail to the adjoining new jail (under renovation) at River and Second (Van Buren) streets. The new jail has space for up to 74 inmates and a separate section for juveniles.

■ **July:** The Korean War, euphemistically referred to as a "police action," forces the United States to reinstitute the draft. By year's end, 109 Rock County men will be drafted; 170 enlist, and scores of reservists are called up.

By year's end, eight county men will be killed; four are missing in action, and 21 will be wounded.

■ **Aug. 10:** Janesville learns of the first local men wounded in the Korean War: Marine Cpl. Robert S. Wyman, 423 Williams, and Army Pvt. John R. Powers, 19, 207 Pleasant (West Court) St. Previously, Pvt. John F. Kelleher, 17, of 914 Prospect, was reported missing in action.

■ **Aug. 30:** "Bud Melges, young Lake Geneva skipper, appeared on his way to capturing top honors" in sailboat races on Delavan Lake. Harry "Buddy" Melges of Zenda will be at the helm on the America3 when she wins the America's Cup races in 1992.

■ **Oct. 11:** Delbert Anderson of LaPrairie Township wins the Rock County plowing championship.

■ **Oct. 25:** Roland Rabuck, 16-year-old starting center for the Janesville High football team, dies unexpectedly, the death attributed to a head injury suffered while playing earlier. Rabuck played in a game Oct. 20 and practiced the day before he died.

■ **Oct. 31:** Hundreds of Janesville High students jam the intersection of Main and Milwaukee to form a double line and snake dance to the school (Marshall Apartments) for a pep rally on the eve of the most important football game of the season: the grudge match with Beloit. The diversion, including a street dance, is credited with keeping the kids out of most Halloween mischief. Beloit wins the game, 20-14.

■ **October:** Rock County's 3,037 Social Security recipients receive benefit increases ranging from 60 to 100 percent.

■ **Nov. 1:** Janesville's unions give the fire department and Rock County Jail two portable iron lungs—devices that enable a person lying in them to breathe by changing the air pressure so the person's paralyzed or injured lungs expand and contract—to use in emergencies such as near-drowning or polio in which long-term artificial respiration is needed.

■ **Nov. 4:** Rover, a 6-year-old collie, shepherds three calves to safety when fire destroys the barn and granary on Isaac Saevre's farm north of Orfordville. The dog suffers a scorched muzzle and back, and Saevre's friends start a hay drive to get him the overwinter feed he lost when 40 tons of alfalfa and 1,000 bushels of wheat burned.

■ **Nov. 10:** Janesville's Civil Defense organization, dormant since World War II, is reinstituted. Scheduled is a meeting at which a U.S. Signal Corps movie on the atomic bomb will be shown.

■ **Dec. 18:** Lake Geneva continues its efforts to be the site of the planned Air Force Academy



as a federal selection committee inspects the 100-room Stone Manor on Geneva Lake's south shore and considers it as a possible headquarters building. The Air Force's college for officers—similar to the Army's West Point and Navy's Annapolis—will be located in Colorado Springs, Colo., in 1958.

■ **Sometime in 1950:** The Korean War kills eight Rock County men: Pfc. John Anderson, Janesville; Pvt. Edwin Goede, Janesville; Pfc. Roy Knopp, Janesville; Sgt. Vincent Libassi, Milton; Pfc. Richard Reese, Janesville; Pfc. Lloyd Bosben, Edgerton; Pfc. Ronald Huberner, Beloit; and Lt. William Hotchkiss, Beloit, who is the oldest at age 23. Four other county men are missing in action, and 21 are wounded.

■ Nineteen people die in Rock County traffic accidents.

■ Parker Pen adds its first non-writing instrument product, the Flaminaire, the original butane cigarette lighter, a French invention.

■ Rock County experiences its worst polio epidemic to this date: 38 cases, of which 18 are in Janesville. Five victims die. They are Sandra Green and Pauline Ellen Donnelly, both 8 and from Janesville; Maxine Whitehead, 25, Milton Junction; Mrs. Charles McBride, 33, Milton; and Earl Marquardt, 23, Beloit.

■ Janesville High wins its first state cross-country championship since 1913.

■ Janesville sets a new residential construction record—210 new houses, bringing to 717 the number built since the end of World War II.

■ Of Rock County's 461,440 acres, 434,748 are in farms. The average farm size is 129.1 acres, and the average value is \$19,328.

## 1951

■ **Jan. 30:** In what will prove to be the year's biggest fire in Rock County, the Beloit Masonic Temple, 220 W. Grand, in Beloit is destroyed for a loss of \$200,000. Firefighters must contend with temperatures that drop to 28 degrees below zero as well as fierce flames.

■ **January:** Lewis Knitting, corner of South Main and Second (Van Buren) streets, which has made underwear in Janesville for 62 years, closes. Borg Corp. of Delavan takes over the building.

■ **Feb. 8:** Janesville High's Battling Bluebirds play in Beloit's "mammoth" new gym, part of the stateline city's new \$4 million high school (Memorial) on Fourth Street on the west bank of the Rock River. Janesville loses 56-53.

■ **Feb. 15:** Smoked picnic ham sells for 45 cents a pound; coffee for 89 cents a pound, and pork and beans cost 59 cents for six 16-ounce cans.

■ **Feb. 17:** 3,000 people sign up as Civil Defense volunteers in Janesville, and 400 of them start first aid courses.

■ **March 1:** Janesville Fire Chief Frank F. Murphy, 53, retires after 31 years as a firefighter

and 17 years as chief. His reason is a knee injury suffered while fighting the Parkway Grocery fire Jan. 31, 1950. Janesville firefighter Alex Andreski will be named to head the department.

■ "Carlotta Taking Beloit by Storm" reads the ad for Bob and Jerry's Night Club in South Beloit, Ill. Carlotta is Carlotta D'Sanchez, the "Mexican madonna" whose "exotic dance interpretations ... have thrilled Beloiters with their enchanting charm and rhythm." Sanchez's twice nightly floor shows include the "Sacred Flame Dance" and "Fantasy in White" taken from the Greek myth of Sappho. The fancy language and links to the classics are a cover for uncovering the female form.

■ **March 15:** Southern Wisconsin anglers are reminded of fishing restrictions: No fishing within 500 feet downstream of dams, locks and fishways until May 12 to protect spawning fish; fishing for panfish only is allowed in Rock County; ice-fishing is allowed only from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., and no fishing in trout streams until April 28.

■ **April 1:** Janesville police officer Gerald McDonnell uses his necktie as a tourniquet to stop the bleeding of 15-year-old Robert Rice's right foot. Rice, 308 Center, accidentally shot himself as he was carrying a 16-gauge shotgun with the muzzle pointed down to avoid getting falling snow in the barrel. Rice was hunting crows in Vernon McNeil's quarry on Afton Road south of Janesville.

■ **April 9:** First classes are conducted in the new Beloit High School, and the Gazette runs a comparison of it with Janesville High. The local school, which was the first \$1 million high school in Wisconsin in 1923, is considered obsolete. Designed for 1,400 students, Janesville High has 1,610 students from eighth through 12th grades.

Under consideration is a plan to build a new senior high on land already purchased on Randall Avenue (Craig High School) for grades 10-12 and retain the building on South Main Street as a junior high for grades 7-9. The plan will become reality, but not for another four years as various alternatives are considered and rejected.

■ **April 20:** A portable steam boiler explodes on the Arthur Witt farm, rural Edgerton, and the blast kills the 40-year-old Witt and neighbor Walter Roll, 40, and injures Witt's brother, Herman. The explosion is so forceful that it hurls Arthur Witt and Roll over a 35-foot tobacco shed, across a road and power lines into a field hundreds of feet away. Roll is thrown the farthest, 560 feet. The one-ton boiler, used to steam tobacco seed beds, is propelled 375 feet.

■ **April 27:** 16 days after he was relieved of command of Allied forces in Korea, Gen. Doug-



**Alex Andreski**  
Janesville fire chief  
1951-1970

las MacArthur visits Milwaukee and meets men who were under his command in the Philippines in the early months of World War II: 13 Janesville survivors of the 192nd Tank Battalion.

■ **May 11:** Janesville's second ordinance requiring dogs to be confined or leashed until Sept. 1 goes into effect. The city passed a similar measure early in World War II to keep canines out of victory gardens, but the law was rescinded because it was thought to be too harsh.

■ Everett Klusmeyer of Magnolia Township, an 18-year-old student at Janesville High, is named Wisconsin Star Dairy Farmer by the Future Farmers of America. Klusmeyer is the first Janesville youth to win the state dairy honor.

■ **May 15:** Oscar Olson, 55, a Beloit veteran of World War I, is successful in his second attempt to kill himself. A year earlier, he shot himself in the chest and spent intervals in the hospital, but this time, he kneels in front of a passenger train speeding toward the Beloit station.

■ **June 9:** Six Janesville students are members of Beloit College's 100th graduating class, and graduate John Garbutt of Janesville wins membership in the prestigious national Phi Beta Kappa scholastic fraternity with his cum laude performance earning a bachelor's degree in chemistry.

■ **June 18:** A Shopiere couple—Earl Lavern Mitchell, 40, and his 20-year-old wife, Charlotte (Schollmeyer)—are killed instantly when a Chicago & North Western passenger train hits their car at the Tiffany crossing. The crash occurs at 4:59 a.m., and the 60-mph train pushes the wrecked car for about a mile. The Mitchells, who have an 18-month-old daughter, Shirley Ann, were on the road early because they intended to go fishing.

■ **June:** 10 years after it bought the land, Parker Pen starts building its Arrow Park plant. World War II and its shortages of building materials delayed the start of construction.

■ **July 1:** Everett Webb, Edgerton, survives a 3 a.m. accident on Highway 51 north of Janesville because of the coincidental arrival of Dr. J.P. Oliver, "a colored surgeon from Chicago." Webb's car rolls over after a collision with another auto, and his jugular vein is severed. A passing motorist who arrives moments before Oliver turns Webb's head to temporarily staunch the spurting blood. Oliver, returning with his wife from a weekend in Wisconsin, sutures the wound and administers morphine to Webb.

■ **July 2:** A massive school reorganization plan is proposed for Rock County that would consolidate rural schools into seven districts centered around high schools in the communities of Janesville, Beloit, Clinton, Edgerton, Evans-



ville, Milton and Orfordville. The proposal is controversial as rural communities want to retain their schools and control. It will not be until 1962 that eight rural schools in Rock, Harmony, La Prairie and Janesville townships are added to the Janesville School District.

■ **July:** Poison of unknown origin has killed 200 of the ducks that have flocked near Janesville's Milwaukee Street Bridge for six years. Theories on the toxin range from bacteria in stagnant water to rat poison to salt on popcorn tossed to the ducks by spectators, but no one thinks of all the pesticides being sprayed liberally by the city. The remaining birds are trapped and moved to Bowers Lake outside of Milton.

■ **Aug. 1:** A plane taking off from the Janesville City Airport—on Highway 26 north of the city limits—crashes and kills the pilot, Howard Fink of Kenosha. Fink's sister and niece, Dorothy and Sally Maxwell of Van Nuys, Calif., are injured.

■ **Aug. 10:** Edwin Sherwell, 86, a former Delavan resident, is killed near Waukesha by a flying cow. The cow, one of four heifers standing on the road, is struck by a car and hurled 15 feet into Sherwell, who is walking alongside the road.

■ **Sept. 1:** Warren C. Hyde becomes Janesville's second city manager. The first, Henry Traxler, retired in April after 27 years on the job and moved to Beverly Hills, Calif. Chosen from a field of 36 men, Hyde is an Iowa native, graduate of the University of Wisconsin and former city manager of Albert Lea, Minn.

■ **Sept. 17:** Six Beloit police officers turn in their badges because of "morals offenses" involving 14- and 16-year-old girls. One cop is charged with statutory rape. The others face charges of contributing to the delinquency of minors for taking the girls drinking in Illinois taverns. All the cops are married.

Oliver Davis, a 25-year-old officer who pleads guilty to statutory rape—having sex with an underage person—receives two years of probation. The other officers, accused of having "necking parties" with the girls, are not criminally charged.

■ **Sept. 19:** The police scandal extends to Rockton, Ill., where Leonard Schoonover at age 22 is reported to be the youngest police chief in the country. Schoonover, a Beloit resident, is suspended because of his arrest on a charge of contributing to the delinquency of a minor for taking the 16-year-old Beloit girl drinking while he was member of the Beloit force.

At a hearing, Schoonover says the drinking trip was the girl's idea, and further testimony is presented that Schoonover and another Beloit officer accompanied the girl and her 19-year-old girlfriend on the tavern trip. But there is no testimony on who paid for the drinks. A municipal justice in Loves Park, Ill., dismisses the

charge against Schoonover for lack of evidence, but he resigns his post because of "unfavorable publicity."

■ **Sept. 22:** Clarence Wendtland, 28, rural Beloit, is fined \$25 for his attack on umpire Donald R. Oakley during a softball game Aug. 30 in Janesville. Oakley suffered a black eye, and Judge Ralph Gunn tells Wendtland that umpires and their decisions must be respected.

■ **Oct. 13:** John Garbutt, 22, who in June graduated with honors from Beloit College, is wounded in a hunting accident by his brother, Ralph, 25, of 321 Racine. They are hunting pheasants on an Orfordville farm when shot from one of Ralph's blasts at a bird falls and hits John in his head and shoulder.

■ **Nov. 3:** The Janesville YMCA places fourth in the international "Swim the Mississippi" contest. Swimmers don't actually swim the big river; instead, they swim lengths of the local pool. Anchoring the Janesville team are David Bortner who swims 3,692 lengths of the pool, about 42 miles, in the men's division, and Roger Perry who swims 3,620 lengths in the junior division. They swim the lengths over several sessions.

■ **Dec. 31:** Comedy reigns in Janesville movie houses: Bob Hope stars in "My Favorite Spy," (Bud) Abbott and (Lou) Costello crack 'em up in "Keep 'Em Flying," and Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis get nutty in "Crazy Over Horses."

■ **Sometime in 1951:** The draft selects 274 Rock County men for the Army and Marines; 102 are from Janesville. In addition, another 168 men, 127 from Janesville, volunteer for the service.

■ Janesville boxer Jed Black, a sophomore at Michigan State University, wins the NCAA's 145-pound championship.

■ Melvin Waggoner wins two city championships—golf and handball.

■ The Rock County March of Dimes raises \$21,870.03 to combat polio.

■ Electricity replaces steam power at Blodgett Mill, 122 N. River St. (no longer standing), but water power still turns the grist mill. The mill produces buckwheat and rye flour.

■ Lt. George Kleifoth, 932 Mineral Point, wins the Silver Star for gallantry in action as commander of a Marine machine-gun platoon in Korea. He was wounded in the fighting.

■ Two downtown groceries close in Janesville: National Tea, 23 S. Main, leaves the city, and W.J. Baumann Grocery, 18 N. Main, one of the city's oldest groceries, goes out of business.

■ Eleven Rock County men are killed in the Korean War; six are missing in action, and nine are wounded.

■ County traffic deaths number 24.

## 1952

■ **Jan. 4:** The cost of keeping the frozen Goose Island (Traxler) Park lagoon clear of snow

for skating and the limited amenities for skaters there concerns City Manager Warren Hyde, but he assures skaters the rink will be maintained. The public cost of skating at the park will repeatedly crop up as an issue and threaten outdoor skating.

■ **Jan. 15:** Confederates are overrunning Janesville as the fad of wearing replica hats from the Civil War sweeps the city's youngsters. Only gray Confederate caps have been available so far, but blue Union caps are expected.

■ **Jan. 21:** Janesville passes an ordinance outlawing dumping of rubbish in city parks. Until now, the parks have been popular dump sites.

■ **Feb. 1:** Judy Carter, 9, Beloit, and Bridget Ann Walsh, 10, rural Beloit, break through the ice while walking on frozen Turtle Creek. Judy drowns, and her body is not found until Feb. 13. But Bridget is carried under the ice for about 300 feet before she bobs up in an open spot. Bridget suffers facial bruises from rubbing on the underside of the ice and tells her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Walsh: "God helped me find my way out."

■ **Feb. 19:** 91 Clinton area residents petition for a referendum to decide if village schools should merge with rural schools, but opposition is so fierce at ensuing meetings that the county education committee lets the proposal die. School consolidation must wait until public opinion changes.

■ **Feb. 28:** Two Janesville organizations hear different speakers: The Rev. Perry Saito, third-generation Japanese-American and assistant pastor of Beloit Methodist Church, tells the Congregational Guild that believing in the equality of man, inalienable rights and freedom is what makes a true American, not ancestry. He notes that Japanese-Americans won more medals proportionately in World War II than any other ethnic group, yet thousands of Japanese Americans were confined in U.S. concentration camps.

■ Federal narcotics agent Owen W. Lewis tells Kiwanians that Wisconsin needs more severe narcotics penalties. Marijuana, he says, not only leads to stronger drugs but also causes users to commit crimes that they do not realize they committed.

■ **March 4:** Paper ballots are used for what is thought to be the last time in Janesville in a primary election for state Supreme Court. The city's new voting machines are being prepared for the April municipal election and fall general elections. But paper ballots will return in 1996 when they are electronically counted by optical scanners.

■ **March 5:** For spring, the well-dressed man wears a two-button, single-breasted suit of medium-gray worsted wool with a matching soft felt hat. The hat's narrow brim complements the suit's narrow lapels and shoulders. The well-dressed woman wears a silk faille suit with a brief



jacket, easy sleeves and full-flared, mid-calf skirt. Her hat is a white Milan sailor, and she accessorizes with a flouncy white neck bow and long-handled umbrella. Women can buy the "fashion shoe for '52," white bucks, for \$7.95 at Yost's, 32 S. Main.

■ **April 7:** Virgil K. Rath, a distributor of dairy equipment made by Roy L. Meyers Mfg., 225 N. Main (no longer standing), arrives in Janesville to bid on some equipment being auctioned in Meyers' going-out-of-business sale. At the end of the auction, Rath is somewhat surprised to find that he owns the bulk of the inventory and the organization itself. He reorganizes the businesses into Sani-Health Dairy Equipment, which starts production of dairy equipment in late October and eventually evolves into Rath Manufacturing Co.

■ **April 24:** Barber shops raise the price of an adult haircut from \$1.25 to \$1.40 on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays while retaining the old price for Mondays and Tuesdays—shops closed on Wednesdays—to both raise revenue and even out their work load. The cost of a shave recently rose from 75 cents to \$1, and kids' haircuts now trim parents for \$1.25 instead of the previous buck.

■ **May 11:** On Mother's Day, the Janesville Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) recognizes several local moms of note: Mrs. Allen Perry Lovejoy, 220 St. Lawrence, oldest at 102; Mrs. Ralph Hankey, 215 Laurel, most living children with 15; Mrs. Minnie Leeder, 109 Holmes, most grandchildren with 49; Mrs. Anna Baker Wheelock, Elkhorn, most great-grandchildren with 85; Mrs. Harold Arneson, Milton Junction, most children in military service with five; and Mrs. Sylvester Snyder, 279 Western (Rockport Road) first Janesville baby of the year.

■ **May 16:** A state historical marker commemorating the first Norwegian settlement in Wisconsin is dedicated on Jefferson Prairie on Highway 140 south of Clinton. Assisting in the ceremonies are toddlers Sonja Kay Lee and her brother, John Carlton Lee, great-great-grandchildren of Ole Knutson Nattestad, who founded the settlement in 1838.

■ **May 22:** Rabies is found in skunks in Rock County prompting a 90-day quarantine of all dogs and cats. Pets must be confined, chained or leashed.

■ Janesville voters overwhelmingly, 3,029 to 545, support the city's buying the Janesville Bus Co. from the private owners who cannot make a profit.

■ **May 26:** Michael C. Lopez, 21, of 530 S. Pearl, is sentenced to two years in the federal reformatory for his refusal to be inducted into the military. Lopez maintains he is a conscientious objector because he is a member of Jehovah's Witnesses, which opposes bearing arms.

■ **June 1:** The city buys the buses and equipment of the Janesville Bus Co. for \$17,000 and assumes control of operations.

■ **June 5:** 305 students graduate in Janesville High School's first open-air commencement ceremony, which is conducted at Monterey Stadium.

■ **June 14:** The 12th annual Rotary Horse Show draws horses and equestrians from all over the country to the fairgrounds. Proceeds from the show help operate and maintain Camp Rotamer.

■ **July 7:** To save money and preserve equipment, the Janesville council votes to end bus service on Sundays and holidays and to shorten night service so the last bus leaves the Corn Exchange (Milwaukee and Franklin streets) at 9:24 p.m. except on Fridays when the old 11:48 p.m. departure will remain.

Bus drivers who were receiving \$1.35 an hour for a 53.5-hour week agree to a 48-hour week with a 10-cent-an-hour raise, lowering their weekly wages by about \$3 each.

Within two weeks, the city will hear complaints that teens attending movies have no way home at night.

■ **July 15:** Army worms are waging war on Rock County corn, and the main battlefields are Johnstown, Harmony, Bradford and La Prairie townships. Farmers consider calling in air strikes in the form of crop-dusting planes, the cost of which is \$4 an acre.

■ **July 28:** Some noted magazines claim they exist, but the Air Force and Navy say there is nothing to the rash of flying saucer reports around the country, which now includes Janesville. Milton Carr, 1414 Clark, tells police he saw a fiery ball—red, amber and orange—fly in a straight line over the city the night before, and Mrs. J.T. McClarmont sees a large fiery ball—changing in color from green to purple—make rapid dives toward the fairgrounds and float back upward early this morning. Nine years earlier, McClarmont saw three purple lights flying over her home.

■ **Aug. 3:** 15,000 folks flock to the Rock County Airport, which has been converted into a sports car track by the Janesville Junior Chamber of Commerce, to see a series of races run by amateur drivers from throughout the Midwest. A deluge of 3.5 inches of rain slows the times of cars such as Ferraris, Jaguars and Porsches, but it does not dampen the crowd's enthusiasm.

■ **Aug. 4:** Janesville council members limit the number of liquor store licenses to one per 3,000 residents. The 1999 limit is one license per 3,500 population.

■ **Aug. 5:** For one night only, Jimmy Dorsey, brother of the late Tommy and the "world's greatest saxophonist," brings his big jazz band to the Dutch Mill Ballroom on Delavan Lake.

■ **August:** Rock County hires its first home

crafts instructor, John Colt of Madison, who visits the homes of handicapped residents to teach them crafts as a pastime and a skilled occupation with some hope of compensation.

■ **Sept. 1:** 30,000 people throng downtown Janesville to see the parade portion of Janesville's first Labor Day celebration in more than 20 years. The parade features two Army bands, nine other marching units, a calliope, clowns and floats both beautiful and hilarious.

■ **Sept. 3:** Mechanic Donald McCaskell, 29, Watertown, is pinned between two cars in the pit at Edgerton Speedway and dies shortly after being taken to the hospital. McCaskell is working on a stock car when another, driven by Fred Bishopberger, Waterloo, experiences steering and brake problems and careens into the pit area. McCaskell's death is the first in the two years of summer stock car racing at Edgerton Speedway.

■ **Oct. 5:** The four-column ad for the Jeffris Theater touts "A Well Rounded Program Featuring the New Secretary of Exterior, the lonely girl in 809, Provocative Marilyn Monroe, in 'Don't Bother to Knock.' The ad has two pictures of Marilyn, "every inch a woman ... every inch an actress." One is a cleavage shot with co-star Richard Widmark; the second is a large photo of a come-hither look cast backward over cocked hips and shoulders.

■ **Oct. 7:** The last 7½ miles of the bypass of Highway 14 north and east of Janesville is completed. The road is the federal highway connecting Chicago and the Twin Cities.

■ **Oct. 15:** Parker Pen dedicates its new, \$4.5 million Arrow Park plant on North Bluff (Parker Drive) Street just inside the city limits, which have been extended. The factory's name resulted from a contest won by Carol Erickson, Janesville High senior and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Erickson, 1275 N. Bluff, right across from the new plant.

Reflecting the international scope of Parker Pen's business, the blue United Nations flag flies atop the building next to the American flag, and the flags of the world's 73 "free," non-communist, nations fly along the "Path of Nations," made up of polished stones from those countries.

■ **Nov. 4:** Janesville and Rock County are part of the Republican landslide that carries retired Gen. Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower, World War II hero, to the White House and elects California Sen. Richard Nixon vice president. Wisconsin's controversial Sen. Joseph McCarthy, the Republican both loathed and loved for his politically motivated yet fruitless hunt for



Marilyn Monroe



Communists in the federal government, also carries the city and county as he is re-elected.

■ **Nov. 16:** A downpour of 1.62 inches ends 54 rainless days for Rock County, the worst autumn drought in the community's memory. And in the 76 days preceding the rain, precipitation has amounted to only 0.77 of an inch of rain.

■ **Nov. 30:** On the first Sunday of Advent, parishioners celebrate Mass in the new St. William's Catholic Church, 1800 Ravine, Janesville. The Rev. Joseph Strange is pastor to some 400 families.

■ **Dec. 12:** The new 1953 Ford with a choice of V8 or straight-6 engines hits the Janesville showroom of Desens Janesville Motors, 400 W. Milwaukee, but motorists also can buy new Studebakers with "America's most distinctive jet-streamed styling" at Francisco Motor Sales, 115 N. First (Wall Street) or Hudson Hornets—and the "spectacular new Hudson Wasp"—at K-S Motors, 1514 Racine.

■ **Sometime in 1952:** Milton Union and Edgerton high schools are forced to forfeit two football games each when team members come down with polio.

■ In a presidential election year, Rock County does not see either nominated candidate for the top spot, Eisenhower, or the candidate drafted by the Democrats, Gov. Adlai Stevenson of Illinois. But before the nominating conventions, GOP hopefuls Sen. Robert Taft of Ohio, Gov. Earl Warren of California and Harold Stassen, former governor of Minnesota, visit the county as does Sen. Estes Kefauver, a Tennessee Democrat seeking his party's nomination. Campaigning here for himself and Ike just before the Nov. 4 election is Nixon, a California senator.

■ W.R. Arthur Co., a vehicle-hauling business that is a precursor to JATCO and CCI and serves the Janesville Chevrolet plant, increases to 155 drivers out of a total employment of 240 and to 110 trucks.

■ The Baby Boom is starting to catch up with local schools, and the Janesville district adds 20 classrooms to three schools—Washington, Roosevelt and Adams—in the first half of the year.

■ Riverside and Great Northern Scenic Railroad, which has operated a miniature train in Riverside Park since 1949, moves to Wisconsin Dells. The trains are made by Elmer Sandley and his son, Norman, at their workshop on Delavan Drive. By one account, the move was prompted by the displeasure of nuns at nearby Mercy Hospital over the little train's big whistle.

■ Technology—new fertilizers and more intense planting—and good weather in the growing season combine to make 100-bushel-per-acre corn yields common in southern Wisconsin, "an improbable phenomenon a few years ago."

■ Twenty-two people are killed in Rock

County traffic accidents.

■ Janesville's third piece of mechanized equipment, an American LaFrance fire truck which operated from 1921 to 1949, is put on blocks at Palmer Park and proves more popular as playground equipment than the swings, slides and other park amusements.

## 1953

■ **Jan. 2:** Mrs. Arnold Schmidt, 628 Milton, becomes the Janesville Police Department's first female employee in more than 30 years. A former secretary with the Rock County District Attorney's Office, Schmidt serves as records clerk, freeing a male officer for patrol work. On June 7, 1921, two years after Janesville women first could vote, Margaret Kavanaugh became the city's first female police officer, but her job was discontinued after a few months, leaving the department an all-male bastion until 1953.

■ **Jan. 13:** Work starts to change Janesville's 170 pay telephones from a nickel to 10 cents—a dime or two nickels—a call.

■ **Jan. 31:** Mrs. Victor Falk opens the back door of her home on Highway 51 south of Edgerton to find Lt. T. Booth Holker, a 23-year-old Chicagoan and Air Force combat veteran of Korea, where he shot down two MIG fighters. Holker is one of four Sabre jet pilots on a training flight who could not land at Madison's Truax Field because of a sudden snowstorm. Cruising at 300 knots at 16,000 feet, Holker runs out of fuel and bails out, landing in a corn field near the Falk home. His jet crashes into a marsh in Rutland Township, Dane County, not far from Cooksville. No one is injured.

The other three pilots also bail out. One is safe, but two are missing as is one jet. The other two planes crash in Waukesha County. Holker picks the right door to knock on: Victor Falk served as Navy flight surgeon in World War II, and his visiting cousin, Ross Poser, also is a physician. They both examine the slightly injured aviator.

It takes six days to find the missing fliers, both dead, one in Waukesha County and one in Racine County. One's parachute did not open; the other's chute is partially open, indicating he jumped from low altitude.

■ **Feb. 7:** Rock County District Attorney Frank X. Kinast and his assistant, Joe Forrestal, have been attending the state DAs convention in Madison, where prosecutors support changing the law so drunken driving suspects must submit to tests for intoxication or face penalties.

■ **Feb. 9:** Yet another 90-day rabies quarantine is imposed on dogs in Rock County. Pets in Janesville, Edgerton, Milton, Milton Junction and the townships of Fulton, Milton, Harmony and Janesville must be confined or on leashes or chains. Rabies vaccinations are available but

not yet mandatory.

■ **March 3:** Victor Bleasdale, who served with the Marines in France in World War I, Nicaragua in the late '20s, the South Pacific in World War II and as military governor of Guam after the war, returns to his hometown to tell 250 Janesville Red Cross volunteers at the kickoff of their fund campaign: "Many, many times I have thanked the Red Cross for providing us with a means of helping a lad in service who was in trouble."

Bleasdale rose through the ranks from private to brigadier general, and, as a full colonel, he was Rock County's most senior officer during WWII. He and his brother, Hector, were the only American brothers to receive both the Distinguished Service Cross from the United States and the Croix de Guerre from France.

■ **March 7:** After going to movies downtown, hungry Janesville theater-goers can amble down to 320 W. Milwaukee, where Elmer's Tower offers five hamburgers or "bar-b-q" sandwiches for a buck.

■ **April 11:** Miss Penette of 1953, Carol Carlson, official hostess of Parker Pen, begins her duties at the Janesville YMCA's annual Industrial Exhibit and Hobby Show. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Carlson, 80 S. Fremont, Carol works five days a week in Parker's "tabulating department," enjoys tennis and has a dog named Skippy. "A court of four Parker girls was selected to attend her."

■ **April 12:** H.T. Whitmeyer, 52, dies in a fire at his home, 317 Oakland, but his 22-year-old daughter, Nancy, escapes by dropping out of her second-floor bedroom. Whitmeyer is overcome by smoke just before he reaches the front door. Whitmeyer was prominent as a Janesville businessman, having worked for the Gazette and J.M. Bostwick & Sons and operating his own clothing store at 105 W. Milwaukee. He served on the school board from 1944-50.

■ **April 17:** Two Jefferson County justices of the peace, William Brandel and Clarence Kisson, are convinced by a highway demonstration to allow as evidence the findings of the "electromatic speed meter," otherwise known as radar.

■ **April 30:** Lightning strikes—six times. A violent storm sweeps through Rock County, and lightning strikes two Janesville houses, three rural houses and a car in Afton, causing much damage but no serious injuries.

The bolt that hits the car of Mrs. LeRoy Bladorn, Afton, shatters the windshield and rattles her and two passengers. At the Ambrose McNall farm, lightning strikes a utility pole, follows the wires into the house, starts a fire in a cupboard, burns a hole in a bottled gas line and turns the escaping gas into a flaming torch.

■ **May 12:** Peewee James wrestles Saile



Hallasi, a purported "prince from Ethiopia," at Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds as part of a Janesville Optimist Club fund-raiser. Both Peeewe and Saile are midgets. Two other matches are staged, and all feature stunts such as the double necklock, Boston crablock, spinning toe hold and bouts with the referee.

The ad for the next set of bouts promises: "GIRLS! GIRLS! GIRLS!" as Rosie DeMoine vs. Ramona Wood is the featured attraction. On the same card is 232-pound Reggie Lisowski of Milwaukee, who eventually will wrestle as The Crusher.

■ **May 29:** Born on the John and Milford Hill farm just east of Janesville is a Holstein calf believed to be the first in the United States produced by artificial insemination with frozen sperm.

■ **June 9:** The Janesville Board of Education unanimously refuses to pay men and women teachers uniformly. Men are paid \$300 more annually than women because, the board and administration maintain, male teachers are expected to work extra hours officiating extracurricular sports.

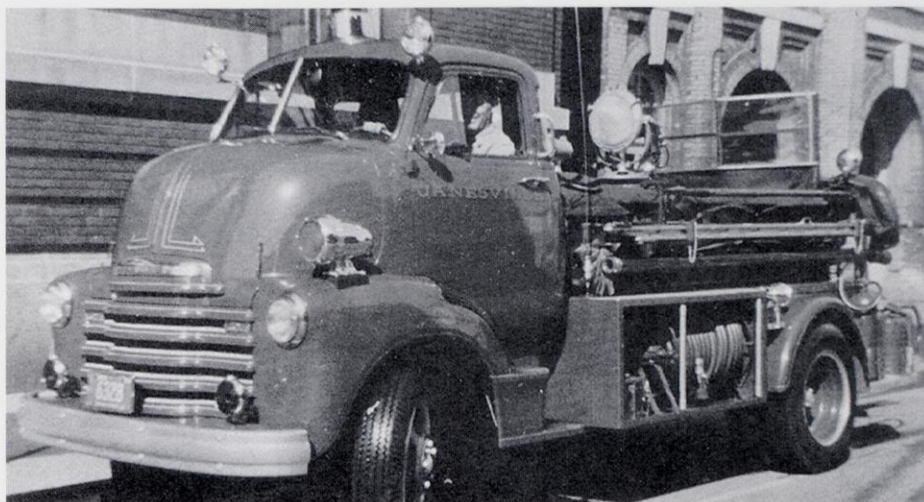
■ **June 29:** GM's Fisher Body plant in Janesville adds a second shift, and the Chevrolet plant follows soon after. Employment grows to 3,700 for the two factories, and Chevy production for the year will jump 45 percent to 144,000 cars. Truck assembly rises from 32,357 in '52 to 33,850. Fisher Body provides the bodies that Chevy workers put on chassis.

■ **July 18:** Neil Trout shoots a 31 on the front nine and 33 on the back side for a 64 total that trims two strokes off the Janesville Country Club course record, the 66 shot by Joe Nichols on July 4, 1940.

■ **July:** Parker Pen moves all its local manufacturing to Arrow Park, and George W. Borg Corp., Janesville and Delavan, manufacturer of car clocks, airplane instruments and fuses for military ordnance, moves into five old Parker factory buildings. Remodeling begins on the old Parker building (One Parker Place) on Court Street to change it from a mix of manufacturing and office functions to all offices, so the company can centralize its scattered administration.

■ **Aug. 1:** Word is received here that Marine Sgt. Robert J. Raymond, whose father, Julius, moved to Janesville after Robert joined the Corps, was killed in Korea on July 28, 12 hours after the truce was signed. Julius says he had to contend with two hours of continued shelling after the Armistice that ended World War I was signed in 1918.

■ **Aug. 20:** WCLO radio announcer Ed Hadley interrupts the broadcast of the Milwaukee Braves game to announce that Pfc. George West of Janesville has been released from a



**The Janesville Fire Department debuted its new 1953 two-ton Chevrolet on May 8, 1953. The new truck replaced one that was damaged in a crash between the engine and an automobile transport truck on Main and Milwaukee streets the previous month.**

Communist POW camp in North Korea, and West's mother, Mary, faints in her home at 254 S. River St. West was only 17 when he was captured in 1950, and his mother, who has eight other children, has not been sleeping well for weeks because she has been staying up late to listen to radio-reported lists of released POWs.

The next day, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Jensen, 465 N. Chatham, get the good news that their nephew, Raymond, also has been released from a prison camp.

■ **Summer:** The Municipal Women's Association Golf Tournament is won by Carol Sorenson, 10-year-old daughter of Janesville High golf coach Ted Sorenson.

■ **Sept. 3:** Janesville limps through its ninth consecutive day of 90-plus temperatures—including three 100-degree days—and the 25th day without rain.

■ **September:** St. William's Catholic School becomes Janesville's newest elementary school with seven classrooms and a lunchroom.

■ **Joseph A. Craig,** the man who brought General Motors to Janesville and who fostered 4-H in Rock County, buys and presents the former A.P. Lovejoy residence, 220 St. Lawrence, which was built in 1881, to the YWCA.

■ **Oct. 2:** Federal Judge Patrick Stone gives Raymond Solles, 26, of Janesville, a one-year suspended sentence and two years of probation for stealing two sacks of parcel post mail from a Janesville rail depot Aug. 29. "You don't deserve probation," the judge tells Solles, "but someone has to look after your wife and six children."

Solles brother, Edward, 29, is charged in the same theft, but he is in Rock County Jail awaiting trial on other charges of fraud and resisting arrest.

■ **Oct. 3:** The YMCA's four Hi-Y clubs elect officers. Presidents are Jim Cripe, '54 club;

Don Gehri, '55 club; Bob Suter, '56 club, and Keith Vogel, '57 club.

■ **Oct. 20:** David Byerly of Clinton shows the grand champion wether at the Wisconsin Junior Livestock Show, carrying on a Rock County tradition. Since 1937, with the exception of only one year, the grand champion lamb has been shown by the Disch family of Evansville.

■ **Phil D. Pearsall,** 55, former clerk-treasurer of Evansville, pleads guilty to embezzling \$15,443.76 from the city. Once a highly respected resident and justice of the peace, Pearsall is sentenced to five to six years in prison.

■ **Nov. 3:** Janesville voters approve, 4,947 to 3,398, a \$3.75 million bond issue to build a new high school on Randall Avenue (Craig).

■ **Dec. 30:** The Walworth County Sheriff's Department gets wind of a threatened grudge fight between teen-age boys from Elkhorn and Lake Geneva. Deputies round up the boys to break up the rumble, and Sheriff John Cusack lectures them on penalties for mob action and gang fights.

■ **Sometime in 1953:** Another tragic year on Rock County roads as 32 people die in traffic accidents, only five short of the record set in 1937.

■ **The Rock County Historical Society** hosts 9,000 visitors on 151 days of operation at the Lincoln-Tallman House, which is being restored in phases.

■ **Rural school consolidation** is under way in Rock County: 12 former districts, including the village of Clinton, merge as one. Eight districts consolidate around Johnstown, and five small districts consolidate in La Prairie Township. The rural consolidations are a step toward the later system that eliminates rural schools in favor of districts centered around high schools in municipalities.

■ **The shooting** has stopped in Korea, but



## Fighting on Old Baldy a hair-raising experience

**A**t age 18, Private Ron Bleiler was 5-foot-6 and 140 pounds, one of the smaller soldiers in his Army unit in Korea.

"When we went on patrol, I was lead scout—up front with the sergeant—because I was a small person, a small target so to speak," Bleiler, retired from the Chrysler plant in Belvidere, Ill., said in the kitchen of his home at 2011 S. Crosby, Janesville.

Bleiler's outfit was the 19th Regiment, 24th Division, one of many U.S. units that fought on Old Baldy. The mountain was one of many so-called "strategic positions"—usually mountains or hills—over which United Nations and Communist forces fought for most of the Korean War.

Old Baldy seesawed back and forth between the two sides.

"The reason it was called Old Baldy was because most of the vegetation was blown away, there was so much artillery and napalm thrown at it," Bleiler explained.

A fortunate delay in his assignment kept Bleiler from the actual bloody assault to recapture Old Baldy, but he was on the mountain from sometime in September 1951 to Nov. 15, 1951.

"We were cleaning up after retaking Old Baldy. There were a lot of dead Chinese and North Koreans," he said.

During the night, Communist patrols would probe the American positions, searching for weak spots.

In the American foxholes and bunkers, "somebody always had to be awake," Bleiler said.

The holes, 2- by 4-foot rectangles about 3-feet deep, were "big enough for one guy to sleep curled up in a sleeping bag and one guy to sit," he recalled.

Bleiler traded fire with Chinese soldiers in a couple of night engagements.

"They were close enough where you could see 'em, but I never had any hand-to-hand combat," he said.

During the day, Bleiler and his comrades would watch Navy aircraft pound the next hill over, "probably a mile away," with rockets and napalm. Or they would patrol in groups of 20 to 25.

"They were search-and-encounter patrols to find their location. Then we'd usually call in the artillery or whatever."

Finding the enemy's dug-in positions also meant coming within range of enemy machine guns and mortars.



**Ron Bleiler clowns around with a South Korean comrade during the Korean War.**

"I was up front with the sergeant, going down a little road, when automatic weapons opened up. The sergeant spun around, and his rifle knocked my helmet off. It was kind of comical," Bleiler recalled. "I wasn't about to go scramblin' for my helmet. I was scramblin' for cover."

The officers at the rear of the patrol ordered the men to retreat to their left to take cover on a small hill while the officers called for artillery. The forward soldiers laid down fire to cover the rearmost troops, who ran one by one over 45 yards of a field and small, shallow creek to the hillock.

Because he was first in line, Bleiler was the last to make the dash.

Only three men remained to evacuate when "a young fella who was married, not with us more than a couple of days, he was killed."

"As soon as I got up and started running across the field, they started firing at me. I hit the dirt next to (but not behind) a square rock. They evidently thought that rock was me because they were blowing hell out of the rock."

"By then, the officers were calling in artillery, and they let up the machine gun fire and started sending in mortars. I got up to run, and just before I got to the creek, a mortar round went off somewhere near me, and shrapnel hit me in the head because I didn't have my helmet on."

The wound got Bleiler off Old Baldy,

into a regular hospital and eventually to reassignment with a quartermaster outfit in the south of the Korean Peninsula far from the fighting. He served there for another year and a half.

On the mountain, the weather was cold—similar to late fall in Wisconsin—but it didn't snow while Bleiler was there.

The troops ate only C-rations: canned meat and spaghetti; "some kind of canned chicken stuff, that's what we called it, 'stuff'; crackers; a 'round jelly candy thing.'"

"I saw supplies comin' in, and dumb, naive, 18-year-old kid from Janesville, Wisconsin, I saw a lot of guys taking a lot of bottles of aftershave. I wondered what they were doing with it. They sure weren't shaving. One guy said, 'Don't you know what they're doing with it? They're drinking it for the alcohol.' I never tried it."

Bleiler found the Korean people to be "basically friendly, basically nice people, but you always had to be careful of North Koreans posing as South Koreans."

American troops also had to be wary of having things stolen by or being swindled by Koreans whose country was impoverished and backward by American standards.

"Especially the young kids, they were pretty slick, pretty sharp operators."

Most of the enemy bodies he encountered were Chinese.

"They were not as well-equipped as we were, and they were not as well taken care of as we were," Bleiler remembered. "And they didn't take care of each other as well as we did. When they were killed, their buddies would dig a small hole and just bury their heads and leave the rest out. You were tempted to search for souvenirs, but you didn't, because of booby-traps. You didn't touch anything that didn't belong to you."

While in the combat zone, Bleiler said, he was not always frightened, but he was always apprehensive.

"As far as being scared, one of the scariest times I had was when we first landed in Korea. You didn't know your enemy. You didn't know your assignment. And you had heard all these terrible stories."

Bleiler's landing was amphibious but not under fire.

"But you know you're going to be involved eventually. You start thinking: 'You're so young. What's this all about? Will I ever get out of here?'"



# Conflict in Korea was more like two separate wars

The war for the Korean Peninsula was actually two different wars. The first—from June 1950 to June 1951—was much like World War II in Europe, a war of sweeping offensives and brilliant strategic maneuvers on both sides. The second—from June 1951 to the truce on July 27, 1953—was like World War I, a war of bloody attrition, not for yards of ground between trenches but for hills and mountains such as Old Baldy.

North Korea and South Korea were two police states created in the aftermath of Soviet and U.S. occupation of the Korean peninsula after World War II. On June 25, 1950, Communist North Korea invaded U.S.-supported South Korea. President Harry S. Truman ordered American troops back into Korea on June 30 as the vanguard and bulk of a United Nations force sent to repel the Communist invaders.

But the North Koreans nearly swept the Allied troops off the peninsula. They were halted only when the 1st Marine Division and 2nd Infantry Division of the U.S. Army made a stand on the southeast end of the peninsula around the city of Pusan.

In a surprising and bold strategic move on Sept. 15, 1950, Marines and soldiers landed well behind North Korean lines at Inchon to liberate the South Korean capital of Seoul. The Pusan defenders broke out, and the two Allied forces pushed the North Korean troops back across the 38th Parallel—the line dividing the peninsula before the war. By October, the North Korean military had its back to the Yalu River, the country's border with China, and the war to repel the invasion became a war to liberate the North from Communism.

The Allied advance worried the fledgling Communist government of the People's Republic of China, which was created only the year before after a long and bitter civil war. After several warnings, the Chinese threw hundreds of thousands of troops into the war. They pushed the Allies south of Seoul again, but by June 1951, the U.S.-led U.N. forces again regained the capital and a slice of territory north of the 38th Parallel.

The Korean War then became "The Battle for the Hills," in which each side captured, lost, recaptured and lost again mountains such as Old Baldy, Pork Chop Hill, Heartbreak Ridge and Bloody Ridge. The two sides signed a truce in summer 1953, but they are still technically at war. The United States still maintains a major military presence in South Korea.

Total U.S. casualties were 162,708: 54,246 killed, 103,284 wounded and 5,178 captured. The total Allied dead numbered 115,567.

North Korea had an estimated 522,000 dead or wounded, and estimates of Chinese deaths range from the most conservative 401,000 to 3 million. At least 2 million noncombatant men, women and children were killed.

Janesville lost 12 men in the fighting, and two Army privates—George West and Raymond Jensen—were held as prisoners of war by the Communists.

Rock County's Korean War dead numbered at least 32, according to the names on the memorial at the Rock County Airport.

An unofficial count done by The Janesville Gazette at the close of 1953 put the war dead for southern Wisconsin, including Rock, Walworth, Green and Jefferson counties, at 38.

the Cold War means defense business for Gibbs Manufacturing and Research which has a \$5 million backlog of orders and employs 445 people in four local factories.

■ Janesville annexes 1,600 acres, extending its southern boundaries by about three-quarters of a mile and adding 1,500 residents. South Janesville (area around Beloit and Kellogg avenues) is now part of the city.

■ What could be called Janesville's first mall opens: The Jeffers Town and Country Shopping Center on Highway 51 south of the city limits offers a range of products from groceries to hardware under one roof.

■ Janesville's slain military men in Korea total 12 for the war's duration.

■ The Boston Braves move to Milwaukee, bringing Beer Town its first Major League franchise, but the shift in attention hurts attendance at Janesville Cubs games.

## 1954

■ Jan. 1: A teen-age Janesville couple narrowly avoid death when they are found slumped in the front seat of a running car, overcome by carbon monoxide, at the young man's house. At 10:30 a.m., Arthur Marko, 1536 Carrington, finds his son, Wayne, 19, and Wayne's date for New Year's Eve, Pat Wiskie, 17, of 1118 Wheeler, unconscious in the car. Firemen give both teens oxygen for 30 minutes before either responds.

■ Jan. 9: Ashley Ellefson, 23, a social studies teacher at Fort Atkinson High School, resigns and maintains that his resignation was prompted by false accusations that he is a subversive Communist.

"I do not believe it is enough to say, 'America is the best because it is best.' Both students and adults must be shown why it is best. However, since I tried to compare communism and capitalism, because I tried to look at the merits and weaknesses of each and because I tried to look at them intellectually rather than emotionally, I was labeled a Communist."

Neither the school superintendent nor a local minister who labeled Ellefson a "troublemaker" from the pulpit has any comment.

■ Jan. 24: Beloit College names its sixth president, Dr. Miller Upton, 37, former dean of the School of Business and Public Administration at Washington University, St. Louis.

■ January: Janesville's expansion prompts the hiring of two police officers, bringing the total force to 34, of which three are civilian clerks.

■ Feb. 10: CinemaScope, which provides a much wider angle movie, debuts in Janesville with a showing of "The Robe," a film based on the story of Christ, at the Jeffris Theater. The movie house (vacant) on West Milwaukee Street has been closed for nine weeks to install the wider CinemaScope screen and a new stereophonic sound system.

■ Feb. 13: Mary Stewart of Walworth, a high school senior, is judged "Wisconsin's Best Young Cherry Pie Baker," no small feat because the contest is staged in Sturgeon Bay and the women of cherry-growing Door County have long laid claim to the title. One of Stewart's secrets is using milk instead of ice water in the crust.

■ March 6: Ground is broken on Randall Avenue for Janesville's new \$3.75 million high school (Craig). The school board plans to start classes for 10th through 12th grade students there on Sept. 7, 1955, and retain the old high school (Marshall Apartments) as a junior high for seventh- through ninth-graders.

■ March 18: Parker Pen employees win a 5-cent-an-hour wage increase in contract negotiations. Men will make a base pay of \$1.95 an hour while their female counterparts will be paid \$1.62 an hour.

■ April 12: Rock County Airport is officially listed as one of 400 possible sites for the still-unbuilt U.S. Air Force Academy. The academy will be built in 1958 in Colorado Springs, Colo.



Marlon Brando



■ **April:** Marlon Brando is "The only one who could play... 'The Wild One,'" now showing at the Myers Theater. Among other things, the movie about a motorcycle gang terrorizing a small town is famous for the lines: "What are you rebelling against?" to which Brando's character answers: "What have you got?"

■ **May 1:** The 110-year-old hexagonal Milton House, "an architectural wonder when it was built in the Wisconsin wilderness," opens as a museum. The Milton Historical Society has restored the old inn and filled it with antiques. Part of the restoration is the reconstruction of the building's circular staircase. The Milton Historical Society hosts more than 5,400 visitors in the restored Milton House's first season as a museum, but the official opening will not be until 1955.

■ **May 5:** Rock County second-graders start pouting and crying—but they will not get polio—as inoculations of the Salk vaccine begin at centers around the county. Rock is one of eight Wisconsin counties to field trial the new vaccine—one of the greatest medical breakthroughs of the 20th century—and all second-graders receive the free shots if requested by their parents. The kids receive a series of three shots over a period of weeks.

■ **June 3:** Lake Geneva is one of three finalist communities vying for the \$126 million Air Force Academy, but the Walworth County community will wind up an also-ran.

■ A total of 513 boys sign up for Janesville's summer baseball program, which is not yet a Little League organization. The teams are managed by boys who select their teams by a draft such as done in the Major Leagues. The boys also can take advantage of a weeklong baseball school, organized by recreation department director Pat Dawson.

■ **June 12-19:** Representing Janesville at Badger Boys State at Ripon College are Ed Snyder, Howard Gage, Walter Traschel, Fred Westphal, Jack Bartels, Dave Brown, Charles Lindemann, Bob Kreul, Ojars Ziemelis and Dennis Gehri.

■ **June:** Gilman Engineering stops making fuses for the military and turns its attention to making assembly machines for the automotive industry.

■ **July 4:** Donald Oakley, 27, rural Janesville, who helps set off the community's municipal fireworks display at Monterey Stadium, is arrested on a charge of selling cherry bombs to Robert Weeks, an Edgerton teenager who is in danger of losing the sight of his right eye because a cherry bomb exploded in his hand. Also hurt by a cherry bomb is Richard Houte, 16, Edgerton, who severely burns his hand.

■ Three Janesville boys are arrested for shooting off fireworks in the city. "One lad ad-

mitted he exploded a firecracker to torment an officer on the next corner, not knowing that another, closer officer was watching."

■ **July 31:** 2,000 Shriners descend on Janesville for a meeting and give kids free camel rides at the high school, and Zor Shrine units entertain a big crowd at the fairgrounds.

■ **Aug. 9:** Janesville City Manager Warren Hyde gets a \$1,000 yearly pay raise, boosting his annual salary to \$11,750.

■ **Aug. 11:** The Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds receives a plaque noting that the grounds were the site of Wisconsin's first State Fair in 1851. The county fair is under way with a wide variety of stock judging and other events including a horse pull—won by Old Tom and his harness mate, owned by August Zabelle, Deerfield, who, though, in the lightweight class, defeat even the brawny heavyweights.

■ **August:** Chief Warrant Officer E.J. Sartell retires after 31 years of Army service. A World War I veteran with Company M in France, Sartell also commanded the 121st Field Artillery Band from Janesville and the Americal Division Band in the Pacific Theater in World War II. His last assignment was command of the 33rd Army Band in Germany.

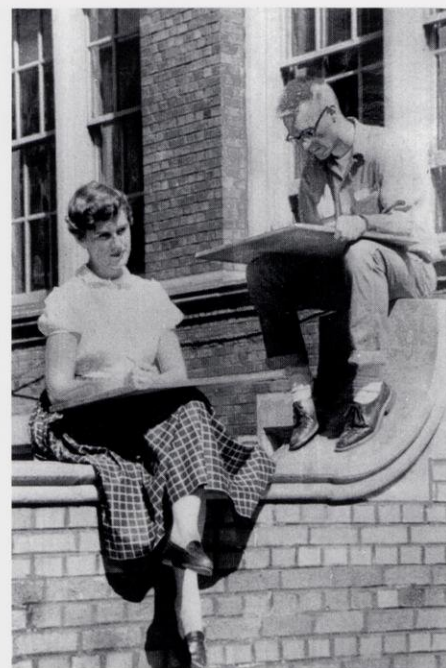
■ **Sept. 1:** Hunting season is approaching, and \$3 down will hold the gun of choice at Janesville Sears store, 18 W. Milwaukee (no longer standing). Remington, Ithica, Winchester and Savage shotguns range in price from \$77.30 to \$105, but bargains can be had in the J.C. Higgins line: 12-gauge pump for \$75, six-shot bolt-action repeating shotgun for \$29.95 and a .22-caliber semi-automatic rifle for \$37.50.

■ **Sept. 3:** Carolyn Russell, owner of a riding stable north of Janesville on Highway 51, gives an equestrian exhibition near Leyden. Riding bareback and standing barefooted—for a better grip—she jumps three horses at once, with one foot on each of the outside horses' backs and the third horse in the middle. The well-trained steeds are Molly, Sam and Duchess.

■ **Sept. 7:** For the first time since 1938, the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus plays Janesville—matinee and evening performances. The three circus trains arrive at 4 a.m. from Madison, and work soon starts on erecting the Big Top.

■ **Sept. 9:** The debate topic at the Janesville Public Library is "Should Janesville allow women to be served at the bar in taverns and should dancing be allowed in taverns?" Speaking for a change in the law to lift the bans is Erv Lacey, field director of the Tavern League of Wisconsin, who notes that the law against women being served is discriminatory and who contends that Janesville taverns are losing business because of the laws.

The Rev. Frank Dauner, pastor of United



**Marlene Schroeder and Jack Raufman sit outside for an art class at Janesville High School in the spring of 1955. That fall the new Janesville Senior High School, now Craig High School, opened.**

Brethren Church, says the strict prohibitions should stay because alcohol is a threat to public health, safety and peaceful domestic life.

■ **Sept. 14:** Janesville voters OK longer bar hours—closing at 1 a.m. instead of midnight—3,366 to 3,073, and they allow dancing in taverns, 3,387 to 3,118. But women still are denied service at the bar—they can drink at tables but cannot even stand at the bar—by a margin of 103 votes, 3,321 to 3,218.

■ **Oct. 2-3:** Magnolia Advent Church, "considered old enough to tear down in the Civil War," celebrates its 100th anniversary. At this time, the venerable building already has been extensively remodeled twice: first in the 1860s, again in 1929. To help with the cost of repairs after the Civil War, the Congregational Mission Society, which built the church, enlisted the help of the Advent Christian Society, and the two congregations shared the building: the Congregationalists on Sunday morning and the Adventists in the afternoon.

■ **Oct. 4:** On the ballot in the coming election is an advisory referendum on whether Wisconsin should use \$3.5 million of tax money to build a system of 12 VHF and UHF television stations around the state to broadcast public educational programming.

Debating the issue in a forum are Harold Engel, assistant director of WHA, the state-owned radio and TV station in Madison, who favors the proposal, and Sidney H. Bliss, co-owner of The



Janesville Gazette and WCLO, who is opposed.

They differ on virtually every aspect of the issue: cost, both public and private; range of the stations; perceived bias on the part of public broadcasting; what constitutes educational broadcasting—Bliss thinks the commercial TV show “Ding Dong School,” which has received high marks from critics, qualifies as educational—and whether UHF is a viable medium.

■ **Oct. 5:** The Barth family of Delavan thanks quick-thinking meter reader James Burcher of Williams Bay for their lives. Working for Wisconsin Southern Gas Co., Burcher detects a gas leak at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Barth and warns the couple, their daughter and three grandchildren, including a 2-week-old infant, to flee.

Burcher tries to close the leak, but the gas explodes, demolishing the house at Wisconsin and Third streets and igniting a plume of gas. Burcher suffers minor injuries but is back on the job the next day.

■ **Oct. 15-16:** Thousands of farmers from throughout the Midwest and Canada flock to the Tracy farms east of Janesville for the state and national mechanized corn-picking contests. Richard Kraus of Whitewater finishes second in the national two-row picker event.

■ **October:** Janesville’s current northern city limit is Mount Zion Road, but that will change because a petition is filed to annex 330 acres on either side of Highway 26 (Milton Avenue) from Mount Zion to the southern edge of the cemetery, Milton Lawns Memorial Park.

■ **Nov. 2:** Wisconsin voters overwhelmingly oppose the idea of a state-supported public educational TV station, 662,044 to 295,329, and every voting district in Rock County thinks the same way.

■ **Dec. 11:** A throng of thousands—expectant kids and indulgent parents—waits on either end of Janesville’s Milwaukee Street Bridge for the arrival of Santa Claus. The jolly and thoroughly modern Old Elf arrives by helicopter, which lands on the middle of the bridge. A fire truck takes Santa to the Corn Exchange (Milwaukee and Franklin), where he’ll meet youngsters in his workshop.

■ **Dec. 22:** Janesville’s Chevrolet plant produces its 3 millionth vehicle.

■ **Sometime in 1954:** Leo Fleming of Janesville wins the state trapshooting championship over a field of 255 marksmen.

■ Jed Black of Janesville fights in three nationally televised events before entering the Army as an officer; his TV record is 1-1-1.

■ Johnstown’s consolidated elementary school—six classrooms, a gym and multipurpose room—is operating, and La Prairie is ready to accept students when the holiday break ends.

■ Both of Janesville’s GM plants—Chevrolet and its body-supplying neighbor, Fisher Body—

expand. Total employment at both plants is 4,000.

■ Parker Pen makes its first ballpoint pens, Jotters, for sale to the public.

■ The addition of two new TV stations in both Rockford, Ill., and Madison brings the Gazette’s total TV listings to nine, four of which are broadcast from Chicago.

■ A store featuring the handicrafts of Rock County’s disabled residents opens in Beloit. It is jointly sponsored by the Rock County unit of the Wisconsin Association for the Disabled and state Board of Adult and Vocational Education.

■ Wesleyan Methodist Church, 967 Benton, is built, and construction starts on new churches for First Lutheran, Milwaukee and Randall, and St. Paul’s Lutheran, South Ringold and Third (Holmes) streets.

■ A total of 240 new houses sets a record for annual residential construction in Janesville.

■ The Janesville YWCA moves into its new home, 220 St. Lawrence, formerly the home of the late Mrs. A.P. Lovejoy.

■ Bluff Street becomes Parker Drive.

■ Rock County traffic deaths number 31.

## 1955

■ **Jan. 5:** Sears Roebuck & Co. has a post-holiday clearance sale: console TV regularly \$229.95 for \$199; 11-cubic-foot refrigerator, usually \$299.95 for \$269; chest freezer, \$339.95 marked down to \$289, and washer and dryer, usually \$399.90, now cost \$336.

■ **Jan. 16:** To speed up work and cut manual labor, the city of Janesville buys two gasoline-powered chain saws for public works employees.

■ **Feb. 19:** In its weekly “Men at Work” photo salute, which follows 1954’s “Career Belles” for working women, the Gazette features Glenn Sauer, 538 Fifth (Avon Street), who delivers milk for Janesville’s Shurtleff Ice Cream Co. to 365 east side homes every two days. Sauer was on the company’s first milk delivery run in 1923, taking the post after his job at Samson Tractor ended when the company, GM’s first venture in Janesville, closed.

■ **Feb. 20:** Asked to raise \$250,000 to help Mercy Hospital expand, the Janesville community pledges \$430,000 as the fund-raiser ends. The biggest single contribution, and largest in city history to this date, is \$100,000 from General Motors. By year’s end, the amount will reach \$443,000, and construction will be under way on the four-story addition, whose total cost is \$850,000.

■ **Feb. 26:** Janesville High wins two state team championships: swimming and wrestling. Individual events won by Janesville athletes are: 100-yard breast-stroke and individual medley, Brian Steinke; 50-yard freestyle, Fred Westphal; 200-yard freestyle in record time, Roger Perry; 100-yard freestyle, Toby Jensen; 200-yard free-

style relay in record time, Perry, Westphal, Dave Anderson and Pete Frechette.

Winning their matches at state are wrestlers Jim Thorsen at 145 pounds and heavyweight Jack Herrington.

■ **March 5:** After contentious debate that the building would be too big and plush and that it should not be on top of the Court Street hill, work starts on the new \$1.6 million Rock County Courthouse, at its planned size and location. J.P. Cullen & Son won the general contract of \$858,000.

■ **March:** The cost of getting clipped goes up again: Haircuts cost \$1.35 on Mondays and Tuesdays and \$1.50 on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Janesville barber shops close on Wednesdays.

■ **April 8:** Rita Hayworth, “glamorous flame-haired film star,” quits her role as leading woman in the planned Biblical drama “Joseph and His Brethren” over a delay in choosing her leading man. The flap causes cancellation of the movie, which is a huge blow to Kerwin Mathews, former Janesville Little Theater star, who is leading 44 other actors in competition for the male lead.

Mathews, a Lake Geneva native, has signed a seven-year contract with Columbia Studios and has finished work in his first film, “Five Against the House,” a B-movie about a bunch of college students who hold up a casino. Mathews just attended the Academy Awards presentation with one of his co-stars in the movie, Kim Novak, “who is star material at Columbia.”

■ **April 11:** Janesville Fire Chief Alex Andreski asks residents to take more care when burning their trash because the department had to contend with 10 serious grass fires over the weekend.

■ **May 1:** Warren C. Hyde, Janesville’s second city manager, resigns after three years on the job to become city manager of Edina, Minn. City Engineer Joseph Lustig fills in as acting city manager.

■ The prefix Pleasant or PL is added to Janesville phone numbers as part of a nationwide program so that long-distance operators can place calls more quickly. Janesville phone numbers are four- or five-digit until the change, and local calls still can be made by simply dialing the existing numbers without the prefix. The PL is simply added to five digit numbers, and in the case of four-digit numbers, the prefix is PL4. The numbers on the phone dial representing PL are 75, which remain the start of most local phone numbers.

■ **May 7:** The Gazette’s editorial cartoon is headlined: “Back to Earth” and shows a flying, space-helmeted boy giving up his raygun, landing on Earth and calling out, “Wait for me, Davy,” to pioneer Davy Crockett. Spawned by a series of Walt Disney TV shows—which were combined





**Owner Al Beyers, Emery Nelson and Howard Larson stand outside the Beyers' Heating store that opened at 58 S. River St. in Janesville in 1955. The business was at 1705 Newport Ave. in 1999.**

into two movies—the Davy Crockett fad is sweeping the United States and Rock County as kids, especially boys, pester their parents for mock coonskin caps, fringed buckskin jackets, plastic “powder horns” and cap guns in the form of flintlock rifles and pistols.

■ **May 8:** Five young men are killed in a head-on crash on Highway 50 three miles east of Lake Geneva as both cars stray over the center line on a curve. The local man killed is Robert Vorpagel, 16, Springfield, who is riding in a car driven by Edward Schenk, 17, Lake Geneva, the sole survivor of the crash. Other victims are driver Jerome Pickera and Charles Thompson, both of Hurley; Kenneth Mitchell, Withee; and Carl Goembeski, Waukegan, Ill.

■ **May 16-25:** The Salk polio vaccine was proved safe and effective by field tests such as the one conducted in 1954 in Rock County, but its distribution nevertheless has been delayed by further safety checks on specific manufactured batches. But the Salk polio vaccine finally arrives back in the county, and voluntary—permission from parents, not kids afraid of the needle—inoculations start for elementary pupils, chiefly first- and second-graders.

■ **June 16:** Theodore H. Burthe, 66, is killed by a dynamite blast on his Porter Township farm five miles east of Evansville. Burthe and two companions are blasting stone from a cornfield when he thinks the fuse has gone out

on a dynamite charge. But when he bends over to relight the fuse, the dynamite explodes, blowing off his right arm and hurling him 8 feet. He dies in Stoughton Hospital.

■ **July 5:** A Beloit mother, nine of her 10 children and her sister-in-law jam into a two-door Ford, and six are killed and five injured seriously as a speeding train slices the car in half as it tries to cross the tracks 2 miles southwest of Darien. Looking on in horror from the yard of his parents' home are the father, B. Eddie Smith, 38, and his 16-year-old son, Jerry.

Killed are Harriett Smith, the mother, and children, Larry, 13; Keith, 6; Jackie, 4; Debbie, 1; and Skippy, 3 months. Hospitalized are the sister-in-law and driver, Beatrice, 21; Leland, 12; Betty Lou, 9; Susie, 7; and Cheryl, 2.

■ **July 10-11:** On successive days, Ray Thobe of Janesville shoots a hole-in-one on the third hole of the Janesville Municipal (Riverside) Golf Course.

■ **Aug. 2:** 8-year-old Jeffrey Bolin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Bolin, Lake Geneva, drowns in 3 feet of water in Geneva Lake while using a diver's mask and snorkel to hunt for minnows. The boy's death sparks an angry outcry from H.C. Paterson, director of the Lake Geneva Water Safety Patrol. Both he and Dr. Boyd Hindahl, deputy coroner, state that skin diving equipment should be outlawed.

“We have been trying for 26 years to get strin-

gent safety measures on the lake. There just aren't enough lifeguards to watch these activities,” Paterson says.

■ **August:** Janesville brings its fourth well—on Beloit Avenue near Jeffris Park (site of Dawson Ball Fields)—on line. It cost the city \$110,000 and can pump 8 million gallons of water a day.

■ **Sept. 6:** The city of Janesville accepts the low bid of \$41,860 from Severson & Schlitz of Janesville to build a recreation center/shelter house at Goose Island (Traxler) Park, and Acting City Manager Joe Lustig suggests a land rink be built there for ice skating because keeping the frozen lagoon clear for skating is a problem. In the previous year, 27,910 people skated at Goose Island on 33 days. Both the shelter and land rink will be built.

■ **Sept. 8:** The new, \$3.825 million Janesville Senior High opens for 1,275 sophomores, juniors and seniors. The project is the largest in city history to this date.

■ **Sept. 9:** Janesville records its third case of polio, all non-paralytic, as George Kelley, 21, is stricken. The other two cases are children, and it is not reported whether they were vaccinated. Out-of-town visitors are barred from Janesville schools as a precaution because polio cases are cropping up all around the city and Milwaukee is in the midst of a epidemic: 266 resident cases and 157 nonresidents in South View Hospital.

■ **Sept. 15:** George J. Foster becomes Janesville's third city manager after leaving his post as mayor of Madison.

■ **Sept. 30:** Janesville banks open from 5 to 8 p.m. on this Friday night but close the next day as new hours go into effect: closed Saturdays but open Friday evenings. Ever wonder what was behind the term “banker's hours”? Daily hours at local banks are 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

■ **Oct. 1:** Virgil Lins, 29, hangs himself in his Waupun Prison cell. In June, the Darien factory worker confessed he choked his wife, Julena, a 33-year-old pregnant teacher, to death, and he was sentenced to 14 to 20 years. Left orphans are the Lins children, Michael, 5, and Terry, 2.

■ **Oct. 11:** The double standard for teachers' pay is still in effect in the Janesville School District, but the gap between women's and men's salaries is narrower as the school board votes a \$250 raise for women and \$150 for men. Men still make \$300 more each a year; salaries are not reported. School board member John Stewart tells teachers they should work together within their organization, the Janesville Education Association, but observers in the community think that male teachers are working independently of the JEA to get a straight \$500 increase in their salaries.

■ **Oct. 31:** Two Janesville women are saved after fire strikes their apartment at 108 Cherry.



## New high school opens its doors

On Sunday, Nov. 20, 1955, the new Janesville Senior High School was dedicated during a weekend open house to introduce the people of Janesville to the new facility.

The new school featured more than 4.3 million cubic feet of space.

At a cost of \$3.825 million, the 55-acre site and building seem like a steal today.

The school's capacity was 1,500 students, leaving room for the school's enrollment of 1,275 to grow.

Physical education space accounted for 49,976 square feet, while the library encompassed 5,278 square feet.

Fifty-eight teachers shared 31 classrooms.

The cafeteria could seat 450, while the library was designed to accommodate 150 at a time, one-tenth of the entire projected student body. The auditorium seated 1,500 and had an 84-foot wide stage for plays and musicals.

Articles singing the praises of the new science, art and athletic facilities appeared in a 52-page special edition of The Janesville Gazette that focused on the new school and many of its amenities.

Dedicated to details, the Gazette went so far as to report the number of gallons of paint used, 3,000, to the number of pieces of glass in the new building, 4,850.

The school today is Craig High School.

traffic into the downtown business district.

■ **Sometime in 1955:** After being absent since 1928, interscholastic baseball returns to Janesville, and the Battling Bluebirds go 8-5.

■ Rock County traffic fatalities set a tragic annual record: 39.

■ Under construction is the second Woodman's Super Market at the corner of Milton and Mount Zion avenues (True Value Hardware); the first Woodman's is at 922 Milton (Mercy Castaways Thrift Store).

■ Reconstruction of Highway 26 (Milton Avenue) into a four-lane road from the north city limits (edge of Milton Lawns Cemetery) to Highway 14 begins.

■ Employment at Janesville's two GM plants—Chevrolet and Fisher Body—swells to 4,600 hourly and salaried workers.

■ Ground is broken for five new churches in Janesville. Four are Lutheran: St. Peter's, 1422 Center; St. Matthew's Evangelical, Walker Street and Milton Avenue; Faith Lutheran, a new congregation at 2116 Mineral Point; and Mount Calvary, 616 N. Washington. (Riverview Surgery Center was at that address in 1999, and the church was at 2940 Mineral Point.) The city's fourth Catholic parish, St. John Vianney, is building its church at 1301 Clark.

■ Hough Shade Corp. changes its name to Hough Manufacturing Corp. (HUF COR) and adds a new product, the accordion door.

■ While the county's population of 92,778 is double what it was in 1905, the number of farmers and those living in farm families stays the same at about 14,000.

■ Yet another record year, 314 new houses, brings Janesville's 10-year boom to 1,826 new houses.

## 1956

■ **Jan. 1:** Rock County Sheriff Miles Sweeney receives a collect call from Los Angeles from James R. Nelson, former night clerk at the Monterey Hotel wanted for stealing \$327 from his employer. The criminal wishes the sheriff Happy New Year, then says he is turning himself in to LA cops.

"Couldn't you hitchhike back this way first?" Sweeney asks.

"I'm afraid of what might happen along the way," Nelson replies before surrendering to authorities.

Just a year before, Sweeney had to go to Miami, Fla., to bring Nelson back to answer a bad check charge in Beloit.

■ **Jan. 2:** St. Elizabeth's Home for the Aged, 502 St. Lawrence, opens under the auspices of the Sisters of Charity to care for 12 elderly women. The former home of Mr. and Mrs. Pierpont J.E. Wood, the 16-room, three-story house was sold to the Madison Roman Catholic Diocese.

■ **Week of Jan. 9:** Gangs of teenage boys are terrorizing skaters at Beloit ice-skating rinks, beating up other teens, stripping nearly all the clothes off one girl, breaking into a church and vandalizing property. On Jan. 13, three squads of police officers must quell "near riots" at one of the rinks. Several of the boys arrested are armed with lead pipes, blackjacks and switchblade knives.

■ **Feb. 4:** Five Janesville youths, ages 14-16 and called an "embryonic wolf pack" by Judge Roscoe Luce of Walworth County, are given a year's probation each because of their attacks on Walworth County teens, some involving beatings with brass knuckles. "You show the intelligence of babies in diapers," Luce tells the quintet and their parents, adding the entire problem of juvenile gangs is linked to improper TV programs and movies.

■ **Feb. 29:** A "thunder-like" blast at 4 p.m. sends Janesville residents scurrying to their basements to check for furnace explosions and hurrying into the street to see if trucks rammed their neighbors' home. But Sheriff Sweeney attributes the blast to a sonic boom created by a plane or planes breaking the sound barrier because jet aircraft were heard overhead at the same time.

Capt. Chuck Yeager first broke the sound barrier less than nine years previous in the experimental X-1 rocket plane.

■ Six boys from Williams Bay Boy Scout Troop 137 earn the coveted Eagle Scout honor. They are Arthur Ray Jr., Craig Orum, Danny Billings Jr., David Pearce, Gregory Moore and Roger Weede. Their scoutmaster is Ray's father.

■ **March 6:** In what is described as Janesville High's "first Dress-Up Day," nearly every student comes in his or her "most attractive ensemble ... and the self-consciousness of girls in high heels and boys in suits and white shirts brought smiles from the teachers." Senior Karen White wears a black felt, flared mid-calf skirt, pink blouse and white sweater, nylon stockings and pink high heels. Mike Garvin, who will wrestle in the state tourney at 182 pounds, wears a gray flannel suit, white shirt and dark tie.

■ **March 19:** Police Chief Jasper Webb has informed city officials that "switchblade knives, metal knuckles and other types of weapons not covered in city ordinances had begun to make an appearance in the city, particularly in the hands of minors." In response, the Janesville City Council outlaws such weapons and many others including any knife with a blade 3 inches or longer.

■ **April 1:** A police chase that starts in Illinois ends in Walworth County on Highway 14 a mile south of its intersection with Highway 11 when fugitive Edward H. Sarney, a 25-year-old Army veteran, is killed by a single police bullet that pierces the top of his 1949 Mercury convertible

Fire Capt. Otto Bennwitz carries 85-year-old Mary Richards to safety, and rookie fireman Robert Selby breaks into a bedroom to save Richards' invalid daughter, Ruth, 61.

■ **Nov. 10:** An employee at Fox Body, manufacturer of truck bodies at 1109 Galena (West Racine Street), drops a bucket of paint thinner, and the liquid spreads across the floor, where sparks from a torch ignite it. Twenty-seven employees escape uninjured, but the fire guts the factory interior for a \$50,000 loss.

■ **Dec. 1:** Traffic is snarling in downtown Janesville, and Madison traffic engineer Joe Bunch is considering recommending that several streets be made one-way. He's looking at Milwaukee Street, Milwaukee Avenue (Milwaukee Street east of Milton Avenue), Court Street, Pleasant (West Court) Street and Franklin and Jackson streets. The purpose of one-way streets is to move traffic more efficiently, he says, and a good one-way street system moves more



and his head.

It remains a mystery why Sarney, formerly of Tomah but working as a mechanic in Woodstock, Ill., fled from police after they tried to stop him for driving erratically in Crystal Lake, Ill. The homicide is ruled justifiable because at one point in the chase Sarney apparently tried to run down an officer at a roadblock, making him a fugitive felon.

■ **April 6:** Janesville High students vote in favor of a code of ethics to guide their behavior in matters such as night hours, driving, drinking, respect for the property of others and the like. Of 1,116 students voting, 669 favor the code; 292 support some parts of it, and 155 oppose having a code. A student panel worked on the code. Members are Jeff Thomas, Mary Bartels, Bill Shea, Betsy Flora, Julie Hanson, Pat O'Brien and Jim Shebesta.

■ **April 7:** A "spectacular fire of undetermined origin" destroys the factory of Fox Body Co., maker of truck bodies, at 1109 Galena (West Racine), just after it was rebuilt because of a fire in November 1955. Though the building is racked by four exploding acetylene tanks and walls collapse, only one fireman is hurt. Arthur Sarnow sprains an ankle. Loss is \$152,000.

■ **May 7:** GM's Chevrolet Division produces its 35th million vehicle, a gold '57 Bel Air sport coupe, or "hardtop," at the Janesville plant.

■ **May 10:** Young dads shopping for Mother's Day gifts can buy their wives babydoll pajamas at J.M. Bostwick & Sons for \$3.98. "Short and saucy as you love them ... just see those brief petal sleeves, that whirling, curly flounce and the matching ruffle-leg panties."

■ **May:** Rock County contends with an outbreak of "chicken" driving in which motorists—almost always teenage boys—drive at unsuspecting drivers to see who will chicken out first and swerve to avoid collision. In the latest case, Richard O. Carlson, Beloit, is forced off Prairie Road, loses control and mows down 24 small trees. His wife, Leola Ann, sustains a skinned knee, and their 3-year-old son, Chris, suffers a head injury.

Seven instances injure four people in the Beloit area over a period of days, prompting Sheriff Miles C. Sweeney to offer personal \$25 rewards for tips leading to arrest. The reward fund grows, and when Sweeney announces that chicken drivers will be charged with attempted manslaughter, the foolish drivers chicken out of their reckless driving.

A scene involving chicken driving was central to the 1955 movie "Rebel Without a Cause," starring James Dean and Sal Mineo, one of the quintessential films about juvenile delinquency. But in

the movie and others showing chicken driving, two teen drivers risk both their lives, not those of innocent motorists.

Showing at the Hi-Way 26 Outdoor on May 5 is a four-movie "Hot Rod Thrill Show," featuring "The Wild One" and three B-movies including "Four Wheels ... No Brakes."

■ **June 7:** The new Janesville High School graduates its first class, 340 students.

■ **June 9:** Betty Ann Frohmader, 22, Jefferson, is granted a divorce from her husband, Donald, 23, on grounds of cruel and inhuman treatment including an allegation "that the defendant comes home to the TV set instead of the family and completely absorbs himself in the TV programs without any consideration for the plaintiff."

■ **Aunt Jemima**, the African-American woman whose smiling face sells countless boxes of Aunt Jemima's Buttermilk Pancake mix for Quaker Oats Co., makes several appearances at the first Janesville Kiwanis Club Pancake Day. She has made public appearances for years as both an entertainer and a fund-raiser for charities combating heart disease, cancer and cerebral palsy. During her stay in Janesville, Aunt Jemima tours the GM and Parker Pen plants and is a guest on WCLO.

■ **July 16:** To ease downtown traffic congestion, Janesville turns Milwaukee, Pleasant/Court, Franklin and Jackson streets into one-way streets.

"The few who opposed the change have had little to say as traffic congestion has been so well relieved and there appears to have been practically no damage to downtown business," the Gazette reports five months later in its year-end edition.

■ **Aug. 4:** The Green Bay Packers play an intrasquad exhibition game at Janesville's Monterey Stadium. To the fans' disappointment, many favorite veterans ride the bench, but among the rookies making favorable impressions is a "cool and clever quarterback from Alabama," Bart Starr.

Starr's Green squad downs the Gold team, 10-6, with the winning touchdown coming on the second-to-last play of the game, Starr's 47-yard pass to another rookie, Alton Romine from Florence Teachers College in Alabama.

"Starr was undoubtedly the best of the newcomers in action here. He was cool and completed 12 of 22 passes for 181 yards."

■ **September:** Pay raises of \$400 to \$500 yearly go into effect for Janesville teachers.

The lowest teacher's salary is raised to \$3,475, and the highest possible is \$6,200 for a teacher with a master's degree and 19 years of experience in the Janesville School District.

■ **Oct. 1:** The Janesville City Council balks at putting the question of whether to permit escorted women to drink at the bar in Janesville taverns on a referendum ballot. The issue doesn't come up for a vote because the council rules that Councilman William Cronin, a tavern operator, cannot vote on the issue because of a conflict of interest. When Cronin seconds the motion to put the question up for referendum, his second is disallowed, and the motion dies.

Attorney George Steil, representing the tavern interests seeking the referendum, tells the council that the question is different from the one defeated in 1954 because it pertains to "escorted women. ... This is intended to permit a man to take his wife to the bar with him."

■ **Nov. 6:** President Dwight Eisenhower and Vice President Richard Nixon ride another landslide to reelection, and Rock County and Janesville are two of the rocks in the

avalanche. The county gives Ike better than a 2-1 margin—28,980 to 13,664—over second-time Democratic challenger, Adlai Stevenson, and the city's margin for Eisenhower is almost 2-1, 8,778 to 4,422.

■ **Nov. 29:** The Rath Manufacturing plant, which makes dairy equipment at 225 N. Main, is destroyed by fire. Starting near the heating plant in the basement, the stubborn fire is fed by paint and enamel stored in the building, and firemen must contend with a temperature of only 7 that combines with water from the hoses to turn the streets into ice rinks. No one is injured, but \$100,000 damage is done.

■ **Dec. 1:** All Janesville banks—First National (Bank One), Rock County National (Johnson Bank) and Merchant & Savings (M&I)—now offer 2 percent interest on savings accounts.

■ **Dec. 21:** The Rock County Circuit Court office is the first to move into the new \$1.68 million courthouse.

■ **Dec. 30:** Playing at the Myers Theater is "Rock Pretty Baby, The Whole Wonderful Story of Today's Rock-and-Roll Generation." Responding to criticism of rock 'n' roll as disrespectful, immoral and lewd, an executive of the American Music Conference in Chicago says the music offers millions of teens a means of expressing their inner urges and believes the "rock 'n' roll craze" may turn out to a blessing for the younger set by directing the tensions of growing up into harmless channels.



Aunt Jemima



James Dean



Bart Starr



■ **Dec. 31:** Scotty's tavern (The Watering Hole), 1700 N. Washington, advertises: "Watch the Rose Bowl Parade in Color on Television."

■ **Sometime in 1956:** Dutch elm disease hits Janesville, but the loss of trees, so far, is minimal.

■ North Central Airlines offers four flights a day to Chicago from the Rock County Airport. The airlines also has flights leaving here to Stevens Point, Wausau, Superior and Duluth, Minn.

■ Carol Sorenson, now 13, wins the Wisconsin Junior Golf Championship, beating another 13-year-old, Heide Prentice of Green Bay, in the final at Milwaukee. Sorenson also wins the Janesville women's title in the Janesville Country Club tourney and shoots a hole-in-one.

■ Highway 26 (Milton Avenue) between the city's northern limits and Highway 14 becomes Janesville's first divided highway with a parkway separating two lanes of traffic on either side.

■ Waldo Luchsinger, former union organizer at General Motors in Janesville and now personnel director for Parker Pen, decides not to seek re-election and ends 20 years of service as a member of the Janesville City Council.

■ Rock County teachers—those working in the remaining one-room schools and elementary and high schools in villages—receive a \$15 a month raise and now average \$369 pay per month.

■ For the first time, the county issues medical cards to old and disabled welfare recipients as well as mothers with dependent children that allow them to visit a doctor twice a month. A third call requires governmental permission; free medical service is not extended to simply poor welfare recipients.

■ The county suffers 27 traffic fatalities.

## 1957

■ **Jan. 2:** Deputies are shocked to discover that a burglary at the American Legion Hall in Milton Junction was perpetrated by three local girls, ages 16 and 17. The girls stole 10 cases of beer, a bottle of vodka and \$2.95 in change for a New Year's party they planned to have at the home of the 17-year-old, whose parents are away. The girls' parents are "shocked and unbelieving." The adults' surprise is not at the age of the criminals but their gender.

■ **Jan. 3:** Janesville goes 537 days without a traffic death.

■ **Jan. 4:** A young robber sits coolly in his car, waiting 30 minutes for an assistant cashier to open the Bank of Milton. The young blond bandit brandishes a revolver and packs a suitcase with \$17,000 in \$1, \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills. He binds the cashier, John Misener, with tape and makes off with the loot.

But Lyman A. Moore, 26, Chicago, will be captured. On June 18, he will be sentenced to seven years in a federal prison.

■ **Jan. 17:** Just 15 months into the job,

George Foster resigns as city manager of Janesville to take the same post in Des Moines, Iowa.

■ **Jan. 18:** James F. Fitzgerald—30-year-old owner of service stations and a fuel supply company, real estate promoter and civically involved Janesville resident—is the Jaycees' "Outstanding Man of the Year."

■ **Feb. 12:** The Jefferson County Board holds firm on its recently passed ordinance that bans beer sales to anyone younger than 21. Tavern owners say they're willing to compromise with a law that would lower the age to 19, a year older than the previous drinking age, but supervisors reject the plan.

■ **February:** Mary Ellen Zanton, Avalon, an honor roll senior at Janesville High, is one of four national winners in national Voice of Democracy radio-script-writing contest. Her script, "Democracy is Not a Cut Rate Article" wins her a \$500 scholarship.

■ **March 19:** Mercy Hospital's latest addition, called St. Joseph's Hall, is dedicated. The four-story wing boosts hospital capacity to 240 adult beds and 40 cribs for babies. The hospital employs 376, including 15 Sisters of Mercy.

■ **March:** Because of the disastrous fire in November 1956, Rath Manufacturing moves into a renovated factory at 112 S. Pearl.

■ **April 10:** Tenants in three Janesville houses built by pioneers receive notice to move within 30 days because the historic—but considered blighted—structures at the corner of North Main Street and Fourth Avenue (Centerway) were sold and are due to be demolished to make way for a filling station. The seller is Nellie Davidson, rural Janesville, whose grandfather came to Janesville on an ox cart. The first time the land was conveyed by deed was Sept. 6, 1837, almost three years before Janesville was platted.

■ **April 28:** For the first time since World War II, Wisconsin goes to Daylight Saving Time.

■ **May 1:** Joe Lustig, city engineer for 30 years, municipal employee since either 1911 or 1913 (records differ) and twice acting city manager, is officially Janesville's fourth city manager. His annual salary is \$13,500.

■ **May 3:** 11-year-old Robert Shuman Jr., 1366 S. Willard, starts rabies treatment a day after being attacked by a bat at Wilson School. The flying rodent latches onto Shuman's chin where neither he nor a passing driver, Theodore Mar-esh, East Troy, can dislodge it. Maresh takes Shuman to the office of Dr. Arthur Reinardy, who chokes the bat to death, beheads it and cuts the bat's jaw muscles to free it from the boy. In all, the bat bites Shuman for about 45 minutes.

■ **May:** The Janesville City Council spends \$2,000 to buy polio vaccine but the city has only enough serum for the first round of inoculations. In July, Beloit gives Janesville 1,000cc



**Greg and Carol Kowal sit on Santa Claus' lap during an appearance by St. Nick at Janesville's Courthouse Park in 1957.**

of serum so the city can complete the second round of shots, which were due in June.

■ **June 14:** A circuit court judge rules that Jefferson County exceeded its authority by enacting a drinking age of 21 for beer, and the age limit reverts to 18.

■ **June 18:** A. Paul Owen of Chamber & Owen Vending, Janesville, says the end of the 25-cent pack of cigarettes is in sight because tobacco companies are raising prices a penny and new state tax of 1 cent will soon go into effect. He does not believe the change will affect king-size cigarettes sold by vending machine for 30 cents a pack, but he expects that regular-size smokes sold by machine will rise to 30 cents a pack from a quarter.

■ **July 2:** Marcia Gates, who as an Army nurse in World War II was held for three years as prisoner of war by the Japanese in the Philippines, starts work as a member of the Janesville city health staff. After the war, Gates enlisted in the Air Force as a nurse and was assigned for 18 months to Japan. She also worked in hospitals and an orphanage in California before returning to her hometown of Janesville.

■ **July:** Janesville haircut prices rise to \$1.75 Thursday through Saturday and on days before holidays and are \$1.65 on Mondays and Tuesdays. Shops are closed Sunday, Wednesday and after 4 p.m. Saturday.

■ **Aug. 8:** Paul Johnson, 25, Beloit, is crushed and buried by an 800-pound crane bucket filled with dirt as he works on a Beloit sewer project. The bucket falls on him, killing him instantly, and the 12-foot-deep ditch he is working in collapses around him.

■ **August:** Janesville's new Central Fire Station (Station No. 1) opens at 303 Milton. The new west side station will open in September at 906 Galena (West Racine, no longer a fire station).

■ **Sept. 3:** The Wisconsin speed limit for



large trucks is 45 mph, but their average speed through Rock County and other parts of the state is 54.3 mph.

■ **George E. Guernsey**, 43, rural Milton, an explosives expert and excavating contractor, commits suicide by blowing himself to bits. Despondent over his impending divorce, Guernsey wraps his torso in highly explosive Prima Cord and detonates it on one of his family's farms.

"The lower portion of a body identified by clothing as Guernsey's was discovered at 1:48 a.m. today," the Gazette reports Sept. 4.

■ **Sept. 18:** 20-year-old Mary Catherine Delaney of Beloit dies in a Waukegan, Ill., apartment during an illegal abortion. Two women, Juanita Hubbard, 27, Delavan, and Frankie Sheppard, 29, Lake Ivanhoe, are arrested. Hubbard is charged with murder and Sheppard as an accomplice. "Both are Negroes. Miss Delaney was white."

■ **Sept. 23:** The Milwaukee Braves win the National League title, Beer Town's first Major League pennant, when Henry Aaron's 43rd homer of the season sails over County Stadium's right centerfield wall in the 11th inning to break a 2-2 tie with the St. Louis Cardinals.

■ **Oct. 2:** At Barry's Grocery, 522 W. Milwaukee, a TV is on top of the freezer. Janesville workers stop excavating a foundation to huddle around a radio. The staff at WCLO peers at radio's chief competitor, a TV set, as do Janesville High students in their J-room.

The reason? The World Series.

Local lawmen get updates over squad car radios from an unidentified source, and mailmen without portable radios plaintively ask, "What's the score?" at each home or business.

The final: New York Yankees, 3; the beloved Braves, 1.

■ **Oct. 3:** Braves hurler Lew Burdette pitches a seven-hitter as Milwaukee evens the Series with a 4-2 victory.

■ **Oct. 5:** Hated Yanks back on top with a 12-3 drubbing of the Braves.

■ **Oct. 6:** Pitcher Warren Spahn goes the distance, and Henry Aaron, Eddie Mathews and Frank Torre hit home runs as Milwaukee wins, 7-5, in 10 innings to even the Series.

■ **Oct. 7:** Lew Burdette throws a shutout, and the Braves win 1-0 to take a 3-2 Series lead.

■ **Oct. 9:** The suspense is killing all of Wisconsin as the Yankees tie the Series with a 3-2 win, the Battle of the Homers as one-run shots by Aaron and Torre are overcome by home runs by Hank Bauer and Yogi Berra.

■ All available Rock County deputies including off-duty officers are called to Log Gables Restaurant across from Milton Union High School to break up a milling crowd of 200 teenagers and prevent what looks to be a "full-scale" brawl. Teens tell the Gazette that many of their

Janesville friends travel to Milton "looking for trouble."

■ **Oct. 10:** Janesville rejoices with the rest of Wisconsin as Burdette throws another brilliant shut-out and the Milwaukee Braves are baseball champions of the world.

■ **Nov. 5:** A brother and sister, Gary, 4, and Mary, 3, Oberbruner drown in a pool created by the village of Milton to catch storm sewer runoff. They are the children of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Oberbruner; their father is coach and athletic director at Milton College.

The Oberbruner kids are playing with a 5-year-old friend when they slip into the muddy pool known as "The Sump." After the friend tries in vain to save them with sticks, he goes home, too afraid to tell his mother what happened for hours. In that time, much of the village searches for the drowned tykes, who are well known to both students and residents as "Guy-Guy" and "Wee-Gee."

■ The Soviet Union has the first two satellites in orbit around the Earth, Sputnik I and a dog-carrying spacecraft, officially called Sputnik II but known as Muttnik. But neither is the cause of reports by a Janesville man and deputy in McHenry County, Ill., that they see something flying in the sky and changing colors from red to green to amber. Two motorists in McHenry County maintain their car engines quit running and their headlights went out when an object appeared in the sky over them.

■ **Nov. 25:** The Janesville City Council surprises City Manager Joe Lustig by naming the newest city park, a 30-acre tract near the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped, after him.

■ **November:** The city of Janesville completes its first parking structure at a cost of \$392,000, the 200-plus-vehicle ramp at North Parker Drive and First (Wall) Street.

■ **Dec. 3:** Piggly-Wiggly becomes Janesville's newest supermarket at 1900 Milwaukee (Janesville U-Haul).

■ **Sometime in 1957:** Janesville High produces four individual state champs: swimmers Dick Moore, 200-yard freestyle, and Douglas Field, diving; wrestler Jack Herrington, reprising his 1955 championship in the heavyweight class; and Graham "Gil" Butler, high jump.

■ Former JHS swimmer Fred Westphal wins the 50-yard freestyle for the University of Wisconsin at the Big 10 meet, the first Badger to win a conference swim title in 30 years.

■ Rock County rural schools start two classes for retarded (developmentally disabled) children with IQs between 50 and 80 in Beloit Township and Edgerton.

■ The old Rock County Courthouse, built in 1869-71 and a distinctive, praised example of public architecture, is razed after all offices complete

the move to the new building, the total cost of which is almost \$1.5 million.

■ Evansville completes its L-shaped swimming pool at Leota Park in the fall; first swimmers will take to the water in summer '58.

■ Work is under way on Clinton's new \$500,000 high school; the old high school will become a junior high.

■ Total GM employment in Janesville reaches a new high, 4,900 with 2,200 people working for Chevrolet and 2,700 at the Fisher Body plant.

■ Gibbs Manufacturing develops and manufactures a musical electric organ for W.W. Kimball, Melrose Park, Ill.

■ Goose Island Park is renamed Traxler Park for Henry Traxler, the city's first city manager, and improved with a circular blacktop road.

■ Janesville City Hall and Rock County Courthouse, for years open on Saturday mornings, go to a standard five-day work week.

■ Under construction in Janesville is Centerway, a new street designed to reroute Highway 51 traffic around downtown, and a new bridge over the Rock River to replace the Fourth Avenue (Centerway) Bridge.

■ Playmore Bowling Alley opens at 215 S. River St.

■ Spraying of DDT apparently prevents the spread of Dutch elm disease in Janesville, but the insecticide kills many robins and other birds throughout the city.

■ Thirty-eight people, one short of the record, die in traffic accidents in Rock County.

## 1958

■ **Jan. 1:** Janesville residents wake up from their New Year celebrations to the prospect of shoveling 5.5 inches of snow—the heaviest snowfall here since Dec. 29, 1954—in 14-degree cold. The mercury will go to zero and below during the next few days.

■ **Jan. 21:** Another 5 inches of snow falls here, making 13 inches for the month and high piles and drifts along streets and roads. Two more storms hit Jan. 22 and 27, and Janesville Municipal Court is snowed under with 106 tickets for people who failed to move their vehicles to allow for snow removal.

■ **Feb. 1:** Rock County deputies are called to Clinton to break up several fights between local youths and teens from Beloit, but the young rumblers scatter before the cops arrive.

■ **Feb. 5:** Who says money doesn't grow on trees? Farm boy Warren Fleisman, 16, of Brook-lyn, Wis., is walking along the railroad tracks when he notices green paper blown into underbrush. A bundle of \$20 bills.

He walks back to the village and alerts Marshal Donald Ferris, and the pair spends quite a bit of time picking \$13,485 off trees and from alongside the tracks.



As is standard practice, a mail pouch containing \$13,500 was tossed off the non-stop Chicago & North Western for delivery to Brooklyn State Bank, but instead of landing on the platform the bag was sucked under the train wheels and torn apart.

The ultimately honest Fleisman's concern is that he is missing school without an excuse, which Ferris gives him when he writes a note that the boy was doing "official government work."

■ **March 2:** Janesville residents no longer have to dial 0 for operator to place long-distance calls to 39 other Wisconsin cities and 41 communities in northern Illinois. To call Chicago, a local person dials 112 to connect with the Direct Distance Dialing system and 312, the area code for northeastern Illinois, and the number he or she wishes to reach. An operator interrupts momentarily to ask the number of the phone from which the call is placed.

## Rising river makes life rocky for residents

On April 1, 1959, the Rock River reached a new high.

That wasn't good news for many residents of Janesville and other southern Wisconsin communities nestled on the river's banks.

The river had the highest head gauge reading since 1929, when records of the river's head gauge readings began being kept. On April 1, the river was roughly 3.3 feet higher than the average.

Several factors caused the flood.

At the time, Janesville was hit by several storms that caused the Rock to rise.

Melting ice on Lake Koshkonong added more water to the flood.

By April 4, the river rose another 0.4 inches. Officials estimated the river was nearly 11 feet deep at the time.

The flooding became the worst it had ever been on Monday, April 9, after the river rose 4.5 inches over the weekend. Water reached as far as South Second (Van Buren) Street, Water and Main streets and Centerway in downtown Janesville.

Much of Traxler Park was under water, and at least four families had to evacuate their homes. Several basements flooded as well.

The "Rampaging Rock River" crested on April 9, much to the relief of residents and city planners.

By April 14, the river's depth had dropped more than 3.6 inches, and flooding began to subside.

■ **March 5:** Janesville women can be at the height of fashion if they pay \$19.95 for the new chemise, or sack, dress, which falls from the shoulder to mid-calf in a straight line without any waistline. Chemise coats also are popular and cost \$49.95 at Elliotts, 4 S. Main.

Men's suits and sport coats are slim-shouldered with two buttons and narrow lapels. R.M. Bostwick and Son, "the store for men" at 16 S. Main, has a sale on men's dress jackets: \$30.50 to \$39.50. Shirts have button-down or tab collars, and dark ties are thin to the point of skinny.

■ **April 28:** Field training starts for the 49 members of the Janesville Auxiliary Police Corps as they accompany regular officers on their patrols and beats. When their duty assignments require uniforms, they will wear helmets, belts and Civil Defense armbands. The auxiliary cops will help direct traffic, assist at accidents, take notes on investigations done by official cops and be on the lookout for stolen vehicles.

■ **May 3:** Janesville teens are restless, and the closing of the Myers Theater leaves only one movie house and two drive-in theaters, so the community responds with a weekend recreation

center for senior high students in the YMCA cafeteria. Organizers approached the city council, which wants to study the issue because an expenditure of about \$1,000 is involved, so instead the organizers appeal to the Janesville Foundation and another private donor for the money. The teens can go to the Y Saturday and Sunday afternoons and Saturday nights, when dances to live or recorded music are planned.

■ **May 5:** Police pick up a Janesville High School senior because he has a rifle and a revolver with him at school. The teen soon is charged with robbery because of a purse snatching Feb. 28 in which a Janesville woman was grabbed from behind and thrown to the sidewalk.

■ **May 11:** 145 motorists take advantage of Blackhawk Car Club's offer to mark hubcaps for free to try to stem the wave of hubcap thefts.

■ **June 4:** Most Janesville retail stores close for the afternoon as they go on their summer schedule: closed at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesdays in June, July and August.

■ Rehberg's, 113 W. Milwaukee, offers the latest wrinkle in men's fashions for Father's Day: shirts and slacks that don't wrinkle if they are not



**Top:** During the flood of '59, lower Riverside Park was submerged near the artesian well.

**Bottom:** When the Rock River went over its banks, water filled the intersection of Main and Centerway near Adams Roofing.



## Murders take lives of friends and family

It could have been a scene from the old Perry Mason TV show.

The “attractive blonde dressed in dark blue with white accessories” took the witness stand and “tearfully told the court” that her brother “had a good reputation,” even though he was on trial for two murders.

Her brother was Albert White, a 32-year-old Georgia native and itinerant worker. He was accused of murdering two of his friends, Albert Knudson, 68, and Ben Renly, 64, respectively a farmer and retired storekeeper from Orfordville.

White’s reputation was crucial to the case because on March 11, 1953, he was the only person who came out of Knudson’s house alive.

White testified he and Knudson were drinking beer in a prolonged beer-and-brandy bender’s fourth day when Knudson brought his shotgun out to show White and Renly.

When White picked up the shotgun, which was described in court as having a hair trigger, the gun went off.

The blast left a “three-inch hole” in Knudson’s face.

Surprised by the fatal shot, White and Renly became locked in a “death struggle” for the gun, the defense contended. Depending on the prosecution or defense argument, White either hit Renly with the gun so hard that the shotgun broke in two and the barrel bent, or the two damaged the gun with their combined weight when they fell on it as they wrestled for the weapon.

White was arrested near Oregon while driving Renly’s car.

The last person to testify was White, who never denied killing his two friends.

His story was viewed as straightforward, “weakened only by the fact that White is the only survivor of the three involved in the tragedy,” The Janesville Gazette reported.

Prosecutors tried to cast doubt on White’s story and reputation, which his sister and two other people vouched for.

While Renly was badly beaten in what the defense characterized as a life-and-death struggle for the shotgun, White sustained only a slight cut on one hand, and the kitchen

where the fight was supposed to have occurred was not in any sort of disarray, District Attorney Frank X. Kinast argued.

And while Knudson and Renly were respected members of the community, “White was a liar, a cheat, a boozier and floater by his own admission,” Kinast said.

The trial featured a first for southern Wisconsin, a 13th juror to take the place of any of the 12 regular jurors who could not complete the trial. The move proved crucial to preventing a mistrial because Len Smith, a 63-year-old Watertown salesman, suffered a heart attack at 2:30 a.m. June 12, the day after jurors began deliberating the trial.

Julius Hornickle, a Lake Mills laborer, was the 13th juror.

White was convicted of second-degree murder in Renly’s slaying and fourth-degree manslaughter in Knudson’s death. When he was sentenced to serve 14 to 25 years at Waupun, his sister, Luella Long, again wept.

Though his situation was similar to White’s, Thomas Chesney of Whitewater wasn’t that lucky.

John and Patrick Fanning, two “semi-hermits,” were found dead on their Johnstown farm south of Lima Center on March 20, 1950. They had been dead for two days.

Patrick, 67, known as “Little Pat,” was found dead in a horse stable, the back of his head smashed in. John, 71, called “Long Jack” because of his stature, had been hit in the face. He was found sprawled on the back porch steps with his feet still on the porch.

In a woodpile close to the house, an single-blade ax was found with blood and hair covering the blunt end.

Sheriff Miles C. Sweeney thought robbery was the motive for the killings. Pat had recently earned \$100 for cutting wood, and he had been paid \$200 rent from neighbors who leased the brothers’ farmland. His wallet was found empty.

Authorities captured Chesney, 44, on March 22 at a Rockton, Ill., gas station. He surrendered after briefly trying to escape by running around the gas station.

Adding another horrible dimension to the crime was the fact that Chesney was related

to the Fanning brothers. They were his uncles.

Authorities also learned that Patrick’s will named Chesney as his sole heir.

One clue that led authorities to Chesney was a call from a Whitewater dry-cleaning store that he brought in an overcoat with two blood stains on a sleeve.

When he was returned to Rock County, Chesney “appeared docile and undisturbed at the serious offenses with which he is charged,” the Gazette reported.

Chesney confessed in much the same way.

In a 14-page statement, Chesney explained he and Patrick argued over money before he killed him.

After killing Patrick, Chesney took the ax to the house, left it outside and lured John to the porch, where he killed him in cold blood.

Chesney’s criminal logic was that “‘as long as one was gone,’ (his words) he might as well kill the second brother,” according to the newspaper.

Chesney, a divorced farmhand with a great thirst for beer who was carrying on with a married woman, wanted to get things over and done with.

After his confession, Chesney didn’t even want a lawyer. He just wanted to be sentenced.

He was persuaded to select a lawyer, Roscoe Grimm.

Grimm got Chesney’s charge of first-degree murder in the slaying of Patrick amended to second-degree because the killing occurred during a fight in which they traded blows. But the charge of first-degree murder stood in John’s killing.

The case was believed to have been the first in Rock County in which photos taken at the crime scene were included in the court record.

On April 1, “in a voice so low that it could not be heard by spectators a few feet away,” Chesney pleaded guilty to both charges and was sentenced to life in prison at Waupun.

Upon arrival at Waupun, Chesney told officers that “he hoped to make a good record there and inquired whether he would be as well treated as he was at the county jail.”

ironed. Called “wash ‘n’ wear” or “drip ‘n’ dry” and made of blends of natural and synthetic fabrics, the sport shirts sell for \$3.95, dress shirts for \$4.95 and slacks for \$4.95 to \$12.95.

■ **June 8:** Lions Beach opens for the summer in Janesville at 1 p.m., and tragically, Earl Bissel, 14, Milton Junction, drowns an hour later. A non-

swimmer, Bissel was in the deep-water area intended only for experienced swimmers.

■ **June 17:** The first leg of the new Centerway and Fourth Avenue (Centerway) Bridge opens in Janesville, and Highway 51 is rerouted to its 1999 configurations: Highway 51 running north along North Parker Drive.

The second section of Centerway opens July 1, and at this time the street called Centerway extends from Center Avenue to North Parker, not beyond North Parker and Milton Avenue as it did in 1999.

The new street also changes the Five Points intersection to a four-point intersection, which the





**Janesville firefighters place a wreath at the grave of William J. Finnane. Finnane was killed on Nov. 11, 1959, when a parapet fell on him and two others while fighting a blaze at the Schlueter Company. The other two firefighters were hospitalized with injuries.**



Gazette calls the demise of Five Points. The newspaper starts calling the intersection—controlled only by stop signs—Four Points, but the name Five Points nevertheless endures.

■ **July 2:** Two cases of Dutch elm disease are confirmed in Janesville trees that have not been sprayed with DDT to prevent the disease. By Aug. 1, the number grows to 18.

■ **Aug. 4:** The King comes to Janesville, even if he's only on the screen: Elvis Presley in "King Creole" at the Jeffris Theater.

■ The circus is in town, and it's staying for a while: Part of the Clyde Brothers Circus is laying over in Janesville until Aug. 13. Lois Baines, tight-wire walker; Dave Hoover, animal trainer; a couple of roustabouts; five lions; three elephants; and a zebra are staying on East Racine Street. Not with this part of the Clyde Brothers Circus is its 20-person aerial act, The Flying Wallendas.

■ **Aug. 8:** Gene Autry, internationally famous singing cowboy and star of movies and TV, performs at the Rock County 4-H Fair.

■ **Summer:** Little League Baseball starts in Janesville with an eight-team league. Playing at Monterey Park, the Merchant & Savings (M&I Bank) White Sox go 18-3 to win the American Division title, and the First National (Bank One) Braves go 16-5 to win the National Division. The little Sox prevail 2-1 to win the three-game grand title series.

■ Janesville's first McDonald's restaurant opens at 1622 Milton (still in business).

■ Carolyn Borchert, 2171 Sherman, has the right wiggle and sway to be crowned Hula Hoop champion of Janesville at an outdoor theater derby.

■ **Sept. 8:** Since the end of Prohibition in

1933, women have been banned from being served at the bar in Janesville taverns. The city council finally votes 4-2 to end the paternalistic and discriminatory ordinance.

■ **Sept. 9:** Janesville voters advise the city council, 4,426 to 1,978, to broaden the dog control ordinance so that canines must be confined, tied up or leashed year-round, not just during the summer. The council soon passes such an ordinance.

■ **September:** The new Jefferson Elementary School opens on Mount Zion Avenue with 16 classrooms, and the new Lincoln Elementary School opens with 21 classrooms on South Oakhill Avenue.

■ **Oct. 1:** World Series rerun: Milwaukee Braves vs. New York Yankees; Braves take Game 1, 4-3.

■ **Oct. 2:** 4,000 members of United Auto Workers Locals 95 (Fisher Body) and 121 (Chevrolet) at Janesville's two GM plants walk off the job as part of a national strike over GM's refusal to agree to a contract patterned after those reached with Ford and Chrysler in which auto-workers win pay increases of 24 to 30 cents an hour and raises in supplemental unemployment benefits and severance pay.

■ Milwaukee wins Game 2 of the Series, 13-5.

■ **Oct. 3:** The national UAW strike against General Motors is settled, but Janesville workers stay off the job until local issues are ironed out.

■ **Oct. 4-5:** New York makes a series of it with a 4-0 victory in Saturday's Game 3, but Milwaukee takes the upper hand with a 3-0 win on Sunday behind a two-hitter pitched by Warren Spahn.

■ **Oct. 6:** Yankees battle back to take crucial Game 5, 7-0, against their archnemesis, Lew Burdette.

■ Jane Marquardt of Milton Junction, 18-year-



**Gene Autry**

old queen of the Rock County 4-H Fair, wins the grand champion ribbon in the junior division of the sixth annual International Dairy Show in Chicago with her 8-year-old Holstein, Doe-Bell Beth.

■ **Oct. 8:** Janesville baseball fans again are dying of suspense as New York evens the World Series with Milwaukee with a 4-3 win in 10 innings.

■ **Oct. 9:** The Yankees stage a dramatic comeback and exact their revenge against Milwaukee and pitcher Burdette with their third victory in a row, 6-2. It is New York's 18th World Series title in 38 years.

■ **Oct. 18:** Janesville's UAW locals ratify new contracts, ending a 16-day strike, but it will be four days before they are back on the job.

■ **Oct. 25:** Kroger Grocery closes its downtown store in preparation to move to the new Creston Park Shopping Center on Milton Avenue, and for the first time in 120 years, Janesville does not have a grocery on Main Street downtown. Volney Atwood opened the first Main Street grocery in 1839.

■ **Nov. 12:** Built on a 20-acre tract, Creston Park opens with 10 stores and room for seven more.

■ **Dec. 12:** Sunnyside Shopping Center opens at Oakhill Avenue and Pleasant (West Court) Street with a Kroger Grocery and Shell service station as primary tenants.

■ **Dec. 30:** Joseph A. Craig, "Janesville's most illustrious citizen," dies at age 91 at his and his wife's winter home in St. Petersburg, Fla. Craig was the former general manager of Janesville Machine Co. who convinced General Motors to locate its Samson Tractor Co. here in 1918. He also persuaded GM to stay in Janesville after the city made improvements to help the automaker. But Samson Tractor failed because of GM's bad decisions and a national farm depression in the early 1920s.

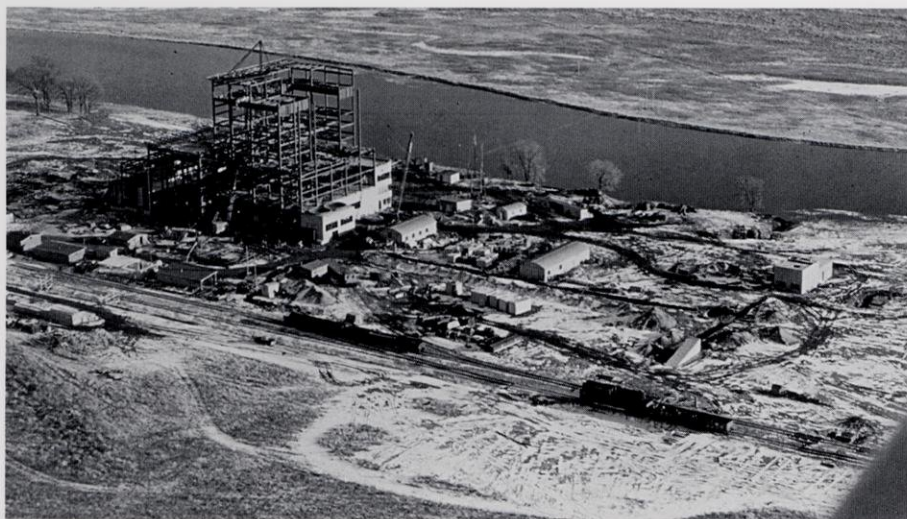
Craig went on to become the patron of 4-H in Rock County, buying and donating the fairgrounds to the county, and eventually buying the home of another of Janesville's leading residents, Julia Stow Lovejoy, 220 St. Lawrence, which he gave to the Janesville YWCA as its headquarters.

■ **Sometime in 1958:** Carol Sorenson, 15, wins the Wisconsin Junior Golf Tournament for the second time in three years, and Graham "Gil" Butler of Janesville High repeats as state high jump champ.

■ The old Apollo Theater, 306-308 W. Milwaukee, is renovated into a three-story office complex known as the Cullen Building (no longer standing).

■ Gibbs Manufacturing has a contract making parts for the Thor missile, one of the mainstays of fledgling U.S. space exploration.





**The Wisconsin Power & Light plant starts to take shape on Highway 51 south of Janesville. The Rock River Generating Station has two massive generators to produce electricity and is still in operation today. The facility was built in stages over several years during the '50s.**

■ GM employment reaches 5,000 in Janesville: 2,700 jobs at Fisher Body, 2,300 at Chevy.

■ W.R. Arthur (JATCO/CCI), the car transporting firm, increases employment from 570 to 650.

■ The Rock County 4-H Fair discontinues the dormitory where boys used to stay at the fairgrounds during the weeklong event.

■ Fox Body designs and starts making Go-Boy Carts, small vehicles patterned after Soapbox Derby racers but powered by 2.5-horsepower engines that can be regulated to slow speed for kids or which can carry a 250-pound man at 45 mph. The Go-Boy Cart is the second go-kart developed, and Fox Body eventually will buy the rights to the original.

■ First National Bank (Bank One) is the first in Janesville to offer drive-through banking and a parking lot for its customers. Merchant & Savings (M&I) will follow suit with drive-through banking when it remodels and expands its building on West Milwaukee Street (no longer standing).

■ Riverside Golf Course gets its first clubhouse.

■ Traffic deaths in Rock County number 28.

■ Construction on Interstate 90 starts in Rock County; the first 16-mile section—from the Illinois state line to Janesville's northeastern edge—costs \$8.5 million.

## 1959

■ **Jan. 8:** The will of Joseph A. Craig is entered for probate and reveals that of an estate of more than \$600,000, \$105,000 is earmarked for charity: \$40,000 to the Wisconsin 4-H Club Foundation, \$25,000 to the First Congregational Church of Janesville, \$15,000 to the Janesville YWCA, \$10,000 to the National 4-H Club Foundation, \$10,000 to the Janesville YMCA and

\$5,000 to the Janesville Womans Club Association.

■ **Jan. 10:** An 18-year-old Janesville youth is slashed across the face with a knife in a "wild free-for-all fight" on North Jackson Street. James E. Knappenberger, 457 N. Walnut, needs 20 stitches to close the wound. Eight young men, including two 17-year-olds, are arrested.

■ **January:** Coldest January to this date in Janesville records: Average daily mean temperature of 14.2 degrees. Most snow to this date for a January, 18.4 inches.

■ **Feb. 2:** Janesville temperature plummets to 22 below zero, setting up a colder than average February.

■ **Feb. 16:** Phyllis Hagen and Shirley Hannawell become Janesville's first "meter maids," enforcing downtown parking limits.

■ **March 2:** Seven boys, ages 15 and 16, from Mallwood Estates on Lake Koshkonong are charged with 181 counts of theft, burglary and vandalism, clearing up crimes in Newville and Mallwood that date back three years.

■ **March 15-16:** The worst blizzard in 23 years wallops southern Wisconsin with 10.4 inches of snow and sleet, thunder, lightning and gale force winds. With 18 days of zero or below temperatures, the winter of 1958-59 is the coldest since 1936 and produces 51.5 inches of snow, twice the average snowfall.

■ **April 6:** Seasonal rain, the ice breaking on Lake Koshkonong and the spring thaw of all the winter snow are swelling the Rock River to well beyond flood stage. Houses along the river and on the banks of Lake Koshkonong are flooded, and residents are evacuated. Also flooded are the Rock River Woolen Mills, 1405 Riverside, and several downtown Janesville businesses.

■ **April 8:** Most families near Janesville's Riverside Park evacuate as the river continues to

rise and wash over its banks into the first floors of their homes. Water is knee-high in Riverside Park, covers the intersection of North Main Street and Centerway and extends to Prospect Avenue.

■ **April 10:** The Rock River crests, and the worst flood in southern Wisconsin's recorded history begins to ebb.

■ Janesville is visited by a handsome, young Democratic senator who is testing the waters before seeking his party's presidential nomination. John F. Kennedy speaks on labor-management law reform to an overflow crowd of 750 at a banquet at Arrow Park honoring 1st District Rep. Gerald Flynn of Racine.

"Adding to the senator's sparkling personality was that of his charming wife, Jacqueline, a stunning, auburn-haired young woman who would be a first-class vote-getter in her own right."

■ **May 7:** The Rev. Dennis David Barry, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Barry, 120 Linn, is elevated to the rank of monsignor and will serve as papal chamberlain to Pope John XXIII. The Janesville native attended St. Patrick's Catholic School and will have his investiture ceremony within a month.

■ Mrs. Stephen Ambrose of Whitewater, who in April was the first woman elected to the Walworth County Board, is elected president-elect of the State Medical Society Auxiliary. The wife of a doctor, she also is mother to historian and writer Stephen Ambrose, author of among other works, "Undaunted Courage," "D-Day" and "Citizen Soldier."

■ **June 2:** A young couple from Clinton are held in Indiana after a gun battle in which a state trooper and female passerby are wounded. James Brown, 29, and his wife, Nancy Joy, 21, who reportedly have served prison terms for forgery, drive away in a stolen car without paying for gas in Bloomington, Ind., police there report. When a trooper tries to arrest them, Brown opens fire with a .22-caliber revolver, hitting the officer in the right thigh and the passerby in a finger. Brown receives a slight hand wound.

■ **July 1:** Town and city officials meet with local lawmen, and the group decides unanimously to keep the uniform closing time of 1 a.m. for all taverns in Rock County. They are concerned that if one town goes to a 2 a.m. closing that drinkers thirsty for nightcaps will drive there and create hazards.

Sheriff A.L. Capelle remembers "the rush of cars that used to leave Janesville and go into the county for an extra hour in the days when the county taverns closed one hour earlier than rural taverns."

■ **July 2:** 47 cases of Dutch elm disease are reported in Janesville in the past week.

■ **Aug. 1:** The Rock County Airport terminal, a sleek modern wonder in steel and glass, opens and will serve, among others, passengers on



North Central Airlines.

■ **Aug. 18:** A&P opens its second supermarket in Janesville at 1221 Milton.

■ **Early September:** St. Joseph's Preparatory College, a \$4 million Roman Catholic seminary for the Redemptorist Order, opens on the southwest shore of Lake Koshkonong with 175 boys and young men studying for the priesthood.

■ **Mid-September:** El-Ra Bowl has its grand opening at Center and Kellogg avenues with 16 automatic lanes.

■ **September:** Seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota speaks in Janesville and Beloit.

■ **Fall:** Helen Jean Arthur, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter R. Arthur, Janesville, moves from understudy to star of the national company of "The Gazebo." She already appeared in several New York plays.

■ **Oct. 31-Nov. 1:** Halloween mischief turns destructive and violent in Janesville as teenagers hurl pumpkins and bricks through numerous house and business windows and damage an "untold number of cars." Five hundred teens, called an "unruly mob" by police, march through downtown on Halloween night, a Saturday, throwing objects, setting small fires, opening 25 fire hydrants, breaking glass and prompting one officer to lob a tear-gas grenade into the crowd, which breaks up part of it temporarily.

Teens throw eggs, pumpkins and squash at the cops, and one youth throws a light bulb into a squad car, where it shatters into the eye of Patrolman Bob Toler. Assistant principals of Janesville High and Junior High, Hugh Horswill and Ray Brussart, respectively, are called to try to calm the kids, but they are roundly ridiculed by the teens and are pelted with various objects. Police arrest 26, mostly juveniles between ages 14 and 18.

Every police car, two fire department cars and several water department vehicles are called to deal with the melee. Vandalism continues on Sunday but to a lesser extent.

■ **Nov. 11:** The Janesville Fire Department suffers its second fatality. Fireman William Finnane, 26, a father of four who has been with the department for only 18 months, is killed when he is struck by bricks and cement blocks falling from a parapet collapsing atop the burning Schlueter plant, 112 Fourth (Centerway).

Two other firefighters, John Shea and Paul Finley, suffer broken bones and lacerations when



**WCLO's Grant Ritter heads to the country to tape a morning radio show sometime in the 1950s.**

they, too, are struck by the falling debris. The masonry rubble buries Finnane and Finley, and comrades and police officers must dig them out. Finnane dies at Mercy Hospital from a skull fracture; at his side are his wife, Judith (Arrwood), and Fire Chief and Mrs. Alex Andreski.

The fire guts the second floor of the factory; damage is estimated at \$250,000.

■ **Nov. 24:** Interstate 90 opens to traffic as the superhighway is complete between Janesville and Beloit, but work is temporarily halted north of Janesville as the route is determined and property acquired.

■ **Dec. 1:** Rock County Humane Society establishes its shelter for animals at 222 S. Arch, Janesville.

■ **Dec. 7:** Production of 1960 model Chevrolets resumes in Janesville after a seven-week shutdown caused by a parts shortage created by a nationwide steel strike.

■ **Sometime in 1959:** Carol Sorenson of Janesville passes up defense of the state junior women's golf title, which she won twice, to try to win the Wisconsin Women's Championship. Her championship opponent is Paula Clauder, the Milwaukee mother of four who has won the title an unprecedented six times. But

Sorenson sets a precedent of her own: At age 16, she is the youngest golfer to win the state crown.

■ Fred Westphal of Janesville, captain of the UW swimming team, wins the 50-yard freestyle at the NCAA meet; his time of 21.9 seconds breaks the NCAA record and ties the U.S. mark.

■ Boys Baseball of Janesville buys 10 acres off Milton Avenue just north of the city limits (site of most current ballparks) and expands to 10 Little League teams and a Pony League of six teams for older boys. Boys who do not make the Little and Pony league teams play in the city recreation department's softball and baseball program under the direction of Norm Graper.

■ Janesville sets another record for new home construction: 354, making 2,907 new houses since the end of World War II.

■ Construction begins on Cargill Methodist Church, 2000 Wesley.

■ Twenty-six people die in county traffic accidents.

■ Gray Beverage (Gray Brewing Co.), a 104-year-old Janesville company, starts building a new facility near Pleasant (West Court) Street and Crosby Avenue (1999 location).







# 1960-1969

## PROTEST & PARADOX

### Janesville weathers turbulent storm

In emotional times, passions are high, tension is acute, and violence hits at home and abroad

*Activists and astronauts. Body bags and bikinis. Civil rights and campus unrest. Drugs and demonstrations.*

The ABCD's of the 1960s created paradoxes for the United States, Rock County and Janesville.

Much of the country enjoyed affluence, liberation, pleasure and technology while blacks and their relatively few white comrades still struggled and died for the most basic American civil rights: to vote, to freely associate, to get a good education, job and home.

The United States became entangled in a war whose tentacles seemingly could not be severed—despite exercising the world's most powerful, technologically advanced military.

The pungent smell of marijuana smoke drifted through college dorms where young men and women explored sex that was liberated by The Pill and not threatened by AIDS.

But their parents and administrators still treated them like children. The young men were old enough to die in a war but not old enough to vote.

The cheesecake and cleavage of the '50s became the go-go dancers and love-ins of the '60s, and, though women enjoyed a new sexual freedom, they still were called girls and had their physical attributes described as though appearance was essential to their self-worth.

**A Madison police officer beats back an angry throng of UW-Madison students protesting on campus in photo at left. Squads of riot officers were called to the campus on Oct. 18, 1967, to break up a sit-in intended to disrupt career recruiting by the Dow Chemical Co., which made napalm used in the Vietnam War.**

**Right: The 1960s were a time of contention, with strong opinions and feelings on many issues. Key figures who visited Rock and Walworth counties were, clockwise from upper left, Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. and George Wallace.**

The 1960s created turbulence and division in the United States not experienced since the 1860s, when the United States tore itself apart with the blood-soaked Civil War.

No riot ripped Janesville, but anti-Vietnam War protesters marched here. Violence did erupt in demonstrations, but it came not from students upset with the war and the military draft but from middle-class workers angry with a mainstay of the city's establishment: The Janesville Gazette.

Like their fathers and grandfathers, young Janesville men reported to fight a war, but this war defied understanding for both the duty-bound warriors and the peace-seeking protesters.

African-Americans were the targets of police clubs, fire hoses and dogs in many U.S. cities, but Janesville, long indifferent to civil rights, began to realize it had a role in rectifying the myriad wrongs done to blacks.

The assassinations of John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. left Rock County residents shaking their heads and wondering what the country was coming to.

Janesville and Rock County learned the difference between narcotics and hallucinogens, sedatives and stimulants.

They also learned that technology was not all that it was cracked up to be.

Despite putting men on the moon, the United States' advanced technology could not defeat the Viet Cong guerrillas and North Vietnamese Army in the jungles of Indochina. The insecticide DDT that was seen as the savior of summer and preserver of elms in the 1950s—and which Janesville sprayed freely—was found to do great damage to the environment.

Peace, love and understanding.

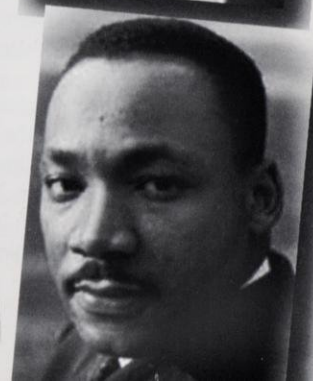
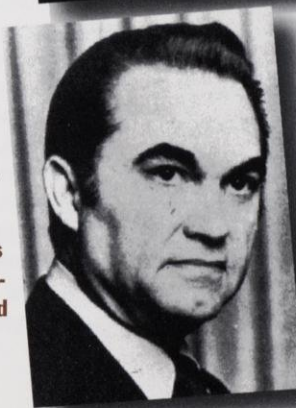
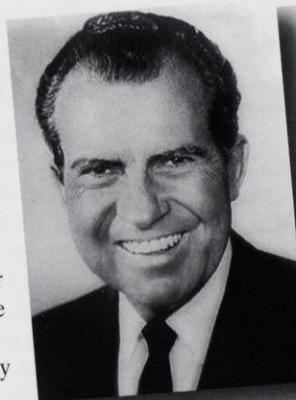
War, violence and paranoia.

Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll.

Sympathy, debate and reconsideration.

The decade defied easy description. It was not easy to live through.

Janesville's downtown





was vibrant with business and entertainment, but it grew still and silent with shock and sadness on a rainy day in November 1963.

Lyn Saxer, who died in 1982, chaired JFK's presidential campaign committee in southern Wisconsin. She and her husband, John, knew Kennedy and his brother, Bobby, personally.

The day after he died, Lyn Saxer told the *Gazette* that Kennedy "knew the limitation of his powers and had come to grasp their magnitude. He understood power and was willing to use it. ... It applied to the power of family. It applied to brain power. It applied to the power of expression and communication, to the power to exploit his remarkable personality. ...

"To me, most important was his warm, humane nature."

John Saxer recalled: "I saw right away in Kennedy tremendous charisma. He was very bright. He showed his courage in the war (World War II). He was a person people could look up to."

But JFK's assassination was only the first of the 1960s.

"I felt terrible when Martin Luther King was killed," Saxer said. "He was a guy who said he had a dream. Kennedy had the same dream: to help underprivileged people."

Mae Thompson, 100, an Evansville resident, was at a meeting of the Magnolia Ladies Club when the radio reported Kennedy's death.

"It didn't seem possible," Thompson remembered. "Everybody thought it was terrible."

Though typically a Republican, Thompson had voted for Kennedy.

"I thought he was the right man to put in office," she said. "I thought he was doing a good job."

And as a Christian, Thompson respected King, who was a minister and, in her mind, a "real fine man."

Soon after King was murdered, Bobby Kennedy fell victim to an assassin's gun.

"I thought he had more potential than Jack," Saxer said of RFK. "He was an honest guy. He was a thinker."

"Bobby came here a couple of times, and Lyn would have breakfast with him. We thought he could help because he was sincere about helping the underprivileged."

When Bobby Kennedy was killed, "that's when I really lost my passion for politics," Saxer said. "It drained me. It took something out of my heart."

"I felt so strongly that these men would have done great things for the country. After they were killed, there was a great cynicism, and the war divided the nation. It's never been the same."

The Kennedys, especially Robert, champi-

oned civil rights.

In the '60s, several Janesville families opened their homes so black children from Chicago could vacation away from the ghetto's mean streets. The Saxers were one of the families.

"I took 'em back and had one mother say, 'Get in here quick. There's always shooting going on.' I couldn't believe it was that dangerous," Saxer said.

"Some people would say, 'It's a terrible thing to bring them here for three weeks and let them see the good life.' At least we gave them hope and a view of what a good life could be."

"We'd take 'em to the (Janesville) country club, and some people (club members) damn near would refuse to swim in the same pool. As I get older, I think that all has changed."

Bob Collins, retired lawyer and former president of the Janesville School Board, agreed that Janesville's attitude toward African-Americans changed in the 1960s.

"There was a growing recognition that, while we may not have been all that responsible for the bad things that happened, it was our responsibility to do something about it," Collins said. "There was much more willingness to face up to that."

A purely local issue that Janesville had to face in the '60s was a growing tax rate fueled by the need for new schools and other public buildings such as City Hall and the library and the need to increase salaries for underpaid and increasingly militant teachers.

Collins was on the school board at the time, but the city council, not the school board, had the last word on the school budget.

"There was a healthy tension between the two groups," he said. "The council never gave us much difficulty as far as the cost of new buildings. With growing enrollments (because of the Baby Boom), they saw the need for new buildings. ..."

"The council felt it had to make a really hard effort (to cut the school budget); otherwise the taxpayers would feel they were rubber-stamping it."

At the same time, Janesville teachers were not being paid as much as those in other districts, and male teachers who had families received \$200 more a year than single men and all women.

"I felt we had to get teachers' pay up to at least the median," Collins said. "There was not much negotiating up to that time."

In 1968, though, the Janesville Education Association threatened a mass resignation if salaries were not increased significantly. The action resulted in a state-mediated compromise, and it showed that the teachers would stand up for their demands.

The teachers' standoff with the board proba-

bly reflected the activist tenor of the times, Collins said.

"The teachers were beginning to get a lot of younger males who were willing to be more confrontational," he said. "The older female teachers were reluctant to do that. They felt entitled to what they were asking for, but they were unwilling to face up to the fact that they had to be militant to get it."

Janesville had to face up to other facts.

The city had long been pressing the state for an overpass to ease traffic and train congestion at Five Points. The city didn't get it.

Janesville bickered with Beloit over the route of the freeway to replace Highway 15. Interstate 43 now runs to Beloit, not Janesville.

And after many council debates, the city stopped spraying DDT to try to stop the spread of Dutch elm disease, which eventually robbed Janesville of its nickname, "Bower City."

Armed with Rachel Carson's revealing book, "Silent Spring," Lew Mittness, then a young Janesville assemblyman in the Wisconsin Legislature, led the fight against DDT in Janesville and the state. The city stopped spraying DDT in 1969, seven years after the publication of "Silent Spring" but three years before the federal government banned its use in the United States.

The law banning DDT in Wisconsin that Mittness authored passed shortly after the city stopped spraying.

"There were people who were threatened in the city," Mittness, also a former teacher, recalled. "I taught with one lady who almost died from DDT spraying. Her doctor told her if she stayed in the city during another spraying she would probably die."

"The city said they would never spray on children, but I remember our children being drenched at Adams (school), and that was one of the reasons that it moved forward. It didn't just happen to my kids; it happened to a lot of other people's kids."

"And Rachel Carson's book was a big help."

And while technology came up short in the case of DDT, it reached its zenith July 20, 1969, when Neil Armstrong stepped onto the surface of the moon.

The *Gazette* asked many kids what the astronauts would find on the moon. Four-year-old John Barry, 410 S. Ringold, gave the romantic answer, "The man in the moon," though he could not remember his name.

Carrie Shumway, 1530 Highland, and Betty Losching, 352 S. Ringold, were on the money with "just rocks."

Carolyn Fitzgerald, 420 S. Oak, obviously was paying attention in class. "Craters made from meteors" was her scholarly reply.

The student demonstrations that most



latter-day observers associate with the Vietnam War did not start with the war or the draft. They started at University of California-Berkeley over the issue of free speech—specifically civil rights—on campus. Most of the early protests were over local campus issues, not the war or the draft. But the student organizations soon took up the cause of peace.

A Janesville example shows why college students felt like second-class citizens, even though they were privileged to experience campus life, a great education and avoid the draft if they kept their grades up.

In 1968, Carolyn Ann Purdy, a 1965 graduate of Janesville High School, was a senior at UW-Madison. She also danced nude behind a smoke-screen to portray innocence in what was described as a “hippie” version of the play “Peter Pan.”

The Dane County district attorney decided to prosecute Purdy and the play’s producer for obscenity. He eventually dropped the charges because he could not get any one of 1,500 people who saw the play to testify that it was obscene.

The story naturally made headlines.

Though Purdy was a 21-year-old adult, legally empowered to make her own decisions, the Gazette referred to her as a “girl” and called her parents for a reaction both to her appearance in the play and to her request for a public defender because she could not afford an attorney.

In a letter to the editor, Purdy took the Gazette to task for involving her family:

“No one had any reason to assume that my

father agreed with me, nor was there any reason to condemn him for disagreeing. I acted independently.”

The newspaper also called girls the young women who applied to be Bunny waitresses at the new Playboy Club Resort in Lake Geneva in 1968.

In 1960, the Gazette wrote an editorial condemning the first Playboy Club in Chicago for trying “to make debauchery acceptable.” Eight years later, it ran a Page 1 photo of 17 Bunnies—high heels, long legs, augmented busts, Bunny ears, tails and all—as they awaited the arrival of Playboy founder, Hugh Hefner, for the resort’s opening.

The Gazette managing editor took advantage of a night at the resort and wrote glowingly of the hotel’s amenities and the waitresses’ physical attributes.

Looking back, one of the more humorous aspects of the ’60s was the fuss made over the length of young men’s hair.

Parents would push their long-haired sons through the door of Bert Schenck’s barber shop on North Main Street and say, “Cut it short.”

“I had to compromise a little with the kids and the parents,” Schenck recalled. “I’d trim it some but not too short. They were my future customers, and a lot of them are back. They’re not kids now; they’re about 50.”

The Vietnam War cast a deep shadow over the entire decade.

The United States was deeply involved before the first Marine ground combat units

were officially deployed in Vietnam in 1965. Some 16,000 U.S. “advisers,” aviators and support personnel already were helping the South Vietnamese fight the Viet Cong guerrillas and North Vietnamese Army.

The U.S. involvement started in 1957 under President Dwight Eisenhower and deepened significantly under Kennedy.

“I was opposed to the Vietnam War all along,” said Saxer, who served as a Navy officer on North Atlantic convoy duty in World War II. “I didn’t want my son to go over there and kill someone or be killed. I didn’t go for the domino theory. Our country had no business being over there.”

Collins said:

“I had the impression that if one of my sons was of draft age for Vietnam, I’d have a problem with that. I felt they should have the right to stand up and question that.”

Collins believes the students had the right to protest but that some of the violent or destructive demonstrations went too far.

“I was for the kids,” Saxer said. “I thought it was immoral for us to be there. I don’t say World War II was a good war but one we had to get into, otherwise we’d all be speaking Japanese or German.”

The Vietnam War cost more than 2 million Vietnamese lives, North and South, and more than 58,000 American lives, 43 from Rock County.

When 1969 ended, many more anti-war demonstrations and 20,522 American dead awaited the United States.

## ‘A senseless waste of a lot of lives’

### Vietnam veterans recount their combat experiences ‘in country’

Dan was “on line” with his platoon, spread out, walking abreast, sweeping the jungle for the North Vietnamese soldiers left dead or wounded from the platoon’s successful ambush.

To his right stalked Dan’s lieutenant and first sergeant. The lieutenant wore a towel wrapped around his neck to soak up the jungle sweat. Across his chest, the sergeant carried an assault rifle mounted with a sniper scope.

Up from a depression popped a wounded North Vietnamese officer, spraying the line of American GIs with an AK-47 assault rifle on full automatic.

Two bullets tore through the lieutenant’s towel, one on either side of his throat. He was not grazed. Another slug slammed into the sergeant’s rifle scope. He was not wounded.

Dan dropped to one knee and opened up with his automatic rifle.

“I put 18 rounds into his head. I cut his

head off from the eyebrows up. That was the first one I knew I killed.”

Dan is from Janesville. So are Jack and Gary.

The three Vietnam veterans agreed to be candid about their combat experiences in Vietnam if their anonymity was respected. Their names were changed for this story.

When the men—all middle-aged, responsible members of the Janesville community—talked about their days “in country,” they slipped easily into the military jargon and slang of grunts, the name combat infantrymen gave themselves. They also paused at times to find the right words, to swallow the emotions that welled up when they talked of comrades killed or the enemies they killed.

They chuckled sometimes at the irony, comedy or stupidity of war. They smiled, remembering the friends they made or lost.

On July 6, 1967, Jack was a 19-year-old Marine on a road sweep near the DMZ (De-mil-

itarized Zone) that separated North and South Vietnam. Unknown to his unit was that two divisions of the North Vietnamese Army were headed the opposite direction down the same road, intent on their summer offensive into the south.

Jack’s battalion of 500 or so was trying to recover American bodies when “1,000 artillery rounds in 15 minutes came in our position,” he said. “It’s like living in an apartment and having the floor above open up and all the furniture drops on you at once.”

When the barrage lifted, the Marines poked their heads out of their holes and saw 50 yards in front of them, “too many people to shoot at,” Jack recalled. “They were on top of us immediately.

“You just remember snatches of it. It was broad daylight. I saw their picture-perfect V formations. I saw the sun glinting off the silver buckles of the NCOs (non-commissioned





**A pair of U.S. paratroopers squat in tall elephant grass in Vietnam's D Zone, north of Saigon on Dec. 8, 1965.**

officers), the officers' gold buckles. They were on our position and ran right straight through us."

Then, good soldiers that they were, the NVA regulars fanned right and left to "roll up" the Marines. The radio operator with Jack was shot square in the chest; a fragment of the bullet flew through the radio and hit Jack.

"He dropped like a sack. He was dead before he hit the ground. I knew I had a problem because he was on my right (from where the NVA were advancing). I took his .45. You never leave a weapon because they tended to use it against you."

Jack dropped back to a bomb crater and huddled with a machine-gunner whose squad had been wiped out.

They held off the North Vietnamese through the night. They had only 17 rounds of ammo left.

Gary was a 22-year-old Army lieutenant, and, though it was far from regulations, he walked point—taking the lead—when his platoon was on patrol.

"I felt safer, and the platoon was safer because I could read the signs better."

On one day, though, he saw the signs on a jungle trail—but kept on walking.

"It was late in the day, and everybody was tired. We came to a trail junction, a T-intersection. You're supposed to check trails for activity."

Gary went ahead alone.

"There was no evidence of activity, but it's still stupid to go down a trail alone. I told everybody to rest. I'd check the trail."

He went around a bend and came to a stream, fresh water that all jungle troops, Americans or Vietnamese, needed. Then, he came to a stand of little trees, the perfect size for covering bunkers. But still no signs of the enemy on the trail. Though his common sense nagged at him to call reinforcements, another bend piqued Gary's curiosity.

"There was a sentry standing in the trail. That was dumb, too. I carried my rifle at my side. His was against a tree. I greased him right there.

"Then I got shot at from three sides. I rolled my pack off and took cover behind that. I yelled for the platoon to come up—and they did. I knew there was an encampment because they had a sentry. I got the platoon on line and called for an artillery sweep."

The American barrage started 400 yards away and rolled toward Gary's platoon.

"That's scary. When it gets real loud, you stop. When it's that loud for us, it's worse for them."

All three men were wounded.

Gary got a "million-dollar" shrapnel scratch by his eye that bled like crazy and got him "dusted off," evacuated by helicopter, and reassigned to a rear area.

Besides the bullet fragment, Jack caught shrapnel twice in the face and once in the groin. But none of the wounds was serious enough to cut short a tour of duty that was extended past a Marine's regular 13 months because of the enemy's Tet Offensive early in 1968.

Dan was in a LRRP platoon—long-range reconnaissance and patrol—that had amazing luck—for a while.

On a mission to find and retrieve American wounded, the 30 or so GIs walked "right into the middle of an NVA base camp, several hundred people. There were North Vietnamese everywhere. The guys in my platoon were really seasoned. They fanned out and tried for fire superiority."

Dan was now the machine-gunner, and he and three or four comrades took out an NVA machine-gunner before he could get to his weapon.

"In all, we killed about 20 North Vietnamese in a matter of a minute. All the others were doing the same thing. We successfully assaulted and killed all the visible enemy without a single wounded man.

"But we still had the mission to get the wounded."

And they didn't know that the terraced hills where they were going was ringed by dug-in North Vietnamese.

"I was wounded first because I was the



machine-gunner. That's the rule. I was shot in my right arm. My arm went up. The machine gun went flying. I thought my arm was shot off. I was knocked down, and my glasses were knocked off. I was in a state of shock and confused.

"Everybody was yelling, trying to get under cover, trying to get away."

Someone told Dan he was pointed in the right direction.

Though his arm wasn't severed, he "reached around and picked up my arm. I thought I'd take it with me."

His wounded arm on his chest, Dan started to crawl backward on his back.

"I was shot four more times. The bottom of my left foot. I was shot through my arm again. I was shot twice in the back.

"You're gonna ask how I was shot in my back while I was crawling on my back. The rounds went right past my balls. I felt the heat of the rounds on my balls, up the crack of my ass.

"They hit on either side of my spine. One broke a rib. One lodged in my chest next to my heart. I still carry that round."

Only one man in Dan's platoon was not killed or wounded.

After his first two or three months in continual combat, Jack did not expect to survive.

"It's the infantryman's fatalism. When your number's up, it's up. You never expect to live through it," he reflected.

After the first time he knew he killed a man, Jack felt guilty and a physical reaction—loose bowels.

"It was the same as the first time a person (Marine) got killed next to me. You're glad it was him and not me. It's a kill or be killed situa-

tion, but you're still trained since you're a kid that the one thing you don't do is take a human life."

But Jack also learned that his enemy had no mercy.

Once when his unit retrieved American bodies, they found 19 men who had been wounded and tagged for helicopter evacuation. But the North Vietnamese drove off the Marines who had tagged their buddies and shot each wounded Marine in the head.

"It was a defining moment," Jack said. "You just realized there would be no quarter in this deal."

When Dan blew the North Vietnamese officer's head off, all his nerve endings tingled with adrenaline, but his feelings were numb.

"It's a traumatic feeling, like being in a tremendous accident. When you come down, you start justifying it. If you're in Vietnam long enough, you see a friend die or friends die. There's a certain amount of anger and revenge, so it's a good feeling when you get to kill one of the enemy to even the score for one of your buddies. But it's kind of a surreal feeling.

"There's a feeling of glory that in combat you were able to engage and kill the enemy."

Later, Dan thought about the man whose life he ended, and he believes philosophically that war is wrong.

"But I don't regret it," he said of killing the enemy. "I was relieved that I was not killed or the other guys. I didn't have any remorse or regret while serving in Vietnam. I was doing my duty. I was married. I wanted to have a life back in the world."

Gary had the bravado of youth "until I got shot at. Then I was scared all the time,

but you learn to deal with it. We had a saying, 'It don't mean nothing.' That sums up the feeling of the average grunt: It don't mean nothing."

"Everybody was just doing their time, counting their days, waiting to go home," Gary said, then added emphatically:

"The people I served with were good people. They were brave, disciplined, caring of each other. They were good soldiers."

Jack takes the big view of the Vietnam War. He thinks it was an important exercise in the United States' containment of Communism.

Though the dominoes did not tumble all the way to Australia or Indonesia as some hawks predicted they would if Vietnam fell to the Communists, Jack noted that Vietnam's neighbors, Laos and Cambodia, did come under Communist regimes.

Jack has no problem with anti-war protesters who stayed in the United States and demonstrated to change the nation's policy.

"That's why I fought," he said, "for the Constitution, so we can have a dialogue."

Gary felt obligated to do his duty, but though college-educated and trained as an officer, Gary didn't know what the United States was fighting for. He still doesn't.

"I was young and dumb. I'd really like to know why I did what I did."

Dan said:

"I was proud of how I served my country, but I think that what happened to me and everybody else in Vietnam was totally senseless. There are times when you have to pick up arms and defend your country, but Vietnam was a senseless war, a senseless waste of a lot of lives."



# 1960-1961

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1960

■ **Jan. 1:** The University of Washington Huskies crush the Wisconsin Badgers 44-8 in the Rose Bowl.

■ **Jan. 12:** The Wisconsin speed limit on Interstate 90 is 65 mph for cars during the day and 55 mph for autos at night, but the speed limit for cars on the Illinois part of the superhighway is 70 mph at all times. Janesville Municipal Judge Ralph Gunn, in whose court I-90 speeders wind up, calls for a study to determine if Wisconsin's speed limits are realistic. Initially rebuffed by state officials, Gunn soon will persuade Gov. Gaylord Nelson that a study is appropriate.

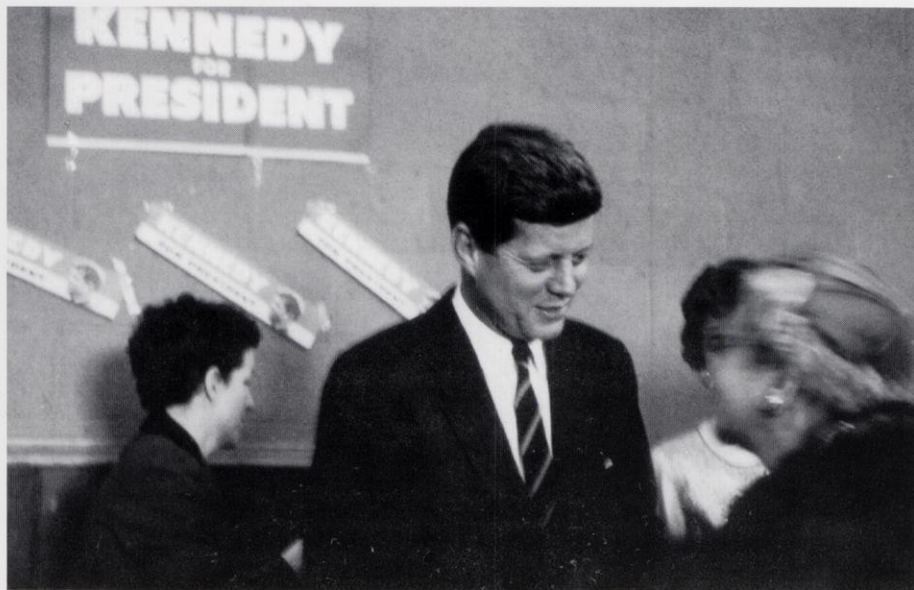
■ **Jan. 24:** Representatives of civic and service organizations, schools and churches meet in Monroe to discuss the "crisis of morals" in Green County, where the number of unwed women becoming mothers increased to 40 in 1959.

■ **Feb. 1:** Daniel Dowd, 30, of 24 S. Pine, resigns as a Janesville patrolman to become a field operator for the State Crime Laboratory. Dowd eventually will head the crime lab.

■ **Feb. 3:** Allie Razook, a Syrian immigrant and one of Janesville's most popular businessmen, dies at age 86. From 1898 to 1940, he operated a confectionary store at 30 S. Main (offices). One of Razook's most prized possessions was a gold button proclaiming him an honorary member of Company M, Janesville's main military unit in World War I. The soldiers granted Razook the honor for many reasons: He created the "Company M sundae," a red, white and blue ice cream special; threw a party for them before they left for service in 1917; sent treats to the soldiers during the war and staged reunions for them after the Armistice was signed.

■ **Feb. 14:** With a sound truck blaring the Frank Sinatra song "High Hopes," Democratic Sen. John F. Kennedy begins a campaign swing through southern Wisconsin with a stop and speech in Fort Atkinson. Other stops include Whitewater, Elkhorn and Lake Geneva. Accompanied by his wife, Jacqueline, the 42-year-old Kennedy greets individuals with the words: "Hello there, I'm Jack Kennedy. I'm a candidate in the Democratic primary for president, and I invite your support."

In Elkhorn, a group of cheerleaders treat Kennedy to a personal cheer. The girls are Janet and Kathy Papenfus, Lorraine Austin, Judy Starkey, Linda Kutz, June Burgess, Diane Dewart and Roxie Fish.



Sen. John F. Kennedy greets supporters during a campaign stop in Janesville in 1960. The dark-haired woman in the background is Lyn Saxer, who chaired Kennedy's southern Wisconsin campaign committee. Despite Kennedy's local efforts, Richard Nixon carried Janesville and Rock County. Kennedy got the last laugh, however, by winning the presidential election.

■ **February:** Rock County becomes part of the National Air Warning Network, meaning that the sheriff's department will be alerted by the Defense Early Warning Line of any possible attacks by bombers or missiles with 1½ minutes of the DEW Line's detection of incoming attackers, presumably Soviet. The department then is supposed to alert local civil defense units.

Later in the year, the county civil defense system will get a 10,000-watt emergency electrical generator equipped with a 14-day supply of propane gas, "the amount of time CD officials feel the unit will be inaccessible due to atomic bomb fallout."

■ **March 1:** The Kennedys continue their blitz in Wisconsin, the state with the first Democratic preferential primary. The candidate's brother, Robert, or Bobby as he became known, speaks to 700 social studies students at Janesville High School and to the Lions Club. Bobby tells the students they must develop their responsibilities, have a desire to serve others and accept their obligations to their fellow citizens.

■ **March 3:** Wisconsin's first helicopter charter service, Midwest Helicopter Service, opens at Rock County Airport.

■ **March 19:** JFK starts another campaign swing through southern Wisconsin with stops in Janesville at the Fisher Body plant and

YMCA. A thousand people flock to the YMCA to see "the kinetic Kennedy who beams health and wealth, youth and charm...And one and all get the benefit of the broad smile, the beautiful teeth ... and the warm greeting."

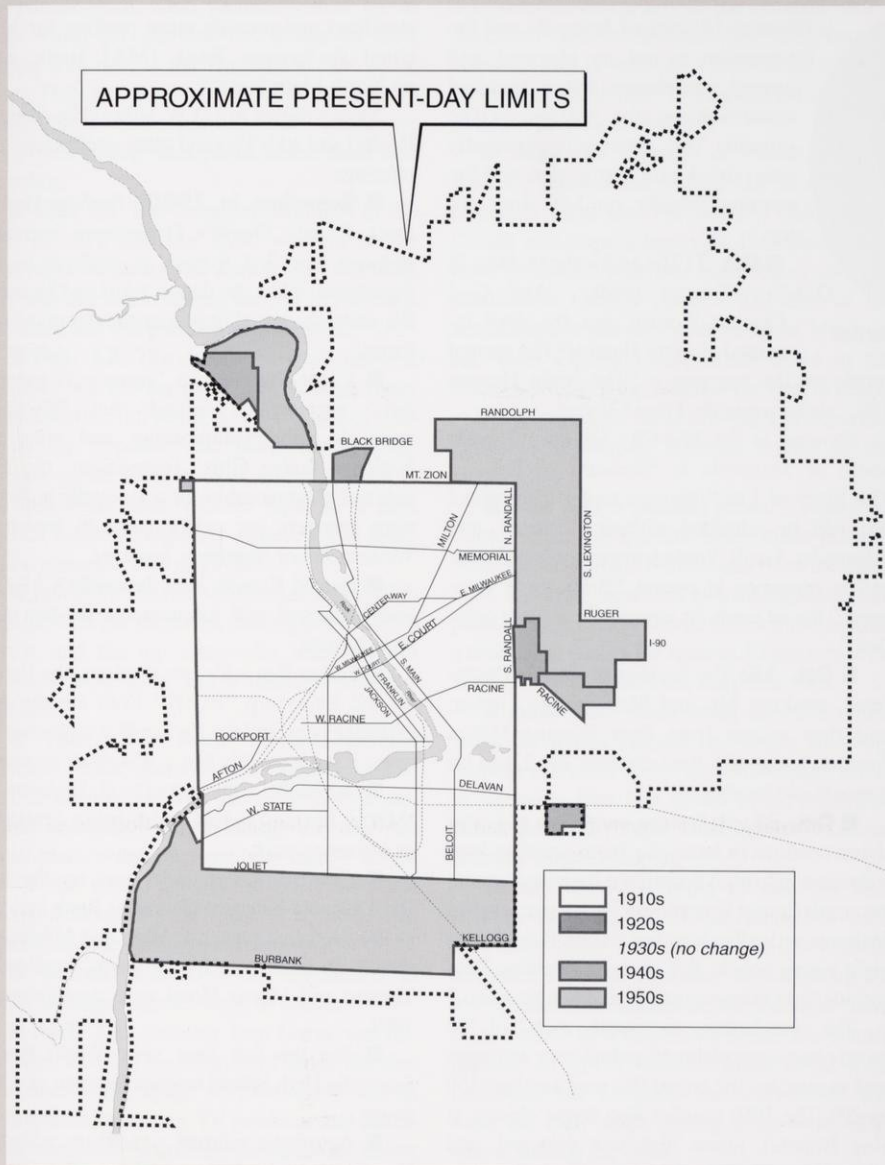
The Y's reception room only has room for 350, so most of the throng must wait outside to catch a glimpse or shake the hand of the senator from Massachusetts. Tony McGhee, 10, of 411 Harding, draws a big grin from JFK because he is wearing a hat made from a Kennedy campaign poster.

■ **March:** Janesville's junior high school is christened Marshall in honor of the late Gen. George C. Marshall, who served as Army chief of staff during World War II and later as secretary of both the state and defense departments. He conceived and developed the program, the Marshall Plan, that rebuilt western Europe after the war. Marshall received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953, and junior high students vote to name the school after him.

■ **April 4:** Janesville and Rock County join the Kennedy majority as JFK wins 57 percent of the Wisconsin Democratic primary vote and 20 delegates to the national convention. His chief opponent, Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota, wins 10 delegates. Running unopposed on the Republican ticket, Vice President Richard



# Janesville in 1960



**Janesville's city limits in 1960.**



**Area of city:** 12.12 square miles



**Number of churches:** 34



**Number of schools:** 15. 1 is Janesville High School; one is the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped. The rest are elementary schools



**Miles of storm sewer:** 56.4  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 108.3  
**Miles of water mains:** 117.95



**Population:** 35,164



**\$1 in 1960 has buying power of \$5.49 in 1999**

Nixon garners 3,744 votes in Janesville, nine more than Kennedy. Humphrey, endorsed by organized labor, gets 2,567 votes in the city.

■ **April 24:** North Central Airlines adds a flight from Janesville to Chicago and a return, bringing to six the number of incoming and outgoing flights daily. The new flight is the first to have O'Hare Field as a destination; the others fly from and land at Midway Airport.

■ **April:** The soft or gentle tress replaces the bouffant as the hairstyle of fashion-conscious Rock County women. Where the bouffant featured a large mass of back-combed and teased

hair, the soft tress is characterized by "swirling S-waves across the crown (and) a gentle drape at the temple or eye-line." The soft tress extends to the nape of a woman's neck and to the middle or bottom of her ears.

■ **May 3:** All TV stations in the United States go off the air at 1 p.m. Janesville schoolchildren walk from their classrooms to the hallways where they kneel against lockers and cover their heads, and the only radio broadcasts are on 640 and 1240 kilocycles AM as the country participates in Operation Alert 1960. The primary test is of a new component of the nation's

civil defense system, Conelrad, which stands for "control of electronic radiation" and which switches all AM radio stations to the designated frequencies of 640 and 1240.

■ **May 15:** After several experiments, Janesville ends city bus service on Sundays and increases the adult fare from 15 to 20 cents in an effort to break even. Also discontinued is service after 10 p.m. on Fridays. The city tried such measures earlier but relented to public demand to reinstitute Sunday and late-night Friday service.

■ **May 31:** Janesville Auto Transport Co.



buys the operation of W.R. Arthur & Co. to transport Chevrolets made at the Janesville General Motors plant. JATCO employs almost 700 people.

■ **Otto C. Kreger**, a 51-year-old laborer for J.P. Cullen & Son, is killed in a fall while working on the roof of the Fisher Body plant, which is expanding again.

■ **June 2:** A charge against a 25-year-old Janesville man of possessing "obscene literature" is dismissed for lack of evidence. The man initially was arrested on a disorderly conduct charge stemming from a domestic disturbance, and when he was searched at the city police station, cops found "the so-called obscene pictures ... in a secret compartment in his wallet." But the man's wife does not sign a criminal complaint so the disorderly conduct arrest is invalid, and the evidence gathered because of the arrest is not admissible in court.

■ **July 1:** 40 Janesville streets are renamed; most names will stick until 1999.

■ **Warren D. Welkos**, former Elkhorn police justice, is found guilty of embezzling some \$20,000 from the city. He eventually is sentenced to five years probation on condition he repay the money and court costs.

■ **July 21:** Everett "Pud" Harper, special delivery messenger for the Janesville Post Office, dies in his sleep. Though respected and beloved by his colleagues and the community, Harper was a dreaded sight during World War II. He was the man who delivered War Department telegrams telling families their sons had been killed.

■ **Daniel Parker**, grandson of company founder George S. Parker, becomes president and chief executive officer of the 72-year-old pen company, and former president Bruce M. Jeffris becomes chairman of the board, a post vacated by the retiring Kenneth Parker. George Parker Jr., 31, becomes executive vice president.

■ **Aug. 13:** Robert W. Stearns screams: "Help! Help! Get me out of here!" but would-be rescuers are unable to get near the burning car in which Stearns is trapped because of flames shooting 30 feet high. Stearns, 22, of 314 S. Division, Janesville, was speeding when his car crashed into a parked auto in the 600 block of East Court Street. Both cars burst into flames.

Passenger James Swart, 18, of 102 N. Parker Drive, is able to pull another passenger, William Riley, 19, Cuba City, to safety, but the intense, gasoline-fed fire keeps him and passers-by from saving Stearns, who is "burned beyond recognition."

■ **Sept. 1:** GM grants pay raises of 6 cents an hour or 2½ percent of the standard wage, whichever is greater, to its 340,000 U.S. hourly

employees, including the 4,300 workers at the Fisher Body and Chevrolet plants in Janesville. The raise lifts most wages from \$2.40 to \$2.46 an hour.

■ **Sept. 2:** Interstate 90's northern terminus is Highway 14 north of Janesville, and the intersection is not an elevated and ramped interchange but a standard crossroads on the surface of the ground. The intersection recently was posted with a stop sign and the warning: "Traffic on I-90 does not stop."

■ **Oct. 7:** The ad for the Hi-Way 26 Outdoor Theater reads: "'And God Created Woman' but the devil invented Brigitte Bardot." The second movie on the marquee is "The Night Heaven Fell," also starring the French sexpot.

Showing at the Mid-City Outdoor Theater south of Janesville is "Because of Eve. ... The Story of Life." No one under high school age will be admitted without a parent, and Alexander Leeds, "noted hygiene commissioner," is appearing in person. "Bring those teenagers," the ad reads, "it answers their every question."

■ **Oct. 16:** The barking of Tina, a Dachshund, awakens Mr. and Mrs. George Gerber, and they escape from their burning Milton Junction home with their children, Jay, 2, and his 8-month-old brother.

■ **Oct. 31:** Halloween vandalism and rowdism continue in Janesville. Teens smash at least a dozen windows in downtown businesses, ignite two trash fires in Courthouse Park, open two fire hydrants and call in false fire alarms. Police arrest eight young people, five of them juveniles. They include "egg throwers and foul language artists."

The year before, an "unruly mob" of 500 mostly teen-age celebrants pelted cops with eggs and vegetables; the crowd this year numbers 150 to 200. The 1959 rowdies also threw objects at Ray Brussart, junior high vice principal, and Hugh Horswill, senior high vice principal.

■ **Nov. 8:** JFK nips Nixon to win the presidency, but Janesville votes sharply for the Republican, 9,141 to 6,416, and Rock County is soundly in Nixon's camp, 29,683 to 19,190.

■ **Nov. 21:** Thanksgiving shoppers in Janesville can buy turkeys for 39 cents a pound at Scotty's Super Valu, 2020 Center. Cheddar cheese sells for 59 cents a pound; butter for 63 cents a pound; bacon is 2 pounds for 99 cents, and a 22-ounce frozen pumpkin pie can be had for 39 cents.

■ **Dec. 5:** Cargill Methodist Church, 2000 Wesley, opens with an "impressive service led by the Rev. William Riggs" in the church's Fellowship Hall.

■ **Dec. 31:** Kressin's Recreation, 22-24 W.

Milwaukee, closes, ending a long era in Janesville's bowling and billiards history. The building and its neighbor, Yagla's, a camera store at 26 W. Milwaukee, will be torn down to make room to expand the Sears store (no longer standing) and provide more parking for Merchant & Savings Bank (M&I Bank, now on North Main Street).

Yagla's moves to 111 W. Milwaukee (Richter Realty) and adds TVs and other appliances to its offerings.

■ **Sometime in 1960:** Barbara Hatlen, Rock County Sheriff's Department secretary, becomes the first woman in uniform in the department when she dons a "skirt and blouse of the same shades of brown as the deputies' uniforms."

■ **Carol Sorenson**, a "comely 17-year-old girl," successfully defends her Wisconsin women's golf championship and wins the National Junior Girls' Tournament, the first national championship for a Janesville golfer. A virus hampers her performance to repeat as Western Junior champion, however.

■ **Harold Kotwitz** wins Janesville's All-City and Municipal golf tournaments for the third straight time.

■ **Parker Pen** adds two products, the Parker 45 and Eversharp "10,000." Both are the new cartridge pens, and the Parker 45 is so named because it loads quickly like a .45-caliber revolver.

■ **Janesville City Airport** off Highway 26 (Milton Avenue) is sold and is being developed as a housing tract.

■ **Construction** is under way on the new Rock County National (Johnson) Bank building at the southeast corner of Main and Milwaukee streets. To make way for the bank, the Beverly Theater and Milner Hotel were demolished in 1959.

■ **For the first time since World War I**, Janesville High School teaches German as a language.

■ **Automatic railroad signals** are added at Five Points, and a feature of Janesville's skyline for almost 100 years, the watchman's tower, is torn down.

## 1961

■ **Jan. 3:** The Roman Catholic Diocese of Madison announces it has bought 80 acres on Highway 11 near Janesville's west city limits to build a high school, but no Catholic school ever is built.

■ **Jan. 16:** About 1,250 of the 2,100 assemblers at Janesville's Chevrolet plant and the 2,500 production workers at Fisher Body are laid off for a week because of slumping car sales. The remaining 850 Chevy workers are on the pick-up truck line, which is idled for only one day.

■ **Jan. 20:** The 78-piece Milton Union High



Brigitte Bardot



School Band, directed by Richard Dabson, marches in the parade at JFK's inauguration in Washington, D.C. The temperature in Washington is 23 degrees, and besides the two hours of the parade itself, band members must try to keep warm for another two hours in their staging area next to the Washington Star newspaper. They are "jumping around to keep warm except for a short period when newspaper employees, noting their plight, invite them into the lobby."

■ **Feb. 6:** The recession continues in the auto industry, and the 3,750 workers at the Janesville GM plants who work on cars will work only four-day weeks during the rest of February. The truck line will lose two days of work.

■ **Feb. 13:** The chemise, or sack, dress of the late '50s is long gone, and, though many dresses feature full skirts, the new height of fashion is the opposite: the sleek, hip-hugging, tapered sheath dress or skirt, which extends to just below the knee. Blouses taper to a trim, cinched waistline, regularly achieved with foundation garments such as girdles.

■ Janesville teacher salaries are raised \$100 to \$150. With the increases, starting pay is \$4,500 a year, and the top salary—for teachers with 19 years' experience and a master's degree—is \$8,000.

■ **Feb. 27:** Rock County National (Johnson) Bank opens its new building (still in use). In conjunction with the modern-style aluminum-and-glass bank building, the top two floors were removed from the bank's neighbor to the south, a building called the "The Young America Block," and its exterior was remodeled in a similar modern style.

■ **March 13:** GM car assemblers in Janesville begin another week of layoffs.

■ **April 11:** Anthony Don Garra, son Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Dongarra Sr. of Janesville, dies in Evanston, Ill., at age 45. Don Garra was an accomplished musician, TV producer and advertising executive. A violinist, the Janesville native studied on scholarships at the Chicago College of Music and Julliard School of Music in New York City, was concertmaster of several orchestras including the Chicago Conservatory Orchestra and, with his wife, Virginia, produced the TV show "Little Stars" for WGN-TV, Chicago.

■ **April 15:** Motorcycle driver Duane R. Roenneburg, 22, and his passenger, Ronald M. Berg, 47, both of Evansville, are killed when the motorcycle smashes into a car driven by Benjamin Walsh, 60, Beloit, as he turns left off Highway 14 into the motorcycle's path. Berg is hurled through the windshield of a car following Hoover's auto, and three people in the following car are cut by flying glass.

■ **April 16:** The congregation of Asbury

Methodist Church moves into its new church at 1810 Kellogg. The church members were meeting at the Teamsters Union Hall.

■ **April 30:** A 12-year-old Beloit boy shoots a 16-year-old Beloit boy in the stomach with a .32-caliber revolver because of a "difference of opinion." The 12-year-old is held on an attempted murder charge; the 16-year-old is recovering in Beloit Municipal Hospital.

■ **May 2:** Chicago & North Western Railroad receives the federal OK to drop two passenger trains that run between Chicago and Duluth with stops in Janesville. The cancellations leave Janesville with two northbound and two southbound C&NW trains a day. One of the northbound trains only goes as far as Madison, and both Chicago-bound trains leave in the evening, so Janesville, which at the turn of century had 64 passenger trains arriving and departing daily, is left without morning service to the Windy City.

■ **June 14:** A building permit is issued for Cedar Crest, a retirement home made possible by bequests from Ida Barnett and Rena Strickler, both Janesville residents who designated that parts of their estates should be used to establish a residential facility for retirees. Construction on South River Road will not start until 1962.

■ **June 29:** After being closed for four years, the Myers Theater (no longer standing) reopens at Parker Drive and Milwaukee Street in Janesville. First film shown in the renovated movie house is "Pepe," starring the Mexican comedic actor Cantinflas.

■ **July 1:** Attempting to stab his wife, William Leshoure, 27, Beloit, plunges a foot-long screwdriver into the head of his year-old daughter, Barbara. Leshoure was drinking for a long time with friends before the fight flares on the porch of a neighbor's home. The friends manage to get a butcher knife away from Leshoure, but he grabs the screwdriver and stabs the baby while aiming at his wife, Ocie, who is holding the child.

The baby dies a week later, and Leshoure pleads innocent by reason of insanity to charges of murder of his daughter and attempted murder of his wife. After repeated mental examinations, Leshoure is found to be "feeble-minded" and does not have the mental capacity to be tried. He is committed to Central State Hospital for the Criminally Insane.

In 1963, Leshoure is released from the hospital and deemed competent to stand trial. He pleads guilty to a reduced charge of manslaughter. He is sentenced to 10 years in prison.

■ Police in Lake Geneva, which has a drinking age of 18 for beer, prepare tear-gas grenades, and firefighters hook up their hoses as possible weapons to break up an unruly crowd of college-age people estimated at 3,000 to 5,000 that is

milling around downtown and rambling from bar to bar. The crowd jeers the cops; some spit on officers, and one throws a firecracker in the direction of police. But no serious violence or vandalism occurs as the young holiday celebrants take heed of the authorities' preparations.

Twenty-six people are arrested before a heavy rain dampens the crowd's ardor and washes the streets clean of troublemakers. Police Chief Mel Swance credits his officers for using their heads and not aggravating the situation, and he offers understanding of the young revelers: "It was a hot night, and they were restless. There's nothing for them to do after dark."

■ **July:** Holiday Inn opens a 106-room motel with a swimming pool at 2723 Milton Ave. (no longer standing, site of Toys R Us).



**The Lone Ranger and his trusty steed, Silver, rode into Janesville for the 1961 Rock County 4-H Fair.**

■ **Aug. 2:** With a cloud of dust and a mighty "Hi-ho, Silver," the Lone Ranger and his horse, Silver, appear at the Rock County 4-H Fair. Played by actor Clayton Moore, the Lone Ranger, "masked horseman, champion of law and order," is a big hit playing in two shows to a packed grandstand. Besides Silver, "the idol of boys and girls," the Lone Ranger also performs with a second steed, Victor.

■ **Aug. 3:** The Beloit City Council debates whether to allow restaurants and bowling alleys to sell alcohol on Sundays. At the time, Beloit doesn't allow any establishment to serve alcohol on Sunday. More than 1,000 residents petition for Sunday sales, but a group of clergymen remains opposed. A few days later, the council decides to let a referendum decide the issue, but it will be three years before action is taken.

■ **Sept. 8:** As GM and the UAW are wrap-



ping up talks on a new three-year contract, Local 95 in Janesville goes on a wildcat strike because of 171 unresolved grievances over job overloading. The unauthorized strike shuts down Local 95's Fisher Body plant and its body-dependent neighbor, the Chevrolet plant represented by Local 121.

The wildcat lasts until the next day, a Saturday, but on the following Monday, both locals go on strike—joining some 91 other locals—over the grievances and other local issues. The many local strikes hang up national negotiations, and it is not until Sept. 20 that the national contract and the Local 121 agreements are settled. The Local 95 negotiations prove more difficult, and its strike continues until Sept. 23.

■ **Sept. 19:** The U.S.-U.S.S.R. crisis over Berlin is simmering to near the boiling point, and southern Wisconsin members of the 32nd "Red Arrow" Division learn they will be mobilized in October so that regular Army units can be transferred to West Germany. The call-up will include the Janesville unit, the 32nd Quartermaster Company.

■ **Sept. 25:** Wisconsin Gov. Gaylord Nelson signs into law a bill that requires all 1962 cars sold in Wisconsin to be equipped with seat belts.

■ **Oct. 7:** While practicing his quick-draw technique with a .22-caliber revolver, Thomas J. Sterk, 21, of 108 S. Academy, shoots himself in the leg.

■ **Oct. 31:** Pairs of club-carrying police officers at every downtown intersection ensure that Janesville enjoys a peaceful Halloween, unlike the previous two years.

■ **Nov. 1:** Rock County deputies confiscate two wooden crosses from two teen-age boys, one from Albion, the other from Edgerton. The Albion youth tells the cops they intended "to burn them on somebody's lawn, like they do down south."

■ **Nov. 15:** Janesville's biggest fire of the year does \$100,000 damage to Biwer's Shoe Store, 27 S. Main, (parking lot) and adjoining buildings. Seven firemen suffer minor cuts and bruises.

■ **November:** As part of Civil Defense Week, the private bomb/nuclear fallout shelter in the basement of Mr. and Mrs. K.L. Stephenson's home at 1606 Greenwich is open to the public. Built with the help of a federal subsidy as a model, the concrete-block shelter is 10- by 14-feet and 7-feet high. It has sewer and garbage disposal facilities and is stocked with enough food and water for a family of four for 14 days.

■ Siker's Furniture moves to Highway 26 after doing business at 24 N. Parker Drive, formerly North Bluff Street, for 31 years. Owner Art Siker transforms the store at the North Par-

ker Drive site into a discount furniture business.

■ **Dec. 4:** Edmund Gates, 26, Orfordville, a worker at Janesville's Chevy plant, is killed when the car he's in crashes into a tree while being pursued by Cuba City Police Chief Al Schneider. Injured in the crash are three of Gates' brothers, Robert of Byron, Ill.; John of Belmont; and Eugene of Cuba City. Schneider said he chased the Gates' car because it was speeding through the city.

Robert and John Gates die in the hospital. Which brother was driving is unknown because the surviving Eugene says he cannot remember the accident.

■ **Dec. 15:** Lt. Walter G. Updike, 30, a Navy aviator from Janesville, is killed when his Crusader jet crashes as he attempts an instrument landing in foggy weather in Florida.

■ **Dec. 17:** The still-separate municipalities of Milton and Milton Junction are switched to dial telephone service, and calls to Janesville no longer are toll calls.

■ **Sometime in 1961:** The Gazette ends its practice of identifying blacks as Negroes in stories that do not deal with racial issues. The defendants in two murder cases that receive extensive coverage—a Beloit man charged with stabbing his baby and a South Beloit woman convicted of killing her husband in Beloit—are African-American, but their race is not mentioned in any of the Gazette's stories.

Since at least the turn of the century, the newspaper identified blacks by their race in virtually all stories, latently biased reporting that reflected the prejudices of the area and society. The Associated Press continues to identify blacks by their race even in stories that don't cover racial matters.

■ The Rock County Humane Society Shelter, 222 N. Arch, cares for 2,000 unwanted dogs, cats and small pets in its second year of existence and finds homes for 60 percent of them. In its first year, the shelter cared for 1,500 animals.

■ Daytime speed limit for cars on parts of I-90 is raised from 65 to 70 mph, and the night speed limit goes from 55 to 60 mph.

■ Thomas Lubeck, a 1961 graduate of Janesville High and a caddy at the country club, is the first Janesville caddy to win a Chick Evans College Scholarship. Lubeck is studying at the University of Wisconsin.

■ JHS wins the state swimming championship. Winning events were Ron Loveland, the 50- and 100-yard freestyles, and the 200-yard freestyle relay team of Dennis DeRemer, Bob Peterson, Jim Loofboro and Jim Hessian.

■ The city of Janesville begins filling the old millrace in the Rock River with clay, sand and gravel. The millrace once extended from what is now called the Centerway Bridge to Marshall

Junior High and tapped the natural resource of the flowing river to provide water power to turn the grist mills of the city's first industry.

■ Janesville's housing boom tapers off: 210 new houses in 1961 compared with 320 in '60 and the record 354 in 1959.

■ Under construction are the new \$2.6 million junior high at Mineral and Crosby avenues (Franklin Middle School) and a dormitory and gymnasium at the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped.

■ Rock County issues 718 marriage licenses, an annual record to this date.

## 1962

■ **Jan. 6:** Showing at the Myers Theater is "Twist Around the Clock," starring the singer most famous for the dance, Chubby Checker. Also in the movie is a heartthrob of adolescent girls, Dion. A subsequent article reports that "Teeners (teen-agers) like the Twist," which "has been roundly denounced as suggestive and vulgar."

■ **Feb. 1:** The Page 1 picture in the Gazette shows Dave Sherman, 905 Milton, paying Bud Venable \$1 for his lunch at Krause's Town and Country Restaurant (Pinnacle Pub and Eatery). The day before, Sherman would have received a dime in change, but today the 90-cent lunch costs 93 cents as Wisconsin's first sales tax goes into effect.

■ **Feb. 4:** Burglars smash their way into a vault at Janesville High and, using tools from the industrial arts department, "peel" the door of the safe and steal \$900.

The same Sunday night, Sgt. Anthony Eilers of the Burlington Police Department is found shot to death in his squad car outside Racine. It turns out that one of the high school burglars killed the policeman. Wilson Lee Brook, 21, Racine, a parolee from the Green Bay Reformatory, and his 17-year-old brother, Max, confess that they pulled the safe heist and were on their way back to Racine on Highway 11 when Eilers stopped their car because of a dangling license plate.

When Eilers asks to search the car, Brook begins to argue, knowing the loot will be found. A fight ensues, and Eilers loses his service revolver in a snowbank. Brook picks up the gun and shoots Eilers five times.

Brook then attempts to turn off the flashing red light on the squad dash, and when he can't, he puts it on the floor of the squad and stomps it with his foot. But he also hits the accelerator, and the squad lurches forward into the back of his car, dislodging the rear license plate. The plate is the clue that leads cops to the Brook brothers.

In September, Brook is convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

■ **Feb. 6:** Gerald Tiffany, 31, 232 N. Pine,



suffers a broken arm and hip when he falls from the second to the first floor while working on the demolition of Blodgett Mills on North River Street. Blodgett was Janesville's longest operating grist mill.

■ **March 1:** Fred Ties of Brodhead is dismayed because while he predicted 25 snows over the winter, the season has had 32 snows with more on the way. Ties used the "old Indian cat-tracker formula" to come up with his prediction and, with his tongue planted firmly in his cheek, blames the blown prediction on another prophecy, that of Indian astrologers who recently forecast the imminent end of the world.

"The snow may have decided to fall while there was still time," Ties says.

■ **March 5:** Ten downtown businesses stay open until 9 p.m. on a Monday night. Previously, Friday was the only night that most stores in Janesville's central business district stayed open until 9 p.m. Several stores do not open until noon to keep the work day close to its regular length.

■ **April 4:** District attorney for five years, Mark Farnum runs unopposed and is elected judge of the new Rock County Circuit Court Branch 4 in Beloit.

■ **April 18:** Dr. A.F. Ottow, 69, Beloit, is arraigned on a charge that he performed an abortion on a 24-year-old practical nurse from Beloit on Jan. 6. The case will not be decided for years.

■ **April 27:** Five Negroes picket Beloit's Municipal Center to protest the city's failure to appoint a black man to the police department. The Beloit Police Commission maintains that the lone black applicant was not qualified, but the protesters maintain he is fit for the job.

■ **April 28:** Returning again to Janesville is Aunt Jemima, known worldwide as the smiling face on Quaker Oats' Aunt Jemima Buttermilk Pancake Mix. The reason for her visit is the same as the several times she has visited the city before: Kiwanis Pancake Day. Besides helping the Kiwanis flip pancakes, Aunt Jemima sings and makes several other public appearances during her three-day stay.

■ **April 30:** Delta Gamma, a social sorority at Beloit College, reportedly is placed on probation by its national council for pledging an African-American woman, Patricia Hamilton, 21, Madison. Mrs. Robert Preston, the sorority's national president, tells the Iowa newspaper that breaks the story: "This is a private organization. When we have disciplinary actions, there is no reason why we have to tell anyone about them."

Hamilton, a junior, is a top student and active in campus organizations. The Beloit Delta Gamma president, Phyllis Farnsworth of Nashville, Tenn., reports that Hamilton remains a pledge.

Ten days after the probation is reported, Preston breaks her silence and says the proba-



The U.S. Navy's Blue Angels soared across the sky during the 1962 Aviation Day at the Rock County Airport.

tion is not because of pledging Hamilton but for a series of infractions of sorority policy. Beloit Dean John P. Gwin, though, is skeptical when he wonders publicly why the college was not notified of the probation.

■ **May 3:** Leo Beauchamp, rural Janesville, returns home from his night shift at Fisher Body and opens a can of oysters to make himself a stew. He is quiet so as not to wake his sleeping wife, who works days at Parker Pen, but he rouses her nevertheless when he bites into a small, natural pearl, described as "smaller than a pea but very beautiful."

■ **June 6:** The Janesville Lions Club votes to sell "Little Toot," the miniature railroad the club has operated for three years in Riverside Park to the delight of local youngsters.

■ **June 19:** Joyce Mary Day, 22, rural Orfordville, signs a confession in which she admits that four days earlier she beat her newborn, illegitimate child around the head repeatedly with a heavy branch. The child dies, and Day, former X-ray aide at St. Clare Hospital, Monroe, is charged with first-degree murder and found to be competent to stand trial.

In December, she pleads guilty to second-degree murder, the lesser charge arranged in a plea deal, and is sentenced to eight years in Taycheedah State Prison for women.

■ **July 1:** Harry O'Leary, a practicing Janesville attorney for two years and unsuccessful Democratic candidate for Rock

County district attorney in 1960, is named to replace Mark Farnum as DA by Democratic Gov. Gaylord Nelson.

■ **July 4:** At least four Lake Geneva taverns refuse to sell alcohol to anyone younger than 23 in an effort to short-circuit problems caused by rowdy college students and even younger celebrants. Unlike Janesville and Beloit, Lake Geneva's regular drinking age for beer is 18.

Forty-four carousers are arrested for various offenses as the resort town again draws a ram-bunctious crowd for the Fourth of July.

■ **Aug. 4:** "Despite careful advance planning," a fire deliberately set by the Janesville Fire Department—personally by Chief Alex Andreski—to raze the vacant Pan-O-Ramic Packaging factory on North River Street roars out of control. The blaze burns many firefighters to one degree or another—none seriously—and it destroys telephone and electrical lines,

damages power transformers and ignites window frames, doors and cotton seat pads in the building across the street, 216 N. Franklin, occupied by Janesville Cotton Mills and Janesville Apparel Co. (Cotton Mills Apartments).

■ **Aug. 5:** In the fifth annual Gazette-WCLO Aquacade, a group of water skiers known as the Aqua Jays starts the ski portion of the show at Riverside Park. The show ski troupe started the year before. Pictured in the Gazette are skiers



Alex Andreski  
Janesville fire chief  
1951-1970



Karen Cash, Ann Lalaney, Mary Jo Cash, Sally Gifford, Ruth Ehrlinger and Sandy Gifford.

■ **Aug. 9:** Work starts to remove the top two floors—the fourth and fifth—of the Jackman Block as the 100-year-old building on the northwest corner of Milwaukee and Main streets is modernized.

■ **August:** The Blue Angels, the Navy's precision flying team, perform aerial stunts and exact formation flying at the Rock County Airport's annual Aviation Day. On display at the air show is a mock-up of Friendship 7, the space capsule that carried astronaut John Glenn on three orbits of the Earth. On Feb. 20, Glenn was the first American to orbit the planet.

■ **Sept. 21:** Janesville's oldest manufacturer, Rock River Woolen Mills, ceases operation here after 113 years. The company moves to Texas. Started in 1849 as Monterey Water Power Mill, the mills initially produced fine yarns, flannels and cashmere.

The Great Depression closed the company in 1931-32, but it was reorganized to make car upholstery and fabric for clothing, including Marine uniforms during World War II.

■ **September:** The \$2.2 million Franklin Junior High School opens at Crosby and Mineral Point avenues with 851 students.

■ School consolidation becomes reality as 650 students, 26 teachers and seven elementary schools are added to the Janesville district. The schools are Blackhawk, which is in the city, and the rural schools of Hillcrest, Rock, LaPrairie, Happy Hollow, Frances Willard and Howarth.

Enrollment in the Janesville district reaches a high to this date of 8,619, and pressure is building to construct a second high school. Janesville High, built only seven years earlier, already is 279 students ahead of its design capacity of 1,500 students.

■ **Oct. 5:** The Madison Chapter of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and the Governor's Committee on Human Rights try to persuade the Monroe Lions Club and city band to cancel the minstrel show slated for the following spring. Odell Taliaferro, president of the NAACP chapter, says that in a city with no resident blacks, the minstrel characterization—white men in black face performing comedy—might be the only portrayal of Negroes that children see live and could do inadvertent harm.

The minstrel show writer, Mrs. Allan F. Barnard, a member of the Governor's Committee on Youth, counters that the show portrays Negroes in a good light and that minstrel shows "are part of our heritage." The human rights commission has no authority to order the show stopped, but the year before it apparently convinced Orfordville to end its minstrel shows.

■ **Nov. 2:** I-90 opens to Madison. Gov. Gay-

lord Nelson cuts a series of ribbons, and the festivities include high school bands, beauty queens, politicians, floats and Norwegian dancers.

■ **Nov. 4:** Herman Dommershausen, 55, 1719 Elizabeth, is killed when his station wagon is rammed by a convertible being pursued by Janesville police. Charged with negligent homicide is the fugitive driver, Steven Glaessel, 22, of 1328 Benton. Patrolmen James Ward and John Herrington are in a single squad at South Academy and West Court streets when they spot the convertible "going real fast."

They pursue it at speeds of 50 to 60 mph before it crashes broadside into Dommershausen's car less than a block from his home.

In 1964, Glaessel will plead no contest to a reduced charge of reckless driving. He is fined \$200 and has his driver's license revoked for one year.

■ **Nov. 6:** Patrolman Herrington pursues another traffic offender, and the chase again ends in a crash. Seriously injured are the driver, Gary Tracey, 17, rural Janesville, and his passenger, George Dorsey, 18, 311 N. Franklin.

Herrington was chasing them down Center Avenue at 60 to 70 mph, and another cop set up a road block near State Street. Tracey's south-bound car evades the roadblock but skids out of control and hits a power pole, tree and large sign. Police find beer bottles in the wrecked car.

■ **Nov. 9:** Scot Discount Department Store (Rock County Job Center) opens as the first store and anchor of Blackhawk Shopping Center on Center Avenue.

■ **Dec. 1:** Rock County's highway deaths for 1962 mount to 35, only two short of the tragic record set in 1955, when cars driven by Nora Olson, 69, Edgerton, and Roger F. Kelm, 45, rural Janesville, collide head-on on Highway 184. Both drivers are killed, and five others, relatives of the drivers, are injured.

Before the year concludes, one more person is killed in a county traffic accident.

■ **Sometime in 1962:** Janesville's most accomplished athlete—Carol Sorenson, who turns 20 in November—wins many tournaments: the Western Women's Amateur; National Collegiate Women's championships, both individual and team, playing as a freshman for Arizona State University; Wisconsin Women's Golf Association and Wisconsin Metropolitan Women's.

Sorenson, a "blue-eyed blonde," also is chosen "most beautiful golfer" by Golf Digest, which reports her "vital statistics" as 34-22-34.



**Carol Sorenson,**  
golfing great  
from Janesville

■ Janesville High wins the state cross-country title.

■ Janesville National League All-Stars win the Wisconsin Little League Championship.

■ Wig hats—as in the R&B song lyrics, "Put on your high-heel sneakers, put your wig hat on your head"—are the rage for women, and the fad helps Norwood Mills of Janesville, manufacturer of synthetic fabrics, increase employment from 32 to 170.

■ The congregation of Church of Christ, organized here in 1953 and meeting in the old YWCA building, dedicates its new church at 2103 Roxbury Road.

■ City of Janesville extends Palmer Park across Highway 11 to the west and south as the Blackhawk Park System. The acquisitions include Atlas Gravel Pit (Kiwanis Pond).

■ Caravilla (Rock Valley Correctional Program halfway house) opens as a retirement and nursing home between Janesville and Beloit, and work is under way on Rock Haven, Rock County's nursing home, and Cedar Crest, a retirement and nursing facility at 1700 S. River Road.

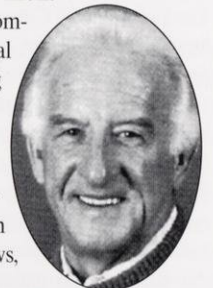
■ The Cuban Missile Crisis in October sparks a sharp increase in the number of folks requesting information on nuclear fallout shelters from city and county Civil Defense organizations.

## 1963

■ **Jan. 15:** Members of the Milwaukee Braves visit Janesville, tour local factories and attend functions of the Lions

Club and Chamber of Commerce on a promotional tour for the upcoming season. Among the players visiting are stars Henry Aaron, who will go on to become baseball's all-time home run leader; Eddie Mathews, another slugger; and Joe Torre, who becomes manager of the New York Yankees in the '90s. One of the "young Braves who clicked with the Lions (is) rookie catcher Bob Uecker with his imitations of wrestler Dick the Bruiser."

■ **January:** Charles Adamany sells his ice cream parlor at 211 W. Milwaukee (offices), a Janesville business since 1921 and "for many years the headquarters of the high school crowd," to his nephew, Joe, and the



**Bob Uecker was**  
a big hit with  
the Janesville  
Lions in 1963



**Henry Aaron**



focus changes to business lunches. But the shop still sells homemade candy made under Charles' direction.

■ **Feb. 1-3:** Whitewater State College (UW-Whitewater) finds itself in the middle of a controversy involving the NAACP and Whitewater Junior Chamber of Commerce. The NAACP protests the Jaycees' plans to stage a minstrel show with white men in black face at the college. The NAACP asks the Jaycees that "the show be given without any dark makeup, that dialect be omitted and that any references or inferences to the Negro race be cut. ... 'The NAACP is definitely opposed to this type of entertainment since it depicts the American Negro as a clowning person with an attached stereotype,'" the Chicago field director of the organization says.

The Jaycees maintain they don't have time to change the show, scheduled for the next two days.

College President Walker Wyman says: "Personally I have a low regard for the minstrel-type dramatics but have no interest in censoring the type of show the community wants to see." He invites the NAACP to use the college auditorium to present its case against minstrel shows.

Nine pickets from the NAACP, two of them white, protest the Saturday night show, which fills 400 of the auditorium's 900 seats. None picket the Sunday show, which draws only 200.

■ **Feb. 15:** The number of days in which the temperature goes below zero hits 33, not the sort of weather for a 50-mile hike, but nine Janesville boys attempt to walk to Deerfield and back nevertheless.

They are inspired by President Kennedy's call for physical fitness along the lines of a regime laid down by former President Theodore Roosevelt, which includes being able to hike 50 miles.

Starting the trek at 4 a.m. are Paul Sterk, Matt Olin, Tom Ryan, Pat Stratton, Ed Kotthaus, Jerry Hoppe, Terry Mullen, Tom Vaughn and Wesley Stibbe. Foot blisters knock Vaughn and Stibbe off their feet and into the WCLO mobile unit, which accompanies the hikers, but the boys, ages 15 and 16, pick up a new comrade in Edgerton, a small black and white puppy.

Hoppe, Sterk, Stratton and Kotthaus complete the 50-mile march—to a point 8 miles north of Edgerton, clocked by Floyd Stratton, Pat's dad, because the road distance signs are way off—12 miles.

Olin and Ryan call it quits in Deerfield, and Mullen throws in the towel 4 miles into the return trek. The boys acknowledge that they needed to be in better shape to make such a hike, and Sterk says: "No one complained about the cold—we were perspiring all the way."

The dog makes it all the way back to the finish line, lies down and falls asleep in front of the WCLO vehicle. Sterk gives the pup a ride back to the Edgerton restaurant where it joined the hike.

■ **March 7:** The Gazette runs on Page 2 an article with the byline "John Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation." The nation's top lawman asks readers to be ever vigilant for Soviet spies, who, Hoover says, could be anybody because Soviet spies have no distinguishing profile. "Be constantly alert," Hoover advises.

■ **April 2:** Carolyn Blanchard, Edgerton, wins the election to fill the state Assembly seat left open by the death of her husband, David, and becomes the first woman from Rock County to serve in the Assembly. Blanchard's election brings to two the number of women serving in the Assembly.

■ **April 13:** Janesville fisherman Herbert Durner, 303 N. Walnut, rescues Karen Hembrook, 7, rural Fort Atkinson, from drowning when she trips and falls into the Rock River in Fort Atkinson. Hembrook, who can't swim, is in water over her head, but Durner, an employee of Allan Electric, jumps in to save her.

■ **April 14:** Church of the Nazarene, 1710 Randolph, is complete, and the congregation celebrates Easter Sunday in it.

■ **April 26:** Janesville learns that Lorrie Bobert, whose professional name is Kellie Greene, cut a record as a member of Ray Anthony's jazz band. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bobert, 909 Blaine, Greene plays vibraphone and piano. She has played professionally since age 14 and has been appearing regularly on Anthony's TV Show.

■ **April 27:** Jazz legend Dave Brubeck brings his quartet to Beloit College for a concert in the field house.

■ **June 11:** "Beer-Thirsty Teeners Like Walworth County" is the headline on a story about how Walworth County has become the suds mecca of southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois because it still allows beer sales to 18-year-olds. Five beer bars are doing great business with teens from Rock, Waukesha, Racine and Kenosha counties and from northern Illinois.

Drinking has been found to be a factor in many accidents, several of them fatal, involving older teens who quenched their thirst in Walworth County. Government officials there maintain that Walworth County teens are not the ones causing the trouble and that the state needs a uniform drinking age to curb the problem of young folks driving to "beer islands."

■ **June 13:** Janesville learns its first ZIP codes: 53545 for delivered mail, 53546 for post office boxes. The new system adding the numerical code to an address on a letter or package goes into effect July 1 to speed the delivery of mail nationwide, but few ZIP codes are seen on mail at the Janesville Post Office.

■ **July:** Marilyn Draeger of rural Fort Atkinson begins her year long reign as Alice

in Dairyland.

■ **Aug. 3:** An Illinois couple and one of their children are killed in a fiery, three-car crash on I-90 two miles north of Janesville. Dead are Mr. and Mrs. Einar Reiser of Lombard, Ill., and their 4-year-old son. The couple's other two children are among the five other people hurt in the accident.

■ **Aug. 4:** Four Delavan youths are killed when their car slams into a tree, rolls and ejects them. Killed in the 1 a.m. accident are James O. Douglas, 17; Larry Wright, 17; Terrance DeWolfe, 16; and Phillip G. Schneider.

The sole survivor is John Stirmel, 19, who leaves the scene and wanders dazed and confused for the rest of the night before arriving at a relative's home.

The five were causing a disturbance at Assembly Park on Delavan Lake about 20 minutes before the horrendous wreck and fled from police officers sent there. The teens elude the cops, but whoever is driving loses control on Sweet Road.

■ **August:** Janesville's Chevrolet plant adds a second shift to its pickup truck line, adding 300 workers and bringing total employment to 2,300. Fisher Body employment remains at 2,500.

■ **Sept. 1:** Evert C. Wallenfeldt, former dean of men at Iowa State University, becomes Milton College president. At age 31, he is believed to be the youngest college president in the United States. Wallenfeldt is married to a Janesville woman, the former Phyllis Schoof.

■ **Sept. 5:** Enrollment in Janesville's 21 schools—17 public and four parochial—is 11,443. The total in public K-12 schools is 9,059.

■ **Oct. 2:** The Rock County Medical Society announces its "People vs. Polio" campaign through which it hopes to vaccinate 100,000 Rock County residents with the new Sabin oral polio vaccine. The society bought the vaccine and advises that people of all ages, from babies to the elderly, receive the vaccine even if they have been previously inoculated with the Salk vaccine.

■ **Oct. 8:** David Behnke of Janesville, who just graduated from the University of Wisconsin, leaves for his 22-month stint in Ghana, West Africa, with the Peace Corps, an organization that is the brainchild of President Kennedy. While Behnke is training at the University of California-Berkeley for his assignment, he meets Mrs. John Paul of Milton Junction, a former French teacher at Milton College, who also has a Peace Corps assignment in Ghana.

■ **Nov. 10:** It's SOS: Sabin Oral Sunday, and 88,816 Rock County residents go to clinics to drink their oral vaccine. Cost is 25 cents per person to cover the cost of the vaccine, but the vaccine is given free to those who cannot afford it.

■ **Nov. 13:** In an effort to curb spying, the



U.S. government declares that 11 percent of the nation is closed to travel by Soviet diplomats, who previously could travel freely anywhere in the United States. On the list of proscribed areas are Rock, Walworth, Jefferson and Dane counties. The reason for choosing those counties is not reported.

■ **Nov. 21:** Janesville's Rock River Parking Plaza, a 225-foot bridge spanning the river between the Milwaukee and Court Street bridges, is formally opened as Mrs. William Henke, the city's first female council president, cuts the ribbon. The River Parking Plaza has 130 spaces and combines with lots on either side of the river to provide room for 242 vehicles.

■ **Mary McBride**, 439 Eisenhower, tells women attending a meeting at the Woman's Club that she has been capitalizing on domestic calamities by turning them into written jokes. For five years, she has been writing gags inspired by her husband, Bill, and their children, ages 4 to 13. She sold her first joke to Art Linkletter and has made \$2,000 in 1963 selling gags to Phyllis Diller.

■ **Dec. 14:** Kurt Heinzelman, a debater on the Janesville High team, is ranked No. 1 speaker after five rounds of debates in a five-state tournament conducted in Minneapolis.

■ **Dec. 16:** Eugene Henry Jensen, 30, a Janesville man sentenced to eight years in prison for three counts of statutory rape of a girl younger than 13 in August, escapes from the Rock County Jail.

The convicted rapist talks with his attorney, William Robson of Beloit, and walks down a hall with him. When the lawyer enters a room to find a jailer to return Jensen to his cell, the pedophile slips away behind the backs of both the jailer and the attorney.

Two days later, William Stafford, "a husky Milton College senior from Janesville," captures Jensen in downtown Janesville with a flying tackle. Rookie police officer Alfred Lembrich is chasing Jensen along South Franklin Street and calls out "Stop that man!" and Stafford responds with an imitation of Green Bay Packer linebacker Ray Nitschke.

Stafford, who played two years of football for Janesville High, is delivering mail as a seasonal postal employee when he tackles Jensen. Jensen immediately has three years tacked onto his sentence.

■ **Dec. 18:** Madison police say they have evidence of the sale and use of narcotics at the University of Wisconsin. "While most of the evidence involved narcotic weeds (marijuana)... there was evidence that others used needle-injected narcotics such as morphine, heroin and cocaine. ...There were indications of the use of peyote and mescaline, two narcotic derivatives processed from cactus and weeds."

■ **Sometime in 1963:** Golfer Carol

## News of JFK's death brings sadness, disbelief

**N**ov. 22, 1963. The lunch crowd at the Knotty Pine Restaurant in downtown Janesville was engaged in its usual lively chatter until James R. Leute brought in the tragic news and Larry Gray turned on the radio.

President John F. Kennedy had been shot in Dallas. But no one in Janesville yet knew whether he was dead or alive.

"Oh, no!"—the same words Jackie Kennedy cried when her husband was killed—were the only words heard in the Knotty Pine as the crowd listened intently to the radio bulletins.

Leute was at the old Blunt Ellis & Loewi office on Milwaukee Street, visiting his good friend, Dick Lane, when the news that JFK had been shot came over the brokerage's news-wire service.

"At first, the news was that he was wounded," Leute recalled. "We went hours without finding out if he was dead or alive."

People were dumbfounded and disbelieving, Leute said.

"We got various stories," said Leute, then a salesman for Ossit Church Furniture here. "They were stringing us along."

Johnny Saxer was working at his sporting goods store and lunch counter on South Main Street.

"My wife, Lyn, called and said, 'Jack's been killed,'" Saxer recollected.

Lyn Saxer's familiarity with JFK was real. She headed his presidential campaign committee here in 1960, and the Saxers had dinner with both Jack and Jackie when they visited here in 1959 as Kennedy was testing the political waters for his run for the White House.

Oscar Hagen, who owned Hagen's Ladies Shop across South Main Street from Saxer's store, came over, Saxer said. "He said, 'Johnny, we better close up. Maybe there'll be more assassinations.' Nobody knew what was really

going on.

"I said, 'Hell no, absolutely not. There's no reason to panic.'"

But there was reason for shock and despair. "I turned on the radio. The lunch counter was filled," Saxer recalled. "Everybody was shocked. It was just so terrible."

Radio reports were relayed via intercom into Janesville's classrooms, and many boys and girls broke down into tears.

Events were canceled or postponed.

But not everyone in southern Wisconsin was sad.

Wearing a red and black swastika, Owen H. Rieron, 24, was arrested outside the state Capitol in Madison when he created a disturbance. The neo-Nazi said he was celebrating Kennedy's assassination, which he called a "miracle for the white race."

Downtown Janesville was already dreary with rain, and many people ducked into Bell Appliance at Main and Milwaukee streets to watch TV news accounts of the assassination.

"He was like one of the family, almost, you saw his picture so often," Janesville attorney James E. Brennan said at the time.

Leute was not a Kennedy fan, but JFK's assassination made him reflect on the president's violent death.

"I thought, 'Why?' It just didn't make sense," Leute said. "I never went back to work. We just watched TV all afternoon."

JFK was important to Saxer.

"He really captured the hearts of just about everybody—unless you were a dyed-in-the-wool Republican," Saxer said. "He was like your best friend or big brother."

"He had so much charisma he just made you feel good. The nation was on a high; everybody felt good about things. That day, we lost a tremendous amount of good feeling in the nation."

"It was like a morgue throughout the whole country."



Sorenson, now a junior at Arizona State, continues her winning ways: She repeats as Wisconsin Amateur Women's champion, winning her fourth title in five years on her home course of Janesville Country Club. She and a teammate retain the Women's Intercollegiate Team Championship for Arizona State, and Sorenson advances to the semifinals of the national Wo-

men's Amateur Golf Championship, which she loses because of "putter failure."

■ Jan Hoffman wins the All-City golf title for the third straight year and repeats as Municipal Association champ.

■ The JHS baseball team finishes 5-7, but left-hander Terry Scieszinski pitches a perfect game—no hits, walks or errors—against Milton.



He also throws two no-hitters and two one-hitters.

■ **Janesville's Babe Ruth League All-Stars** win the state championship.

■ **The Jems, Janesville's outstanding women's softball team**, win the Wisconsin tournament.

■ **The JHS golf team** wins the state championship.

■ **Ground is broken in Janesville for a new St. John Vianney Catholic Church and Faith Lutheran Church**, 2116 Mineral Point. First Lutheran Church adds 40 classrooms, and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church has a new school, 150 S. Ringold.

■ **Rock County Civil Defense** posts 120 buildings as nuclear fallout shelters and stocks 96 buildings with survival food, water, sanitation kits and medical supplies.

■ **Once called Hough Shade, Hough Manufacturing (HUF COR)** sells its shade-making division—in operation since the company moved here in 1901—so that it can concentrate on making folding doors.

■ **Fox Body** introduces the forerunners of the snowmobile: the Ice Cycle and Fox Trac. "They'll go anywhere a man can go on snowshoes," the company says, and the new vehicles will provide work in slack months when the company has little demand for its karts and miniature motorscooters, the Campus Bike, Doodle Bug and Sprite.

■ **Marshall Junior High (Marshall Apartments)** is expanded, and 12 classrooms are added to Jefferson and Lincoln schools. The Baby Boom immediately fills the new classrooms.

■ **The Milwaukee Road viaduct**, a 450-foot diagonal span across the Rock River from Centerway and North Main Street to North River Street, is removed.

## 1964

■ **Jan. 3:** Marie C. Welch, 61, Walworth County register of deeds since 1955, receives five years' probation because of her conviction on 10 counts of theft, forgery and misconduct in office. Her probation depends on making restitution for the thefts, \$1,225 from the county over 15 months, and the cost of prosecution, estimated at \$500.

Welch, whose health has been poor for years, dies Jan. 22 from an internal hemorrhage.

■ **Feb. 9:** Jeffery Statz, 1519 Tyler, of Boy Scout Troop 29, St. John Vianney School, receives the Eagle Scout award, and another member of his troop, Michael Roach, receives Scouting's highest church award, the Ad Altare Dei award. Roach, 12 Randall, was made Eagle Scout the year before.

In Milton, Dennis Skelly and James Woodman, both members of Troop 17, are awarded Eagle Scout honors.

■ **Feb. 11:** The Janesville Education Association immediately criticizes raises given to teachers by the school board as "unsatisfactory." The increases of \$100 to \$235 annually make the starting salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree \$4,900. The top annual salary is \$8,565 for a teacher with a master's degree and 17 years' experience.

■ **Feb. 22:** The Beatles have just come and gone on their first American tour, but Beatlemania grips Janesville teens. As part of Brotherhood Week at Franklin Junior High School, Mike Burrows, Gary Back, Doug Austin and Tim Jewell don wigs to portray the mop-topped Fab Four.

And to hype the weekly photo of an animal in need of adoption, the staff at the Rock County Humane Society puts a Beagle wig on an 18-month beagle and asks the public if anyone is willing to say "I Wanna Hold Your Hand."

■ **Worried over his health**, Arthur Greifelt, 71, Delavan, commits suicide with an electric drill, boring a 2.75-inch hole in his right temple.

■ **March 4-5:** A blizzard dumps 9 inches of snow on southern Wisconsin and blows into mountainous drifts, closing schools, shops, offices and factories, snarling traffic and shutting roads.

The blizzard turns out to be a killer: James and Patricia Ann Cramblett, 26 and 21 respectively, former Green County residents living in Milwaukee, are found dead in their car on Highway 14 just east of Highway 184 (County H). The couple is believed to have been en route from Milwaukee to visit relatives in Green County when they could drive no farther in the wind-blown snow.

The victims of carbon monoxide poisoning, they are found covered with blankets, their car covered by a snow drift.

■ **March 9:** The Janesville School Board gives annual raises of \$185 to \$875 to administrators and school principals. The salary of Superintendent Fred Holt is raised from \$16,800 to \$17,500, \$300 more than City Manager Joe Lustig.

■ **April 1:** Former Janesville policemen Donald Webb, 47, and John Herrington, 25, are found guilty of burglary because of an incident Oct. 14, 1963, when they and patrolman James Shea Jr., all on duty as patrol officers, entered the Sherwin-Williams Paint Store, 12 N. Main, (no longer standing).

Herrington, a former wrestling star at Janesville High, is not convicted of theft as Webb is for taking a 5-gallon can of paint, a gallon of turpentine and three paint brushes, total value \$45. On April 6, Shea, who is being

tried separately, pleads guilty to burglary and petty theft. All three receive probation but are finished as Janesville cops.

■ **April 3:** Alabama Gov. George Wallace, an arch-segregationist seeking the Democratic nomination for president, stops in Janesville. Wallace earned international publicity in 1963 for standing in the University of Alabama administration building's door to bar admission to two black students and for the statement: "Segregation now—segregation tomorrow—segregation forever!"

At the Rock County Airport, Wallace is greeted warmly by 50 or so supporters.

But at the Monterey Hotel, where he speaks to supporters, he is greeted by 50 or so demonstrators peacefully protesting his visit and his positions. Many of the pickets are local high school students on spring break, and many of the protesters are white.

Among the signs they carry: "Wallace, go home" and "Wisconsin believes in civil rights."

In the primary election April 7, Wallace gets 261,000 votes statewide, but Wisconsin Gov. John Reynolds, running as a favorite son candidate chosen personally by President Lyndon B. Johnson, garners 508,000 votes and all of the state's 46 delegates to the Democratic National Convention. Reynolds outpolls Wallace almost 2-1 in Janesville, 3,334 to 1,765, and by better than 2-1, 10,166 to 5,020, in Rock County.

■ **April 13:** The Janesville School Board authorizes the purchase of 43 acres west of city limits on Mineral Point Avenue for a possible second high school (Parker).

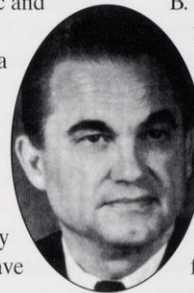
The land is purchased for \$40,850 from the Madison Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, which bought more than 80 acres there in 1961 as the site for a Catholic high school (never developed).

■ **April 17:** Mary Marchiafava, 18, of 18 S. Pearl; Nicholas Hohnhurst, 23, Rockford, Ill.; and Robert Moss, 25, Beloit, are killed when their car, driven by Hohnhurst, slams into the eighth car of a freight train and is dragged 1,230 feet in Afton.

Four others in the convertible are injured: Patricia Pollock, 17, rural Janesville; Elizabeth Roberts, 21, of 106 S. Grant; and the Green sisters, Rebecca, 20, and Rose Mary, 16, both of 703 Delavan. Pollock never recovers, dying in Rock Haven on Sept. 1.

Investigators learn that the seven were drinking beer and that Hohnhurst was going about 100 mph when he hit the train.

■ **May 2:** Reigning in the enchanted land of Shangri-La, otherwise known as the Janesville High Junior Prom, are King John Dooley and Queen Margie Christopherson. Margie wears a white lace over satin gown whose sleeveless



George Wallace



bodice creates a jacket effect. In her court are Barbara Daly, Maurine McCarten, Kathy Conley, Mary Van Skike, Judy Anderson and Jeanine Mitby.

■ **May 5:** The Fireside Inn opens on Highway 26 in Fort Atkinson. The supper club draws a lot of attention because it is a four-sided pyramid.

■ **May 14:** Construction worker Robert Wyman, 34, of 1327 E. Van Buren, is working on the fifth story of Rock Haven when he falls. But miraculously his only injuries are minor cuts and a dislocated finger.

■ **May 18:** The Beloit City Council unanimously approves Sunday sales of alcohol by bowling alleys and restaurants. Bars and packaged good stores still are banned from selling any alcohol on Sundays.

■ **May 23:** Two JHS seniors, James Halverson, 619 S. Franklin, and Terry Campbell, 1711 Hawthorne, save three Milwaukee men when their boat sinks in Lake Ripley during a storm. Campbell and Halverson are working on a dock when they hear cries for help. They row to where the men are trying to stay afloat, jump in to pull them to the boat, then take them to shore, where they keep them warm until an ambulance arrives.

■ **June 15:** George D. Griffis of Milton Junction, an employee of Gilman Engineering and a captain in the Wisconsin Air National Guard, is injured when the F-89 jet fighter he is piloting crashes and burns on takeoff at Truax Field in Madison. His radar observer, David C. Holmberg, a Madison lawyer, is killed in the crash.

■ **July 15:** Janesville's second municipal golf course, the nine-hole Blackhawk, opens across Highway 11 from Palmer Park.

■ **Aug. 8:** Victor Merrifield, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Merrifield, 857 St. Mary's (Memorial Drive), is riding the latest fad in bicycles: the Sting Ray, complete with highrider handle bars and elongated banana seat.

■ **Aug. 30:** The congregation of Faith Lutheran Church has its first services in its new church, 2116 Mineral Point.

■ **Sept. 4:** A 12-year-old Beloit girl is beaten so badly by seven other youngsters that she is hospitalized. Arrested are six girls, ages 12 to 15, and a 17-year-old boy. The beaten girl's offense is that she danced with the boyfriend of one of her assailants.

■ The Beatles appear in Milwaukee on their second U.S. tour and play for only 30 minutes, and their music, though highly amplified, rarely rises above the shrieks and screams of the 11,500 fans who jam the Milwaukee Arena. John Lennon is called Jack Lennon by the Associated Press.

■ **Sept. 25:** About 4,800 members of UAW

Locals 95 and 121 walk off their jobs at the Fisher Body and Chevrolet plants in Janesville as the United Auto Workers stages a nationwide strike against GM over a number of unresolved issues including grievance procedures, production standards and work conditions.

■ **September:** Parkview High School opens in Orfordville.

■ **Oct. 10:** The first Mass is celebrated in the new St. John Vianney Catholic Church, 1245 Clark.

■ R. Sargent Shriver, director of the Peace Corps and brother-in-law to the Kennedys, comes to Janesville to defend the Peace Corps and attack Wisconsin Republican congressmen who do not support the corps. About 200 people hear him at Marshall Junior High (Marshall Apartments).

■ **Oct. 28-29:** The UAW strike against the Janesville GM plants ends.

■ **Oct. 31:** George W. Gressman, business manager and advertising director of The Janesville Gazette, retires after 28 years of service to the paper. He is succeeded by Marshall W. Johnston, who joined the Gazette in 1962 as an assistant to Gazette President Sidney H. Bliss.

■ **Nov. 3:** A tremendous explosion blows a large section of Janesville Sand & Gravel's cement block-manufacturing plant to rubble and severely damages two adjoining buildings. No one is hurt in the 2:30 a.m. blast, caused by the ignition of leaking butane gas that fuels the factory's kilns.

■ Rock County votes Democratic in a presidential election for only the third time in the 20th century as voters here cast 28,252 votes for President Lyndon Baines Johnson and 20,372 for his opponent, arch-conservative Barry Goldwater, a Republican senator from Arizona. Janesville votes 9,572 to 6,643 for LBJ, the former vice president who became president when John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Johnson wins the presidency with a national landslide.

Janesville teacher Lew Mittness, a Democrat, is elected to Wisconsin's 1st Assembly District seat.

■ **Nov. 9:** Citing lack of space at City Hall (no longer standing) and lack of space and parking at Janesville Public Library (Senior Center), City Manager Joe Lustig proposes in his 1965 budget to spend \$20,000 for preliminary architectural plans to replace both buildings.

■ **Dec. 12:** Jupiter Discount Store, 29 W. Milwaukee (Rock River Charter School), has train sets on sale for Christmas: H-O for \$12.88 and Lionel for \$10.88. Or parents can put a Monopoly game under the tree for \$2.99.

■ **Dec. 14:** For the first time, shares of the Parker Pen Co. are traded on the New York Stock Exchange. For its first 40 years, the

company was a closed corporation. In 1928, Parker stock was offered on the Chicago Stock Exchange, which became the Midwest Stock Exchange in 1949.

■ **Sometime in 1964:** Carol Sorenson, "Janesville's most famous athlete of all time," adds international championships to her long list of triumphs. She wins the British Women's Amateur title, opening the match play tourney with five straight 3's: two eagles, a birdie and two pars. Sorenson also plays on the U.S. Curtis Cup team that defeats Great Britain for the championship, and she ties for best individual performance when she leads the U.S. team to victory in the first Women's World Amateur Championship in France.

■ Jan Hoffman is Janesville's All-City golf champ for the fourth straight year, but he is forced to a sudden-death playoff by Dan Nitz. Nitz wins a four-year Chick Evans Scholarship to the University of Wisconsin. Evans scholarships are for golf caddies.

■ Janesville's Babe Ruth National All-Stars repeat as state champs, and they win the double-elimination tourney the hard way—with five straight wins from the loser's bracket.

■ Dean Nottingham of Milton Union High is the 133-pound state wrestling champ.

■ Janesville is selected as the site for a two-year University of Wisconsin Center campus.

■ Janesville's new house construction sets a record: 400.

In addition, five buildings housing 44 apartments are erected, bringing to more than 200 the number of apartments constructed in the past four years.

■ Rollin' Pin Bakery moves into a third location, a new building at 19 N. Arch.

■ Additions expand Rath Manufacturing, Norwood Mills, Gilman Engineering & Manufacturing, GM's Fisher Body and Chevrolet plants and Hough Manufacturing (HUF COR). Gilman employment grows 66 percent to 155 people.

■ The small stone house that stood at 112 St. Lawrence is moved to the grounds of the Lincoln-Tallman Museum at the corner of North Jackson Street and Mineral Point Avenue.

■ Tom Metcalf, 24-year-old Janesville farmer, is the state combine corn-picking champ, and Warren Reppen, 47, Edgerton, takes the two-row title.

■ Harold Traynor of rural Milton Junction, president of Rock County 4-H Association, finds perfection in Breezy Hill Perfecto, his milking shorthorn bull that is grand champion of the Wisconsin State Fair and three county fairs: Walworth, Kenosha and Dodge. The bull is reserve senior champ at the Minnesota State Fair and National Dairy Cattle Congress and wins first place for 2-year-olds at the International



Dairy Show in Chicago.

■ Skunk's Misery, a Walworth County valley, is turned into Alpine Valley, a resort focused on snow skiing.

■ Whitewater State College becomes Whitewater State University.

■ A new voice is heard on WCLO: Bob Dailey's.

## 1965

■ **Jan. 16:** Carl Choitz, 25, Whitewater High School wrestling coach, and two of his wrestlers are killed when their car is hit by a freight train in Stoughton, four blocks from the high school where they were to have a meet. The two boys killed are Elmer Batz and William Hammons, both 15.

Another wrestler, Larry Kowalski, 15, dies later in the hospital, and in critical condition are two more wrestlers: Robert Miles and Roger Haskins, both 15. All six are hurled from the car when Choitz ignores the flashing signal and hits the front of the 35-mph freight train.

■ **Jan. 20:** America's polka king, Frankie Yankovic, performs at the Log Cabin tavern on Highway 51 (Center Avenue) south of Janesville.

■ **Feb. 1:** Ken Bick, beloved principal of Janesville High School, is listed in "Who's Who in American Education." Bick has bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin and started teaching at Milton Union High School in 1928.

In 1929, he started teaching high school in Janesville and became assistant principal in 1936. Bick was promoted to principal in 1946.

He is active in numerous education and civic organizations.

■ **Feb. 8:** Construction starts on the control tower at the Rock County Airport. Built with federal money, the \$350,000 tower will be staffed by federal air-traffic controllers.

■ **Feb. 27:** A fiery crash kills Floyd Kurth, 27, rural Edgerton, and Mary Jo Watson of Edgerton. They are in a car driven by Norman Freberg, 30, Albion, when it skids off Lake Drive Road north of Edgerton; scrapes a stump, rupturing the gas tank; hits a large tree and explodes.

Despite severe injuries, Freberg tries unsuccessfully to rescue his friends from the car, which spews 30-foot flames. He is hospitalized with third-degree burns and a compound leg fracture and dies April 11.

■ **March 19:** The Universal Health Spa, a "fun and fitness club" at 210 N. Jackson, offers introductory memberships for \$2.50 per week.

■ **March 20:** Fire guts Youth Fashion Shop, 109 W. Milwaukee (offices), and owner Alvin Strauss collapses on the sidewalk outside and dies of an apparent heart attack. Twelve-year-old baby sitter Susan Wickersham leads two children—Robin Anderson, 2, and Donna Blumer, 4—to safety from the apartment above the store.

Three firemen sustain minor injuries. A carelessly discarded cigarette is blamed for the \$42,000 fire.

■ **April 11:** 37 vicious Palm Sunday tornadoes rip six states, including Wisconsin, and kill 248, including three people in Jefferson County. Five thousand people are hurt across the country.

Edward Zimmerman of Cross Plains and his

daughter, Susan, 7, are killed when a twister whips their car off a highway east of Watertown. Ivan Schroeder of rural Waukesha suffers a similar death.

Houses and barns are flattened in Jefferson County, where most of the damage is southeast of Lake Mills between Watertown and Ixonia. Deputies must kill 60 animals, mostly cows and pigs, trapped in fallen barns. Watertown Memorial Hospital treats at least 30 people.

A tornado levels buildings and throws tons of debris into the air as it smacks a three-block area on the west edge of Monroe. Fifteen people are hurt, many seriously. Twenty-five commercial buildings are ripped apart, and 50 mobile homes and several houses are demolished.

A tornado wreaks havoc to property in the Walworth County village of Williams Bay, but no one is seriously injured.

A twister slices a path 15 miles long and a half mile wide across the northwest corner of Rock County, knocking down many farm buildings, trees and telephone and electrical wires. The tornado clobbers the Evansville area hardest, but no one is killed or injured.

Storm damage in Janesville is light.

■ **May 8:** Royalty again comes to Janesville, but this time it's of the jazz nature. Duke Ellington and his 16-piece orchestra perform at the city's Second Annual Policeman's Ball. Asked his opinion of rock 'n' roll, the 66-year-old jazz legend replies: "I like it. It's the people's music. Any music that sounds good is good music. There's really no difference."

■ A melee erupts among the 200 people gathered around the pond at Lions Beach for the start of the trout-fishing season at 12:01 a.m. Most of the crowd, ranging from boys to teens to adults, is not there to fish but to drink, carouse, fight and throw each other in the water.

All available police cars are dispatched to break up what is described as a "virtual riot," and the actual anglers help the cops restore order. A Rockford, Ill., man is hospitalized with a broken jaw, and two Janesville teens are arrested on minor charges.

■ **May 11:** The Janesville School Board is faced with naming a new high school—to be built in 1966-67—and chooses the names of the city's two most famous industrialists, Joseph A. Craig and George S. Parker, for the existing and new schools.

Board member William J. Ryan suggests that which school gets which name be determined by chance so that the board cannot be accused of favoritism. He flips a silver dollar to determine that the new school on the west side will be George S. Parker High School and the existing school on the east side will be Joseph A. Craig High School.

■ **June 2:** St. Mary's Catholic School grad-



St. John Lutheran Church held its first worship services in June of 1965. St. John was just one of a number of new churches that were built during the '60s.



## King's strategy outlined in Williams Bay

**D**r. Martin Luther King Jr., America's foremost civil rights leader, visited Williams Bay on Oct. 8-10, 1965, to plan strategy for upcoming demonstrations in Chicago.

The meeting was a conference between King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations, an association of Chicago civil rights groups.

The groups picked Williams Bay for their meeting because they wanted to be away from the media glare and political pressure of the immediate Chicago area. The United Council of Churches invited them to Conference Point.

In a news conference, King outlined the next anti-segregation targets of the civil rights movement. They weren't the traditional sites of the Deep South, but the northern, eastern and western cities of Chicago, Cleveland, Newark, N.J. and the Watts area of Los Angeles.

King set no schedule for non-violent demonstrations in Chicago, which, he noted, created problems for blacks because of discrimination in schools and housing and with economic deprivation.

"We want to be sure we have a strongly mobilized and well-organized community before we take action," he said.

King credited President Johnson for "by and large ... doing an admirable and courageous job on civil rights. (He) has passed some very significant legislation.

"His domestic policy is OK, but I have some questions about his foreign policy," said King, a pacifist who opposed the ever-deepening war in Vietnam.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

in the Washington, D.C., office of Rep. Lynn Stalbaum, the 1st District's Democratic congressman.

Feingold's younger brother, Russ, also shows an interest—and flair—for politics. In a later newspaper photo of a mock city election staged as a playground activity, the younger Feingold, called Rusty, is shown standing on a car plastered with campaign posters throwing free bubble gum to get the crowd's attention for his speech. In 1992, Russ Feingold is elected to the U.S. Senate.

■ **June:** First services are conducted in the new St. John Lutheran Church at the corner of North Parker Drive and Pease Court.

■ **July 1:** Rock County adds the position of corporation counsel, and the first person to fill the job is Robert Ruth, 29, former assistant district attorney.

■ **July 3-5:** The holiday weekend is filled with death, injuries and violence. The national traffic death toll is 542, a record for the three-day holiday, and two of the fatalities come three miles south of Clinton.

Killed in a head-on collision are Lyman Purdy Jr., 42, Beloit, and Alice Fessler, 20, rural Sharon. Purdy is driving one car; Fessler is in the other. Ten other people suffer critical to serious injuries in the crash that literally litters County W with the injured.

A water skier from Illinois drowns in Geneva Lake, and the celebration turns rowdy again in Lake Geneva as 200 are arrested and a police officer is injured in a scuffle.

The VFW float in the Whitewater Youth Parade is made from paper napkins and depicts the Marines' World War II flag-raising on Iwo Jima, but the float bursts into flames shortly after the parade starts. Firemen extinguish the blaze but not before it badly burns the arm of Joe Weimer, who was riding on it.

■ **July:** The Janesville High School Band marches in a parade at the World's Fair in New York.

■ **Aug. 1:** An explosion rips a large hole in a trailer used by Ryan Inc., a Janesville contracting firm, at the site of dredging for Interstate 35 in Minnesota. No one is hurt, but it is the fourth successful bombing in five attempts in a jurisdictional dispute between locals of the International Union of Operating Engineers.

The unsuccessful attempt involved a dud firebomb placed in the garage of Thomas Ryan's Janesville home.

■ **Aug. 30:** Twin elementary schools, Madison, 330 N. Grant, and Jackson, 441 Burbank, open for Janesville students. They are built from the same plans at a combined cost of \$1.85 million.

■ **Sept. 4:** WCLO-FM (WJVL) begins

stereophonic broadcasts of musical programs.

■ **Sept. 5:** Holiday traffic carnage continues: Seven young people, including two from Janesville and one from Edgerton, are killed in a two-car crash west of Cambridge, as the Labor Day weekend proves Wisconsin's bloodiest to this date: 31 deaths.

Killed in the Dane County crash are Linda Gilbertson, 18, of 217 W. Milwaukee; Richard E. Davis, 20, of 220 S. Locust; James R. Schaefer, 19, Edgerton; and four young people from Cambridge. Three other people are hurt.

In addition, a two-car wreck north of Lake Geneva kills four young people from Illinois.

■ The last Chicago & North Western passenger train to serve Janesville, Beloit and Evansville runs through the communities, ending 100 years of C&NW service. Janesville still has passenger service from the Milwaukee Road—four trains daily.

■ **Sept. 28:** To comply with a new state law, the Rock County Board votes to cut its size from 67 members to 40 with Janesville and Beloit each having 11 supervisors. The new size will go into effect with election in April 1966.

■ **September:** The month has 22 days of rain amounting to 7.83 inches.

■ **Oct. 16:** The Gazette's lead headline: "Thousands Protest U.S. Actions in S. Viet Nam," and the story reports demonstrations in more than 20 American cities. Janesville is not one of them.

■ **Nov. 1:** Dr. Thorn Vogel, Janesville health commissioner, asks the city council to pass an ordinance requiring all dogs to be vaccinated against rabies, which has been increasing in Wisconsin. The council says it will study the issue.

■ **Nov. 19:** Janesville opens an 80-stall addition to the south end of the Rock River Parking Plaza.

■ **Dec. 8:** Seven women from Beloit and South Beloit, Ill., are riding home from work at Admiral Corp. near Harvard, Ill., when a car driven by Joyce Weber, 25, of 352 Ringold, broadsides their station wagon in the intersection of Highways 51 and 75, a half mile south of the state line.

Five women are killed: Ethel Sommers, 47, Glenna Grundy, 48, and Rennie Peterson, 20, all of Beloit; and Lula Rotzoll, 40, and LaVerne Wohlfert, both of South Beloit. The other two women in the car and Weber are hospitalized with serious injuries.

Weber will be tried and convicted in Illinois for five counts of negligent homicide.

She testifies that she drank a beer and a half before the accident. Other witnesses testify that Weber was speeding at 50 to 65 mph in a 35-mph zone when she ran a stop sign and broadsided the station wagon.

Weber is found guilty and faces up to five

uates its last class of ninth-graders. For 45 years, the parochial school has offered classes for first through ninth grades but hereafter will extend primary education only through the eighth grade. Fifty-two students graduate in the last class, and 65 eighth-graders also bid their school farewell.

■ **June 21:** David Feingold, son of Janesville attorney Leon Feingold and a junior at UW-Madison, begins his duties as a political intern



## Janesville teacher a veteran of the Cold War

**T**hick clouds covered the sky as John Van Altena drove through the dark toward West Berlin.

In a secret compartment behind the back seat of the big 1959 Ford hid an East German woman and her 5-year-old daughter. They'd given the girl a tranquilizer so she would stay still while sealed with her mother in the small compartment.

It was 10:10 p.m. Oct. 10, 1964.

Ahead was the checkpoint, a highly illuminated area the size of a football field across which motorists were required to take a slow, serpentine route. Along the way, the Communist East German police scrutinized the vehicles.

They searched the trunk and engine compartments. They slid illuminated mirrors beneath the cars to search for people clinging to the undersides. They removed the seats or probed them with long needles.

Van Altena, a 20-year-old native of Milton Junction, knew what to expect. He'd been through the checkpoint many times while visiting the family in East Berlin.

The father, Juergen Rabe, was a midlevel official in the East German economics ministry. The plan was for Van Altena to come back for Juergen the next day, after his wife, Barbel, and daughter, Sabrina, were safely out.

Van Altena had first visited Germany as a 15-year-old foreign exchange student. Immersed in the culture, Van Altena quickly became fluent in German.

He was on a German ship on his way back to the United States in 1961 when word came that the East Germans had thrown up the Berlin Wall, dividing brothers from sisters, parents from children, boyfriends from girlfriends. The West German passengers on the ship were frantic, leaving a deep impression on the high school boy.

After high school, Van Altena decided to join the Peace Corps. He trained for more than a year for an assignment in Ecuador, but he decided against it. The Peace Corps was not what he'd expected. Some nations were refusing to accept Peace Corps volunteers, fearing the young people were linked to the CIA, Van Altena said.

He went to school at UW-Madison. It wasn't long, however, before he had a visitor. The man asked Van Altena if he wanted to go back to Germany.

"I work with people in Berlin," the man said. "We have jobs available."

Van Altena assumed the man had connections with "the U.S. information agency," the CIA.

Van Altena agreed to work as a customs translator for the government-controlled Luft-hansa Airlines in West Germany. Once there, it was arranged that Van Altena meet Werner Kloss, a West German whose cousins, Juergen and Barbel Rabe, wanted to escape from East Germany.

East German adults were allowed to leave the country with passports, but children were not allowed out. They were kept as collateral to ensure their parents would return from the democratic West, Van Altena said.

The key to the Rabe family's freedom, therefore, was getting their 5-year-old daughter out of the country.

The first plan was for Juergen and Barbel to assume the identity of their West German cousins and go out through Hungary. Van Altena would smuggle out their daughter in a secret compartment near the big Ford's gas tank. That plan fell through.

The alternative was more risky. They made a new and bigger secret compartment behind the back seat of the Ford. It was big enough to hold both an adult and the 5-year-old.

The mother and daughter would go out first. Van Altena would return to East Berlin the next day for the father.

They didn't know it, but their plan was doomed. The Rabes had to leave behind belongings and bank accounts, but they'd arranged to give their expensive TV to a relative in West Germany. For a \$5,000 reward, the relative betrayed them to the Communists.

As Van Altena drove into the East Berlin checkpoint that October night, he suspected there was a problem. The guard had been doubled. The mother and daughter remained quiet in their hiding place, but the East German police had been tipped.

They held Van Altena's visa as they searched the car. And searched. And searched.

Van Altena was arrested. Eventually, the mother and daughter were found. The father was arrested later.

Van Altena was sentenced to eight years in East German prison. He served 17 months, the first 12 in solitary confinement.

He never was physically abused, but he was malnourished on black bread and lard, lung soup and pig ear goulash. He was questioned every second day. Guards checked him every 10 minutes, waking him with the light in his cell at night to make sure his hands and face were not covered by blankets.

The toilet in his cell was the only source of water.

"You keep your toilet real clean," he said.

Although it was forbidden, he communicated with other inmates in the political prison



**John Van Altena, right, meets Secretary of State Dean Rusk, center, and Maxwell Raab, president of the U.S. Committee for Refugees, at a 1966 dinner where he was the guest of honor.**

through code tapped on the concrete walls.

The East Germans eventually released him in exchange for the right to buy certain steel alloys in the West. After serving 18 months, the Rabes were freed to the West, as well.

Van Altena later returned to West Germany, after the government offered to pay his way through law school. He wrote a book about his adventure, too, although it had to be edited by the FBI before it could be published.

In 1999, Van Altena lived in Milton and was a social studies teacher at Franklin Middle School in Janesville. He did not regret his Cold War adventure.

"I don't see it as the worst part of my life, although it was certainly a turning point," he said. "Psychologically, I think I benefited greatly."

—Sid Schwartz

years in prison on each conviction; her attorney suggests probation. A review of Gazette editions through May 1966 did not reveal her sentence.

■ **Dec. 16:** Two prisoners flee the Rock

County Jail (under renovation) in downtown Janesville after threatening the jailer with jagged edges of broken spoon handles, but their escape is shortlived. Sheriff's department radio dispatch-

er Richard Bayer grabs escapee Andrew C. Spencer of Beloit just outside the jail entrance.

Jailer Paul Schroeder, who frees the pair when one of them presses a sharp spoon handle





**The Kingston Trio performed at the Jeffris Theater in 1966. The folk group included a rendition of its hit, 'Tom Dooley,' for the Janesville crowd.**

against his neck, calls for help, and 15-year-old Randy Leyes grabs and holds the running Elmer D. Swenson, a Janesville man awaiting trial for burglaries.

At first, Leyes steps in front of Swenson. But, thinking he will get hit, Leyes, who plays end on the JHS sophomore football team, steps back, lets the escapee past, then grabs him.

For the jail break and other offenses, Spencer and Swenson are sentenced to five years in prison.

■ **Dec. 17:** Fire sweeps through half of the Norwood Mills plant on Kennedy Road, causing \$1 million damage and throwing 200 people out of work a week before Christmas. The cause is not immediately determined.

About 120 first-shift employees escape without injury, but fireman Henry Lafferty injures a wrist falling on ice.

■ **Sometime in 1965:** You'd think their names were on the trophies permanently: Bob Luchsinger is city handball champ for the 13th consecutive year, and Jan Hoffman wins Janesville's All-City Golf Tournament for a fifth straight time.

■ Donna Rusch sets an all-time city women's bowling record in the Thursday Night League at Franklin Gardens (no longer standing) with a 727 series that includes a perfect 300 game.

■ The Monroe Cheesemakers are state high school basketball champs and do not substitute in the final 74-71 victory over Eau Claire. The starting—and finishing—five are Keith Burington, Paul Dearth, Dave Holling, Tom Mitchell and Bob Buchholtz.

■ Beloit wins the state high school baseball championship.

■ On the diamonds, the Babe Ruth All-Stars, in the third year of Janesville's Babe Ruth program, win their third state title; the Rock County National Bank Cardinals go undefeated in 14

Little League games, and the Janesville Jems regain the state women's softball championship.

■ Construction starts on a new Masonic Temple in Janesville in the 2300 block of East Milwaukee to serve all the city's Masonic groups.

■ GM employment reaches a new high in Janesville: 2,909 hourly and salaried employees at the Chevrolet plant, 2,800 at Fisher Body.

■ Interstate 94 is completed through Jefferson County and now links Madison and Milwaukee.

## 1966

■ **Jan. 1:** Social Security taxes rise sharply—59 percent for those earning more than \$6,600 a year—in large part to cover the cost of a new federal program, Medicare, part of LBJ's "Great Society" domestic program. A man making \$5,642 and supporting a non-working wife and four children will pay \$236.96 a year in Social Security taxes and \$197.60 in federal income tax.

■ **Jan. 21-22:** More than 30 Rock County volunteers learn the Laubach method of teaching illiterate adults to read. Dr. Frank Laubach addressed a group in Janesville in September 1965, and his talk inspired local people to form the "Company of Compassion" to support adult literacy here and abroad.

■ **Feb. 21:** One of the most popular folk-singing groups in the United States, the Kingston Trio, performs at the Jeffris Theater. Their hits include "Tom Dooley," "M.T.A." and "Where Have All the Flowers Gone."

■ **Feb. 22:** Speaking at the Richard Ellis American Legion Post in Janesville, former Army Capt. Joseph Bollenbeck of Madison rips those who question or protest the Vietnam War. He names four Democratic congressmen, including Rep. Robert Kastenmeier of Wisconsin, as "giving aid and comfort to the enemy," blasts University of Wisconsin professors for being "indifferent to Communist activities" on campus and claims that the national perspective of UW is as a "radical and pink" institution.

■ **March 4:** Dr. Albert F. Ottow, 73, Beloit, is fined \$10,000 and assessed \$8,000 for court costs on his convictions for committing three abortions—one in 1962 and two in 1963.

■ **March 10:** Though Rachel Carson's book, "Silent Spring," detailing the harm insecticides, especially DDT, do to the environment was published in 1962, the city of Janesville starts its annual spraying of elm trees with DDT to try to stop the spread of Dutch elm disease.

■ The speakers at the 50th annual Janesville Chamber of Commerce dinner are five women from Des Moines, Iowa, known as the "Know Your Neighbor" panel. The panel, consisting of two Jews, an African-American, a Protestant and a Roman Catholic, speaks around the country

on the discrimination they have encountered, practiced and overcome in their lives.

■ Penney's offers women's stretch denim bell-bottom pants for \$4.98.

■ **March 23:** Two Milton College students are expelled for smoking marijuana. The two, Anthony J. Januska, 21, and Steven S. Wasserman, 19, both of New York City, tell college officials and Rock County sheriff's detectives that they brought the pot with them from New York, and no marijuana is found in their possession.

They are not arrested but leave the college for New York. The college got wind of the reefer smoking in November 1965 and asked the sheriff's department for an investigation so that the incident would not be "swept under the rug." Dean of Students Allen Dearborn says. "As a result of the extensive investigation, we are convinced that this was an isolated case on the Milton campus."

The young men's departure from the college means the "problem (is) removed," Dearborn adds.

■ **April 13:** Teachers' salaries are an ongoing issue in Janesville, and the school board, backed up by city attorney Theodore Bidwell, has refused to give its salary records—individual salaries of all teachers—to the Gazette on the grounds that if such information were made public it would erode staff morale.

The Gazette procures the legally open records from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

■ Because of previous rowdiness, vandalism and drunkenness on opening day of trout fishing season at Lions Beach, the Wisconsin Conservation Commission decides to no longer stock the pond with trout.

■ **May 3:** The Janesville City Council OKs building a new library (present site) after a long and controversial process in which Councilman John Fredendall opposed the new building because of its more than \$1 million cost. Five of his colleagues on the council blast Fredendall for his tactics and statements and maintain that the community is getting "less library" because specifications were changed to save \$125,000, the alteration that won Fredendall's support.

In the 1990s, library and city officials will learn that they cannot expand the library upward, which would be less costly, because the structure, changed from original specs, won't support another floor.

■ **May 10:** The state orders Janesville to build a new sewage treatment plant so effluent discharged into the Rock River will meet new, stricter anti-pollution standards.

■ **May 21:** Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians perform at the Janesville Policeman's Ball.



■ **May 25:** The State Highway Commission approves a new bridge over the Rock River in Janesville that will link St. Mary's Avenue on the east side with Magnolia Avenue on the west side. The names of both avenues will change to reflect the name of the bridge, Veterans Memorial Bridge.

■ **May 29:** Elkhorn expected the Hell's Angels to show up and disrupt national championship motorcycle races at the fairgrounds, but the Milwaukee Outlaws and Chicago Rogues show up instead. The gangs of "outlaw" bikers keep to themselves and enjoy the races.

"The Outlaws were admitted without incident—only amazement at their dress: black leather jackets covered with medals and slogans; bearskin vests, sleeveless to display tattooed arms; headgear ranging from German army helmets to derby hats; bare heads, which were shaved or wearing shoulder-length curls. Nazi swastikas were everywhere in evidence."

■ **June 6:** Valerie Peterson, 22, Evansville, becomes the first woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin with a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering. "One of the prices you have to pay for being first in this field is trying to explain to people what inspired a girl to become a nuclear engineer," says Peterson, whose interest in science was sparked in a one-room school house in rural Evansville.

■ **July 2:** A young Janesville woman—a bride of less than three months—and two of her nieces are killed when the car driven by her husband runs off a bridge near Waupun and lands on its top in 2 feet of water in the Rock River.

Dead are Bonnie (Harris) Linden, 18, of 427 Prospect, and her nieces, Nancy Gibson, 15, 613 S. Chatham, and Lori Harris, 8, of 1411 S. Crosby. The group is headed to upper Michigan for a holiday excursion when Philip H. Linden falls asleep at the wheel and his sedan careens off the bridge.

■ **July 2-4:** Lake Geneva again is the destination of thousands of young revelers intent on taking advantage of the resort atmosphere, sweltering heat and drinking age of 18. Police officer Richard Fortney shoots an 18-year-old from Illinois in the left leg when the young man runs from a disorderly conduct arrest and ignores several warning shots. The rowdies vandalize much property near the Riviera dance pavilion, including crushing a car just with their weight. Police arrest 193.

■ **July 13:** Rock County starts forming a grand jury to investigate commercial gambling, or bookmaking. The grand jury follows by four days the arrest of five Janesville men on charges of accepting and forwarding bets. Charges against one of the men are dropped at his initial court appearance, but the grand jury indicts 23 people

on gambling and perjury charges.

■ **July 30:** Yet another multiple-fatal accident devastates a family. William Baker, 22, Loves Park, Ill., is driving when he speeds to pass another car. Baker's car skids out of control south of Lake Geneva, hits a utility pole and two concrete pillars and rolls over twice.

Baker is killed as is his 2-year-old daughter, Brenda Kingston, whose mother is Leatha Baker Kingston, Elkhorn. Also dead is Brenda's uncle, Robert V. Wilson, Elkhorn.

■ **July 31:** The folk-singing Mitchell Trio performs in Williams Bay's Music by the Lake series. In the trio are Joe Frazier, Mike Kobluk and John Denver.

■ **Aug. 9:** Nine African-American children from Milwaukee's inner city get a two-week taste of life in Janesville and make new friends among local kids as guests of local families in a program sponsored by First Congregational United Church of Christ. Hosting the Milwaukee children are the families of Norman Alff, James Cripe, Don Ryan, John E. Anderson and Raymond Brandt.

■ **Sept. 9-10:** Total TV, the first cable television system in Wisconsin, starts operation in Janesville. Owner and founder is Jim Fitzgerald. Special guest for the opening ceremonies is Miss Universe 1966, Margareta Arvidsson of Sweden.

■ **Sept. 12:** Classes begin at the University of Wisconsin's Rock County campus on Kellogg Avenue in Janesville. Twenty-one faculty members teach 294 freshmen at the two-year college, one of the UW's Center schools.

■ **Sept. 22:** Richard Nixon speaks to a friendly, cheering crowd at Rock County Airport. The former vice president is here to stump for fellow Republican Henry Schadeberg, a former 1st District congressman who is seeking a return to that office, and to test the political waters for his presidential bid in 1968.

On the flight to Rock County from Racine, Nixon impresses local newsmen with his relaxed friendliness, openness and knowledge. Dressed in a blue suit and smiling at the cordial reception, Nixon rips President Johnson for his policies on Vietnam, social programs and the economy.

Nixon calls for an end to domestic spending on LBJ's "Great Society" programs until the Vietnam War ends, which he maintains can be achieved with a U.S. victory if the United States expands its use of air and sea forces in Southeast Asia. Otherwise, Nixon says, the war will continue another five years.

"Instead of declaring war on poverty," Nixon says of Democrats, "they have declared war on the poor with higher food prices, higher clothing prices and higher taxes." Asked about his 1968 presidential aspirations, Nixon is coy: "Let's worry about this election and let the other party

speculate about 1968."

■ **September:** The first performance by Janesville's Green Berets, a drum and bugle corps, is in the city's Labor Day parade.

■ **Oct. 20:** The Gazette breaks ground to erect a new building to house the newspaper and radio station WCLO. The old building will be razed to make room for a plaza.

■ **Oct. 21:** William Grudzinski, a 1964 graduate of Edgerton High School and a Marine for two years, becomes the first Rock County man to be killed in combat in the Vietnam War. The 20-year-old's wife, Judy, is expecting their first child in a month.

A volunteer for duty in Vietnam, Grudzinski is killed by fragments from a "short round" fired from a mortar, presumably friendly fire.

Grudzinski's last letter to his sister in Janesville, Donna Williams, 212 McKinley, arrives after she receives the telegram informing her of his death.

It reads in part: "Don't believe what you hear on TV about this place. It's pure hell. The Marines are getting their tails kicked. They call moderate casualties 259 of a company of 300 men wiped out..."

"One booby-trap wiped out a whole squad in our third platoon, so now they just brought in 24 tanks, and we are going to sweep the end of the country and kill everything that moves. ...

"I don't want any medals. I just want to come home safe. So to do that I have to be careful and believe me I am."

■ **Nov. 5:** The Gazette's weekly picture page is headlined "Autumn on the Milton Campus," but it might just as easily be called "Girls of Milton College." All of the six young women pictured are dressed modestly, but their poses are those of fashion or pinup models.

Some of the phrases used to describe them are: "pensive and pretty," "energetic and attractive," "pretty sun-flecked hair," "cute Irish colleen," "dark-eyed natural beauty" and "the Milton campus never looked so good."

■ **Nov. 9:** Residents of Milton and Milton Junction vote to merge into a single village, Milton. The Miltonians want the merger more than their Milton Junction neighbors. The vote to meld the villages carries Milton 515-47 and Milton Junction 322-201. The merger will become effective with the April 1, 1967, election of a single village board.

■ **Dec. 1:** William J. Schneider, 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wenzel Schneider, Wright Road, Janesville, dies of a sniper wound suffered Nov. 4 in Vietnam. A 1965 Janesville High graduate, Schneider is the first Janesville man to die in the Vietnam War from a combat wound.

■ **Dec. 6:** City Manager Joe Lustig announces he will retire Feb. 28, 1967, after 53 years of service to the city. His length of service often





Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Jack B. Olson, left, General Motors President James M. Roche and Chevrolet and Fisher Body workers celebrate the production of GM's 100 millionth U.S.-built vehicle, a 1967 blue, two-door Caprice Custom Coupe. The car, which rolled off the line April 21, 1967, was taken to GM's birthplace, Flint, Mich., where it was enshrined. About 6 million of GM's cars, trucks and vans had been made in Janesville by this time.

is reported as 55 or 56 years because he started work for the city as an engineer's assistant in 1911, but he left his municipal job to serve as an Army engineer officer in World War I.

■ **Sometime in 1966:** Janesville's Babe Ruth All-Stars repeat as state champs and win the regionals for the right to play in the Babe Ruth World Series in Arizona, where they go 2-2 in the double-elimination tourney.

■ Bruce Kenyon of Milton Union High School is Wisconsin's 145-pound wrestling champion.

■ Monterey Mills, 1725 E. Delavan, becomes Janesville's latest addition to the knitted high-pile synthetic fiber industry.

■ Helgesen Realty demolishes a downtown landmark—the Carle Building on the northeast corner of Main and Milwaukee streets—to make room for a six-story office building (still standing).

■ Glen Oaks (no longer operating) opens on Highway 51 as Rock County's school for "trainable mentally retarded" children ages 6-19.

■ Evansville celebrates its 100th birthday and elects its first female mayor, Ida T. Conroy.

## Fireworks aren't just in sky at Lake Geneva

The 1967 Fourth of July riot in Lake Geneva and other Walworth County towns required armed National Guardsmen to help restore peace.

Independence Day disturbances became common in Lake Geneva in the 1960s as the combination of hot weather, resort atmosphere and a drinking age of 18 lured restless and rambunctious young people from throughout southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

On the night of Sunday, July 2, and into the early morning, 3,000 young people rampaged and barraged police with beer bottles and firecrackers. It was the second flare-up in as many nights.

During the Saturday melee, the drunken rowdies broke windows and stoned houses. They ripped parking meters loose and demolished the city's famed landmark, the statue of cartoon character Andy Gump.

Residents resorted to shotguns loaded with small pellets and rock salt to protect their property from roaming vandals. They wounded five youths intent on destruction.

Cops used dogs to corral the revelers into Library Park, and officers blockaded roads going into Lake Geneva, allowing only those with emergency business to enter the city.

On Monday, July 3, 100 National Guardsmen were on alert at company headquarters in Elkhorn in case they were needed. They were.

Stymied by a 5 p.m. curfew on Monday, 123 of the carousers formed a caravan of cars and motorcycles and hit the communities of Fontana, Williams Bay and Delavan, "moving around the resort area like a blitzkrieg," The Janesville Gazette reported.

The lumbering Guard trucks couldn't keep up, but police cruisers did.

A Williams Bay bar owner repulsed a wave of vandals by firing gunshots in front of them, but the hooligans smashed other business windows until townsmen, deputized on the spot, stood guard with baseball bats and boards.

Delavan Police Chief Harry Larsen talked to the young folks and cooled them down before they did much damage there.

The police set up a roadblock on Highway 50. When they halted the caravan, the armed Guardsmen blocked the carousing caravan's retreat. Officers order the revelers out of their cars; then each driver was accompanied by a Guardsman riding shotgun.

The passengers were herded into Guard trucks.

The Guardsmen and cops arrested 123 people, including 30 girls and young women. The authorities took those arrested to the Walworth County Fairgrounds where they spent the night in barns guarded by bayonet-toting soldiers.

During the riot on Sunday, chanting carousers burned an American flag on the Riviera lawn and beat up three Marine veterans of Vietnam who tried to stop them.

On Monday, 16 carloads of Marines, all previously wounded and recovering at Great Lakes Naval Hospital, and Navy corpsmen arrived to replace the flag to commemorate the holiday.

The 150 servicemen marched through Lake Geneva four abreast in civilian clothes. Many limped on canes and braces.

For 24 hours, they rotated one hour watches to protect Old Glory.

## 1967

■ **Jan. 24:** The temperature rises to a unseasonable 60 degrees by evening, but the springlike warmth combines with a cold front to trigger a springlike storm, and 72-mph winds rip open the clubhouse at the Janesville Country Club "like a can opener." The tornado-like wind lifts the newly constructed Terrace Room off its foundation and strips away the roof of the ballroom.

A large brick chimney crashes through to the second-floor kitchen, but no one is hurt because it's Tuesday and no dinner is served.

■ **Feb. 2:** To trunk or not to trunk is the question as a Gazette article notes that boys at Marshall Junior High School swim nude in

physical education classes while those at the new Franklin Junior High must don trunks because the pool area has windows. No one states a good reason for pool swimming au naturel other than decades-old tradition.

■ **Feb. 6:** Activist Stokely Carmichael speaks in the Whitewater State University Forum series on "Black Power and the Civil Rights Movement." The chairman of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee says blacks must reclaim their identity



Stokely Carmichael





**Above:** Picketers carry signs in support of the Local 197 of the International Typographical Union. The union went on strike against The Janesville Gazette on June 23, 1967. The strike was the first in the 122-year history of the Gazette and lasted for 105 weeks.

**Lower:** Machinists picket at Parker Pen's Arrow Park plant. On March 28, 1968, machinists struck, preventing about 600 assembly workers from operating production lines. Strikes had been threatened—and approved—at the plant during previous labor negotiations, but had been averted by agreements at the bargaining table. The Parker strike was similar to the Gazette strike in that it was the first at the plant, but it also had a big difference—it ended after a little less than two weeks.

and history, and they must organize to control local political offices, especially in large cities.

■ **Feb. 28:** David Feingold, a senior at University of Wisconsin, speaks to an anniversary dinner of the YMCA about his experiences living with a Negro family on Chicago's west side as part of a student program. Society's major problem, says Feingold, son of Leon and Sylvia Feingold, 1207 Vista, is: "How are people going to live together? Is it going to

be a reality? ... It can and must be done. ...

"Blacks must be encouraged to be part of the Janesville YMCA. We must take a look at Janesville, its industries, homes, etc., to see if they are really open."

■ **March 2:** A group of Beloit College students and faculty stage a silent vigil to protest representatives of Dow Chemical recruiting prospective employees on campus. Dow Chemical makes napalm—jellied gasoline—used by

the U.S. military in Vietnam.

■ **March 4:** The weekly Gazette picture page focuses on Head Start, a new federal program of LBJ's Great Society that is funding three centers in Beloit to give underprivileged preschoolers a chance to learn life's simple rules and activities before they start school.

One white boy pretends to make popcorn on a play stove, then turns to a black playmate and says: "Here's your popcorn, brother."

■ **March:** Miniskirts, with hemlines 3 to 4 inches above the knee, start appearing in newspaper fashion photos and cartoons. A few can be spotted on Janesville women in Gazette pictures. Women's fashions for spring also include pants suits.

■ **March 30:** A Delta Air Lines DC-8 cartwheels into a luxury motel in New Orleans and kills 18 people, including nine senior girls from Juda High School who are on a class trip to celebrate what would have been their graduation.

The young women who died are Doreen Williams, Nelva Smith, Janice Siedschlag, Nancy Siegenthaler, Linda Hartwig, Sheila Babler, Joyce Kaderly, Sandra Goecks and Linda Moe. The bodies of eight of the girls are found in charred bathrooms, where they huddled under showers in a futile attempt to escape the flames.

The class was scheduled to return home the same day. Twenty-three classmates survive the dreadful fire, and the Green County community of 300 is shocked into headshaking, whispering sorrow.

■ **April 21:** General Motors makes its 100 millionth vehicle in Janesville. The blue, two-door Chevrolet Caprice is taken to GM's birthplace, Flint, Mich., where it is enshrined. When the Chevy rolls off the line, Janesville has made about 6 million of GM's 100 million cars, trucks and vans.

■ **May 6:** Muriel Humphrey, wife of Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, visits Janesville to address the annual conference of the Wisconsin Association for Retarded Children. She visits Janesville High and Glen Oaks schools.

Mrs. Humphrey quotes her husband: "The American people have a strong sense of conscience. We will not rest, we dare not rest until we have helped those who cannot help themselves. This is our creed. This is our deed."

■ Janesville cops respond to a call of a noisy party in an upstairs apartment on South Main Street and find one young woman stripped to the waist, dancing for several beer-drinking young men, and another young woman nude in a bedroom. The topless dancer, not stopping for a wrap, and three drinkers light out across a rooftop to freedom.

■ **May:** The congregation of Asbury United





**Left:** Students who will eventually attend Parker enter what was Janesville High School for the start of their school day—in the afternoon. Until the completion of the Parker High School building, both Craig and Parker students shared facilities.



**Right:** The school day ended at 12:11 p.m. for Craig students, but there was a downside. Their day began before dawn. Some students found out a nap during class was the best way to cope.

## Shared school makes for long days

Delays of many kinds prevented Parker High School from opening as scheduled in September 1967, and the postponement created an unusual school day at Craig, formerly Janesville High School.

Craig students had to rise before dawn to finish a school day of 40-minute classes before being dismissed at 12:11 p.m.

The building then became a different school when Parker entered. Students didn't finish their school day until after the sun went down.

On Feb. 12, about 1,100 Parker students enjoyed their first day of classes in their \$6 million building.

They had plenty of room because the 280,000-square-foot brick building was designed for 2,000 students. The split-level school also graduated from one level in the front to three in the rear.

Named for George S. Parker, founder of Parker Pen, the school had 88 instructional rooms, two lecture halls, a television production studio and office space for teachers in each department.

Parker was equipped with an Olympic-size swimming pool and a main first-floor gymnasium that could be divided into four smaller gyms.

J.P. Cullen & Son was general contractor for Parker.

A rush of activity finally prepared Parker for its opening, but some details remained to be finished.

The teachers' lounge was devoid of furniture.

"Invention prevailed, however," The Janesville Gazette reported, "and an inverted wastebasket became a table with a single folding chair pressed into service."

Methodist Church consecrates its new church at 1810 Kellogg, built next to its Fellowship Hall, where services have been conducted for several years.

■ **June 23:** The Gazette's front page has a decidedly different look: Most stories are composed on typewriters, rather than standard typesetting machines, because Local 197 of the International Typographical Union goes on strike over an impasse in negotiations. The newspaper maintains that the strike is not over wages but over international work rules the union wants to include in the contract and the union's insistence on having its local employees

reproduce ads that already were printed by another source.

The reproduced ads simply will be discarded, so the demand is for "make work," the paper argues in reporting the story.

Despite the Gazette's first work stoppage in its 122-year history, the news and advertising staffs, Pressman's Union and management continue to publish the paper.

The union agrees that the work rules and reproduction demands are issues but says they concern job security. The union also maintains that hours and wages remain as issues.

The strike will drag on for 105 weeks.

■ **July 1:** Oleo margarine colored to look like butter may be purchased legally in Wisconsin. For decades, the state's dairy industry managed to keep margarine a contraband spread whose sales would mean fines or possible jail terms but which was sold legally in Illinois and smuggled into Wisconsin.

■ **July 3-5:** Municipal workers start to move into their offices in Janesville's new City Hall, 18 N. Jackson. The move will not be complete until summer 1968. The \$1.65-million building replaces the 60-year-old City Hall that sat where the new courtyard is.

■ **July 31:** Lake Geneva passes an ordinance banning go-go girls—dancers in bikinis—and swimsuit-clad waitresses from establishments serving alcohol. The headline reads: "Geneva Go-Go Girls Have To Go-Go."

A second ordinance prohibits the granting of an alcohol license to any female unless more than 60 percent of the establishment's business comes from the sale of food.

■ **Aug. 5:** Clara Wright, 77, of 941 Blaine, is recuperating in Mercy Hospital after being trapped for 23 hours in an aluminum lawn chair. Inside her sewing room, she pins a new seat to the folding chair, but when she sits in it, it collapses, jack-knifing and pinning her so that she can't move the chair or extricate herself.

She suffers painful cramps, panic and shivers, passing out for periods and awakening to scream in vain for help. Her granddaughter, Mrs. James McCutcheon, finds her and calls for firemen, who must cut apart the chair to free the elderly woman.

"I sweat beads of death sweat," Mrs. Wright says. "I knew that I was going to see Gabriel pretty soon."

■ **Sept. 1:** The thing to wear at the Walworth County Fair is a flower painted on your face, leg or arm by a California painter at the "psychedelic skin-painting booth." One young woman who has a flower embossed on her cheek gives her name only as Valerie Flower.

■ **Sept. 15:** Joyce Archer, 32, a veteran employee in the Rock County office of accounting, pleads guilty to embezzling almost \$17,000 from the county over four years. Her attorney, Joseph Forrester, says Archer wants to make restitution and that the money went for no extraordinary expense other than to support her family.

Archer, mother of two, is sentenced to an indeterminate prison sentence not to exceed 2½ years.

■ **Sept. 22:** Karl Samek, who has served as acting Janesville city manager since the retirement of Joe Lustig, is chosen as the city's new top administrator. Samek is a graduate of Janesville High and Milton College and World War II Army veteran. Hired by the city in 1953



as an accountant in the engineering department, Samek also was budget director and Lustig's administrative assistant.

■ **September:** Monroe School on Pontiac Drive becomes Janesville's 14th elementary school, both public and private. Built from essentially the same plans as Jackson and Madison schools, it has 24 classrooms, a multipurpose room and a library.

■ The completion of the Parker High School building is delayed by hang-ups in finances, a steel shortage and a bricklayers' strike, so the 1,100 students supposed to be taught at Janesville's westside high school are double-shifting with Craig students in their building. Classes are shortened from 53 to 40 minutes for all students so the Parker school day can be piggy-backed on the Craig schedule. The Craig kids start early in the morning, and the Parker kids don't finish until the evening.

■ **Oct. 13:** The Janesville Education Association, the teachers' union, and the school board are at odds over teachers' salaries, and the JEA threatens a mass resignation of teachers if negotiations don't resume on the board's last offer. The board is offering \$650 across-the-board annual raises, which would make a starting teacher's salary \$6,000. The teachers don't object to the base salary, but they contend that experienced instructors with more education should get higher percentage increases rather than a flat amount.

The school board is faced with both paying the high costs of building and expanding schools and trying to correct what it recognizes as shortcomings in teachers' salaries.

■ For the third consecutive Friday night, Janesville union members march on the Gazette in support of the striking typographers. Three hundred strike supporters march from the Labor Temple (no longer standing) at the west end of downtown. They break several basement windows of the old Gazette building. As the march returns to the Labor Temple, a small group breaks off and demonstrates in front of the Monterey Hotel, where police close the bar.

The small group charges police outside the hotel, and the cops respond with tear gas. One man is hospitalized with injuries.

Ugliness continues in the Gazette strike for several days. Hundreds picket the newspaper, and workers crossing the picket line are jostled. Minor fires are set, and property is damaged.

Police Chief Jasper Webb pledges a crack-down on illegal acts in street demonstrations, but they continue, and police become targets of fire-crackers and eggs, most thrown by teenagers. At least three men are arrested.

■ **Oct. 18:** Club-swinging Madison police join campus police to break up a large anti-war demonstration on the UW campus. Sixty-five

people, including several officers, are treated for injuries; 13 student leaders are ordered expelled.

State Attorney General Bronson La Follette blasts the cops for brutality.

■ **Oct. 20:** The JEA presents a list of 365 classroom teachers who vow to resign in one month if their contract is not resolved. The JEA is the first teachers union in the state to take such action.

■ **Oct. 26-27:** The Music Man himself, Meredith Wilson, stays in Janesville for two days, making many appearances and breaking into songs from his hit musicals, "The Music Man" and "The Unsinkable Molly Brown."

■ **Nov. 6:** The Janesville School Board contends that the mass teacher resignation in fact constitutes an illegal strike. It also invokes an administrative rule to gag teachers from talking to the media about contract negotiations.

■ **Nov. 8:** The school board and teachers union agree to state mediation to resolve the impasse, and in a week, the third mediation session produces a compromise, a total pay raise of \$722,000 for all teachers. The amount is \$122,000 more than the board's last offer of \$600,000 and \$138,000 less than the JEA's last demand of \$960,000. The teachers withdraw their mass resignation but later reject the contract because they think not enough of the money will go to experienced teachers.

The contract will not be resolved until 1968.

■ **Nov. 16:** Three members of the Madison-based Wisconsin Draft Resistance Union are arrested for loitering at Craig High when they pass out anti-war literature.

■ **Dec. 8:** Gibbs Manufacturing agrees to buy Amphenol Controls Division. Both are Janesville operations: Gibbs is a subsidiary of Hammond Organ Corp.; Amphenol a division of the Walworth County-based Borg Corp. They share similar products: precision electronics for the U.S. military.

■ **Dec. 12:** Faced with a property tax rate increase of \$16.65, the Janesville City Council, for the first time ever, cuts the school board's budget. The tax rate at this time is combined—city and school under final council authority. Cuts in both budgets result in a \$12.10 increase in the tax rate for a rate of \$68 per \$1,000 assessed value.

■ **Sometime in 1967:** The new Parker High Vikings post Janesville's first winning football season since 1949, going 6-3 including victories over both Craig, 32-7, and the first win, 12-0, over Beloit by a Janesville team since 1958.

■ Night baseball is played for the first time at Riverside Park.

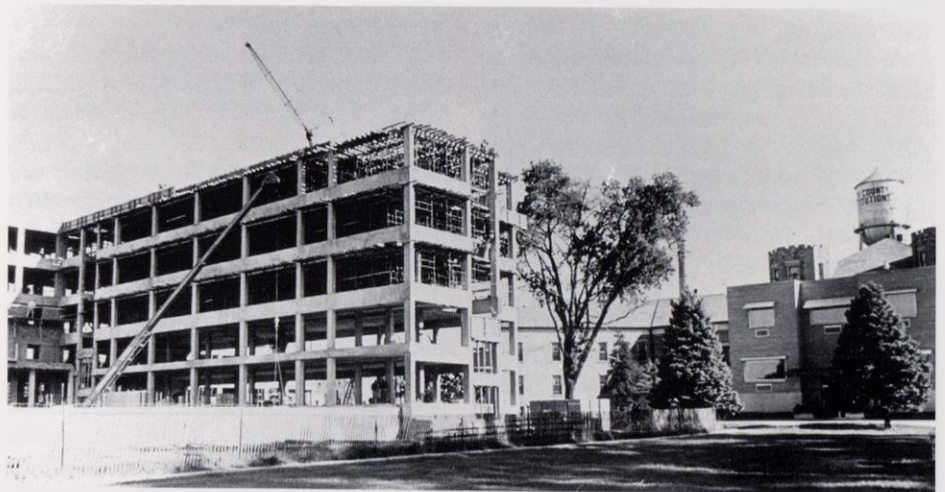
■ Janesville's first Pizza Hut opens on Milton Avenue.

■ North Central Airlines transports more than 8,200 passengers from the Rock County Airport with seven daily flights, including two on prop-jet aircraft, a first for the airport.

## 1968

■ **Jan. 11:** Rock County members of the National Farmers Organization, a relatively new activist group, join a national movement to withhold grain from processors to try to drive up prices. The farmers want \$1.50 per bushel of corn compared to the current 80 cents and \$3 for a bushel of soybeans as opposed to the \$2.35.

■ **Feb. 9:** George Romney, governor of Michigan, visits the Janesville home of Roy and Jeanne Hoffman to drum up support for his bid for the Republican Party's presidential nomination. He charges that President Johnson's current Democratic administration has not told the truth on Vietnam and that the only way the United States can extricate itself from the continued escalation of the war is to win the loyalty of all the Vietnamese people by working not for victory but for "guaranteed neutrality" for the South-east Asian country.



**Rock Haven, the county home for the elderly and others needing long-term care, starts taking shape during construction in the 1960s.**



■ **Feb. 10:** 16-year-old Sally Mixon persuades her father, Jack, 605 Ringold, to let her use the family sedan to drive five friends to a wrestling match in Edgerton. The trip ends in tragedy.

The car careens off River Road below a hill near Edgerton, and Sally and Nanette Porter, 16, of 126 S. Randall, are killed. Patricia Steinbicer, 16, of 425 S. Lincoln, dies the next day.

Surviving the crash but needing hospitalization are three more 16-year-old girls from Janesville: Connie Hefty, Dorothy Zyc and Bonnie Wait.

■ **Feb. 12:** 1,100 students in grades 10-12 attend the first day of classes at Parker High School, ending the double shift at Craig.

■ **Feb. 22:** A national survey of 1,000 teen-



The shape of American cars changed during the 1960s. Tail fins, like on the 1960 Impala above, were shown the door and cars hit the weight room, ushering in the Muscle Car Era. A 1968 Impala is shown below. Both models were made in Janesville.



agers finds that 55 percent consider drug use a serious problem among their age group. Marijuana is the most popular drug, they say, and most young people do not consider it harmful or addictive.

■ **Feb. 24:** The Meadow, a psychedelic dance club operating in the former Ace High Roller Rink (no longer standing) on Highway 11, proves a hit with local teens. Besides the socialization, the main attractions are ultraviolet (black) and strobe lights, a continuous slide and light show, a rug to sit on the floor and rock bands, including national acts such as Neil Diamond.

■ **March 6:** David Robinson, Dean of Student Affairs at UW-Milwaukee, tells U-Rock students that alcoholism is a far greater problem than drug addiction in the United States and that within three years, marijuana will be legalized and readily available in states such as New York and California.

■ **March 7:** A dozen eager young women

show up for Playboy Bunny interviews in Walworth County. The Playboy Resort Club will open near Lake Geneva in the spring, and Playboy is looking to hire 55 young women to wait tables in high heels, scanty frocks and rabbit ears and tails.

Bunnies can expect to turn their \$2 an hour wages into \$200 to \$300 a week through tips, and they can live in the Bunny Hutch, a dormitory on the club's grounds.

Asked what Playboy is looking for in waitresses, the interviewer replies: "The face and the figure, that's it."

■ **April 1:** Because of a tie vote, the Janesville City Council fails to ban the use of DDT to stop the spread of Dutch Elm disease. Urging the ban is state Rep. Lew Mittness, who introduced such a bill to the Wisconsin Legislature.

He tells the council that his children came home dripping with DDT after they were sprayed by a helicopter on the Adams School grounds. City Manager Karl Samek defends air-spraying, saying it involves DDT in low concentration solutions and is the only effective way to reach some trees.

The next month, the council will order a stop to DDT spraying, only to rescind the ban in the fall because DDT is cheaper than other insecticides.

■ **April 4:** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, Tenn., and shocked and angry blacks riot in cities throughout the United States. In Beloit, a group of African-American youths heckle, beat and kick a young white man.

■ **April 7:** 450 people attend a memorial service for King at the First Congregational Church in Janesville sponsored by the clergy of Janesville Dialogue. The flag flies at half-staff at the Rock County Courthouse.

■ **April 29:** The new, \$932,000 Janesville Public Library, 316 S. Main, opens. The 41,403-square-foot building is air-conditioned, contains 76,000 books and has a staff of 23.

■ **May 20:** Two Edgerton men are sentenced to federal prison after pleading guilty to stealing from the First National Bank of Edgerton. Merrill Bender, 28, former president of the Edgerton Jaycees, is sentenced to two years, and Richard Engler, 37, former bank employee, gets one year.

Engler tells authorities the pair embezzled \$131,000 from the bank to bet on a horse race and take a trip to Hawaii. The duo is convicted of stealing only \$19,823, though, because the rest of the cash is returned to the bank.

■ **June 5:** Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, JFK's younger brother known as Bobby, lies near death after being shot in California, where he just won the Democratic presidential primary.

The Gazette prints a Page 1 editorial decry-

ing what, in a matter of hours, will be another assassination. "There was a stillness in the air this morning, a stillness unnatural even for such an hour on such beautiful spring day," the editorial reads. "Perhaps it was the unheard sound of Americans thinking, 'How long, oh Lord, how long shall this killing go on.'"

■ **July 1:** Wisconsin creates vocational school districts, and separate schools and/or programs in Janesville, Beloit and Monroe are melded into one district controlled by a single board of directors (eventually resulting in Blackhawk Technical College).

In October, a single engine airplane is donated to the new district, and it offers aircraft mechanics classes for the first time at Rock County Airport.

■ **July 1:** Following the State Patrol's lead, the Janesville Police Department will start demanding that drivers suspected of being drunk submit to compulsory breath or blood tests.

■ **July 21:** Yet another new church, St. Mark Lutheran, 2921 Mount Zion, welcomes the congregation for first services.

■ **July 25-26:** Racial violence erupts at Whitewater State University (UW-Whitewater). High school-age black students living on campus for the summer in the Upward Bound program march downtown to protest insults made to black girls. Stories differ on what happens next: Negro youths either insult white girls, or they get upset when a restaurant closes just as they are about to enter, or both.

The black students return to Carlson Hall, and a fight breaks out between blacks and whites. Responding police fire tear gas through the windows, and students throw furniture out windows before the gas routs them.

Several students are injured, and four students—three black, one white—are arrested. The university shuts down the Upward Bound program, but most of its 150 participants refuse to leave campus.

"It was racism, overt racism and police brutality. And you can say I said that," program instructor Elliot Tenofsky tells a reporter.

A day afterward, university officials relent and agree to continue the program.

■ **Aug. 1:** Frank Sinatra sings at the Rock County 4-H Fair. Frank Sinatra Jr., that is.

■ **Aug. 21:** Two Janesville exchange students—Linda Van Saun, 17, of 1123 Columbus Circle, and David Hyzer, 136 S. Garfield—are holed up in their hotel rooms in Prague, Czechoslovakia, awaiting the Soviet invasion to simmer down.

Their Foreign Study League tour has taken them to cities behind the Iron Curtain, including Moscow, but the Soviet occupation to thwart democratic-minded reforms has closed all travel for foreigners. The Janesville pair hears scattered



gunfire and jets and rockets over their hotel, and they see Russian tanks and wounded Czechs.

Van Saun and Hyzer are temporarily stranded but make it to Vienna, Austria, in a couple of days.

■ **Aug. 26-30:** Tens of thousands of anti-war protesters descend on Chicago to disrupt the Democratic National Convention. A small cadre is violent, hurling objects along with insults at police, and cops respond with billy clubs and tear gas in what is described as a "police riot."

Gazette Managing Editor Robert Rhodes is in Chicago to cover the convention. Most of his stories deal with straight politics, but he reports that Chicago cops were "mean" and physical before the true violence erupted.

■ **Sept. 28:** The UW football team loses 21-17 to the University of Washington at Camp Randall on new artificial turf made by Norwood Mills in Janesville.

■ **Oct. 7:** James Anton, 17, Williams Bay, takes his fight not to be expelled from school to court. Anton has been tossed from Williams Bay High School because his hairstyle is collar-length in back, Beatle bangs covering his forehead in front and long, bushy sideburns.

"It's my constitutional right to wear my hair as I choose," he says. "I'm not harming anyone, disrupting school or offending my classmates."

A Walworth County judge issues a temporary injunction allowing Anton to return to school, but the judge's ruling is not based on the constitutionality of the district's action but on the fact the school board did not give Williams proper notice of his expulsion hearing.

■ **Oct. 11:** Carolyn Ann Purdy, a 1965 graduate of Janesville High School and senior at UW-Madison, is charged with taking part in a "lewd, obscene and indecent performance" because she was one of two female students who danced nude behind a screen of smoke to portray innocence in a "hippie" version of "Peter Pan."

Though 1,500 people saw three productions on Oct. 1, the charges against Purdy and play producer Stuart Gordon are dropped because of lack of witnesses. Purdy, a "slender, 21-year-old brunette," marries Gordon.

In a subsequent letter to the Gazette, Purdy expresses disappointment that the case, described by the Dane County district attorney as an important test of obscenity, was not tried.

"By withdrawing charges before ever getting into court, (the district attorney) avoided a loss in his important test case, but denied 'Peter Pan' the total vindication it should have enjoyed," Purdy writes. "The implication that the play was obscene regrettably will remain despite the apparent approval by the 1,500 persons who saw it."

■ **Nov. 1:** Prent Corp. starts business in Janesville as a manufacturer of formed plastic

packaging. Jack Pregont is president.

■ **Nov. 4:** GM announces a reorganization that puts Janesville's Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants under the new GM Assembly Division, ending the operations' separate managements and eventually their separate facilities and UAW locals. The operation has a new employment high: almost 7,000 hourly and salaried workers.

■ **Nov. 5:** Richard Nixon defeats Humphrey by a hair's breadth to win the presidency, but the results in Janesville and Rock County are not nearly as close as they are nationally. Nixon outpolls Humphrey 25,227 to 20,567 in the county with segregationist George Wallace, running on a racist, populist platform, getting 3,665 votes.

In Janesville, the results are Nixon, 8,792; Humphrey, 7,771; and Wallace, 988.

■ **Dec. 4:** Arnie Agnew, chairman of the Rock County Board, is "horrified" to learn that the courthouse in Janesville was secretly "bugged" with electronic listening devices the previous summer. While not acknowledging the electronic eavesdropping, District Attorney Robert J. Ruth issues a statement saying he hired a private investigator to probe security problems at the courthouse, including unauthorized entry into the DA's office and missing files.

■ **Dec. 6:** A legislative subcommittee recommends that Wisconsin drop its 35-year-old ban on the sale of contraceptives—including the relatively new birth control pills and traditional prophylactics—to unmarried people. The law classifies contraceptives as "indecent articles."

■ **Sometime in 1968:** Larry Hough of Arlington, Va., son of Mr. and Mrs. John Hough of Janesville, wins a silver medal in the Summer Olympics as half of the U.S. two-man rowing team.

■ Janesville resident Fred Lasher is a relief pitcher for the World Series champion Detroit Tigers.

■ Janesville's American Legion baseball team wins the state championship.

■ Jan Hoffman racks up his seventh All-City Golf Championship, and Bob Luchsinger rules city handball for the 16th straight year.

■ Ten Rock County servicemen are killed in the Vietnam War, and a Janesville civilian, Francis Rasmussen, 36, a Korean War veteran, is killed in a Viet Cong raid on an American officers' club during the Tet Offensive. Rasmussen was working for a private architectural firm.

■ Passenger rail service to what was once the thriving rail hub of Janesville continues to dwindle: The Milwaukee Road runs only two trains daily from Janesville, one southbound to Chicago, one northbound to Madison.

■ The Janesville Area Human Rights Council and League of Women Voters persuade the city council to pass an open housing ordinance, and



The Janesville City Council sits in session in the new Municipal Building, which was dedicated in 1968. The new City Hall had 42,800 square feet of space, more than twice what the old building had.

various programs bring black children for sojourns in the city or arrange weekend exchanges in which African-American and Janesville families swap homes.

■ The Rock County Council on Alcoholism forms in response to a 1967 survey that projected 1,700 alcoholics and 4,320 problem drinkers in the county but no local treatment centers and few services for alcoholics.

■ Rock County statistics show that 1,200 boys are growing up without fathers in the county, and Big Brothers of Janesville is formed to give fatherless boys adult mentors.

## 1969

■ **Feb. 3:** The Whitewater chapter of the Society of Afro-American Students makes five demands of the Whitewater State University administration: a culturally relevant black student union, more financial aid for qualified black students, black instructors in all departments, evaluation of incoming black instructors by black students and a minimum of only eight credits to qualify as a full-time student.

■ **Feb. 20:** Federal Judge James E. Doyle rules that Williams Bay High School's dress code banning long hair on male students is unconstitutional. The ruling affects James A. Anton, honor student and athlete, and Thomas Breen, 16.

Anton first challenged his expulsion in 1968 and won on a technicality. But the state superintendent of schools upholds his and Breen's expulsions.

In what is believed to be the first ruling by a federal judge regarding the constitutional right of males to wear long hair and facial hair, Doyle says: "Freedom to wear one's hair at a certain length or to wear a beard is constitutionally





**Shurtleff Ice Cream Co. sits empty and for sale on Janesville's South Main Street. The 91-year-old business was sold on Dec. 1, 1969.**

protected, even though it expresses nothing but individual taste."

■ **March 14:** Three people die, and four others are seriously injured because of a traffic accident on Prairie Road four miles north of Beloit. Killed instantly in the head-on crash are driver John C. Stafford, 61, rural Janesville, and 15-month-old Theresa Tinkham of Beloit. Theresa's mother, Rita, the other driver, dies in Beloit Memorial Hospital.

Two of her other children, Cynthia, 4, and Scott, 5, are in critical condition, and two passengers in Stafford's car also are hospitalized with critical or serious injuries: Helen Extrom, 56, rural Janesville, and Eunice Day, 53, of 2432 Rutledge.

■ **March 15:** The motel cottage near Lake Geneva is "cloudy with a sweet and sickening smoke" when 21 law officers bust up a pot party and arrest 20 Walworth County young people. Simple possession of marijuana is a felony in Wisconsin with a first conviction carrying a sentence of not less than one or more than 10 years in prison.

■ Yippie leader and eventual Chicago 7 defendant Jerry Rubin tells a Beloit College audience that more bloodshed is in store for the nation's cities and campuses.

Wearing a Viet Cong flag on his shoulders, Rubin tells the audience: "Destruction of America and American principles are the ultimate goals of the revolution, baby." He calls the policeman who arrested him in Chicago during the 1968 convention demonstrations, Robert Pearson, a Beloit College alumni, an "undercover pig."

In later life, Rubin becomes an ultimate member of the Establishment he loathes as a young man: a securities broker.

■ **April 28:** 5,360 hourly workers strike the GMAD plant in Janesville as do UAW members at five other newly formed GMAD plants. The main issue stems from the consolidation of Chevrolet and Fisher Body into General Motors Assembly Division. Members of what is now UAW Local 95 in Janesville want to be paid the higher of what were two different pay scales for Fisher and Chevy workers.

They return to work May 19 with a new contract and most demands met.

■ **May 16:** The Janesville Police Department starts using its new Sony video-corder, priced \$2,700, to tape suspected drunken drivers when they are arrested and interviewed.

■ **May 26:** A "jilted lover" kills two people, then himself in Janesville's first homicides in 25 years.

Urial "Riley" Behling, 35, of 451 N. River St., uses a .38-caliber revolver to slay Goldie L. Thomas, 28, of 432 N. Parker Drive, and her date for the night, Steven L. Brown, 21, of 212 W. Milwaukee. Behling also seriously wounds Douglas Miller, 22, of 465 S. Fremont, before committing suicide in a field in Plymouth Township by connecting a hose to his running car's exhaust and passing it through the car's window.

Behling was "crazy in love with that girl," a friend says, and was brooding since his divorce that he was losing Thomas, the reason for the marital split-up. The straw that apparently pushes him over the edge is finding Thomas and Brown dancing at a local tavern.

Behling, a GM worker, goes to Thomas' home and finds Brown and Thomas asleep in her bedroom. He orders Brown against a wall, pushes the gun into his stomach and shoots him twice. Behling then drags Thomas outside, where he knocks her and a neighbor, awakened by the fra-

cas, down with a car.

Behling returns inside where he shoots Miller, who was staying over at Thomas' apartment with another woman.

As Thomas begs, "Don't do this. Don't do this," Behling shoots her fatally in the chest.

Friends and acquaintances describe the murderer as a "good kid" and "decent sort of fellow" and Thomas, the mother of a 5-year-old boy, as "ladylike and polite."

■ **June 16:** Albert Buehl, 518 N. Adams, is killed by a shotgun blast to the face in the liquor store where he was a part-time clerk on West Court Street.

The 62-year-old Buehl, a former partner in a tavern, is shot twice, once in the right side and once in the mouth. His body is found in a cooler 16 minutes after the always punctual Buehl opened the store at 8 a.m. Buehl's wallet still contains \$85, and money remains in the cash register, so robbery is apparently not the motive.

One of his employers, William Cronin, describes Buehl as a "hell of a nice fellow (without) an enemy in the world." Janesville police do not find witnesses, clues or the gun, and Chief Murray O. Cochrane concedes: "This could be a sticky one."

He's right. Thirty years later, Buehl's murder was still unsolved.

■ **June 28:** The Gazette strike officially ends after two years and four days, the longest labor strike in Janesville history. The strike started June 23, 1967, when 31 members of International Typographical Union Local 197 walked off their jobs.

The newspaper published without interruption, and within nine weeks, five of the strikers returned to work. The strike was marred by violent demonstrations and vandalism by members of other unions supporting the Gazette pickets.

In a new vote, the workers reject the union 26-0, and the pickets make an unconditional offer to return to work. Twelve of the 26 have found other jobs.

The strike ends when the Gazette reinstates three pickets, places two others who are near retirement on company pensions and puts the others on a preferential hiring list.

The strike has held up completion of the new Gazette building and demolition of the old building.

■ **June:** Two of Janesville's longtime leaders in education and recreation retire, each with 40 years of service.

Ken Bick, principal of Janesville and Craig high schools since 1946 and vice principal for JHS for 10 years before that, retires as the Class of '69 graduates. Bick graduated from JHS in 1922 and was long active in school and community affairs.



Pat Dawson was recreation and playground director and civil defense director for the city as well as physical education director and playground director for the school district. He also commanded the 32nd Quartermaster Company, one of Janesville's National Guard units.

■ **Cindi Anne Morgan**, 18-year-old Craig graduate and Miss Janesville, is chosen Miss Wisconsin. The "honey-blond beauty" is the youngest of the 50 contestants in the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City, N.J.

■ **July 10:** Pfc. Leslie Bellrichard, a Janesville native whose wife and mother live in California, is posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award.

On May 20, 1967, less than a month after Bellrichard arrived in Vietnam, he and four other soldiers were under attack in a foxhole. Bellrichard was throwing a hand grenade when a mortar round exploded nearby, knocking him to the ground and the grenade from his hand.

But Bellrichard immediately jumped on the grenade, giving his life to save his four comrades.

■ **July 16-24:** The digital event timer that fires the rockets to propel Apollo 11—command ship Columbia and lunar lander Eagle—out of Earth orbit toward the moon and back to Earth again was designed and built by Gibbs Manufacturing and Research in Janesville.

■ **Sept. 2:** Father James Groppi, noted Milwaukee activist, leads 50 adults and 20 children in a non-violent march on the Rock County Courthouse, home of the county department of social services, to protest the state's cutting welfare benefits.

■ **Sept. 29:** Father Groppi takes the welfare protest to Madison, where his boisterous group takes over the Assembly chamber for 11 hours.

Assemblyman Lew Mittness, a Janesville Democrat, tries to persuade Groppi to lead the group out of the Capitol before innocent people are hurt, but two demonstrators grab Mittness by the arms and force him to a door.

■ **September:** Van Buren Elementary School, 1515 Lapham, opens with 613 students. Van Buren is Janesville's first "pod school" with students in ungraded units and open classrooms to provide flexibility for teachers to instruct several classes simultaneously or to concentrate on small groups.

■ The second-year Milwaukee Bucks start training camp at Milton College with the first pick of the college draft, a 7-foot-2 center named

Lew Alcindor (Kareem Abdul-Jabbar).

■ **Oct. 15:** It's Vietnam War Moratorium Day, and students dot the lawn at the U-Rock campus with white crosses as a reminder of the war's many deaths. Some 60 Craig students leave the school and sing and chant outside for an hour and a half to show their pro-peace feelings.

About 300 people rally at the Rock County Courthouse, where one of the speakers they hear is Phillip Parrish, representing Veterans for Peace. Parrish is one of The Janesville 99. He survived the Bataan Death March and years in Japanese prison camps.

■ **Oct. 17:** Janesville police raid an erotic book store that opened on North Main Street and arrest two South Beloit, Ill., men on charges of selling obscene material.

Three days later, the men, confident they are within their constitutional rights, reopen the store. Police again raid the store and seize all material on display.

In December, Federal Judge Doyle orders police to return materials seized solely on the basis of obscenity.

■ **Dec. 1:** Shurtleff Ice Cream Co., a 91-year-old Janesville business, ceases operations. The company sells its ice cream business to Schoep's Ice Cream, Madison, and discontinues milk deliveries. The death of Shurtleff's leaves only one milk-processing dairy, Country Quality Dairy, Highway 14, in a city that once had five.

Schoep's employees continue to work at the old Shurtleff's building (no longer standing) on South Main Street. When Shurtleff's started in 1878, it used a horse walking on a treadmill to power the ice cream-making machine.

■ **Dec. 4:** Veterans Memorial Bridge is open for traffic over the Rock River, but much work remains to be done before the 734-foot span is complete.

■ **Dec. 16:** Scuffles erupt between blacks and whites at a basketball game at Whitewater State University. One student is cut with a knife; a black woman is pushed down stairs. Later, 20 to 30 African-American male students invade the all-white Phi Chi Epsilon fraternity house and beat members with pool cues and baseball bats.

A black student fires two shots, but no one is hit. University officials seek criminal charges



**Gary Burghoff  
as Radar**

and suspensions against 15 black students and the white student who pushed the black student down the stairs.

■ **Dec. 29:** Gary Burghoff, 26, is at his parents' home in Delavan, awaiting release of the movie "M.A.S.H.," in which he plays a character that forever defines his acting career: Radar O'Reilly. Burghoff is the only actor to have a part in the movie and a regular role in the subsequent TV show.

■ The \$1.5 million, six-story Helgesen Building on the corner of Main and Milwaukee in downtown Janesville gets its first tenant, a branch office of Mutual Federal Savings and Loan.

■ **Dec. 31:** 100 peaceful anti-war protesters, members of Janesville Area Peace Action Committee, march downtown and conduct a memorial service "for all those who died in war and who will die, from all nations."

■ **Sometime in 1969:** About 1,425 Janesville Elms are found to have Dutch Elm disease, and 580 have been removed. Instead of spraying trees with the controversial and environment-damaging DDT, the city and University of Wisconsin experiment with a new chemical to control spread of the disease through tree roots.

■ Eight Rock County men are killed in the Vietnam War.

■ Three Janesville baseball players are drafted by Major League teams and play in the teams' minor-league organizations: Kent Burdick, drafted by the Cincinnati Reds; Gary Gloede, Cleveland Indians, and Jerry Davis, New York Mets. One other Janesville ball player also is playing with a minor-league team affiliated with a big league club: Bob Strampe, Detroit Tigers.

Another Janesville resident gets a taste of life in the bigs: Catcher Doug Adams is called up late in the season by the Chicago White Sox.

■ Mike Barlass of Milton Union High is the undefeated state heavyweight wrestling champion and wins the title in the U.S. Junior Wrestling Championships.

■ Why does anyone play him? Bob Luch-singer is city handball champ for the 17th straight time.

■ Janesville's Babe Ruth All-Stars repeat as state champs.

■ Bob Curtis wins his ninth consecutive singles title in the Janesville City Tennis Tournament.







# 1970-1979

## AFFLUENCE RUNS OUT OF GAS

### **Janesville watches out for No. 1** **Economic prosperity makes for a growing city** **that struggles to keep a small-town attitude**

*The decade of the 1970s opened with the United States still mired in the Vietnam War and the country ripping itself apart because of it.*

The decade closed with folks boogying to the disco beat while interest rates, inflation and gas prices danced to historic highs.

In between, Richard Nixon became the only U.S. president to resign in the disgrace of scandal and corruption.

The 1970s differed greatly in Janesville and Rock County from previous decades.

In the '40s, southern Wisconsin's men, women, girls and boys pulled together to shoulder the burdens and endure the losses of World War II.

In the '50s, they pulled together to build homes, churches and prosperity.

In the '60s, they were pulled apart by the Generation Gap and the Vietnam War.

In the '70s, they looked out for themselves.

Not that groups did not form and work for the greater good.

The first Earth Day to raise awareness about and alleviate threats to the environment was April 22, 1970. Janesville students cleaned up their school grounds. They warned their parents about environmental hazards. They walked or rode bikes to point up the pollution caused by cars and trucks.

Later the same year, 1,100 environmentally and civically conscious Janesville residents, most of them young people, pitched in to pull junk from the muck of the Rock River.

In 1971, volunteers created the Hotline for Help to give troubled teens advice and someone to talk to in times of crisis.

The Janesville Kiwanis Club contributed money and time in 1974 to create Janesville's first hiking and biking path.

Southern Wisconsin communities joyfully celebrated the United States' 200th birthday in 1976, and part of the Bicentennial party in Janesville was an Ecumenical Celebration that brought believers of different faiths together to share their spirituality.

In 1979, St. John's Lutheran Church in Janesville welcomed refugee families fleeing Cambodia's killing fields.

The same year, Parker High School students staged a Unity Day march and rally to show support for the Americans held hostage in Iran.

But one of the main reasons the Hotline for Help began was to assist young drug abusers. Drug use, an undoubtedly self-centered practice, is most commonly associated with the counterculture of the '60s, but it was in the 1970s that drugs were mainlined into mainstream America.

An investigative series by The Janesville Gazette in 1975 reported that drug use and abuse were common among young adults and teenagers from all walks of life in the city and county. The number of arrests for marijuana possession in Rock County rose from 15 in 1971 to 136 in 1974. Most arrested pot smokers were teenagers.

The number of overdoses on hard drugs also rose sharply. Drug users estimated that Janesville was home to 40 heroin addicts and that 100 lived in Beloit.

What was publicly known of the drug scene undoubtedly was only a part of the whole picture.

At the same time, responsible people urged the legalization of marijuana, which they saw as no more harmful and probably less dangerous than alcohol.

They included John Lindsay, former mayor of New York and presidential candidate, and the Wisconsin Citizens Study Committee on Judicial Organization, a task force appointed by Gov. Patrick Lucey. The National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse favored "de-criminal-



**Left: The Janesville Mall takes shape during construction in the early 1970s. The mall opened in September 1973 and changed the way Janesville residents shopped.**

**Right: Popular female fashions in the 1970s included the miniskirt, hot pants and the bra-less look. This photo from the Janesville Craig yearbook shows miniskirts and plaid were popular in high school.**



ization"—repeal of all jail terms and fines for pot possession—but not outright legalization.

Wisconsin and the federal government reduced first-offense marijuana possession from a felony to a misdemeanor. Failing to win legislative approval was a bill that would have made possession of small amounts of pot a civil, not a criminal, offense. State Sen. Fred Risser, a Madison Democrat, introduced the bill, and the state Council on Drug Abuse supported it.

Whitewater rejected a referendum that would have made marijuana possession an ordinance violation, a civil offense.

Sex moved more into the public eye.

Female fashions included the miniskirt, micromini, hot pants and the bra-less look.

In 1970, the Gazette devoted space on its usually serious editorial page to a humorous, Gazette-authored editorial supporting the miniskirt over the midi with its mid-calf hemline.

The Myers Theater in Janesville tried to survive on X-rated films. In 1999, cable-TV subscribers can see similar fare in their living rooms, but in the '70s, flesh projected on the big screen was initially shocking to middle America.

But many middle Americans bought tickets to the movies, and the first pornographic videocassettes, produced in sexually liberated Denmark, became available in the United States.

Topless dancers often were bottomless. Whip's Inn (later Gensler's) on the western edge of Janesville featured topless dancers and once booked the exotic dancer Serpentina, "82 pounds of woman, 85 pounds of snake."

Adult bookstores opened in Janesville. Cops confiscated porn, but the courts ruled the material was not obscene. A citizens group and the city administration tried to pass an anti-obscenity ordinance. The city council balked at what many members thought was censorship and an infringement of constitutional rights.

"It was a bad ordinance because it would have eliminated half the books, half the artwork in the library," said businessman George Poppas, then a city councilman and an outspoken opponent of the ordinance.

"Nobody had guts enough to be against it because if you were against it, you were for obscenity," he said. "It's amazing to me that people are willing to give up an enormous amount of freedom because they think the law will only get the bad guy."

Janesville voters backed up the council majority, defeating a referendum on the ordinance in every ward.

In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its landmark Roe vs. Wade decision that legalized abortion, an intensely personal issue.

The decision was a victory for the fledgling Women's Liberation movement, which still had a long row to hoe, as evidenced by attitudes in

Janesville. The Gazette editorial advocating short skirts referred to women as "today's miniskirted dollies." The headline on the story localizing the first Women's Liberation Day—Aug. 26, 1970—was "Women's What? Local Gals Ask."

A sarcastic column by a Gazette city editor in 1972 proposed that women be treated as equals in all respects including military service; employment including dirty, nasty jobs, and social situations such as who asks whom for a date and who picks up the tab for dinner.

What the chauvinist failed to realize is that

started a fire in his ex-girlfriend's apartment building and killed her and two other innocent people.

But it wasn't just low lifes committing crimes in the '70s.

In 1974, four police officers—three from Janesville, one from Edgerton—were arrested on charges of receiving stolen property, TVs stolen from a Janesville store, and of perjury for trying to cover it up.

A former cop actually stole the color sets, and two of the four officers still on the job were



**The winter of 1978-79 was a record-breaker. Nearly 70 inches of snow fell that season; and 50 inches dropped on Janesville during the first four months of 1979.**

that equal treatment is just what most women sought—and would continue to seek in 1999.

Rock County hired its first female sheriff's deputy and assistant district attorney in the '70s, and the Janesville Police Department hired its first female officers since a woman cop worked a short stint in the 1920s.

Crime became more violent and meaner in Janesville and Rock County in the 1970s. While scans and spotchecks of newspaper files turned up virtually every homicide in the county for previous decades, they probably did not for the '70s.

Motives remained the same: jealousy, greed, marital strife. But the murders seemed, if possible, more senseless and blatant than in previous years.

Four thugs rolled a drunk for \$60, and one pushed the victim in the Rock River. Three people robbed a gas station for all of \$24, and one shot the attendant in the face. An exhusband gunned down his ex-wife in broad daylight and cold blood on a college campus. A jilted boyfriend

acquitted. But the two who were acquitted were fired or suspended because of official misconduct for hampering the investigations.

A Janesville city councilman pleaded no contest to fraudulent use of telephone credit cards and paid a \$100 fine.

Grand juries indicted many southern Wisconsin contractors—including Janesville and Beloit businessmen and their businesses—for rigging bids on major public construction projects, including the Rock County Health Care Center, youth home, UW-Rock County campus building and Edison Junior High School.

The initial bid-rigging case in 1971-72 involved plumbing and heating contractors. Most pleaded guilty and paid fines of \$2,000 to \$7,000. One Janesville man served six months in jail. The men were active in the community, well liked and otherwise respected.

In 1975, a Janesville highway contractor pleaded no contest to bid-rigging and paid a \$5,000 fine, and in 1976, investigations accused



Janesville, Edgerton and Beloit sewer contractors of bid-rigging.

It would be disingenuous to assume that the contracting firms and individuals publicly accused were the only Rock County businesses and people involved and that the white-collar crimes were limited only to the '70s.

Theft and restraint of trade were not the only examples of local people looking out for No. 1 in the '70s.

Several Janesville city councilmen created a flap when they wanted gold-filled badges that looked like police badges and which were given to their predecessors. One councilman suggested that council members should have police powers.

In 1970, Janesville firefighters played hardball over pay demands. They threatened a sit-in strike—and “cracked heads” if anyone tried to move their equipment. Mediation averted the strike and reached a contract.

But before the contract was settled, the firefighters' union negotiator met in what was supposed to be a secret session with three councilmen, and a fourth council member concurred with the meeting and its decision. The councilmen agreed to the union's pay demands, then brought City Manager Karl Samek in to work out the details.

In an open session, the four voted for the firefighters' pay demands, but approval required five votes because it involved the special appropriation of funds. The quartet's actions circumvented the city's manager-council form of government and the public's right to observe and comment.

Marv Roth, former contractor and executive vice president of the Janesville Area Chamber of Commerce, was council president at the time. He was not invited to the “secret” meeting and said then:

“Whatever the motive might have been, the real result could be the absolute destruction of the city manager-council form of government that Janesville has been proud of for 47 years.”

Reflecting on the period, Roth attributed the split in the council to partisan politics—Democrat vs. Republican—though council elections were supposed to be non-partisan with political affiliations having no bearing.

Poppas was elected to the council shortly afterward.

He thought that council's fractious nature was due to the desire of some members to replace the manager form of government with the mayoral type because they thought they could be elected to a paying mayor's job.

Some members of the city administration were arrogant, Poppas said, and politics and cronyism were common.

“Differing groups were beginning to flex

their muscles,” Poppas said. “Everybody started to look out for themselves, whether as individuals, businesses, unions, the police, the fire department.

“When one group got something, another group wanted the same advantage. There was a pulling apart, rather than a pulling together,” Poppas said.

Janesville's prosperity of the 1950s grew into relative affluence in the '60s, which bred materialism and greed in the '70s, Poppas and Roth agreed.

“I'm gonna get mine.” I guess that's the way it was. Everyone for himself,” Roth said.

Meanwhile, the Rock County Board was going through its own controversies. Supervisors essentially created the administrator's post when they instituted an executive secretary's position in 1968. But the board balked at giving Lynneal Wells full administrative power. It fired him and abolished the position in 1970.

Supervisors formally established the administrator's job, but by mid-1971, they and new Administrator Harlyn Larson were embroiled in more controversy. Among other things, he wanted to reduce the county board from 40 to three or five supervisors.

The board failed in attempts to oust him. When he resigned under pressure in summer 1971, Larson charged that county government was rife with nepotism, shoddy financial practices, ineffectual meetings and reactionary attitudes unwilling to make progressive changes.

The position remained unfilled until July 1973 when Larry J. Brown got the job.

One measure of Janesville's prosperity and growth was the \$18 million Janesville Mall that took almost three years to develop and which opened on Milton Avenue in September 1973. The mall changed not only how and where Janesville shopped but also whom it shopped with.

It changed what had been a friendly neighbor-to-neighbor business environment in an insular community to one in which out-of-town companies were concerned more with the bottom line than about who was contributing to it, Roth and Poppas said.

Malls “changed virtually every city in the country with populations of 10,000 or more,” Roth said. “You can drive through city after city and see downtown stores redeveloped with something else. Where there were law offices on second floors, now they're on the first floor, where there used to be stores.

“All malls did was move downtown shopping into one complex. They reduced a lot of downtown shopping areas into vacant stores. It was all done for the convenience of the customer,” he continued. “Where we had locally owned stores ... suddenly we got stores out in the mall that

were no longer locally owned.

“Locally owned stores just disappeared,” Roth said. “The chains could just undercut the locals when they buy by the (train) car load as opposed to the pickup load. ...

“Janesville was a growing city with a small-town attitude. You see someone at church or at the ball game. He owned the shoe store. He owned the hardware store. You just believed in the quality of the products because this was their home, their town.”

Roth recalled that the butcher whom his father, Frank, patronized knew the Roth family—and the butcher knew when times were tight. The butcher often would give his dad extra bologna or fresh liver for free, Roth said. “Boy! Do I hate liver!”

But he appreciated the butcher's concern for his family.

“The mall killed downtown,” Poppas commented. “Not only did the city not resist it, it pushed it forward. ...

“The town grew very fast in a very short period of time. It was no longer a small community where kids left their bicycles out ... The town grew, but not necessarily for the better. There's a lot more business, but we gave up a lot. People have the assumption that the bigger you are, the better you are. That's nonsense. ...

“The '70s were a tough time because people were doing well, but they were looking out for themselves. They thought they were doing right, but we became disconnected as a community,” Poppas said.

Ironically, Janesville's materialism became evident at a time when the nation and southern Wisconsin were learning that one price for their affluence was the damage done to the environment. Besides efforts to learn about and correct environmental damage and dangers, an anti-nuclear power faction formed in Rock County to oppose a reactor proposed for the Lake Koshkonong area in Jefferson County.

Pressured by the activists, state and federal regulators pulled the plug on the reactor when they determined it was too great an environmental hazard.

Furthermore, American affluence was threatened by high inflation, high interest rates and two energy crises: the Arab Oil Embargo of 1973 and OPEC's doubling of oil prices in 1979.

Those fuel shortages and high interest rates spawned public disenchantment with large cars, which translated into massive layoffs at the General Motors plant in Janesville. The layoffs reverberated through the community.

The layoffs also foreshadowed the 1980s when the plant's products were changed and moved. Rock County faced the possible loss of the GM plant and its thousands of high-paying jobs.



## Protesters find peaceful methods to show opposition

**O**ld Main, the primary building at White-water State University, burns at the hands of arsonists.

Sterling Hall on the UW-Madison campus blows up at the hands of bombers. The explosion kills a graduate student and wounds three other people.

Student protesters barricade streets and set fires in Madison. They burn a supermarket on University Avenue. The National Guard patrols the streets of the state capital and lobbs tear gas grenades at students.

Protesters hurl rocks and Molotov cocktails at Guardsmen.

Guardsmen shoot and kill four students at Kent State University in Ohio. State police kill two protesters and wound 11 others at Jackson State College in Mississippi. Construction workers rough up peaceful demonstrators in New York and elsewhere.

The most violent year of anti-Vietnam War protest and reaction was 1970. One of the primary reasons was President Richard Nixon's decision to significantly widen the war by invading Cambodia.

Protest in Janesville was peaceful, but there was protest.

Sixty or so demonstrators marched on the National Guard Armory on Janesville's High Street. Most were young people. But some were middle-aged, including Phil Parish, a barber who was one of The Janesville 99, the tank company that defended the Philippines in World War II and whose members endured or died in Japanese prison camps and hell ships after their surrender.

UW-Rock County students boycotted classes. So did students at Milton College.

Peter Roang arrived in Janesville in 1970 after the May demonstrations over the Kent State killings and Cambodian invasion. An Edgerton native, Roang was a graduate of Harvard University and a teacher in Burlington.

He also was a conscientious objector to military service, and his required alternative duty was to work for Rock Rehabilitative Services, which became KANDU Industries.

Age 52 in 1999 and owner of Basics, Janesville's natural foods grocery, Roang reflected on protest in Janesville in the 1970s.

"I was meat. I was going (to be drafted)," Roang said. "The whole radicalizing thing for me started in college. I got involved in draft counseling."

Studying economics at Harvard, Roang was stunned to see the statistics that showed the disparity between America's haves and have-nots.

"I was conscientiously opposed to participating in war," Roang said. "War seems to be the wrong answer to any question that's asked. War is a failure of policies that ought to be designed to prevent war from happening."

"When I was young, I thought it was an organized, orchestrated, Machiavellian plan of my elders to make sure war continued to happen

to support a hungry economic machine."

"Now I think it happens because people are too stupid to avoid it."

Though college gave Roang the intellectual framework for his opposition to war, an experience he had in high school in 1962 laid the emotional foundation.

As a high school sophomore, Roang was called to play "Taps" on the bugle for Glenn Bjerke, an Edgerton serviceman not much older than Roang who was killed in an accident in Vietnam years before the United States became officially involved in the fighting.

"None of us knew anything about Vietnam," Roang recalled. "It was a strange scene. Here we are in a cemetery in Edgerton, all kids standing around a casket, everybody crying."

"Here was I, playing 'Taps' for this kid who had been a member of small-town America, and now we were being taught the lessons of international conflict."

"The anti-war movement in Janesville was not well developed, at least in comparison to how it was on the Harvard campus," Roang said.

A small group of people formed the Rock County Draft Counseling Group.

"We offered counseling to young men who were drafted or about to be drafted on their rights and responsibilities and how to avoid the draft," Roang said. "That group became the cadre of the other things that happened."

John Graf, 44, who graduated from Parker High School in 1973, became part of the other things.

"In high school," Graf said, "I was politically aware to the extent that I was frightened to death of the prospect of being drafted and sent to Vietnam. That fear was intense enough that I sought other avenues (protest)."

But Graf didn't recall the war or protest being topics of conversation at Parker.

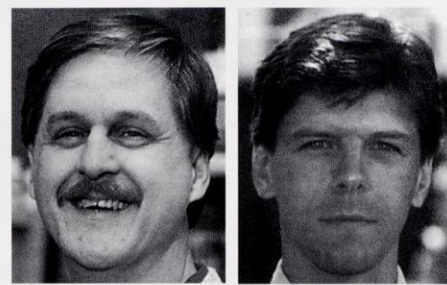
"We marched a couple of times and had a rally," Roang said. "We were as visible as we could be. My recollection is that the (community) response was mostly negative. ..."

"I went on cable TV when it was just starting in Janesville. There was a pro/con show. Jim Welker (then a lawyer, a judge in 1999) was pro-war. I was con. They opened the phone lines. It was really ugly. I don't think he got any calls."

"People called up with questions like, 'What if your mother was being raped by a Nazi, would you kill him?' It didn't seem relevant to why we were engaging in an imperialistic policy in Vietnam."

"The small group of 'kindred spirits' that formed the anti-war cadre were sober, serious people who discussed problems, politics and practical protest even when they were at social gatherings, not action meetings," Roang said.

"They were not radical, long-haired dope-



**Peter Roang and John Graf**

smokers who got together at parties and hatched political idealism," he said. "We never got away from politics. We planned. We conversed. We conspired."

The same group formed the nucleus for Rock County's anti-nuclear effort—which campaigned against a proposed nuclear reactor close to Lake Koshkonong and became part of the nuclear freeze campaign in the early 1980s—and was the core for the local environmental movement in the 1970s, Graf and Roang said.

"We went from how to stop something (the war) from happening to how to make things happen to how to make a positive social change," Roang said.

When the Watergate scandal of 1972-74 exposed the widespread political corruption of President Richard Nixon and his administration, "it didn't surprise me," Graf said.

"I think a childhood of growing up with the horrors of war—even though I was not subjected to the reality of it—showed me the awful, awful thing that could be perpetrated by our government," Graf said. "My feeling was probably sadness and anger more than cynicism."

Roang took the news cynically. He was used to reading about incredible, outrageous government excesses—first in the alternative press, he said, then when the mainstream media reported the same abuses months later.

When Watergate broke, Roang said, "I and a number of people just sat around nodding, nodding 'Of course, of course. What's next?'"

Roang and Graf believe their protest efforts had a positive effect on the Janesville community.

While they heard many negative comments at first, Roang said, "over the intervening years, many people have said that the protests and political action of the 1960s and '70s opened their eyes and minds to what was wrong with the United States and how they could remedy it."

"People were afraid to speak their minds," he said. "In speaking our minds, we were surprised to find people thinking the same way. Once you say it out loud, you find you're not the only one."

"We made people start to talk about the things on their minds and to think that the decisions they made really affected the way the world developed."



# 1970-1979

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1970

■ **Jan. 9:** The largest seizure of hashish—a concentrated form of marijuana—in state history to this date, 2 pounds, is made at the Whitewater Post Office, and four Whitewater State University (UW-Whitewater) students are arrested.

■ **Jan. 10:** Three people are killed, and two injured in a two-car crash near Evansville. Dead are Margaret Krings, 52, Lake Mills, and her daughter and son-in-law, Mary and Charles Link of Johnson Creek.

Hospitalized are Krings' husband, Alfred, 59, who was driving, and the driver of the other car, Douglas A. Sveum, 28, Evansville.

■ **Feb. 1:** WCLO-FM changes its call letters to WJVL to distance itself from its AM counterpart, WCLO.

■ **Feb. 2:** A 31-year-old economics professor at Marquette University announces he will seek the Democratic nomination to challenge U.S. Rep. Henry Schadeberg, R-1st District. Throwing his hat in the ring is Leslie Aspin.

■ **Feb. 7-8:** Fire destroys Old Main, the primary building on the Whitewater State University campus.

Four Fort Atkinson firefighters are hurt. Gary Gebhardt, 34, is in critical condition because he fell 30 feet when pressure from his fire hose forced his ladder away from the burning building.

Destroyed in the blaze are Old Main's north and west wings and a central section of offices, classrooms and shops. Lost are the College of Business and Economics; administrative offices; the music, art and math departments; the campus radio station; drama workshop and maintenance headquarters.

The loss is pegged at \$2 million to \$3 million.

■ **March 4:** Miniskirts—with hemlines well above the knee, often to midthigh or higher—and pants suits are still in for women, though the midiskirt, with a midcalf hemline, is being touted by European and East Coast designers.

Men's fashions—not the jeans and T-shirts of college students—actually change from the basics of the '50s. Fashion-conscious males can choose from double-breasted, high-collar Edwardian suits to jumpsuits to the western look with yoked shirts with slanted pockets. Collars are floppy; lapels are wide.

Men's and women's pants—whether jeans or dress—are bell-bottomed.

■ **March 23:** The Janesville Meals on

Wheels program starts. Meals are made at Mercy Hospital and delivered by volunteers from women's groups of various local churches.

■ **March 16-17:** Parker Pen is hit with the second strike in company history as members of United Rubber Workers Local 663 and International Association of Machinists 1266 picket company headquarters on East Court Street and Arrow Park, the company's factory on North Parker Drive. The main issue is pay.

■ **April 7:** Incumbents generally come up losers in the elections for Janesville City Council and Rock County Board. Among the newcomers elected are Tim Cullen, 26, who leads the field of eight council candidates with 5,772 votes, more than 1,400 more than the next highest vote-getter, and Robert E. Gilliam of Beloit, "believed to be the first Negro elected to the Rock County Board."

Cullen, a Democrat, embarks on a long career as a top vote-getter, eventually serving as majority leader of the Wisconsin Senate.

■ **April 19:** A two-car crash on Highway 11 west of Janesville kills three city people and injures two others. Killed are Richard D. Berndt, 27, of 220 N. Parker Drive, one of the drivers; Katherine Scrivens, 65, of 541 Williams; and her granddaughter, Rhonda Kolberg, 11, of 1227 Richardson.

Kolberg's father, Richard, will die two days later in the hospital, and her mother, Carol, is hospitalized with serious injuries. Blood tests show that Berndt had a blood alcohol concentration of 0.15, the 1970 standard for intoxication.

■ **April 22:** It's Earth Day No. 1, and Janesville residents participate in many ways. Students clean up school grounds, make cloth litter bags for their homes, perform songs and skits. They write letters to their parents about pollution, design and pay for newspaper ads, collect DDT containers from their homes for proper disposal and organize biking and hiking outings to point up the problem of auto exhaust pollution.

■ **April 26:** Mississippi Valley Airways begins offering daily flights from Rock County Airport to Chicago's O'Hare Field. Mississippi Valley's service is short-lived. North Central Airlines continues to offer passenger service from the county air field.

■ **May 1:** Ted Kinnaman, music professor

at UW-Rock County Center and chairman of the Wisconsin New Democratic Coalition, criticizes President Richard Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia as a strategy to end the Vietnam War:

"Mr. Nixon has increased the level of violence in Southeast Asia with his shocking announcement of the expansion of the Vietnamese war into Cambodia. At the same time, he has hypocritically attacked as anarchism the increasingly militant opposition to that war on the part of the young, the black and the alienated at home."

"The simple fact is that violence at home is only a pale reflection of the violence that our government is perpetrating abroad, and the former will cease only when the latter ceases."

■ **May 4-11:** Student demonstrators across the nation are protesting Nixon's expansion of the Vietnam War, and four are killed by National Guardsmen at Kent State University in Ohio. The deaths swell the ranks of protesters at UW-Madison, and the demonstrators set scores of small and large fires, barricade streets and smash windows on and off campus.

A supermarket on University Avenue is burned, and the National Guard patrols streets in Wisconsin's capital for the third time in 16 months.

Protesters hurl rocks and Molotov cocktails at police and soldiers. Cops and Guardsmen lob tear gas at any gathering of students, large or small, that they spot. Dozens of people, including cops and soldiers, are injured, and scores are arrested.

In Janesville, 60 people—mostly young but some UW-Rock faculty—march in front of the Armory. One of the older marchers is Phil Parish, one of The Janesville 99, the tank company that endured the Bataan Death March and Japanese prison camps.

Now a barber with a shop in Creston Park, Parish reiterates that he has opposed the Vietnam War since the first U.S. involvement.

The demonstration is peaceful, so Janesville cops stationed in the Armory don't need the riot gear they are wearing, but they take still and motion pictures of the protesters.

Milton College and UW-Rock students boycott classes and all other campus activities.

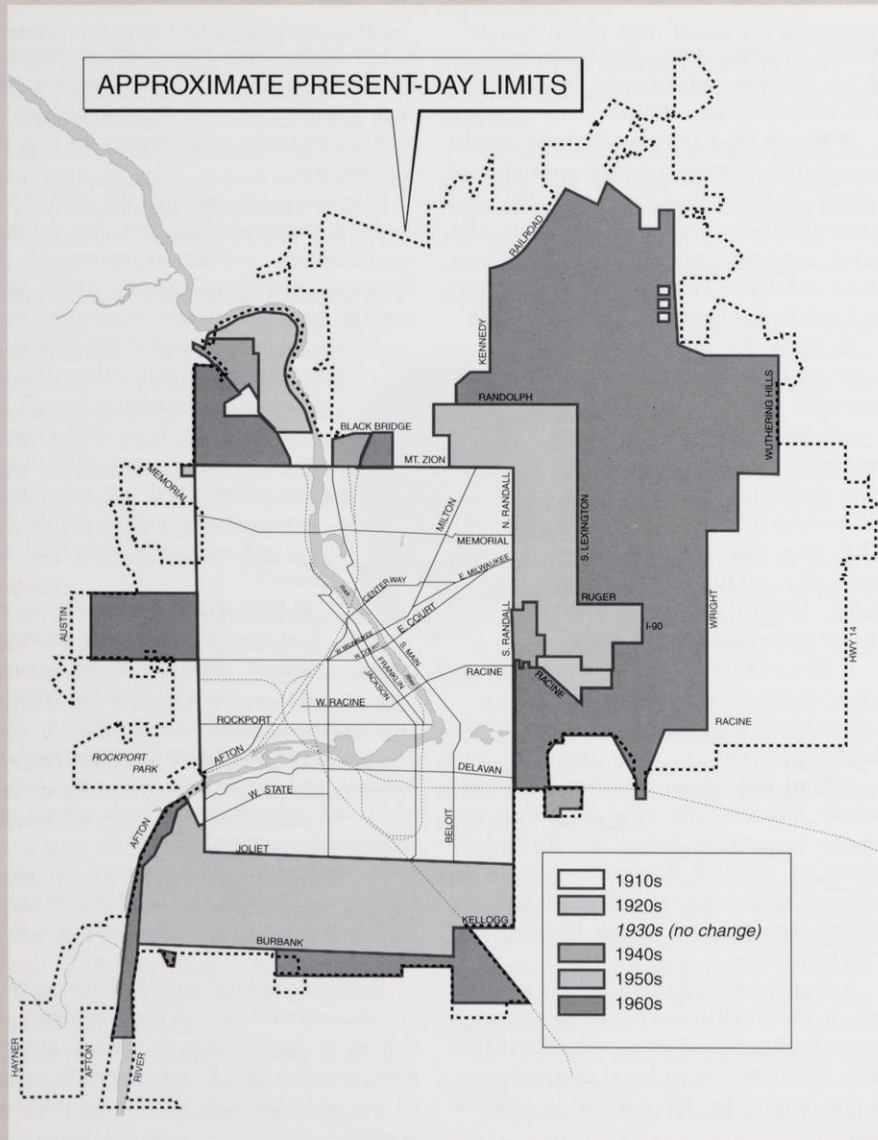
■ **June 8:** Karl Samek announces his resignation as Janesville city manager be-



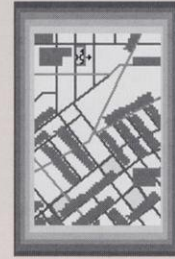
Robert E. Gilliam



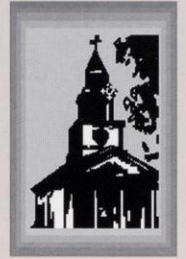
# Janesville in 1970



**Janesville's city limits in 1970.**



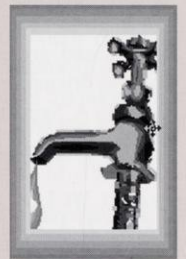
**Area of city:**  
19.11 square miles



**Number of churches:** 38



**Number of schools:** 19.  
Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped, UW-Rock County, 2 high schools; 2 junior highs and 13 elementary schools.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 95.62  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 163.03  
**Miles of water mains:** 182.03



**Population:** 46,426



**\$1 in 1970 has buying power of \$4.20 in 1999**

cause of health reasons: recurring problems from a leg wound suffered in World War II. He will stay on as acting city manager until a replacement is found, then will become the first person to hold the new position of assistant city manager/finance director.

■ **June 13:** Susan Masterson, rural Janesville, becomes the 23rd Alice in Dairyland. During her year-long reign, she hopes "to bring the young and old together because people talk so much about the Generation Gap."

■ **June 16:** A Rock County panel on drug

abuse agrees that alcoholism among adults and drinking by young people are greater problems than drug use by young folks. Beloit Police Chief Bernard Kakuske says that although drug use is worrisome, teenagers are in greater danger from accidents when they drive to Walworth County nightspots where 18-year-olds can drink beer legally.

"I'm convinced that just because a person experiments with marijuana he is not a freak or a criminal," the chief says.

■ **July 2:** The JM Book Store reopens on North Main Street, Janesville, under new own-

ership but still selling erotic magazines, books and movies.

Over the next week, Janesville cops arrest two men at the store for selling allegedly obscene photos.

■ **July 15:** "Private sexual activity between consenting adults, whether married or unmarried, homosexual or heterosexual, is no concern of the state," the Gazette editorial asserts. At this time, sexual intercourse between unmarried adults and adultery are crimes in Wisconsin.

■ **Aug. 1-2:** 1,100 Janesville residents,



most of them young people, pitch in to clean the Rock River bottom from Monterey to Centerway dams. The cleaners extract more than 125 truckloads of debris from the shallow river.

Among their finds are a wood-burning stove, slot machine, safe, portable TV, bowling balls, silver spoon and a gold ring with three small diamonds.

A few days later, the finder of the ring, 15-year-old Dennis Olson, 29 S. Ringold, meets with Dorothy Mitchell, 15 N. High, to see if the ring is one of two she flung into the river 16 years previous when she was depressed and frustrated. Though the ring is quite similar, it is not Mrs. Mitchell's.

■ **Aug. 24:** A powerful bomb guts six-story Sterling Hall, which houses an Army mathematics research center on the UW-Madison campus, and kills one man and injures three others.

The man killed in the blast, Robert E. Fassnacht, 33, a graduate student, has an aunt living in Janesville, Mrs. R.A. McDonald, 1220 Columbus Circle.

On the same day, Walworth County officials announce that a grand jury has determined that the Old Main fire at Whitewater State University on Feb. 7 was in fact arson.

No arrests will be made in the Old Main case.

■ **Aug. 26:** It's the first Women's Liberation Day, and the National Women's Strike Coalition has called on American women to boycott their jobs, including home-making, for a day in their quest for equal pay and treatment.

The Gazette story assigned to localize the event is headlined: " 'Women's What?' Local Gals Ask."

■ **Sept. 15:** 4,800 members of United Auto Workers Local 95 strike the GM plant in Janesville as part of a national strike. Key issues are wages, automatic and unlimited cost-of-living increases and retirement after 30 years of service with a minimum monthly pension of \$500.

The wage for autoworkers is \$4.02 an hour with fringe benefits costing another \$1.75 an hour. The union wants a 63-cent-an-hour raise; the company is offering 38 cents.

The strike ends Dec. 3.

■ **September:** Harrison Elementary School, 760 Princeton, opens as Janesville's 14th elementary school and second "pod school" with open classrooms to provide flexibility in teaching: single classes, combined classes or small groups.

■ **Oct. 15:** Fairview Mall and Mart, 2100 E. Milwaukee, opens with 23 shops and Queen's Court, a restaurant.

■ **Oct. 22:** Science Related Materials starts doing business on South River Street and employs eight people. Owner and founder Don Hedberg says his company, originally started in his and wife Gerry's apartment in Chicago, Ill., is the only business in the world devoting itself exclusively to the manufacture of molecular models for colleges and high schools.

A new venture for the company is making a chart that lists emergency procedures for those who work with dangerous chemicals. The chart is the kernel from which Science Related Materials grows another business, Lab Safety Supply, that eventually will dwarf the parent company.

■ **Nov. 1:** Chief Alex Andreski retires from the Janesville Fire Department. He was a fireman since 1927 and chief since 1951. Battalion Chief James W. Burhans serves as acting chief.

■ **Nov. 3:** Les Aspin, a "liberal, anti-war economist from Racine," soundly defeats Republican Rep. Henry C. Schadeberg for the 1st District congressional seat.

■ **Nov. 24:** JM Book Store closes. It was the target of Janesville police since it opened in October 1969 selling erotic books, magazine and films.

In February 1971, the Wisconsin Supreme Court will uphold the convictions for sale of obscene materials of the store's first two owners, Myron Amato, South Beloit, Ill., and Jack L. Rockey, Beloit. One reason for the court's ruling is that the materials in question showed not just nude men and women but sexual activity.

The men pledge to appeal their case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

■ **Dec. 7:** A Rock County Sheriff's Department squad car driven by Deputy Lawrence Call crests a hill and broadsides a car turning left on County A west of Janesville and kills a rural Beloit couple: Richard and Edna Schultz, both in their 50s.

Injured are Call; his partner, Deputy John M. Jones; John Perkins, 21, Beloit, who was driving the other car; and Perkins' mother, Alberta. The Perkinses are hospitalized.

No charges will be brought in the accident.

■ **December:** The Janesville city administration continues to push for a freeway to link the city directly with Milwaukee to replace Highway 11. It lost the battle with Beloit over the route to replace Highway 15, but now the city and state are pushing, over the objections of many rural residents and Rock County planner Clark Moeller, for a "wish-bone" dual-route freeway to replace both Highways 15 and 11.

The state and county board OK the dual route. It will not happen. Interstate 43 replaces Highway 15 and runs to Beloit, not Janesville.

■ **Sometime in 1970:** Milton's Mike Barlass repeats as state high school heavy-weight wrestling champ.

■ Bob Luchsinger Sr. wins his 18th straight city handball title.

■ Jan Hoffman wins the Janesville City Golf Tournament for the eighth time.

■ Construction is under way on Edison Junior High School at 1649 S. Chatham.

■ Two Rock County men are killed in the Vietnam War.

■ Janesville's third fire station opens at North Crosby and Mineral Point avenues, and the department expands by nine firemen.

■ Rock County has 2,145 farms averaging 180 acres each.

## 1971

■ **Jan. 5:** Attorney Leon Feingold is honored for 24 years of public service by fellow members of the Janesville Plan Commission and other city officials. His satisfaction, Feingold says, "was just in being able to serve the community. Nobody should ever be thanked for public service. The opportunity to serve is the biggest thanks."

■ Accudyne Corp. (Alliant Precision Fuse Co.) forms and specializes in the manufacture of military ordnance components including artillery and rocket fuses. Four Janesville men long associated with Gibbs Manufacturing and Research leave that Janesville company and start Accudyne, which makes many of the same military products as Gibbs.

In 1971, Gibbs starts to sell off and move pieces of its military and non-military businesses from Janesville. In 1972, Accudyne buys the old Gibbs plant at 101 S. Rockport. The factory continued operations in 1999.

■ **Jan. 15:** Robert O. Bailey, 53, becomes Janesville's sixth city manager. His annual salary is \$23,000. A native of Watonga, Okla., Bailey has managed four cities, most recently Culver City, Ca.

■ **Jan. 17:** In another attempt to cut losses, Janesville reduces its bus system from eight to four routes, limits hours and eliminates service on Sundays and holidays.

■ **Feb. 3:** The GM operation in Janesville produces its 7 millionth vehicle, a two-door Chevrolet Caprice painted sandalwood with a brown vinyl top. Employment is steady at 5,800 people. They will produce 198,390 cars and 71,704 trucks during the year.

■ **Feb. 19:** James W. Burhans, acting chief of the Janesville Fire Department, is chosen as chief.

■ **Feb. 22:** UAW Local 95 strikes the Janesville GM plant over unresolved grievances related to work loads. The strike ends March 15 when GM agrees to hire more workers.





**Local and national General Motors officials gather as the 7 millionth Janesville-made vehicle rolls off the line, Feb. 3, 1971. The car was a two-door Caprice, painted sandlewood with a brown vinyl top.**

■ **March 3:** Rep. Les Aspin announces that Tim Cullen, former Janesville councilman, will serve as his "ombudsman," a new role for government offices that Aspin describes as "red-tape-cutter."

Aspin is the first Wisconsin congressman to employ an ombudsman to travel his district listening to and acting on constituents' problems.

■ **March 16:** Army Capt. Harold Fritz, 27, is honored by his hometown of Lake Geneva because he recently was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Nixon.

On Jan. 11, 1969, Fritz' 28-man platoon held its ground against about 270 North Vietnam Army regulars until reinforcements arrived. Though seriously wounded, Fritz kept command of his surrounded platoon and successfully fought off an enemy soldier in hand-to-hand combat after both of their weapons jammed.

■ **March:** Volunteers establish Janesville's Hotline for Help, a phone number teens can call if they are troubled by alcohol, drugs, suicidal thoughts, family or other problems.

■ **April 2:** A group of Janesville Vietnam



**James W. Burhans**

veterans begins collecting money to pay for Army Lt. William Calley's appeal of his court-martial conviction for murdering 22 civilians, mostly women and children, in the Vietnamese village of My Lai.

With the sanction of Janesville's VFW Post, the group also is collecting signatures of support for the convicted war criminal.

One of the drive's chairmen is Stephen B. Hein, 914½ Van Buren, a member of Calley's platoon and twice a witness at Calley's court-martial.

■ **April 15:** The mididress with a hemline to midcalf never really caught on in the United States, and now women who want to show off their legs have another way to do so: hot pants, ultra-short short-shorts. Yost's, 10 S. Main (Wagner's Office Supply), offers an outfit that in front is a "short-short dress ... in the back it's daring new hot pants. Women and girls can "look NOW and WOW" for \$23 for the double-knit outfit.

■ **April 30:** At 8:30 p.m., 10 minutes late, the conductor of the Milwaukee Road's Varsity train yells "highball" to the engineer, and the signal to leave is not just for the Madison-to-

Chicago Varsity, but also for passenger rail service in Janesville.

Amtrak has formed to consolidate all U.S. passenger rail service, and it abandons many routes and cities. Janesville, a turn-of-the-century rail hub bustling with 64 passenger trains arriving and departing daily, loses all passenger service.

■ **May 4:** A poll of 1,559 rural residents of Rock and Dane counties shows that 62 percent of them favor a complete and immediate withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Indochina. Only 6 percent support an all-out military effort and victory.

■ **May 15:** In Janesville's first Roman Catholic ordination, two men—Kenneth Fiedler, son of Mr. and Mrs. Hayen Fiedler, 408 Prospect, and James Kuhn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Kuhn, 1215 E. Memorial—receive the rites of priesthood in their home parish, St. Mary's.

Kuhn becomes associate pastor at Our Lady of Assumption in Beloit; Fiedler is associate pastor of St. William Catholic Church in Janesville.

■ **June 1:** The daily fine for overdue adult books at the Janesville Public Library is raised for the first time in the 20th century, from 2 cents to a nickel. The fine remains 2 cents a day for children's books.

■ **June 9:** The largest drug raid ever executed in the Janesville area nets 21 suspects, all but three adults, on charges of selling or aiding the sale of marijuana, LSD and/or amphetamines. But no drugs are found.

■ **June 10:** Frederick Page, a professor of zoology at U-Rock, is moving to England with his West German-born wife and their two adopted black American children because of racism and innuendo the family endured in Janesville.

The problem, he says, is not with his "excellent" neighbors in the apartment building at 830 Harding but with the bigots who occasionally yell "nigger" when his wife and kids are out walking.

And Page, an avowed leftist who participated in an anti-war rally at the Janesville Armory in 1970, is fed up with whispered rumors, probably fed by a Janesville police officer, that he is a Communist. In his younger days, Page helped refugees flee Communist Eastern Europe.

■ **June 20:** UAW Local 95 dedicates its new meeting and office building, Walter P. Reuther Memorial Hall at 1795 LaFayette, Janesville.

UAW President Leonard Woodcock speaks and criticizes General Motors Assembly Division, of which the GM plant is a part, as having outdated working conditions and management unwilling to listen—let alone change.



■ **June:** For the first time in any high school, students of Craig's advanced science class culture, isolate and photograph human chromosomes.

■ **July 5:** Bob Grassl, president of the Rock Aqua Jays water-ski club, is flying down the Rock River, 150 feet in the air and suspended from a delta-wing kite, when the rope connecting him and the ski boat breaks.

Still wearing his water skis, Grassl makes a near-perfect landing on Veterans Memorial Bridge. His sole injury is a cut finger.

■ **July 8:** The Rock County Youth Home for troubled juveniles opens with the admission of a young girl. By the first week of December, the home will be filled to its 16-person capacity. Originally intended as a detention facility, the home was essentially complete in 1969 but remained vacant because of required structural changes that turn it into more of a shelter.

■ **July:** The Kroger grocery stores at the Creston Park and Sunnyside shopping centers become Piggly Wigglys.

■ **Aug. 9:** The Sisters of Mercy give Mercy Hospital—building, equipment and land, total value \$6 million—to a public nonprofit corporation to be administered by a board of directors made up of lay people.

The Roman Catholic order considered giving the hospital to the city of Janesville because it wanted to use low-interest revenue bonds to finance a \$10 million expansion and federal regulations stipulated that only municipally owned institutions could use such bonds. But the hospital finds a private lender, and a new federal law provides the possibility of U.S. aid to subsidize financing.

A public fund drive so far has raised \$1.76 million toward a goal of \$2.25 million. A \$300,000 gift from GM in October will put the drive over the top.

■ **Aug. 10:** Complaints from business people and residents in the neighborhood of the old Janesville Armory spell the end of dances staged in the building, which is serving as the Janesville Youth Center, overseen by the Kiwanis Club.

Gripes center on noise, vandalism, rowdiness and just the presence of 200 or so teenagers milling about on hot summer nights. In November, a teenage crowd will try to prevent police from arresting a youth, and the city administration closes the center.

■ **Aug. 12:** Whitewater records the first arrests in the city's history for possession of heroin when three men and a woman are apprehended. Cops also confiscate marijuana and more than 1,800 pills suspected of being LSD.

■ **Sept. 15:** Flames level six storage buildings at Marling Lumber, 634 S. River St. A gas line ruptures and explodes, injuring three fire-

men, Art Stearns, Bill Carwardine and Winston Weber. Stearns and Weber are hospitalized for treatment of burns to their faces and arms.

Loss is pegged at \$500,000. Arson is ruled out as a cause, but the fire's origin remains undetermined.

■ **September:** Janesville's third junior high school, Edison, opens at 1649 Chatham with about 1,200 students, including 150 sixth-graders from the crowded Lincoln Elementary School. As with other recent school buildings, Edison is designed around the "pod" concept with oversized classrooms to allow the teaching of large or small groups.

■ **Oct. 2:** Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D., a presidential candidate whose major issue is opposition to the Vietnam War, tells Rock County Democrats in Janesville that Nixon's policies in Indochina are flawed and might be intended to ensure Nixon's re-election rather than end the war.

McGovern also defends a young and relatively recent entrant to American public discourse, consumer advocate Ralph Nader, as "one of the most committed patriots in the country today."

■ **Oct. 8:** The University of Wisconsin (UW) system and State University system merge, so the university at Whitewater is now UW-Whitewater, and the new name of the two-year college in Janesville is University of Wisconsin Center-Rock County, though it is commonly referred to as U-Rock.

U-Rock offers co-ed physical education for the first time in badminton, handball, fencing and swimming.

■ **Oct. 14:** The federal Food and Drug Administration declares that the new surgical procedure of hip replacement is safe because of two years of tests done in U.S. hospitals, including Mercy Hospital in Janesville.

■ **Nov. 11:** Montgomery Ward department store is the first store to open in what will be the new Janesville Mall on Milton Avenue. The 500,000-square-foot mall is being built around the 97,000-square-foot Ward store and two other department stores.

■ **November:** In the month's last 22 days, 9.4 inches of snow falls, making it the snowiest November in 24 years. Snowmobiling is allowed on Riverside Golf Course, at Palmer Park and near the wastewater treatment plant.

■ **Dec. 12:** The Ramada Inn and Hoffman House restaurant open at 3431 Milton.

■ **Sometime in 1971:** Under construction is the Rock County Health Care Center. The county also establishes an alcoholism treatment program.

■ Eighty-two percent of Rock County land is in farm use, down from 92 percent in 1954.

■ After 12 defeats in 30 years, referendums

allowing the sale of beer and alcohol pass in Orfordville, and the village becomes "wet" again with the opening of The Golden Acre tavern.

■ Work is under way on Freeway 15 (Interstate 43) from Beloit to Elkhorn and on to Milwaukee. The plan for the companion Freeway 11 to diverge from Freeway 15 and proceed to Janesville dies when the Walworth County Board balks at the plan to have the freeways split in Darien Township.

■ Craig experiments with an "open campus" and reports better attendance, higher grades and less vandalism.

■ The Craig debate team wins the state forensic association championship. Coached by William O'Brien, the team consists of David Miller, Tom Cain, Andy Muzzi and Russ Feingold.

■ Janesville's sewage treatment plant starts cleaning 1.3 million gallons a day of industrial waste discharge from the GM plant. Previously, the contaminated liquid flowed directly into the Rock River.

■ Parker swimmer Rich McCarten wins the state high school diving championship.

■ Janesville's American Legion baseball team wins the state championship and advances to national competition but is eliminated by losing two of its first three games there.

■ Bob Luchsinger Sr. is city handball champ for the 19th straight time.

■ Three new churches are erected in Janesville: Our Savior Lutheran, 2015 Kellogg; Southside Baptist, 2300 S. Jackson; Wesleyan Methodist (Wesleyan Church), 967 Benton.

■ Walworth County is fourth in the state, and Rock County fifth in the number of drug arrests for the year. Walworth County has 25; Rock 24. Marijuana is the most common drug seized, followed by LSD.

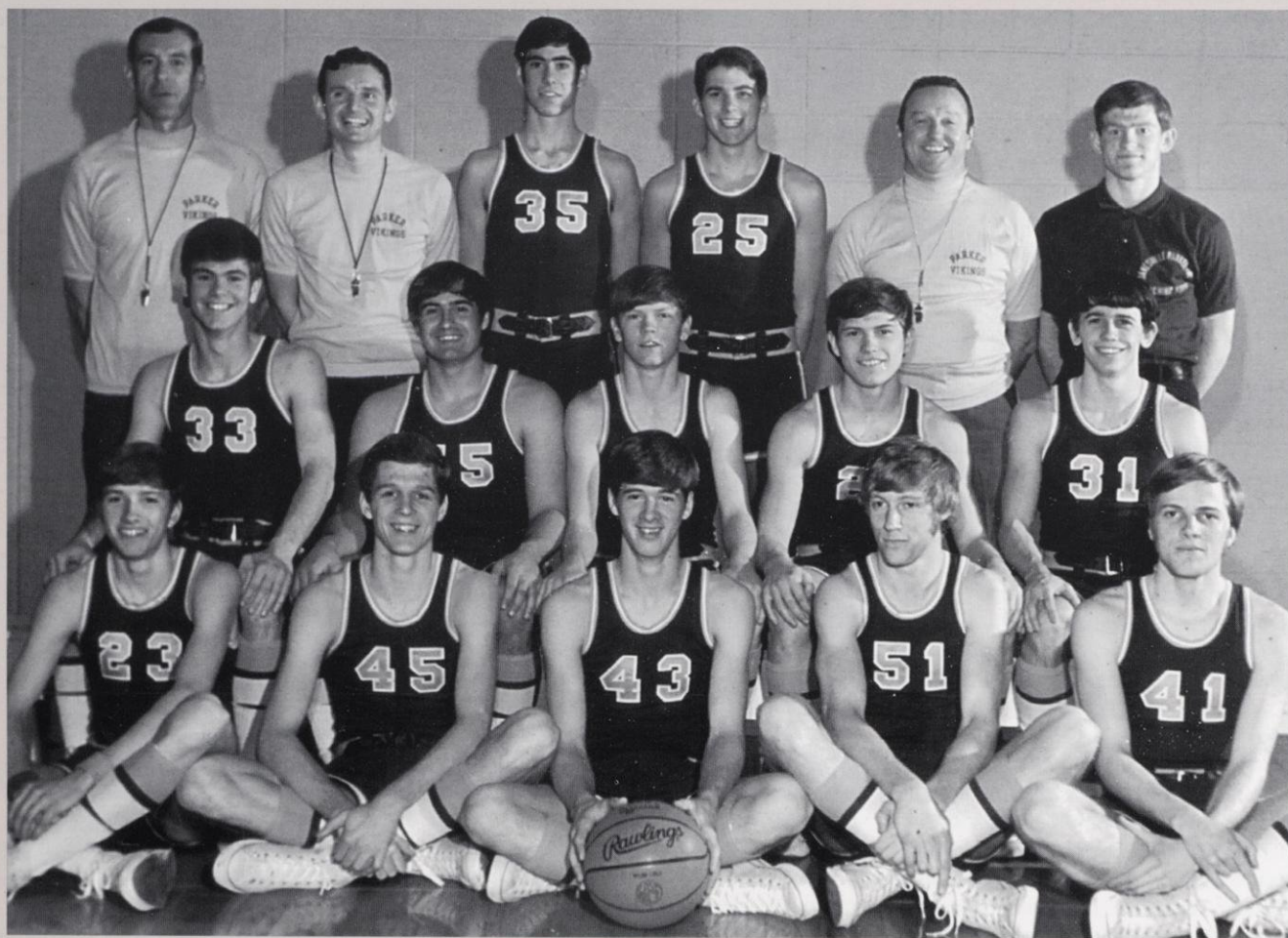
■ For the second year in a row, Rock County is second only to Milwaukee County in the number of drunken driving convictions for the year. Rock County has 289 convictions to Milwaukee County's 532.

■ The state rules that Janesville's GM plant did not discriminate "in reverse" against a white man who was denied a job in late 1970 when, he said, other employees told him that blacks were being hired. GM denies having racial quotas for hiring but does acknowledge the possibility of "positive action" as required under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to correct racial imbalances. Such positive action can include hiring minorities at times when whites are not hired.

## 1972

■ **Jan. 4:** Larry Lujack, a disc jockey on radio station WLS, Chicago, proclaims that





The Parker High basketball team finished the regular season at 11-7, but marched through the playoffs en route to winning the 1971 state championship. Members of the squad were, front row, left to right, Craig Brace, John Bobzien, Mike McGrath, John Brikowski, Ted Schultz; second row, left to right, Tom Wolfe, Jim Quaerna, Terry Ryan, Greg Rud, Jeff Paulson; back row, left to right, head coach Bob Morgan, assistant coach Dan Madden, Bob Luchsinger, Dick Meier, assistant coach Dale Barry and manager Pat O'Leary.

## Vikings claim '71 state basketball title

On March 20, 1971, the Parker High Vikings defeated Milwaukee Rufus King, 79-68, to win the WIAA state high school basketball championship.

It was the first time since 1948 that a Janesville team qualified for the state tourney, and the Cinderella Parker team—11-7 in the regular season—overcame many obstacles to win the title.

Midway through the third quarter of Parker's semifinal game against Neenah, the top-ranked squad in Wisconsin, the Vikings were down 40-24. But Parker outscored Neenah 30-12 over the last 12 minutes to eke out a two-point victory.

In the championship tilt, Parker players set state records by hitting all 23 of their free throws and shooting 62.2 percent on field goal attempts.

At Christmas, the Vikings were only 3-5 but won 16 of their last 18 games. They finished third in the Big Eight conference and eliminated conference champ and cross-town rival Craig, 51-50, on their march through post-season play.

The state basketball championship was the first for a Janesville team in the 56-year history of the WIAA tournament. Janesville High won what served as the state championship tourney, the Lawrence Invitational, in 1913, the only other state hoops title taken by a Janesville team until 1971.

Bob Morgan coached the '71 team, which featured two all-conference players, Bob Luchsinger Jr. and Dick Meier. All three are members of the Janesville Sports Hall of Fame.

Luchsinger also was named to all-state teams and went on to play basketball for UW-Madison. While a Badger, Luchsinger also made the cover of *Sports Illustrated*—but through the back door. The national sports magazine did a feature on Indiana University basketball, and in the cover shot of an Indiana player scoring, Luchsinger was one of the Wisconsin defenders.

In 1971-72, defending champ Parker High was 11-7 in the regular season, but the Vikings again advanced to the state basketball tournament. One of the Vikings' victims was Craig, which was co-champion of the Big Eight with Madison West.

Parker defeated its east-side rival, 86-84, in overtime in subregional play, but the west-siders lost a heartbreaker, 59-57, to Neenah in the tourney semifinals.



Janesville is the hokiest town in the Midwest and the Gazette is the hokiest paper.

Perhaps best known for his "Animal Stories" segments with sidekick Little Tommy Edwards, "Ole Uncle Lare" Lujack cites as his reasons a recent pictorial in the Gazette that shows a chicken crossing the road to eat french fries at a fast-food restaurant and the paper's coverage of the burial of a grasshopper the previous summer.

■ **Feb. 1:** John Lindsay, mayor of New York and a liberal ex-Republican who changed parties to seek the Democratic presidential nomination, speaks to 1,500 faculty and students at UW-Whitewater. He criticizes Nixon for spending billions on the Vietnam War and strategic weapons systems but not creating drug rehabilitation and employment programs, especially for returning veterans.

But Lindsay draws his biggest applause when he advocates the legalization of both abortion and marijuana. "It is utterly insane," he says, "to put kids in jail for the possession of three joints."

■ **March 21:** Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson visits UW-Rock County and meets an attentive, but not entirely friendly, audience. Jackson and professor Ted Kinnaman cross verbal swords over the issue of campaign donations and defense spending.

Kinnaman suggests that Jackson is too close to the military-industrial complex, specifically Boeing Corp., whose main operations are in Jackson's home state of Washington. Jackson replies that he will not reveal the names of campaign contributors beyond legal requirements because he has promised to keep them confidential.

■ **Mama Cass Elliott** of the famous Mamas and Papas singing group stops in Janesville to stump for Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota in his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination. She visits McGovern for President Headquarters on East Milwaukee Street to "rap" with high school and college students who straggle in.

Of the anti-Vietnam War McGovern, she says: "I feel he is righteous, and I like where he stands on the war and welfare. His integrity is beyond reproach. I believe that since 1963 (the year McGovern came out against the war), he hasn't made a mistake, and, if he makes one, he'll be man enough to admit it."

■ **March 23:** Wisconsin changes its age of majority so that people aged 18, 19 and 20 have full rights as adults including the rights to vote; to buy hard liquor, not just beer; enter into valid contracts;

make wills; initiate lawsuits and enter certain licensed trades such as barbering and cosmetology.

In 1971, the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave the right to vote to 18-year-olds was proposed and ratified.

Advance voter registration of the age group in Janesville is reported as heavy.

The change in the drinking age creates little stir in Janesville, where young people do not rush to bars to get their first legal drinks.

■ **March 27:** McGovern stops in Janesville to meet voters, shake hands and buy a dress for his daughter, Susan McGovern Rowan, who lives in Washington, D.C. The senator takes the advice of Lillian Schultz, a clerk at Elliott's, 4 S. Main (offices), and buys a long-sleeved navy-and-white polyester dress with braid trim accents.

McGovern says he will pay for new social programs by closing \$28 billion in corporate tax loopholes, increasing inheritance taxes to 100 percent for estates of more than \$500,000 and cutting \$32 billion from military spending.

■ **Sen. Edward Muskie, D-Maine,** visits Janesville to drum up support for his run for the presidential nomination.

He draws rousing applause at the UAW Local 95 hall when he rips Nixon on unemployment, farm policy, inflation and a "blatant bias" toward big business in the effort to control inflation. Profits for big business rose 24 percent in the previous year, Muskie says, while wages did not come close to such an increase.

He says he can reduce Social Security taxes by \$10 billion for 85 percent of American families by making the Social Security tax progressive so the rich would pay more than the middle class.

■ **April 3:** Also seeking the Democratic nomination is Alabama Gov. George Wallace. At this time, he is still an arch-segregationist, but his main message is more populist, aimed at the working class without direct references to racial separation or white supremacy.

He stops briefly at the Rock County Airport, where he shakes the hands of a crowd of 200 and criticizes the media for giving a "distorted" view of him.

Wallace promises tax relief if elected and maintains: "The average man feels he is totally ignored at this point."

■ Also speaking in Janesville on the eve of the primary election is former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey. He speaks to a crowd of 400 at the UAW Local 95 hall, half the crowd that turned out for Muskie but an audience that makes

more supportive noise.

Humphrey declines to attack the "friendly opposition" of his Democratic rivals and turns his criticism on Nixon, saying the president is "chiseling" the elderly, slowing social reforms and is not competent to combat unemployment and inflation.

"This country is an eight-cylinder country operating today on six cylinders with low-octane gas and a poor driver," Humphrey says. "I know the man that's in the White House. I think I know his weaknesses, and I certainly know his policies."



■ **April 4:** McGovern wins the Wisconsin Democratic primary, and Lindsay finishes last of the six candidates and withdraws from the race.

Local balloting almost directly reflects the state results: McGovern, 3,563 votes in Janesville, 9,320 in Rock County; Humphrey, 2,795 and 6,290; Wallace, 2,252 and 6,929; Muskie, 1,092 and 3,225; Jackson, 609 and 1,552; and Lindsay, 453 and 1,262.

■ **April 9:** Performing at Beloit Memorial High School, "direct from Nashville Tennessee" is The Porter Wagoner Show. A member of the ensemble, Dolly Parton, gets second billing.

■ **April:** Dana Corp. buys a Highway Trailer plant in Edgerton for its Spicer Axle Division, which turns out its first axle in August. The plant supplies the pickup truck line in the GM factory in Janesville. At year end, the company employs 300 people and is building a 230,000-square-foot addition.

■ **May 10:** Nixon has brought home 500,000 of the 560,000 U.S. ground troops once in Vietnam, but he now re-escalates the war by intensifying bombing of North Vietnam and mining its harbors. A random sampling of Janesville residents shows most support the president, but students at UW-Madison stage their biggest protest in two years.

The Gazette publishes a Page 1 editorial calling for Congress to decide the issue: Either continue the escalation of fighting or withdraw American forces immediately.

■ **June 13:** The Janesville School Board approves a hot lunch program for eight elementary schools starting in the fall.

■ **July 3:** The \$5.5 million Rock County Health Care Center begins operation, and the old mental health hospital will be razed.

The new facility also heralds a change in treatment philosophy: from custodial care in which few clients return to the community to the concept of the "therapeutic community" in which the goal is restoration of good mental





health.

■ **July 4:** The Janesville Jaycees' Fourth of July fireworks display moves from Monterey Stadium to Traxler Park where more room and parking are available.

■ **Aug. 3:** 13-year-old Steve Hemming, 2614 Plymouth, is the youngest student ever to enroll at UW-Rock County. Also a student at Marshall Junior High, Hemming studies filmmaking in a U-Rock summer course.

Professor Felicia Londre says Hemming's written work is on a par with college-age students and that his review of "The Godfather," playing at the Hi-Way 26 Drive-In in Janesville, shows very mature insights.

■ **Aug. 4:** Rick Nelson, son of Ozzie and Harriet, performs his new song "Garden Party" at the Rock County 4-H Fair. He pleases the crowd and shows a funky side when he plays the piano and sings the Rolling Stones' "Honky-Tonk Woman."

■ **Aug. 7:** The U.S. Supreme Court has twice refused to hear their appeal, and they have not paid their fines, so Myron M. Amato, South Beloit, Ill., and Jack L. Rockey, Beloit, start terms in the Rock County Jail on their convictions for selling obscene materials from JM Book Store on North Main Street, Janesville, in October 1969.

■ **Sept. 5:** The Janesville City Council eliminates the age requirement of 18 for pinball playing in the city, clearing the way for an Alladin's Castle in the Janesville Mall, which is under construction. Before the council acted, a person had to be at least 18 to legally play any coin-operated game in the city.

■ **Sept. 8:** Buddy Melges, a boat builder from Zenda in Walworth County and two teammates win an Olympic gold medal in the Soling sailing class, boats of 26 feet, 9 inches.

■ **Sept. 15:** At 12:23 a.m., an earthquake lasting 30 seconds rocks the beds of residents sleeping in southern Wisconsin, rattles dishes and shakes the walls of the Janesville City Hall. A few walls and floors are cracked in the area.

The quake measures between 4.5 and 4.75 on the Richter scale and is the most powerful tremor felt in Rock County since a 5.3 Richter quake shook 23 states including Wisconsin on Nov. 9, 1968.

■ **Sept. 16:** Telephone calls between Janesville and Beloit become local calls instead of toll calls, and the number of calls rises 40 percent to 1,550 per day.

■ **Sept 24:** Michael P. Kay, 23, Beloit, who recently was paroled from a Kentucky prison, shoots and kills two Beloiters, then kills himself in Marquette County. He is drinking with Sharon Riley Wrezinski, a Beloit waitress whom he dated, when they are joined by Lewis H. Bull, 41, who is living with Wrezinski.

Kay leaves, gets a .22-caliber rifle and ambushes Bull and Wrezinski outside their home. He shoots Bull 13 times in the face and chest and Wrezinski four times in the chest. Kay steals a car belonging to Bull and hits a deer in Marquette County.

The deputy investigating the accident finds Kay walking down the road, and when he orders Kay to return to the car, Kay pulls the rifle from under his full-length coat and fires at the deputy, grazing his arm. Kay then runs to a construction site, where he trades fire with deputies before shooting himself.

■ **Oct. 6:** Mercy Hospital's maternity department receives permission from doctors and administrators to allow fathers in the delivery room and infants to stay in their mothers' rooms. The new dads must receive instruction about labor and delivery and how to support their wives during the birth process.

■ **Oct. 20:** Some 4,850 members of UAW Local 95 strike the GMAD plant over the company's speed-up of the assembly process. The UAW is staging strikes against GMAD plants nationwide but in a series, not simultaneously. The strike lasts four days.

■ **Nov. 7:** Janesville and Rock County are stones in the landslide that gives Nixon a second term. The city voted 10,859 to 8,045 for Nixon over McGovern, and the county tally is 30,353 to 21,039 for the Republican.

But Nixon has no coattails: Les Aspin is re-elected as 1st District representative.

■ **Nov. 11-12:** Meeting for the weekend in Fontana, the Citizens Study Committee on Judicial Organization, a task force appointed by Gov. Patrick Lucey, recommends that marijuana be legalized; that crimes against sexual morality, such as adultery, be abolished for consenting adults; that laws against public drunkenness be repealed; that alcoholics be treated as sick people; and that noncommercial gambling be legalized.

■ **Nov 17:** Local 95 again strikes the GM plant. Again the issue is work standards but in a different department than the October walkout. The strike lasts two days.

■ **Dec 1:** Janesville Sand & Gravel changes the names of four subsidiaries making ready-mix concrete to Lycon Inc.

■ **Sometime in 1972:** Janesville's Babe Ruth team is Wisconsin champion for the sixth time in 10 years.

■ Jim Krueger of Evansville sets a state bench-press record of 255 pounds for 165-pound weightlifters in the Wisconsin Open Olympic Lift Championships at the Janesville YMCA.

■ Is this thing called the Luchsinger Handball Tournament? Bob Sr. wins his 20th consecutive championship.

■ The Chicago White Sox shellac Bob Strampe of Janesville in his Major League pitching debut for the Detroit Tigers. In June, the relief pitcher is reassigned to the minor-league Toledo Mud Hens.

■ The Minnesota Twins draft Parker pitcher Terry Ryan, who gives up a baseball scholarship at the University of Minnesota to sign with the Twins. In 1999, he was general manager of the Major League franchise.

■ The Craig 880-relay team—Joe Siefkes, Bill Myers, Bill Riley and Dean Vanderlip—wins the state title with a time of 1:30.8.

■ Former Janesville resident Carol Sorenson, now Carol Sorenson Flenniken, qualifies for the U.S. Women's Open Golf Tournament but loses her second match.

■ Precipitation totaling 41.96 inches makes the year the second wettest in local recorded history to this date. The wettest was 1959 with 42.36 inches.

■ Rock County's long fight to clean up Badfish Creek—which flows into the Yahara River, which flows into the Rock River—starts to pay off when the state Department of Natural Resources reclassifies the creek from a "minimum standards" waterway to one that will support fish and aquatic life.

The reclassification means the Madison Metropolitan Sewage District will have to spend millions to treat the 32 million gallons of effluent per day that Madison dumps into the creek.

■ Under construction are a new Woodman's Super Market on Milton Avenue south of Randolph Road (post office), the Mercy Hospital addition, the Hormel Canning plant in Beloit and the Kikkoman Foods soy and teriyaki sauce factory in Walworth. The Kikkoman plant, initial cost \$6 million, is the first built outside of Japan.

■ The last freight train passes through Albany, and the Milwaukee Road tracks are removed to make way for a bicycle and snowmobile path.

■ The city and Janesville Sand & Gravel reach agreement for the city to buy the company's mined property on Black Bridge Road to use primarily as a sanitary landfill.

■ Mercy Hospital ends its nursing school with the graduating class of 1972.

■ Blackhawk Technical Institute acquires an 83-acre site between Janesville and Beloit to build new facilities to replace existing operations in the two cities. In April, voters in Rock and Green counties reject a referendum to borrow \$5 million for the new facility, but the BTI board decides to proceed with a phased "pay-as-you-go building program."

■ The Gazette adds the comic strip "Peanuts" and, in keeping with a new state law,



drops the classified ad headings "Help Wanted—Male" and "Help Wanted—Female" in favor of "Help Wanted—Male and Female."

## 1973

■ **Jan. 5:** Suzanne Kitto, a 25-year-old Beloit native, becomes Rock County's first female assistant district attorney.

■ **Jan. 10:** Donald Gates, 32, a Janesville hotel resident, shoots and kills his girlfriend, Doris Dolphin, 35, at her home at 2605 Roosevelt, then kills himself with a single shot to the temple. Dolphin's five children are asleep in bedrooms in the house at the time of the murder-suicide, but none witnesses the crimes.

■ **Jan. 12:** The student portrayed in the Gazette's "Students Off Campus," a regular photo feature is Anna Marie Lux. The UW-Rock sophomore is shown researching a 100-year-old copy of the newspaper for the Rock County Historical Society, where she is a researcher and typist. She plans to transfer to UW-Madison to major in journalism and "experiment—to find out what I like and what I'm good at."

Traveling and writing apparently—as Lux pursues a career with The Janesville Gazette, where her travel stories are well received.

■ **Jan. 15:** The state finds Mr. and Mrs. James Keys of Milton guilty of sex discrimination when they fired James S. Bahler, a Charley Bluff resident and Milton College student, as a carhop at their A&W Root Beer stand on Highway 26. The Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations supports Bahler's

contention that he was fired because of his long hair and mustache.

The state directs the Keys to stop discriminating against male employees because of the length of their hair, facial hair and "because of customer complaints relating to these characteristics." The couple say they let Bahler go for "economic survival."

■ Men's sport and suit coats are single-breasted but still have wide lapels, and plaid, from bell-bottom pants to vests to jackets, is in. Miniskirts have been declared "out" for women, but the fashion declaration does not stop women from showing off their legs with the micro-mini and the short-short hot pants.

■ **Feb. 2:** Janesville police crack a burglary with the arrests of three boys and say the ringleader is all of 7 years old.

■ **Feb. 8:** A Rock County grand jury indicts 25 people on drug-dealing charges involving marijuana to LSD to heroin. Arrests are spread out over Rock, Walworth, Jefferson and Green counties.

■ **March 1:** George Danz, 32, chief of the Albion (Mich.) Fire Department has been named chief of the Janesville department to succeed the retiring James Burhans.

■ **March 28:** Air Force Lt. William Reich, rural Clinton, is among the last American POWs to be released from Vietnamese prison camps. He has been a prisoner since May 19, 1972, when his F-4 Phantom fighter was shot down.

The United States and North Vietnam

recently signed a truce that calls for the repatriation of all American prisoners of war. Reich's mother, Rachel, appreciates the "fuss" made over her son, but she says more attention should be paid to wounded veterans and those still listed as missing in action.

■ **April 3:** High prices for meat prompt consumers nationwide, encouraged by unions and other groups, to boycott meat for a week. President Nixon institutes price limits.

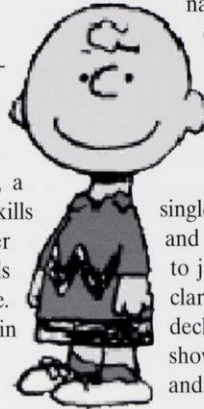
In the last week of March, Janesville stores advertise meat on sale: lean ground beef, \$1.09 a pound, regularly \$1.19, and steak for \$1.36 to \$1.78 a pound, depending on whether it is round, sirloin, T-bone or porterhouse.

Local grocers and butchers decline to tell the Gazette if they notice the boycott. Members of the relatively militant National Farmers Organization stage a counterdemonstration in which they bring a live pig to Woodman's Super Market and put up signs showing their costs vs. prices.

At the end of the week, Wisconsin's Sentry Foods announces it will reduce meat prices to below Nixon's ceilings. The week after the boycott, lean ground beef is advertised for as low as 89 cents a pound, but the price range on steak is unchanged.

■ **April 6:** In a state hearing and news conference conducted in Janesville, paraplegics and other people with handicaps say they are banding together to fight widespread discrimination against disabled people.

■ Milwaukee Professional Sports and Services, owner of the Milwaukee Bucks profes-



George Danz



Not many boys get to play on a hill of this magnitude, but these Janesville youths took advantage of the dirt heaped up during construction of the Janesville Mall. The dirt was still there in 1999, but it was covered with grass and was known as Ardon Park.



## Cold-blooded murder shocks Rock County

A cold-blooded murder shocked the UW-Rock County community and stunned Janesville on Oct. 8, 1973.

John W. Spanton Jr., 28, of 3242 S. Oakhill, fired three shots from a .22-caliber pistol into the head of his former wife, Lisa (Andre) Spanton, 23, Beloit Township, as she walked to her car from a morning art class at the two-year college.

Lisa died 17 minutes later at Mercy Hospital.

Lisa worked for four years as an office manager at Science Related Materials in Janesville. The company's owner, Don Hedberg, described Lisa as an "exceptionally bright and capable girl who constantly wanted to make herself of more value to herself and to those for whom she worked.

"She was a fine, fine girl."

Though she was maintaining a B average and was raising a 3-year-old daughter, Lisa took on extra credit projects and redid class work if her original effort wasn't up to her high standards.



**John W. Spanton served nine years for the murder of his ex-wife**

Lisa told Hedberg and other friends that her ex-husband had threatened her and assaulted her. She sought protection from the Rock County Sheriff's Department and Town of Beloit Police. Lisa planned to see the district attorney about a restraining order the day she was murdered.

Spanton, a self-employed construction worker, turned himself in minutes after the shooting. A Dane County jury convicted him of first-degree murder in March 1974 and sentenced him to life in prison.

In 1976, he won a new trial because improper evidence was admitted in the first trial. Spanton was convicted again, but this time of the lesser charge of second-degree murder.

The improper evidence was testimony from a bartender whom Spanton talked to the night before he murdered his wife. Spanton talked to the bartender about what he would do the next day: kill his wife.

But prosecutors first learned about the conversation with the bartender from a court-appointed psychiatrist who examined Span-

ton, not from detectives investigating the slaying. Such communications are privileged information and may not be used against a defendant, so a new trial was ordered.

Spanton was sentenced to 22 years, but in 1980, an appeals court ruled the judge exceeded his authority and amended the sentence to 20 years.

In an ironic twist to a tragic story, Spanton wrote a letter from his prison cell to the editor of The Janesville Gazette in 1975.

In it, the murderer supported gun control and longer waiting periods for prospective gun buyers.

"Finally, to all the people, before picking up that gun or even giving a thought to such an idea, no matter how remote, take one good long look at your children and the rest of your immediate family—for once that gun has been used, you will be allowed a total of two hours a month for the rest of your life to see them all," the killer wrote.

Spanton was released from prison in 1983 on a mandatory release date determined by his "good time" accrued while serving nine years behind bars.

sional basketball team, buys a 25 percent interest in Total TV, based in Janesville and operating cable TV systems in Wisconsin and Florida. Total TV president Jim Fitzgerald says the infusion of more than \$1 million will help the company expand in Edgerton, Milton and Fort Atkinson.

Fitzgerald eventually will wind up owning the Bucks.

■ **April 20:** Rain deluges southern Wisconsin, and Walworth County is swamped with 6 to 8 inches. Floods close roads and wash out bridges in Walworth and Rock counties. Rock experiences about 2 inches of rain.

Many Beloit businesses are flooded as are some in Janesville. Overflowing their banks are Delavan Lake, Swan Creek, Lake Comus, Jackson and Turtle creeks.

Damage in Rock County is estimated at \$3.5 million to \$4 million with Beloit taking the brunt of the loss.

■ **May 11:** As a boy, Lew Hoy studied at Adams School in Janesville. On this night, his father, Everett Hoy, 545 S. Main, and his wife, the former Diana Cleland of Janesville, will watch him perform at Carnegie Hall. Hoy is a pianist and artist-in-residence at St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa.

■ **June 1-2:** Two robbers steal \$5,000 from

the McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurants on Milton Avenue just before and after midnight.

At KFC, they threaten to kill three employees if assistant manager Ralph Blair, 24, of 112 Linn, doesn't open the door to the office, which Blair closed in a fruitless attempt to call police when the men ran in.

After stealing \$1,000 from the safe, the thugs bind Blair and the other workers, then head to McDonald's, where one holds a cocked revolver to the head of manager Gary D. Slawson, 22, of 74 S. Sumac. The robber threatens to blow off Slawson's head if he doesn't keep getting more money.

The thieves tie up Slawson and his girlfriend, and in both robberies, they place harmless objects—a telephone speaker and a shoe—against the managers' bodies in places they can't see them and tell the young men they are explosive devices.

■ **June 3:** A melee at Riverside Park between young people and police results in damage to three squad cars and park property and 28 arrests on charges ranging from criminal damage to disorderly conduct to obstructing an officer.

A fracas erupts when a young man picks a fight with cops there to investigate a traffic inci-

dent. The donnybrook spills over to the crowd that gathered, and when city police and county deputies declare the park closed, they are pelted with a barrage of rocks, bottles and other debris.

■ **June 15:** A Boy Scout camping trip at Gibbs Lake ends in a twofold tragedy when two Janesville Scouts drown in the Rock River at the Indianford Dam.

Scott Atkinson, 16, rural Janesville, and James Kakuske, 12, of 1209 Church, are hiking with three other boys, all members of Troop 562, to rack up miles for merit badges when the pair ventures onto the dam. Kakuske slips and falls in, and Atkinson falls in when he tries to grab the younger boy.

■ **July 1:** Federal food stamps are available for the first time for eligible people, and 46 Janesville-area families buy the stamps at prices discounted from their face value. The families then buy food at the stamps' full value.

■ **Aug. 1:** Linda Barlass is fair queen, an honor held 24 years earlier by her mother, the former Dolores Henke. Both represented Harmony 4-H.

■ Daily rates for rooms at Mercy Hospital rise an average \$6. A private room costs \$55, and semi-private rooms cost \$53 or \$54.

■ **Aug. 20:** H. Mitchell Bliss is named



news editor of the Gazette. This is Bliss' second tour with the paper. He first joined the Gazette in 1957, left to pursue other interests and rejoined the staff in August 1972.

He is not related to the Bliss family that owns the newspaper.

■ **August:** Creston Park becomes Janesville's first enclosed mall, beating the Janesville Mall, which is still under construction, to the punch by a month.

■ **Sept. 4:** Larry Brown, former city administrator in St. Petersburg, Fla., is the new Rock County administrator, filling the post left vacant and controversial by Harlyn Larson two years before. Larson charged that county government was inept and fraught with nepotism, and after his departure, the county board debated long and hard over whether an administrator was needed.

■ **Sept. 7:** Thomas W. Waltermann, associate professor of history and assistant to the president of Central Washington State College, is named dean of UW-Rock County Center.

■ President Nixon names Daniel Parker, 48, chairman of the board of Parker Pen, to head the federal Agency for International Development.

■ **Sept. 16:** The Janesville Mall, an \$18 million project, opens with six stores. By year's end, it contains 25 stores with plans for dozens more.

On Christmas, the mall's three screen movie theater—UA Cinemas 1, 2 and 3—opens. Anchor department stores are a Weise's in the center of the mall and a Montgomery Ward store.

■ **Oct. 1:** Janesville Riverview Clinic, which has been Pember-Nuzum Clinic for 55 years, opens adjacent to Mercy Hospital.

■ **Oct. 4:** Donald Grosenick, exalted ruler of the Janesville Elks Club, praises the national organization's vote to remove "whites only" from its bylaws. "We've never been against it (integration) here in Janesville at any time," he says.

■ **Nov. 21:** Donald Schwartz, 56, who farms on Mineral Point Road west of Janesville, dies after falling 45 feet down the middle of a silo on the day before Thanksgiving. In December, 12 friends and neighbors use three combines to harvest the rest of Schwartz's corn for his family.

Farmer Dick Selck puts it plainly: "We take care of each other."

■ **Nov. 26:** The Arab Oil Embargo forces Nixon to order reductions in the amount of gasoline and fuel oil delivered to dealers, and he asks drivers to go no faster than 50 mph and filling station operators to close on Sundays.

Janesville gas station operators are cooperative but wonder if the day off will force runs on

other days that will drain them of already reduced supplies. Janesville decides not to illuminate holiday lights to conserve energy.

■ **November:** Chris Weber's 49 points lead the Craig Cougars to a 84-76 basketball victory and set an all-time city single-game scoring record to this date.

■ **Dec. 3:** After six months of work, the reconstructed Five Points intersection in Janesville reopens for traffic. One of the points, Madison Street, no longer intersects at the intersection, and West Court Street is widened to four lanes west of the intersection.

A wide median is left between Milwaukee and Court streets for the long-anticipated overpass. It will not happen.

■ **Dec. 10:** An explosion believed caused by coal dust mixing with gases from burning coal rips a 60-foot hole in the roof of Wisconsin Power & Light's seven-story Rock River Generating Plant on Highway 51 between Janesville and Beloit.

The blast injures seven men, one critically. Carl G. Young, 34, Brodhead, is hospitalized with burns over 85 percent of his body.

While Young sweeps coal dust on one floor, the other six fight a fairly common fire in a coal bunker on the floor below when the explosion erupts. Young is engulfed in flames, and co-workers extinguish his burning clothing.

No damage estimate is immediately available. Electrical power is not interrupted.

■ **Dec. 17:** Fuel shortages caused by the Arab Oil Embargo, which started in October, prompt GM to reduce production of full- and midsize cars, and the Janesville plant's car line is one of many to be shut down. The initial announcement is that the car line will be off for a week.

■ **December:** Two young women ask the Rock County Clerk's Office for a marriage license, and when the woman staffing the desk asks where their fiancés are, the women say each other.

The clerk tells the women that state law prohibits her from granting them a license, and they leave, apparently headed for Minnesota. But County Clerk Walt Lindemann checks state statutes and finds no law prohibiting granting a marriage license to two people of the same gender.

However, he also cannot find a statute that says his office may grant a license to a same-gender couple. "Besides," Lindemann says, "I didn't want to be the first county clerk in Wisconsin to do something like this."

■ **Sometime in 1973:** Make it 21 handball championships in a row for Bob Luchsinger Sr. This year's final victim is Dr. Tom Haye.

■ Tom Skelly, 2713 Hayner, a Parker graduate, is state champion of the Future Farmers of America crop production contest.

■ Dean George Jr. of Evansville FFA shows two grand champions at the Rock County 4-H Fair, the top steer and barrow.

■ A record 2,500 elm trees fall victim to Dutch elm disease in Janesville. Forty of the diseased trees are century elms at least 100 years old. In the past five years, the city has lost a third of its 21,000 elm trees.

■ Janesville creates its first industrial park on Kennedy Road and Foster Avenue, and Prent Corp. breaks ground for a factory there.

■ First National Bank (Bank One) installs the first automatic teller machine in the Janesville area, a Mr. Munny Machine in the building's foyer.

■ For the first time, Janesville public kindergartens teach 5-year-olds to read.

■ A five-building central campus for Blackhawk Technical Institute is under construction between Janesville and Beloit.

■ Also under construction are First Baptist Church, 3414 Woodhall Drive, and St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 709 Milton.

■ Janesville gets its first Taco Bell at 1231 Milton.

## 1974

■ **Jan. 3:** Gasoline prices jump some 7 cents per gallon in Janesville to a whopping 49.9 cents per gallon for regular and 53.9 cents a gallon for premium.

■ **Jan. 6:** Most of the United States goes on Daylight Saving Time in an effort to save energy. It is the first time a president has ordered year-round Daylight Saving Time since World War II.

■ **Jan. 7:** As the energy crisis and recession intensify, 3,400 workers on the GM car line in Janesville are again laid off. The layoffs ripple through the community with JATCO, the vehicle hauler, the first to be hit.

The GM workers return Jan. 21, only to be laid off Feb. 4 for another two weeks.

■ **Feb. 10:** As the Watergate scandal deepens, Rep. Robert Kastenmeier, a Wisconsin congressman sitting on the House Judiciary Committee, speaks at the Janesville YMCA in a "Forum on Impeachment."

■ **Feb. 28:** Because of the fuel shortage, 32 friends and relatives of Eugene M. Tousey gather in the Fond du Lac area and come to Tousey's funeral in Janesville in a bus driven by his brother, Harry, a Lomira resident who owns a small bus company.

■ **March 2:** 10 Janesville area residents are taking a course in transcendental meditation, a relaxation and awareness technique first made popular in the United States by the Beatles in the late 1960s when they began studying with an Indian guru, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.



Another 85 local residents reportedly took the course and regularly practice TM.

■ **March 4:** The energy shortage and the state's agreement to underwrite two-thirds of the Janesville Transit System's perennial operating deficit leads the city council to add two bus routes for a total of seven and return to half hourly, rather than hourly, service.

Ridership rises 68 percent through August.

■ **March 6:** Streakers run naked across the Milton College campus around midnight, and when 150 streakers and gawkers start lighting fireworks, shouting and throwing beer bottles, police are called. The officers become targets for the junk hurled by rowdies, but none is hit.

■ **March 7:** 10 streakers flash nude through the Janesville Mall, and a young man wearing only streaker sneakers zips down Janesville's Main Street.

■ **March 8:** Four police officers—Sgt. James Stowers, Patrolman David Barnes and Patrolman William Hills of the Janesville department and Edgerton Patrolman Robert Furan—are arrested on charges including aiding and abetting felony theft, receiving stolen property, perjury and obstructing because of an eight-month John Doe probe into thefts of TV sets from Adams Furniture (Plaza Furniture and Bedding), 55 S. River.

In June, Barnes, 29, is acquitted of perjury and receiving stolen property charges. But when called to testify in Stowers' trial, he refuses to answer most questions, citing his Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate himself. Barnes returns to the job but is fired because of official misconduct regarding the investigations.

In July, Stowers, a 10-year veteran of the force, will be found guilty of perjury and receiving and concealing stolen property while three charges of concealing stolen property are dismissed. Stowers, 30, is fired and sentenced to 60 days in jail.

An appeal results in the stolen goods charge being dropped, but he serves time on the perjury conviction.

In August, Hills, 37, is acquitted of perjury and concealing a stolen TV. He returns to the force but is suspended for 42 days because of official misconduct regarding the internal and external investigations of the case.

In August, Furan is found guilty of receiving stolen property and of obstructing. He agrees to plead no contest to the obstructing charge in exchange for dropping a charge of perjury to John Doe investigators. Furan, 37, is fired and sentenced to three years of probation and payment of court costs.

The principal witness against the officers is Larry Tollison, 32, a former Edgerton cop and Rock County deputy who was charged in

## Janesville man is killed for just \$60

Three canoeists found Edwin Klukas' fully clothed body in the Rock River south of the Afton bridge on May 27, 1974.

At first, investigators thought Klukas' drowning was an accident. But their suspicions were raised when they discovered his wallet was missing. The wallet had contained about \$60, and the modest amount of cash cost Klukas his life.

Police learned that the last time the 62-year-old Klukas was seen, April 29, he was drinking at Don's Bar, 309 W. Milwaukee (Riverside Adult Video), and that he was picked up about 12:30 a.m. by four young men.

All of them drank together. They drove to Afton. At the bridge, the four rolled Klukas, a muscular construction worker. They robbed him of his wallet and the \$60.

Three of the thieves ran back to the car. One continued to fight with Klukas, and when the crook came back to the car, he told his partners in crime that Klukas jumped into the river.

On May 31, the four Janesville men were charged with murder or aiding and abetting murder in the drowning of Klukas, 957 Sherman.

The charges changed because only one man pushed the intoxicated Klukas into the water, but eventually convictions were won against all four.

Fay M. Farmer, 26, of 612 Holmes, pleaded guilty to robbery and testified or gave information against the others. He was sentenced to a year in jail.

January with seven counts of thefts of color TVs, average price \$250. In exchange for immunity on six of the seven charges, Tollison testifies that while he managed the Adams TV department, he stole TVs and gave them to area police officers.

Tollison, who moved to New Madrid, Mo., pleads guilty to the seventh charge and is sentenced to five years of probation.

■ **March 11:** Another two-week layoff begins for the GM car line, but the 1,500 truck line employees remain on the job.

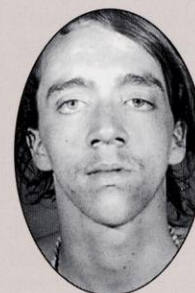
■ An internal Janesville city audit shows that Councilman Tom Karleski apparently misused his and other council members' city-issued telephone credit cards for personal calls. Saying he thought the City Hall switchboard operator would automatically know of and bill him for



Otis G. Jewell



Fay M. Farmer



Edward E. Eno



Patrick M. Wickersham

Otis G. Jewell, 22, of 617 N. Washington, was found guilty of second-degree murder and robbery. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Edward E. Eno, 22, Janesville, pleaded guilty to a charge of robbery by force. He was sentenced to a year in jail.

Patrick M. Wickersham, 23, of 1314 Mineral Point, pleaded guilty to receiving stolen property. He was sentenced to 90 days in jail and two years' probation.

personal calls, Karleski reimburses the city \$227.70.

Karleski, an insurance agent, is charged with fraudulent use of another councilman's phone credit card, to which he pleads no contest. He is fined \$100.

Often at odds with City Manager Robert Bailey, Karleski charges that his phone predicament is politically motivated. His vindication comes at the polls April 2 when he finishes second in a field of six candidates with 5,084 votes and is re-elected to a third term.

■ **April 5:** Former Green Bay Packer Fuzzy Thurston visits Janesville for the groundbreaking on a Left Guard restaurant, a chain that Thurston owns with fellow ex-Packer Max McGee and another investor. The Left Guard (Alfresco Cafe) is built on Highway 26 (Milton



Avenue) in conjunction with a Travelodge Motel (Best Western).

■ **April 20:** Nothing to do in Rock County? Country music fans can take in the Conway Twitty show in Beloit while movie buffs have many choices in Janesville: "The Sting" with Paul Newman and Robert Redford, Redford again in "The Candidate," "Blazing Saddles," the X-rated animated "Fritz the Cat," "Magnum Force" with Clint Eastwood and the Rolling Stones in "Sympathy for the Devil."

■ **May 18:** Wisconsin courts have ruled that newspapers may not prohibit girls from being newspaper carriers, and the Gazette's first "paper girl" is 13-year-old Joslyn Quimet, 1528 Gershwin. She says she likes the money and prefers delivering papers to babysitting.

■ **May 20:** Mrs. Russell French, 1524 N. Parker, who played a major role in introducing the Laubach Literacy Program to Janesville in 1965, is elected president of the National Affiliation for Literacy Advance, the membership organization of Laubach Literacy.

■ **July 5-6:** Southern Wisconsin residents are treated to a sky show, and it isn't Independence Day fireworks. The aurora borealis, or northern lights, throws up brilliant silvery green curtains that reach almost to the sky's zenith.

■ **July 30:** Country music legend and Grammy winner Loretta Lynn draws shoulder-to-shoulder crowds totaling 14,000 to two shows at the Rock County 4-H Fair grandstand.

■ **July:** Schneider Funeral Home, 1800 E. Racine, is the first new funeral home built in Janesville in almost 50 years.

■ **Aug. 9:** The day after Richard Nixon becomes the only U.S. president to resign his office, reaction varies in southern Wisconsin.

Rep. Les Aspin, a Democrat, says: "Personally I think it would have been better for the country to go through with the impeachment process so the entire case would be laid before the American public. Under the circumstances, however, I can understand why Mr. Nixon decided to resign."

Alan Tracy, Avalon, chairman of the Rock County Republican Party, says:

"It was very sad. It was a shame to lose one of the greatest presidents over a third-grade burglary. I am glad he did not try to make excuses. I think it was a positive speech, and if he would have talked about Watergate, it would have been a little melodramatic and negative."

■ **Aug. 19:** Janesville's Blackhawk Voyageurs, a drum and bugle corps, is one of six corps selected to line the route of President Gerald Ford when he visits Chicago to speak to the 75th annual convention of the Veterans of

Foreign Wars, his first major public appearance since becoming president.

■ **Sept. 28:** T.S. Willis Co.—a Janesville construction firm for 74 years and responsible for such structures as Mercy Hospital, Parker Pen's Arrow Park plant, the original Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants, the Rock County Jail (under renovation), City Hall and many schools—is sold to Jim Cullen Inc., another local company.

■ **Sept. 29:** Three children are killed in a fire in their grandparents' home at 3249 Alpine, Beloit Township.

Dead are Patrick Dabson, 4, and his brother, Duane, 3, and sister, Ann, 2 months. They are the only children of Charles and Mary Dabson. The house is owned by Mary's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Sharlow.

Mary tells firefighters she was asleep in the living room when she awoke to find flames eating their way toward the kids' rear bedrooms. A cigarette in a sofa is believed to be the cause.

■ **Oct. 1:** Janesville Police Chief Murray Cochran resigns to become chief of the Delray (Fla.) Police Department, and Kenneth Jones, 50, takes over as acting chief. On Jan. 2, 1975, Jones will become chief.

■ **Oct. 30:** Vicky Winterrowd, 22-year-old secretary-receptionist at UW-Rock County, is presented the Rock County Galantry Award for successfully overcoming the challenge of the birth defect spina bifida.

Despite paralysis of both legs, Winterrowd, 719 Sutherland, is active in her church, St. Paul's

Lutheran, and as a volunteer at Mercy Hospital and with Easter Seal Telethon. She also enjoys fishing, golf and playing guitar.

■ **October:** A new shopping center, Memorial Plaza, opens at West Memorial Drive and North Washington Street. The major tenant is a 25,000-square-foot Graves Super Valu supermarket (Mercy Health Mall).

■ **Nov. 5:** Democrat Tim Cullen, former Janesville City Council member and ombudsman for U.S. Rep. Les Aspin, pulls off a stunning upset by defeating conservative Republican incumbent James Swan of rural Elkhorn to win the 15th State Senate seat.

Democrat Lew Mittness of Janesville is re-elected to his sixth term as 48th District state assemblyman, and Aspin, also a Democrat, is

returned as congressman for the 1st District.

■ **Nov. 11:** The Janesville Kiwanis Club agrees to spend \$7,000 and untold hours of volunteer work to develop a bicycle and hiking trail along the Rock River from the Tallman Restorations north to Riverside Park.

■ In almost two years, 125 Janesville couples have taken LaMaze childbirth classes. The "prepared childbirth" technique involving both mother and father was developed in France in the 1950s and imported to the United States in the 1960s, but it is not until January 1973 that Mercy Hospital begins offering LaMaze classes.

■ **Nov. 30:** Defeated in the November election, Rock County Clerk Walter Lindemann is feted by more than 150 friends, colleagues and relatives at a farewell dinner.

Lindemann is the dean of county government, having served 34 years—including 14 two-year terms as county clerk—in the clerk's office and three years as a county supervisor.

■ **Dec. 16:** The \$800,000 Janesville Ice Arena opens at 821 Beloit Ave. as Craig's hockey team defeats Madison Edgewood. The arena has an 200- by 85-foot ice surface, and seating is available for 1,000 to 2,000 spectators depending on whether the event requires the use of the ice surface.

■ **Sometime in 1974:** The Craig Cougars go 9-0 in football, the only undefeated Janesville team in the 75-year history (through 1999) of the Big Eight Conference, and Craig wins sole possession of the conference title, a first for a Janesville team. The state "championship," however, is determined not by a tournament, but by an Associated Press poll, which gives the title to Fond du Lac.

Bob Suter is named conference coach of the year, and quarterback Dan Ryczek and lineman Fred Jergerlehner make the AP's all-state team. Jergerlehner, both an offensive and defensive tackle, also is named to the United Press International all-state team.

■ Janesville's American Legion baseball team wins the Wisconsin championship.

■ Stop the presses! Bob Luchsinger Sr., suffering from an injury, loses in the early rounds of the city handball tournament, and Lucky's 21-year reign as city handball champ ends. Dennis Campbell is the new champion.

■ The Janesville City Council OKs the sale of beer in the Riverside Golf Course clubhouse. Instead of the carousing, unsightly, behavior and foul language predicted by opponents, the



Murray Cochran



Kenneth Jones



Loretta Lynn



legal suds in the clubhouse create no problems.

■ The Janesville Fire Department starts its paramedic program—essentially an extension of the hospital emergency room—and adds an aerial truck and pumper to its fleet.

■ Cases of the venereal disease gonorrhea rise sharply in Janesville: 189 vs. 75 in 1973, 31 in 1972 and 18 in 1971. Two cases of syphilis are reported.

■ Demolished are four buildings in the 200 block of West Milwaukee Street to make way for First Federal Savings & Loan (vacant); the old Labor Temple, once the city post office, at Dodge and South Franklin streets for a parking lot; and the old A&P grocery at the corner of West Court and South River streets.

■ Dutch Elm disease spreads at an even more alarming rate than before in Janesville: 5,100 dead or dying trees are tagged for removal, more than double the previous high of 2,500 in 1973. To keep taxes down, the city council votes only enough money to remove about 40 percent of the trees in 1975, so some 3,000 will be left up, probably to spread the disease—through roots and the elm bark beetle—even faster.

■ Sidney “Skip” Bliss, a Milton College graduate, joins the Gazette staff as sales supervisor for display advertising. He is the son of the late Sidney Bliss, a co-owner of the Gazette and radio stations including WCLO and WJVL.

■ J.C. Penney starts building a 140,000-square-foot store as an addition to the Janesville Mall, and Rock County Appliance & TV announces it will move from 222 W. Milwaukee (offices) into the old Penney store at 34-36 S. Main after the department store moves.

## 1975

■ **Jan. 9:** The rear gate on a truck opens, and two tons of carp, seined from the Rock River near Janesville, spill onto the Centerway Bridge.

■ Holly Humphrey of Lima 4-H Club is the first Rock County 4-H Fair queen to be named Fairest of Fairs in the statewide competition.

■ **Jan. 13:** The severe national recession and the public’s disenchantment with large gas-guzzling cars leads GM to lay off thousands of workers across the country including the 2,100-person second shift on the Janesville plant’s car line and some 600 workers on the pickup truck line’s night shift.

About 1,900 first-shift employees still are working on the car line, and 900 are turning out trucks during the day.

The indefinite layoff follows an extra week of holiday “vacation” for the entire plant. Chrysler’s plant in Belvidere, Ill., is laid off for six weeks.

On Feb. 3, the car line’s first shift is laid off for a week.

■ **Feb. 8:** Robert Jordan, 26, and John Gibbons, 25, both of Milwaukee, rob the Copps Department Store in Creston Park Shopping Center of \$6,000 at gunpoint.

They split up. Jordan drives a Cadillac and leads Rock and Walworth county deputies on a high-speed, gunfire-riddled chase, and Gibbons abducts Robin D. Pribble, 27, of 475 S. Fremont, so he can use Pribble’s 1972 Corvette in a getaway attempt.

Jordan’s Cadillac collides with a city squad car, damaging a wheel, but he still manages to elude the cops. He steals a wheel off another Caddy at the Rock County Health Care Center, and a counselor at the youth home, ignorant of the crime, helps him change the wheels and lets him use the youth home’s restroom.

Jordan eventually abandons the car after Walworth County deputies pepper it with revolver and shotgun fire—the rear windshield is shot out and 36 bullet holes are found in the car—and he is found walking in the below-zero cold, wearing only street clothes, with a sawed-off rifle, cash and a frost-bitten finger and ears.

Gibbons goes to the Pribble family’s upstairs apartment, kidnaps Pribble at gunpoint in front of his wife and 7-year-old son and demands he drive him in the Corvette. But Gibbons takes the wheel even though he doesn’t know how to drive a stick shift.

Without using the clutch, he just jams the gears on the four-speed transmission and loses control, crashing the car into a parked auto at Main and Hyatt streets.

Gibbons pleads guilty to armed robbery, kidnapping and auto theft and is sentenced to 20 years in prison. Jordan pleads guilty to armed robbery and is sentenced to 10 years.

The 1972 white Corvette, which is demolished, would have been paid for in two weeks.

■ **Feb. 16:** The Janesville Public Library opens on Sunday for the first time. Hours are 1 to 5 p.m.

■ **February:** Rock County unemployment peaks at 16.2 percent, but it will stay in double digits through June and reach a low of 5.8 percent in October before edging back up.

County residents collect some \$14.5 million in jobless benefits throughout the year.

■ **March 12:** In what is believed to be Janesville’s first bank robbery, Bradley Gunn, 23, Beloit, walks into the Bank of Janesville, 1404 Creston Park (Terry Wendt Insurance), brandishes a long-barreled revolver and hands a young teller a note demanding that \$20,000 be placed in a paper bag.

His only spoken words are: “Put the money in the bag, please.” A customer standing be-

hind the robber in line is unaware a robbery is taking place.

Gunn walks out with about \$18,000 cash, half of which he uses to pay debts, the other half of which he burns in a barrel. He turns himself in March 21 and soon is sentenced to three years on a conviction of armed robbery.

■ **April 3:** Janesville teachers will receive a 10.25 percent pay raise and cost-of-living adjustments next school year because of a new contract worked out by the Janesville Education Association and school board. Starting salaries will rise from \$7,800 to \$8,600. The top salary for teachers with masters’ degrees and 13 years of experience will be \$16,255.

■ **May 1:** Richard R. Kniep, 45, rural Elkhorn, suffers a massive heart attack while driving on Highway 14 east of Janesville. As Kniep manages to pull off the road, Rock County Deputy Howard Erickson spots the motorist in trouble.

Kniep gasps to Erickson that he has a history of heart trouble and is experiencing sharp chest pains. Rather than call and wait for an ambulance, Erickson, a five-year veteran of the department, radios for permission to take Kniep directly to Mercy Hospital.

As they speed to the hospital, Kniep stops breathing, but hospital staff revive him. An emergency room nurse says that another minute delay would have resulted in Kniep’s death.

■ **May 12:** Kim Hounsell, 21, and her mother, Marjorie, 41, both Beloit residents, are on their way to the Beloit police station to complain about harassment and threats from Kim’s ex-boyfriend, Robert A. Janowski Jr., when he guns them down in the Beloit Clinic parking lot.

Four shots hit Kim; Marjorie is shot five times. Janowski kills both in front of many witnesses. A doctor at the clinic, where Kim works in the insurance department, shouts at Janowski to “get the hell out of here.” The killer fires at the physician but misses.

Janowski, 22, Beloit, kills himself with a bullet to the right temple.

He bought the .44-caliber Magnum revolver he used in the killings about an hour before the shootings at the Kmart in Janesville for \$159.

■ **May 18:** The congregation of Westside Baptist Church worships for the first time in its new building at 3227 Magnolia Road.

■ **May:** William Boerum becomes administrator of the Rock County Health Care Center. It will be years before his true identity is revealed.

■ **June 8:** Joe Smarz, 28, of 3327 Royal, loses his kayak while practicing in rough water below the Monterey Dam and gets caught in the fast current when he tries to retrieve the boat.



He loses consciousness, but Gene Samuelson, 33, of 2004 W. State, is running to the scene with a rope he gets from a rummage sale he is staging two blocks away.

Samuelson throws an end of the rope to Smarz's kayaking colleagues—Doug Sime and Bob Moore, both of Janesville—and, though the turbulent current keeps them from advancing very far, Smarz bobs up between them.

Smarz is blue and not breathing, and "somebody had to use mouth-to-mouth," Samuelson said. "I guess I was sort of elected." He revives Smarz after about three minutes.

■ **June:** Marilyn Sembell, who teaches piano at Beloit College for about \$5,000 a year, gives up her crown as Miss Lake Geneva to become Miss Wisconsin.

■ **July 1:** Less than half of Janesville drivers seen in informal observation take advantage of Wisconsin's new "right-on-red" law that allows a right turn after a stop at a red light.

■ **July 7:** The GM plant's laid-off second-shift workers return to their jobs. Base pay for assemblers is \$6.46 an hour.

Eighty-eight percent of GM workers live in Rock County; 5.5 percent in Jefferson County; 3.5 percent in Walworth County; 1.5 percent in Green County, with the remaining 1.5 percent living elsewhere.

■ **July 21:** Under apparent pressure from the city council, controversial Janesville City Manager Robert Bailey announces he will retire Oct. 31. Karl Samek, former city manager and now finance director, becomes acting city manager.

■ **Aug. 9:** Luckily it's a Saturday night in summer when a gas explosion blows apart Evansville's elementary school and rips the windows out of the neighboring middle school and old grade school building. The three buildings are a half-block complex.

The entire combination gym/cafeteria in the elementary school is blown out the building's north end, and the kitchen and adjacent hallways are thrown out the west side. Only girders and framing remain in those parts of the structure, but no major fire starts.

The blast hurls debris for two blocks and shatters windows in several homes.

Two firemen sustain minor injuries walking through the rubble, but amazingly the massive explosion itself causes no reported injuries.

In the next school year, 250 elementary students will attend classes in five different locations, including four churches, as they await their new facility.

■ **Aug. 18:** Parker Pen announces it will buy Manpower Inc., a Milwaukee-based temporary help firm.

■ **Sept. 2:** An eight year battle with various federal agencies ends when Milton gets a centralized post office on Hilltop Drive.

■ **Sept. 15:** Kenyon Kies becomes Rock County administrator.

■ The Janesville City Council votes unanimously that the marigold is the city's official flower. The Janesville Home and Garden Club recommended the marigold after a contest voted it more popular than the geranium and many other flowers.

In the contest, Councilman John Hall got one vote, and at the meeting, Councilman Pat Rude presents Hall with a pot of marigolds. When Hall sniffs the flowers, he discovers to his chagrin that Rude has laced the pot with limburger cheese.

Sitting next to Hall, Councilman Wayne Wood comments that at least the limburger smells better than Hall's cigars.

■ **September:** Blackhawk Technical Institute's central campus opens on Prairie Road, and enrollment tops 1,700.

■ **Sept. 20:** Janesville Fire Chief George Danz resigns to become fire chief in Kalamazoo, Mich. Arthur Sarnow, a member of the department since 1949, is named acting chief and eventually will be appointed chief.



Arthur Sarnow

■ **Oct. 8:** Tyrone Wisdom, 23, Beloit, walks out of a Beloit courtroom a free man, the same courtroom where he was sentenced to 10 years in prison for the armed robbery of the Plantation Inn in Beloit on March 26.

A clerk at the motel identified Wisdom, but two men arrested later in Rockford, Ill., admit that they and two others, but not Wisdom, held up the inn. Wisdom served four months in prison.

■ **Oct. 17:** John J. Boyle, Rock County circuit court judge, is arrested for drunken driving. He has been criticized for his court administration and lost a hotly contested spring election to Gerald Jaeckle, who will take office Jan. 5, 1976.

■ **Nov. 4:** The city is negotiating new contracts with local police and fire unions, and their pay range is reported to be higher than for public safety workers in Beloit, Eau Claire, La Crosse and Green Bay.

Starting annual salaries are \$10,504 for cops, \$10,426 for firefighters. Top pay is \$13,650 for patrolmen, \$13,156 for firemen.

The Janesville Professional Police Association is asking for a 10 percent across-the-board raise, while Fire Fighters Local 580 is looking for a 15 percent across-the-board hike.

■ **Nov. 12:** Janesville City Attor-

ney Nicholas Jones will not prosecute three UW-Madison students who were arrested Oct. 16 for distributing *The Worker*, a Socialist newspaper, outside the GM plant because, he acknowledges, the arrests were unconstitutional.

Though the paper carries a price of 25 cents, the students gave away most of their copies but still were arrested because they didn't have a city solicitor's license.

Attorney David Feingold, one of 12 lawyers donating services to the recently formed Rock County Civil Liberties Union (defunct), a branch of the American Civil Liberties Union, points out that the courts have held that ordinances requiring sellers' permits do not apply to people exercising their First Amendment right to expressing points.

■ **Dec 1:** Cathy Norris starts work as children's librarian at Janesville Public Library.

■ **Dec. 1-6:** The Gazette publishes an in-depth series detailing the extent of drug use and abuse in Janesville. It finds that school administrators and parents typically are in the dark and downplay the breadth and depth of the drug scene.

High school students accept marijuana and alcohol as facts of their social life, and kids from dropouts to athletes and scholars are using marijuana and alcohol regularly and hallucinogens and amphetamines occasionally.

From 1972-74, the Janesville Fire Department transported an average 43 people a year who overdosed on drugs. In 1967, the department transported eight.

Drug users estimate that 40 heroin addicts live in Janesville and 100 live in Beloit. The dopers talk of \$70-a-day heroin habits and tell of dealers making \$1,000 to \$21,000 a week.

The number of annual drug arrests is rising dramatically. In 1971, 15 people were arrested in Rock County for pot possession; in 1974, 136 were busted. The youngest person arrested is 11 years old. Most are 16 to 18.

Counselors, teachers and police officers maintain the arrests and overdoses are just the tip of the drug iceberg.

■ **Dec. 18:** Marvin Roth, former contractor and city councilman, is chosen executive vice president of the Janesville Area Chamber of Commerce. He succeeds Bob Westfall, who headed the chamber for 22 years until his death in September.

■ **Dec. 27:** Jehovah's Witnesses dedicate their new 44,000-square-foot Assembly Hall, 207 S. Wright.

■ **December:** Lew Mittness gives up his Assembly seat to become executive secretary of the state Public Service Commission.

■ **Sometime in 1975:** Janes-



Marvin Roth



## Drugs, booze and a twisted trio equal murder

**I**t was a case that featured several twists, but it boiled down to a cheap robbery and a murder by a trio twisted on drugs and booze.

About 3 a.m. March 22, 1976, Fred Patrick Anderson III, 26, of 428 Harding, was killed with a shot to the face in the Clark Gas Station, where he worked at the corner of Centerway and North Parker Drive (The Dog House).

A short time later in Edgerton, Rock County deputies stopped a car matching the description of one seen at the crime scene. The deputies arrested Larry G. Solles, 26, of 404 N. Washington; Steven E. Drenning, 23, of 31 S. Main, and Carol Treuthardt, 35, of 915 W. Van Buren.

On the floor of the car, the cops found a ski mask, black leather gloves and a .357-caliber Magnum revolver with two spent shells in the cylinder.

Solles already was facing burglary, forgery and drug charges. Drenning recently had been arrested for possession of amphetamines.

All three were charged with first-degree murder and armed robbery, and all pleaded not guilty.

On May 19, Treuthardt agreed to testify against her cronies in exchange for immunity.

The trial for Drenning and Solles started July 6 in Waukesha County. It dragged on for five weeks and cost \$125,000. Defending Drenning was attorney Tod Daniel while James Welker defended Solles.

As the trio sat in a car at an intersection near the gas station, Drenning asked Solles if he should shoot the gas station attendant in the robbery, Treuthardt testified.

Solles replied, "Not unless you have to."

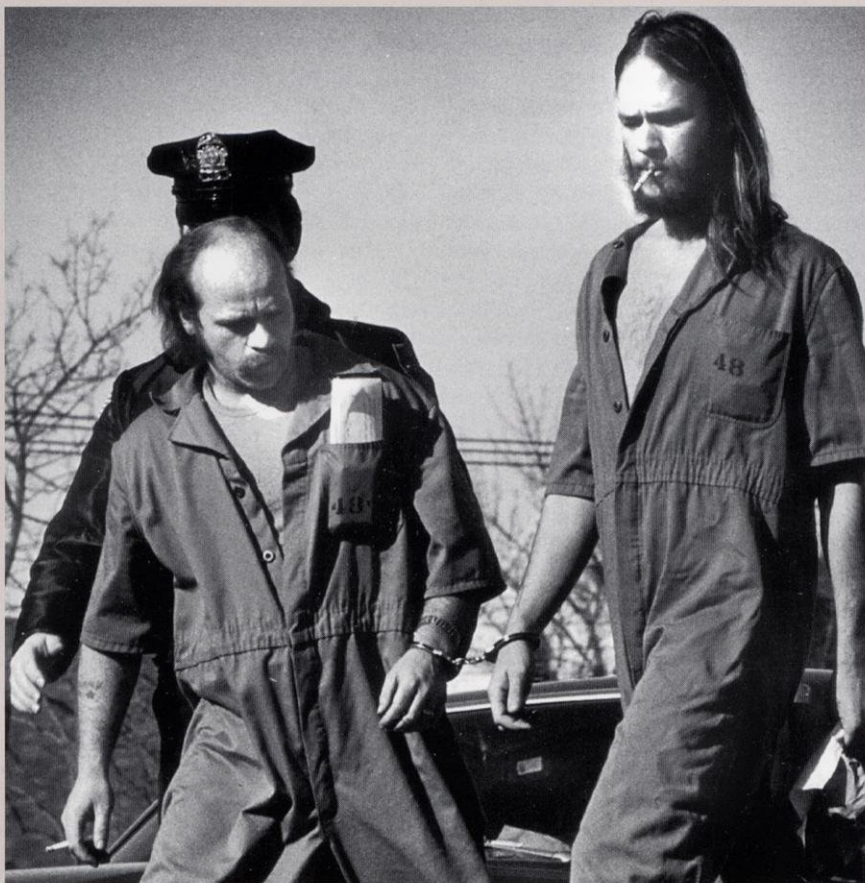
Wearing a ski mask, Drenning entered the gas station alone.

Treuthardt testified she heard two shots, seconds apart, before an excited, shaking Drenning returned to the car, saying: "Larry, I shot him. I think I killed him."

The criminal complaint charged that \$24.81 was stolen. Drenning handed Solles some cash and said: "All I could get is \$12" to which Solles replied, "Is that all?" Treuthardt testified.

Drenning took the stand and testified he was drinking and doing drugs, including injecting methamphetamine, since the time he got up the morning before the murder.

He said he went to the gas station to try to sell the revolver to Anderson and that—though the gun needed to be cocked before being fired—it discharged accidentally as the



**Larry Solles, left, and Steven Drenning are led to court during their trial for the 1976 murder of Fred Anderson at the Clark Gas Station on the corner of Centerway and North Parker Drive. A third party in the crime, Carol Treuthardt, was granted immunity for her testimony during the trial, which resulted in Solles and Drenning being found guilty of second-degree murder and armed robbery.**

two men argued about the price and scuffled over the gun. Anderson then had the gun, Drenning said, and he didn't remember a second shot. But he could not explain how he regained the gun.

Solles testified that Drenning went to the gas station to get cigarettes while he and Treuthardt sat in the car drinking beer and listening to the radio.

The defense showed that the star witness, Treuthardt, also was drinking and doing drugs, and the lawyers tried to persuade the jury that her testimony could not be believed.

The defense attorneys also tried to establish that the victim, Anderson, had been a mercenary in a secret army and was interested in buying and selling guns. Anderson, a Chippewa Falls native, had lived in Janesville for about a year.

The defense also tried to show that a bullet fragment, not a whole bullet, killed Anderson,

indicating that Drenning didn't aim at Anderson and that a ricochet killed Anderson.

The jury took little time to find both Solles and Drenning guilty of second-degree murder and armed robbery. Both were sentenced to the maximum total of 60 years on all charges.

In 1980, an appeals court upheld the convictions.

In 1992, Drenning was paroled after serving 16 years and 14 appearances before the parole board. In 1993, Solles was paroled after nearly 17 years in prison.

By chance, Solles ran into the judge in the case, Gerald Jaeckle, in an elevator in the Dane County Courthouse. A few days later, they shared a pleasant chat on a bench outside the courthouse.

In 1994, Solles' parole was revoked because of an arrest on charges of battery and false imprisonment, and he was returned to prison, where he remained in 1999.



ville baseball teams win their fourth American Legion state title in eight years and their sixth Babe Ruth state championship in 10 years. Managed by Dale Barry, the Legion team amasses a 37-5 record including a 24-game win streak. The Babe Ruth team allows only three runs in 42 innings of state tourney play.

■ Jan Hoffman wins his ninth City Golf Tournament with a 72-hole total of 285.

■ Development begins on the Wuthering Hills subdivision on Janesville's east side.

■ The number of gonorrhea cases in Janesville drops 44 to 132.

■ The community is coming to grips with problems of alcoholism and drug abuse, but the Janesville City Council decides to end the city's alcoholism and referral center June 30, 1976. The center serves more than 200 families in 1975.

■ Village Green East apartment complex is expanding in Janesville.

■ Janesville Truck Equipment, a subsidiary of Morgan Trailer Manufacturing (Morgan Corp.), starts making truck and van bodies in Janesville on a northeast-side street that eventually will be named Morgan Way.

■ Janesville Recycling Center opens on Black Bridge Road.

## 1976

■ Jan. 10: Mercy Hospital opens its first Special (Intensive) Care Unit.

■ Jan. 13: Republican presidential candidate and former California Gov. Ronald Reagan speaks to 400 area civic and business leaders at the Janesville Ramada Inn's Annual Business Appreciation Day breakfast.

Displaying wit, show business polish and political acumen, the former movie actor asserts that the free enterprise system is in grave trouble, and he blasts those who want more government control over business.

"We have neglected to teach (free enterprise) to our children in the schools, and today young people are growing up thinking the profit system is to blame for our ills," Reagan says. "Let me tell you, profit, property and freedom are inseparable, and we can't have the third one without the right to the first two."

■ Jan. 15: Boys at Marshall Junior High (Marshall Apartments) still have the option of swimming nude in physical education classes, as they have for 54 years since it opened as Janesville High School. School administrators rationalize that swimming naked keeps the water cleaner and that providing swim suits, as is done for girls, would be an added expense.

The actual reason is an apparent reluctance to change tradition.

■ Jan. 18: Janesville's Jim Fitzgerald, who started his business empire with gas stations and built it with Total TV, heads a five-man group that buys the major interest in the Milwaukee Bucks. By year's end, the group buys most of the outstanding shares in the successful National Basketball Association franchise.

■ Feb. 18: Janesville patrolman Lloyd Brueggeman shoots Pernel Williams, 22, Rockford, Ill., in the neck to stop a wild chase that took officers careening down Janesville streets at 70 mph and along country roads at faster speeds.

Williams is speeding at 70 down Milton Avenue in a Lincoln Continental stolen in Rockford when Brueggeman gives chase. The chase roars down Main Street and winds up on Prairie Road south of Avalon Road, where Williams loses control when he takes to the shoulder to avoid a car.

As Williams spins the car in a field, Deputy Chad Kelley approaches on foot and yells a warning that Williams ignores. Kelley fires five shots at the Lincoln's wheels and back window.

Brueggeman runs alongside the car, yells another warning, also ignored. He fires one shot through the driver's window that hits Williams' neck. Deputies slow the fugitive's bleeding, insert an air passage to help him breathe and twice massage his heart.

Williams is in fair condition at Mercy Hospital and faces charges here and in Rockford.

■ March 15: Philip Deaton, former city manager of Red Wing, Minn., assumes the same post in Janesville.

■ March 16: 550 members of United Rubber Workers Local 663 strike Parker Pen over wages and benefits.

■ March 30: Former Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter tells 1,000 people at the Janesville Holiday Inn that if he wins the Democratic Party nomination and the presidency he will overhaul the federal government to deflate the "horrible, bloated bureaucracy."

The United States still has its great economic strength despite high unemployment and rampant inflation, Carter says, and its democratic system of government withstood the abuses and scandals of the Nixon Watergate era.

Carter says he could cut the Pentagon budget by up to \$7 billion, which, he says, would

make the military tougher and more efficient, and he wants to rid the planet of all nuclear weapons.

■ Appearing in a wheelchair because of paralysis from would be assassin Arthur Bremer's bullets in 1972, Alabama Gov. George Wallace brings his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination to Total TV in Janesville.

Asked about his infamous statement "Segregation now—segregation tomorrow—segregation forever," Wallace says he was raised to believe that segregation was right and adds:

"I was raised under the principles of honesty and integrity, and I admit that I felt that way then. But we lost the legal battles, and integration is now the law of the land. Now let's put that behind us and go forward."

But he nevertheless maintains that a strong vote for him in Wisconsin would be a clear message to Washington that the public opposes court-ordered busing to achieve integration.

The next day, Wallace, espousing the populist political line that government neglects common people, is greeted with enthusiastic applause, cheers of support and words of encouragement from faculty and students at Parker High School.

■ April 1: A drug raid sweeps up 38 suspects, most from Beloit and most on charges of selling heroin and other hard drugs.

■ April 5: Patrick Kohli, a senior at Elkhorn High School, is the third son in his family to win a four-year National Merit scholarship.

The 17-year-old plans to attend Northwestern University to study political science and economics. There he will join his brothers: Joe, 18, studying pre-law, and Martin, 20, majoring in philosophy.

■ April 6: Assembler Wayne Wood becomes Assemblyman Wayne Wood as he wins a special election to fill the 48th District seat vacated by Lew Mittens. Wood gives up his seat on the Janesville City Council and takes a leave of absence from his hourly job at the GM plant.

Jimmy Carter wins Wisconsin's Democratic presidential primary, and President Ford wins the GOP nod.

In local Democratic presidential nomination balloting, Arizona Rep. Morris Udall wins Rock County and Janesville with 8,173 and 3,708 votes respectively; Carter garners 6,394 votes in the county, 2,442 in the city; Wallace is third with 2,135 votes in the county, 768 in the city.

On the Republican side, Ford outpolls



Philip Deaton



Jimmy Carter



Reagan 8,679 to 7,725 in the county and 3,564 to 2,782 in the city.

■ **April 23:** Gibbs-Hammond ceases operations in Janesville, and 50 people are out of work. Founded in 1946, Gibbs Manufacturing and Research at first made components for military ordnance and electronic devices for the aerospace industry. In 1957, the company developed the Kimball electric organ, and in 1961, Hammond Organ bought the company as a subsidiary. Besides fuses and electronic timers, workers in Janesville made organs and car stereos.

In 1969, Gibbs had three plants in Janesville and one in Milton. With 800 employees, Gibbs had Janesville's third largest payroll. But soon after, business slacked off, and parts of the operation were sold or moved.

In 1977, Accudyne (Alliant Precision Fuse Co.), founded by former Gibbs executives, will buy the Gibbs plant at 340 N. Franklin, the second Gibbs plant acquired by Accudyne. The factory continued operations in 1999.

■ **May 1:** The Bicentennial Wagon Train, an across-country procession of covered wagons, experiences a minor mishap in Lake Geneva. A Walworth County deputy sounds his siren, and a team of horses owned by Ken Duttweiler of Bristol bolts.

Lisa McIsaac, 7, Bristol, is thrown from the wagon, and the horses knock down Irene Clayton, 75, Lake Geneva. Mike West, 15, Lake Geneva, is shaken up when he tries to stop the team. All injuries are minor.

■ **May 3:** The Parker Pen strike has gotten edgy with large numbers of pickets attempting to stop cars from entering Arrow Park and supervisors being taunted.

The company plans to ask for a court injunction against aspects of the strike, but outside the courtroom, the two sides agree to limit the number of pickets. Pickets will not impede people or vehicles entering or leaving the plant, and strikers will not be allowed to threaten people coming and going there.

The rubber workers' strike ends against Parker Pen on May 19, but International Association of Machinists Local 1266 remains on strike.

■ **Spring:** New highway signs with distances displayed in both miles and kilometers go up throughout Wisconsin to get drivers to "think metric." It doesn't happen.

■ **June 2:** Mrs. Donald C. Bolles of Phoenix, Ariz., is visiting relatives in Janesville—Mrs. Stephen Nickols, 312 Jefferson, and Mrs. John Dreyer, 18 N. Atwood—when she receives word that her son, Donald, has had his leg amputated because of a bomb assassination attempt in Phoenix.

Donald, a 47-year-old Beloit College gradu-

ate, is an investigative reporter for the Arizona Republic who is working on a Mafia expose when hit men put a bomb in his car.

Bolles' grandfather, Stephen, was editor of the Gazette for many years before being elected to Congress, and Donald's father, Donald C. Bolles, worked for the Gazette before joining the Associated Press.

Bolles dies 11 days later.

■ **July 4:** Thousands of Catholics, Protestants, Jews and followers of other faiths attend the Janesville Ecumenical Celebration. The principal speaker is Eugene Carson Blake, retired general secretary of the World Council of Churches, who tells the throng that peace is achieved through justice and love, not force of arms.

The ecumenical event is just one of many staged in Janesville for the nation's Bicentennial. The Janesville Mall hosts a costume ball, where the Janesville Bicentennial Fife and Drum Corps, formed the year before for America's 200th birthday, performs.

Parades, regular and bike; raft and canoe races; musical performances; a skydiving exhibition; Rock Aqua Jays shows; three nights of fireworks; ringing virtually every bell in the city; and refreshments, including beer at Traxler Park, make for a festive four days of celebration in Janesville.

■ **July 11:** In a harbinger of many outdoor concerts to follow, Piper Road Spring Band of rural Whitewater co-sponsors a bluegrass musical festival on the ski slopes of Alpine Valley Resort near East Troy.

Bill Monroe, "the father of bluegrass," and headliners Lester Flatt and Ralph Stanley are among the entertainers who come from around the country to perform for 6,500 well-behaved music fans.

■ **Aug. 19:** Peter Burno throws the switch on a hydro-electric generator at a dam on the Yahara River at Stebbinsville, west of Edgerton, and sells the electricity to the city of Stoughton.

The plant has not been used for 23 years, but Burno invests his time and money to refurbish it. In October, he will lease the Fulton and Indianford dams from Rock County.

■ **Sept. 30:** The jury takes only one hour to convict Jesse Hilber, 16, Beloit, of first-degree murder in the shooting death of his father, Raymond, on April 19. The youth, who testifies "I just wanted to hurt him," fired six shots at his sleeping father, then reloaded and fired two more bullets. The elder Hilber died of multiple chest and head wounds. Hilber is sentenced immediately to life in prison.

■ **Oct. 26:** 40 employees scurry from Borchert Laminators (no longer in business), 40 Freedom Lane, when a gas heater explodes and ignites flammable chemicals in the building.

Lucille Bessell, 5237 Kennedy, injures a leg when she jumps from a restroom window. Damage is estimated at \$350,000.

■ **Oct. 28:** Highway 15 (I-43), also called the Rock Freeway, is completed for its full 62 miles between Milwaukee and Beloit. Total cost is \$78 million.

■ **Nov. 2:** Janesville votes 10,642 to 9,787 for President Gerald Ford over Jimmy Carter, but Carter wins the national race. A strong showing in Beloit almost pulls out Rock County for Carter, but Ford narrowly prevails, 28,325 to 28,052.

Les Aspin breezes to a third congressional term, carrying Rock County by a better than 2-1 margin.

■ **Nov. 10:** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources finds that a nuclear power plant proposed for a site just east of Lake Koshkonong 16 miles north of Janesville would seriously harm the lake and the Rock River. The finding effectively scuttles the proposal by WP&L and three other utilities to build a \$1.2 billion, 1,800-megawatt atom-fired generator.

■ **Dec. 14:** Making a big hit at the annual Janesville Big and Little Brothers Christmas banquet are members of the undefeated, 13-0, Delavan Red Devils semi-pro football team. Among team members appearing are quarterback Bob Schaffner and tight end Mel Cushing.

■ **December:** Schoeberle's Grocery, 305 W. Milwaukee (Minuteman Press), the last grocery store in downtown Janesville, closes.

■ **Sometime in 1976:** Janesville's American Legion baseball team rides a 27-game win streak and 44-6 season to take the state championship for the third straight year.

■ The Babe Ruth baseball team takes its second straight state title, and the Rock Valley Senior Babe Ruth team also is state champ.

■ Lori Kenmitz of Parker High sets a state girls' high-jump record at 5 feet, 6 inches, and another Parker athlete, Tom Yoss, sets the state boys' 120-yard high hurdle mark at 14.4 seconds.

■ Rex Lowe of Janesville wins the Wisconsin State Public Links Senior Golf Tournament.

■ Janesville wrestler Scott Palm wins a gold medal in the Olympiad for the Physically Disabled.

■ In the first year of the state girls' basketball tournament, the Clinton High Cougars, 20-1 in the regular season, advance to the final game of the Class B tourney. But the Clinton girls get into foul trouble and lose 49-41 to Lancaster despite a 30-point performance from star Vicky Voss.

■ Severe drought drops the average yield on Rock County corn test plots from 153.4 bushels per acre in 1975 to 102.7 bushels per acre.



Soybean output falls from 52.5 bushels per acre in 1975 to 38.2 bushels per acre.

■ Another 4,343 Janesville trees are lost to Dutch Elm disease. Since a single elm fell to the disease here in 1956, the city has lost more than 23,775 of what were some 24,650 trees.

■ Milton Avenue is reconstructed to three lanes in either direction from Milton Lawns Cemetery to I-90, and frontage roads are installed on either side of the avenue.

■ More than 14,000 Janesville residents are inoculated against swine flu as the federal government provides vaccine and materials for the program.

■ Skatin' Place, a roller rink, is built at 2809 Pontiac in what was recently a cornfield.

■ The Myers Theater, 118 E. Milwaukee (parking lot), closes.

■ The Piggly Wiggly grocery in Creston Park Shopping Center closes.

■ Craig High School is renovated at a cost of \$375,000, and Adams, Jefferson and Lincoln elementary schools add instructional media centers (libraries) at a total cost of \$335,853.

■ The Village Craftsman, a non-profit corporation, forms to market handmade items fashioned by homebound handicapped people. By the end of 1977, Village Craftsman is dealing with 500 people from almost every corner of Wisconsin who do woodworking, sewing, crocheting, knitting and other handicrafts.

## 1977

■ **Jan. 25:** President Carter's granting of amnesty to Vietnam War draft dodgers draws the ire of Janesville veterans. State VFW Commander Monte Hanson of Janesville calls the president's action a "slap in the face to every veteran who served in the Vietnam War."

■ **Feb. 1:** Janesville Auto Transport Co. (JATCO) is sold to Ryder Systems of Miami.

■ **Feb. 3:** Mindful of U.S. dependence on foreign oil—the United States imports 35 percent of its oil—and remembering the Arab Oil Embargo of 1973, President Carter asks Americans to set their thermostats at no more than 68 degrees. The city of Janesville gives away wood—from felled diseased elms—for free to residents with wood-burning stoves and fireplaces.

At the same time, winter is so severe in Rock County that the frost depth—extent of frozen ground—is a record 5 feet.

■ **Feb. 9:** For the first time in 43 days in Janesville, the temperature rises above freezing.

■ **Feb. 16:** Evansville police officer Jerry L. Mulholland, 30, is arrested on a charge of first-degree murder in the shooting death of his wife, Marlene. She is found with what investigators believe is a bullet entrance wound to the back of her head and an exit wound in the front.

An autopsy conducted in Rock County comes to the same conclusion, which doesn't jibe with Mulholland's account that the arguing couple struggled over a revolver and it went off accidentally. But at the preliminary hearing, Rock County Coroner Richard McCaul testifies under defense cross-examination that he found powder burns on Marlene's face and right hand.

Her body is exhumed; another autopsy finds that the entrance wound is in front. Mulholland also passes two lie detector tests. District Attorney Michael Trost dismisses all charges, and Mulholland is exonerated.

■ **March 12:** Local 95 and Janesville plant managers have been trying to negotiate a new local contract for nine months, and the last pact expired in November, so Local 95 strikes the plant over many unresolved issues. The walk-out lasts one day as a new agreement is reached.

■ **April 5:** A proposal to decriminalize possession of marijuana in Whitewater is narrowly defeated in a referendum, 1,544 against vs. 1,372 in favor. The proposal, which would have made possession of up to 4 ounces of marijuana or 1 ounce of hashish an ordinance violation with a fine of no more than \$5, passed easily in wards heavily populated by UW-Whitewater students but was rejected elsewhere in the city.

■ **April 18:** Four Parker High students—Denise Karleski, Jodi Kessler, Leslie Kleinhenz and Ann Gondreau—present the Janesville council with a petition signed by 1,700 residents who want the city to build a municipal swimming pool. The students' efforts play a major role in the eventual construction of Rockport Pool.

■ **May 2:** The Janesville council agrees to a six-month experiment in which drivers will not have to pay for short-term parking in the city's metered downtown parking lots. On-street meters must still be paid.

■ **June 4:** Telephone switching in Janesville becomes electronic and computer-routed rather than electro-mechanical, and residents can use touch-tone phones for the first time. But now they must punch or dial all seven numbers of local calls while they were able to dial only the last five digits before the change.

■ **June 8:** A monster hail storm blasts Walworth County, destroying crops and ruining gardens. Hardest hit is Lyons Township, where pea- to marble-sized hail accumulates to 4 inches in places. Hail drifts of 1.5 feet are reported. Snow plows must clear roads.

■ **June 30:** Janesville's only taxi service, City Cab, 14 N. Locust, closes. When Paul Buggs started the business in 1913 as White Star Taxi, it competed with four other cab companies

for a booming business. Because of their age and health, Paul's sons, George and Otto Buggs, end the taxi service, but they continue City Cab Body Shop, which remains in business as City Cab Carstar Collision Center and in the family at the same location in 1999.

Within a month, George Poppas, city councilman and businessman, and James Edgington, a city bus driver, buy City Cab and resume taxi service.

■ **July 2:** Janesville's second erotic bookstore, Exotic World News, opens at 9 N. Jackson, right across from the Municipal Building. The store opens in the same week that a federal appeals court upholds the overturning of Myron Amato's 1970 conviction for selling obscene materials at his long-defunct JM Book Store, Janesville's first adult bookstore on North Main Street.

■ **July 6:** Lack of sponsorship forces the announcement that the Parade of Champions, the centerpiece of Janesville's Labor Day celebration for 25 years, is canceled.

■ **July 18:** Pamela K. Washburn, 30, of 485 S. Garfield, is Janesville's first female cop in 56 years. By year's end, the department hires a second female patrol officer, Theresa Raymond.



Pamela Washburn

The first time the department hired a female officer was in 1921, when Margaret Kavanaugh, formerly a Necedah school teacher, was hired. But she only worked nine months, either resigning or leaving because the job was discontinued. (Gazette records mention both scenarios).

In 1953, Janesville police hired Mrs. Arnold Schmidt as a civilian records clerk, the first woman hired by the department since Kavanaugh.

■ **July 15:** The Chrysler Corp. plant in Belvidere shuts down for four month changeover from production of full-size cars to subcompact Dodge Omnis and Plymouth Horizons. The annual model changeover at the Janesville GM factory is accomplished in a weekend because, as a local plant worker notes, "There is no change in the models."

■ **July:** The National Weather Service is scheduled to drop Fahrenheit temperatures in favor of Celsius as the United States prepares to go metric, and in September it is supposed to drop inches for millimeters in reporting precipitation amounts. Another governmental attempt to sell the metric system to the American public will fail.

■ **Aug. 1:** Karen Thom, 34, of 304 N. Terrace, becomes Rock County's first female deputy. Women working clerical jobs at the sheriff's department have worn uniforms for



## Murder plot has venomous twist

**N**o one was killed or even injured, but the crime was one of the most notorious in Janesville history because of the intended weapon: snake venom.

On Aug. 31, 1977, Charlotte R. Durfee, 46, and former college professor Loren Moore, 46, both of Milton, were charged with trying to kill Durfee's estranged husband—Miles—with an injection of cobra venom to make it look like the 73-year-old roofing contractor and businessman suffered a heart attack.

Charlotte and Miles, whose value was reported at \$2 million, were getting a divorce from what was a second marriage for both of them. But Charlotte wanted more than a divorce settlement and alimony.

She hired Moore, who was her professor at Milton College in the 1960s, with promises of \$15,000, house renovations, a farm and a lifetime job to help her kill her husband so she could get all his money, Moore testified.

He also testified that he never intended to kill Durfee but that his role "was a fantastic game, and I just kept getting into it deeper and deeper."

To placate Charlotte at one point, Moore testified, he had a son-in-law pose as a "Chicago hit man" and accept diamond rings and \$1,200 cash for the murder, but then he arranged for the "hit man" to disappear.

But Charlotte persisted, Moore testified, and he contacted the reptile keeper at the Vilas Park Zoo in Madison and offered \$12,500 to buy cobra venom and for help in injecting it into Durfee. The attendant contacted police, who didn't know the intended victim's name but who sleuthed it out through county divorce records from bits and pieces that Moore told the attendant.

The divorce trial went on as well, and Charlotte testified that the wealthy Durfee was so miserly that during a Canadian vacation, he took his own cereal and milk to restaurants and "was very offended when they charged him to use a bowl."

Durfee's attorney, Tom Basting, tried to show that Charlotte was cheating Durfee as she did the books for his enterprises.

During divorce proceedings, Durfee ironically suffered a heart attack, and the judge quickly directed a divorce, so that Charlotte would not get Durfee's entire estate if he died. The judge awarded Charlotte \$298,000 in the divorce, most of which reportedly paid legal fees.

Moore pleaded guilty to soliciting first-degree murder in exchange for the dropping



**Loren Moore, above, testifies during the trial of Charlotte Durfee, below right. Durfee had enlisted Moore's help to try to kill her estranged husband, Miles, with an injection of snake venom. Durfee was found guilty of conspiracy to commit murder, while Moore pleaded guilty to lesser charge in exchange for his testimony.**



of a charge of conspiracy to commit murder. A prosecutor in Dane County, where the trial was held because that's where the attempt to procure cobra venom was made, said he would recommend a sentence of no more than a year in jail if Moore testified truthfully against Charlotte.

In August 1978, Charlotte was tried for conspiracy to commit murder.

The zoo's snake handler testified and brought a 6-foot mangrove snake to court to show the judge and jury the kind of snake he

gave Moore to hold when Moore first asked about lethal snake bites.

The jury took 90 minutes to convict Charlotte, and, in January 1979, she was sentenced to four years in prison though the maximum sentence was 30 years. She was paroled Nov. 26, 1980.

Moore was sentenced to a year in jail and five years probation. But after a psychiatric report said he was likely to attempt suicide behind bars, the jail sentence was suspended in favor of probation.



many years, but Thom is the first sworn deputy with regular patrol duties. Thom is a two-year veteran of the State Patrol, where she was one of the first female troopers.

■ **Aug. 3:** Demolition starts on the old Myers Theater, southwest corner of Milwaukee Street and Parker Drive. The building, which also housed the Elks Club, is razed for a parking lot for Rock County National Bank (Johnson Bank). The Elks Club is building a clubhouse at 2100 N. Washington (current location).

■ Hail and rain can't stop the "Rock 'n' Roll Music" as seminal rocker Chuck Berry has the Rock County 4-H Fair crowd "Reelin' and Rockin'." The storm interrupts power during Berry's first show, but he has his drummer continue and finishes "Johnny B. Goode" without amplification and "duck-walks" through puddles on the stage.

■ **Sept. 6:** The Janesville City Council rejects on a 5-1 vote an anti-obscenity ordinance that was prompted by the opening of the erotic book store across from City Hall. Members who vote against the ordinance have various reasons: from noting that the state already has an obscenity statute to citing the freedom of expression guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Of 300 people at hearing, 175 support the ordinance while only 18 openly say they oppose it. But the speakers who address the council are split, with those opposing the ordinance also saying they support the First Amendment and abhor censorship.

One of the ordinance opponents is the Rev. Eugene Beltz, 2416 Mount Vernon, who says: "An upright community doesn't have to worry about an occasional pimple that shows up. We don't need more laws."

■ **Sept. 19:** A group of about 40 Janesville residents forms to try to rid the city of pornography and affiliates itself with a national organization, Citizens for Decency Through Law.

■ **October:** Their appeals exhausted, WP&L and three other utilities scrap their plans for a nuclear reactor near Lake Koshkonong. They also abandon an alternative plan for two coal-fired plants at the same site in the face of heated opposition.

■ **Nov. 7:** Parker Pen Credit Union moves into a new building at 1101 N. Parker.

■ **Nov. 14:** Rock County District Attorney Michael Trost remains steadfast in his refusal to prosecute Exotic World News under state laws unless the store sells erotic material to minors or involves them in any way in its operation. And the Janesville City Council again rejects a new ordinance to prohibit sale of "obscene" material.

■ **Nov. 30:** Howard Erickson and Doug

Witt, Rock County deputies, are cleared of brutality charges in a federal case brought by a Footville man who alleged his constitutional rights were violated and who sought \$115,000 in damages. The judge throws out the case against Witt, and the jury finds insufficient evidence to prove that Erickson kicked the man after pulling him from his car.

■ **Dec. 22:** Fire destroys the Sherwin-Williams Paint store, 23 S. Main (parking lot), causing \$160,000 damage, and nearby businesses incur smoke and water damage. The cause is not immediately known.

■ Rock County Judge Gerald Jaeckle throws out a city charge of selling obscene material brought against a clerk of Exotic World News. District Attorney Trost refused to file the charge because no minors were involved either in the production or sale of the material, so City Attorney Nicholas Jones filed the charge. Jaeckle rules the material is not obscene according to guidelines established by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the Citizens for Decency Through Law has its first petition for an obscenity ordinance referendum rejected because the petition did not meet state requirements. The group prepares a second petition.

■ **December:** Happy Joe's Pizza and Ice Cream Parlor throws a holiday party for some 300 handicapped and "mentally retarded" residents of Rock County.

■ **Sometime in 1977:** The Rock County Sheriff's Department goes to one-man patrols instead of two deputies assigned to each car.

■ Under discussion is a plan to use part of the Rock County Airport grounds for a recreational complex, including a golf course. In 1999, it still hadn't happened.

■ Rock County ranks fourth in the state for number of families, 2,953, receiving public assistance, \$937,233. Calls for welfare reform echo across the United States.

■ Janesville fills up the 24 acres set aside in 1964 as a sanitary landfill on the south side of Black Bridge Road, and the city is trying to convince the state Department of Natural Resources that its plans for an adjacent 17-acre site will not pollute the environment. The city will comply with all state requirements, but all the sites south of Black Bridge Road will contaminate groundwater but no wells or other sources of drinking water.

In 1999, the sites were a multi-million-dollar clean-up project ordered by the federal Environmental Protection Agency as part of the

Super Fund program.

■ The city expands and improves its wastewater treatment plant.

■ For the first time, the city receives and administers federal rent subsidies for elderly and low-income residents.

■ Black Bridge Bowl opens at 1141 Black Bridge Road.

■ Under construction is Riverside Apartments, a three-story apartment building for senior citizens at Washington Street and West Memorial Drive.

■ Eighty-nine duplexes are built in Janesville; the previous high was 49 in 1976.

■ The winter of 1976-77 produces 42 days when the temperature drops below zero; the average is 12 days. January alone has 22 sub-zero days. June and July have 22 days in which the temperature is 90 or above.

■ Jackson Elementary School sets up a math learning center in its library, featuring an electronic Digitor machine. One of the first calculators, it is big and clunky.

■ Parker Pen's annual sales and profits set their seventh consecutive record, but the main source of profits is the company's Manpower temporary help subsidiary, not the pen business.

■ Employment at the GMAD plant reaches a new high of 7,100, more than 1,000 more than the year previous. Of the total, 6,450 are hourly workers and 650 are salaried employees. Production is 274,286 full-size Chevrolet cars and 114,681 pickup trucks. Annual payroll is \$128.5 million.

■ After a decidedly average 7-7 regular season, the Parker Vikings string together eight consecutive victories to win the state high school baseball championship.

■ Jody Rittenhouse of Craig is the state's best high school girls' mileer with a time of 5:03.7, and Parker's Lori Kemnitz is tops in the high jump. In regional competition, Kemnitz breaks her old state record with a jump of 5 feet, 8 inches, a new standard for state female jumpers in both high school and college.

Both Rittenhouse and Kemnitz are Janesville's first girls' state champs. Kemnitz wins the high jump in the U.S. Track and Field Federation meet at UW-Madison. Rittenhouse also is the first Janesville girl to run cross-country, and she is champion of state competition and the No. 5 high school girls' cross-country runner in the nation.

■ Tom Arndt of Parker also is a state champion in the 330-yard low hurdles.

■ In Janesville's first interscho-



Jody Rittenhouse



Lori Kemnitz



lastic girls' softball game, Parker creams Craig 25-5.

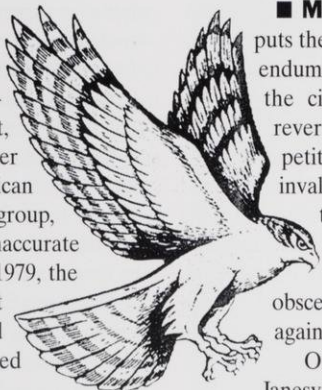
■ Tom Bigelow of Whitewater finishes sixth in the Indianapolis 500.

■ Victories in the Miller 200 and Fair Park 150 propel Dave Watson of Milton to rookie of the year fame for the United States Auto Club.

■ Janesville wins its second straight state Senior Babe Ruth baseball title.

■ Steve Toler repeats as Janesville men's singles tennis champion.

■ UW-Whitewater abandons its Willie Warhawk mascot, an Indian riding a horse, after members of the Native American Student Association, a campus group, complain that the logo was "inaccurate and definitely degrading." In 1979, the school decides its mascot should be "more dignified" and chooses a hawk with outstretched wings and talons.



## 1978

■ **Jan. 1:** The Rock County Sheriff's Department creates its juvenile bureau.

■ **Jan. 26:** It's only 4 inches of snow, but a howling 25-mph wind with gusts up to 50 mph turns the storm into the "Blizzard of '78." Visibility is often near zero, and the wind whips the snow into drifts 8 to 12 feet high.

Every road in Rock County except I-90 is closed by 11 a.m. Schools, businesses and industries close.

■ **Feb. 6:** A new petition for an anti-obscenity ordinance prepared by the Citizens for Decency Through Law is found to have invalid signatures because of technical mistakes, so the referendum that the petition would have forced can only be advisory, not mandatory. The Janesville council removes the referendum from the April ballot, and the citizens group takes the referendum issue to court.

■ **Feb. 10:** U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations George Bush, also former CIA director, tells a Beloit College lecture audience that he is concerned over the Soviet Union's growing nuclear arsenal, keeping NATO strong and making sure that China keeps trading with the West because the economic ties eventually will bring it closer to democratic politics and philosophies.

■ **Feb. 15:** A Parker High teacher interrupts a drug deal and brings the 17-year-old marijuana seller, 16-year-old buyer and the reefer to the principal's office to await city police. When other students see the 17-year-old with the cops in the office, they begin pounding on the office windows, shouting profanities and vulgarities and demanding his release. Another officer

responds, and the student crowd grows larger and more rambunctious, creating a "near riot."

The incident goes on for about an hour and attracts more than 250 students sympathetic to the busted 17-year-old before male teachers convince the kids to return to class. "We know kids smoke marijuana in school," Parker Assistant Principal William Reis says. "Every kid in school has been confronted with drugs."

■ **March 8:** Judge Arthur Luebke puts the anti-obscenity ordinance referendum back on the ballot. He rules that the city clerk has no authority to reverse his original certification of the petitions, which were found to be invalid because of minor technicalities.

■ **April 4:** Voters in every Janesville ward reject the anti-obscenity ordinance; the total is 5,472 against the law, 4,241 for it.

One ordinance supporter predicts Janesville will be considered a "happy hunting grounds" by the "underworld" and that the city will become home to massage parlors and more erotic book stores.

■ **May 1:** Work starts to widen and improve Center Avenue from Nicolet Street to Janesville's south city limits. The \$600,000 project concludes Oct. 1 with a four-lane highway separated by a drive-over median that also serves as a left-turn lane.

■ **May 3:** It's a Wednesday, but it's also Sun Day, a day devoted to education about and use of solar energy. At UW-Rock County, students Art Pratt and Pat McGee devise a solar cooker that uses parabolic troughs to collect sunlight that in turn heats water in a barrel to cook hot dogs.

■ **June 3:** Walworth County officials are concerned about a recent rock concert—featuring Rush, Uriah Heep and Sweet—at Alpine Valley Music Center, and they say they won't issue any more special sanitary permits needed for gatherings of 5,000 or more people.

The officials' concerns are too many people, too much traffic, too little parking, too much litter, too much juvenile drinking and too much marijuana smoking. "When making an overview of the amphitheater, bluish haze was very evident," the officials report.

Alpine Valley and the music are not at fault, the officials say, but "the gathering of such large groups results in spontaneous activities, a behavior contrary to the best interests of the area and its residents."

Alpine Valley officials promise improvements. The shows go on. So do neighbors' complaints.

■ **June 17:** Lightning ignites a fire in a house owned by Mr. and Mrs. James Ram-

seier, 2344 Britt Road, and their daughter Renee, a 22-year-old college student, dies from smoke inhalation in her second floor bedroom.

Neighbors Steve DeForest; his son, Chris, and Jeff Krauter use a ladder to rescue Renee's two sisters, Roslyn, 17, and Rochelle, 11, from their second floor bedroom. They are hospitalized because of smoke inhalation. Their parents manage to escape unharmed. Two sons—Rick and Robby—are spending the night in Wausau at the home of relatives.

■ **June 19:** Louise Merrill Nowlan and her brother, Hiram Merrill Nowlan, give their maternal grandparents' historic house at 202 St. Lawrence to the Janesville YWCA, whose headquarters neighbors the donation.

Hiram Merrill, the Nowlans' maternal grandfather, arrived in the city in 1856, became part owner of the Janesville Gas Works and served as president of Janesville Machine, the company that GM bought and merged with Samson Tractor in 1918.

■ **June 26:** The Janesville council raises the city's legal drinking age from 18, the state standard, to 19. The effective date is Jan. 1, 1979, but in December, the council delays the change until June 1979 to see if the Legislature will raise the drinking age to 19 statewide.

The Legislature shows no willingness to change the age, and Janesville winds up repealing the ordinance before it goes into effect.

■ **June 30-July 1-2:** 4 inches of rain pours down on Rock County over the weekend, aggravating the already soggy and flooded conditions produced by 5 inches the previous week. Bridges, roads and crops are washed out. Damage to roads and bridges is estimated at \$1 million.

The county is one of 16 that make up an officially declared disaster area.

■ **July 1:** City workers start taking parking meters out of downtown Janesville because the council has decided parking should be free on downtown streets and in most parking lots and the municipal parking ramp. Leased parking spots are made available in some locations.

■ Fred Holt retires after a 40-year career in education, including 19 years as Janesville school superintendent. Donald Mrdjenovich, administrator of the Watertown School District, will succeed Holt at an annual salary of \$35,000.

■ A survey in the Parkview School District finds that by 11th grade, 40 percent of students use drugs and that more than 65 percent of students in grades 9-12 drink alcohol.

■ **July 6:** The Rock County Board votes to seek state and federal funds to extend its alcohol and drug abuse programs to the county's minorities and jail inmates. Only Supervisor Sam Loizzo of Beloit objects: "A drunk is a drunk



## 'Defeated before we started': Six perish in Janesville fire

Six people, including three children, from two families were killed on April 28, 1978, in Janesville's worst fire tragedy ever.

The blaze killed Nanette Pagel Ward, 20; her children, Daniel and Sean Pagel, 3 and 10 months respectively; Steven P. Gara, 22; his wife, Dorothy, 20, and their son, Adam, 10 months.

Critically injured with burns over 95 percent of his body was Munir Hanna, co-owner of the business/apartment building at 14-16 N. Main.

Hanna, 37, of 903 Glenn, was working late—11 p.m.—on a Friday to spruce up an apartment for soon-to-arrive new tenants. He was cleaning the woodwork on a third-floor apartment with highly volatile naphtha when the solvent exploded, blowing the clothes off his body and igniting his skin.

Fire officials surmised that the heavier-than-air fumes from evaporating liquid naphtha sank to the second floor where a light switch or pilot light ignited them.

Ward and her children lived in a second-floor apartment. The Garas lived on the third floor. They all were found asphyxiated by smoke on the third floor about 60 feet from the rear exit.

Intense heat, raging flames and a rear stairwell blocked by a collapsed wall prevented firefighters from immediately entering the building. When they did get inside, fire surrounded them.

"It is evident that the victims attempted to escape," Fire Chief Arthur Sarnow said. "They just didn't make it."

"The act already occurred before we arrived on the scene," he continued. "We were defeated before we started and didn't even get a chance to save their lives because we couldn't get near the fire."

"There isn't any kind of gear made that a firefighter could have used to help those people. Not even an asbestos suit would have helped."

When Hanna ran from the building, Jeffrey H. Fox, 117 E. Racine, reportedly threw Hanna on the ground to extinguish the flames, but the distraught building owner jumped up and ran back to the building, trying to get back in.

He was fully conscious when patrons of a neighboring tavern, Rip's Shamrock Bar (The Looking Glass), managed to extinguish the flames on his body.

"I ran through the fire," Hanna said in a later interview. "No one knows how it feels



**Fire raged on North Main on April 28, 1978. Six people died in the blaze, the worst loss of life in a fire in Janesville history.**

unless you're in that situation—when the fire's eating you."

Extensive plastic surgery at the Burn Center at University Hospital, Madison, left Hanna with no visible scars.

Patrons of Ruble's Lounge, a bar on the building's first floor, said the naphtha blast sounded like an exploding bomb or a car ramming into the building. As they ran from the crowded nightspot, chunks of plaster from the ceiling started to fall.

Two firefighters were hurt.

Paramedic Larry Grorud, who was Janesville fire chief in 1999, suffered second-

degree burns to his face and neck when flames flared in the burning building. Robert A. Milke suffered smoke inhalation and chest pains when he was in an area congested with dense, black smoke for about 20 minutes without an oxygen mask.

The building, which was constructed as part of a three-building complex in 1866-68, was demolished. The lot remained empty in 1999.

After the blaze, a weary firefighter expressed the department's feelings:

"It's going to take a lot of time to get over this one."



regardless of his ethnic background. ... We're spending good tax dollars needlessly on drunks."

Janesville Supervisor John Hull counters, "Alcohol abuse is a disease, and I think we should treat it."

**■ Aug. 1:** The "first lady of country music," Tammy Wynette, entertains 12,000 people in two shows at the Rock County 4-H Fair. In an interview with the Gazette, Wynette sits, but doesn't stand, by her man, fifth husband George Richey.

Three days later, Kenny Rogers takes the fair stage to the delight of 16,000 fans at two shows.

**■ Aug. 8:** State troopers stop two Janesville city buses and issue many safety warnings. Among items cited are a bald tire, faulty speedometer, defective brakes, leaking oil, a broken window and windshield wiper and a door that doesn't close.

**■ Sept. 5:** The Janesville council votes to eliminate the city's health nursing department at year's end. The primary reason is that the county operates a health department, and the city picks up 35 percent of the county's nursing costs.

For two years, the county has reimbursed the city for part of the double cost, but the money has not been enough to upgrade a service that City Manager Phil Deaton says "is limping along."

**■ Sept. 9:** Though he was forced to resign as U.S. secretary of agriculture because of a racist, obscene joke, Earl Butz is warmly received at a Rock County Rural-Urban Day dinner. Jokes remain the mainstay of his speeches. Referring to an assistant secretary of agriculture who recommended that Americans eat 25 percent less red meat, Butz quips:

"She's done for red meat what the Titanic did for ocean travel."

**■ Sept. 19:** Project Heartbeat starts at Mercy Hospital in an attempt to train 10 percent of Janesville residents in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Several organizations are co-sponsors, and Merchants & Savings (M&I) Bank donates one of the new anatomically correct "Resusci-Anne" dolls for the life-saving course.

**■ Sept. 20:** The coming of the Disco Era tilts fashion-conscious young women to retro-styled dance dresses with spaghetti shoulder straps, either full or slit skirts and lots of fringe to swing while stepping out. Skirt lengths vary from a little below the knee to a little above.

The place to disco in Janesville is the Gyro Lounge at the Black Bridge Bowl, 1141 Black Bridge.

**■ Sept. 25:** 6-year-old Keri Bliss, 2028 DuPont, saves her 4-year-old brother, Kyle, from drowning in a water-filled manhole near a drinking fountain in a Janesville park.

Someone removed the manhole cover, and Keri hears a splash when Kyle falls in. She finds him clinging to the side of the manhole, keeps her composure and pulls him out.

**■ Oct. 14:** A car apparently driven by Joseph P. Galauner, 23, of 1609 Gartland, speeds out of the Rock River Parking Plaza in downtown Janesville onto Milwaukee Street with its tires squealing. The car fishtails, hits a curb and flies into the bridge, knocking out an 8-foot section of cement railing and plunging into the river.

Killed are Galauner and passenger Kim VanCura, 21, of 2031 Alexandria. Their bodies are not found for weeks in the muddy, swift-flowing river.

**■ Oct. 17:** Walter Stoklosa flies the Polish flag outside his home at 2407 Rockport, in celebration of the selection of the first non-Italian Roman Catholic pope in 455 years: 58-year-old John Paul II, formerly Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, prelate of Krakow, Poland.

**■ Oct. 20:** Vice President Walter Mondale stops in Janesville to campaign for Gov. Martin Schreiber, former Democratic lieutenant governor who assumed the top spot when former Gov. Patrick Lucey was appointed an ambassador.

The vice president tells a partisan crowd at UAW Local 95 headquarters what he sees as the difference between Republicans and Democrats. The last time he was in Janesville was in 1976, Mondale says, when a Republican was in the White House and autoworkers were laid off. Now a Democrat is in the White House, and autoworkers are putting in overtime.

Mondale stops at the Northern Town Motel, 1409 Center, for a half hour to freshen up.

**■ Nov. 7:** Republican Lee S. Dreyfus, on leave as chancellor of UW-Stevens Point, defeats Schreiber in the Wisconsin gubernatorial race. Janesville votes for Dreyfus over the Democrat, 7,283 to 6,920, and the county goes for Dreyfus, whose trademark is a red vest, 18,494 to 17,687.

Democrat Les Aspin is re-elected 1st District congressman.

**■ Nov. 24:** Bargain hunters crowd the sidewalk in front of the J.M. Bostwick and Sons department store, 20 S. Main (Olde Towne Mall), because the Minneapolis-based chain that owns the store announces it will close after the first of the year.

J.M. Bostwick and partner O.K. Bennet bought the dry goods store in 1856, and it remained in the control of the Bostwick family until the early 1940s. Still operating is the Bostwick for Men clothing store in the Janesville Mall, which can trace its roots to J.M. Bostwick.

And at 16 S. Main (offices) is the R.M. Bostwick and Son Men's Wear store, which was founded in 1863 by a brother of J.M. Bostwick.

**■ Dec. 1:** Home mortgage rates in Janesville are 9.5 to 11 percent.

**■ Sometime in 1978:** Colvin's Baking Co., a downtown Janesville business since 1865 and now a division of Gardner Baking Co., moves from 300 E. Milwaukee to 1720 Highway 14, also known as Old Humes Road. Parker Pen buys the old Colvin building.

**■ Charles Roherty** is named Wisconsin Restaurateur of the Year for his operation of Mr. Steak, 2121 Milton, (Roherty's Restaurant & Irish Pub). Roherty has 28 years experience in the restaurant business, having worked at Roherty's Dairy Bar at Five Points, a business started by his grandmother in 1903. In April 1968, Roherty and his wife, Carol, opened Mr. Steak.

**■ Blackhawk Credit Union** expands to a new location, 2704 E. Milwaukee.

**■ Edgerton City Council** members and voters both reject requests from local tavern owners to open on Sundays.

**■ Janesville's Babe Ruth and Senior Babe Ruth teams** again are champions of Wisconsin.

**■ Gregg Clatworthy** repeats as Janesville city golf champ.

**■ Jeff Riley, 15,** a Parker sophomore golfer, wins the city junior tournament, the Wisconsin Junior Masters and repeats as champion of the Wisconsin PGA Junior Tournament.

**■ Harold Figi** shoots a hole-in-one twice in a week at No. 16 at the Janesville Country Club.

**■ Craig's Jody Rittenhouse** pushes her time in the mile down to 4:56, best ever to this date for a woman in Wisconsin competition, but a knee injury cuts short her track season.

**■ Parker's Tom Arndt** again rules as state champ of the 330-yard low hurdles.

## 1979

**■ Jan. 2:** In temperatures that plummet to 19 below, Janesville residents dig out from a Friday-Monday New Year's weekend series of storms that dumps 11.5 inches of snow on the city.

**■ Jan. 20:** The Truax building in Edgerton, an old tobacco warehouse, collapses from the weight of snow accumulated on the roof. Ray Ludkeman and Dave Chapman are folding tents for ice-fishing shacks for Coast to Coast Hardware on the first floor. They are feared trapped in the rubble, but they stepped out for coffee minutes before the roof and second floor crashed down.

**■ January:** 33.4 inches of snow falls, and the temperature drops below zero for 11 straight days.

**■ The Salvation Army** opens its new





The Rock County 4-H Fair celebrated its 50th anniversary with some big name acts in 1979. Barbara Mandrell, Ronnie Milsap, Loretta Lynn and the Oak Ridge Boys provided country flavor, while rocker Dr. Hook capped off the line-up.

Janesville community center at 514 Sutherland.

■ **United Way of North Rock County** collects \$500,876, the first time the umbrella charity group tops a half million dollars in a fund drive.

■ **Feb. 1:** Between 40 and 50 pieces of jewelry on display at UW-Whitewater's Crossman Gallery as part of a national invitational show are stolen. Eighteen exhibitors from across the country lose gold, silver, copper, bronze and enameled hand-crafted pieces valued at \$40,000.

Police describe the heist as a "very professional job." The show is scheduled to end the next day. By year end, the cops make no arrests and have no suspects.

■ **March 1:** Police are cracking down on kids throwing snowballs at vehicles and pedestrians, jumping on and pounding slow-moving cars, blocking traffic and insulting adults, including an officer. So far, 17 students from Craig, Marshall and Edison schools have been arrested near Marshall and Edison.

■ **March:** Ed Wellnitz, Janesville builder and former fireman, donates two acres for the

city's fourth fire station on County A (East Milwaukee Street). Construction starts in December.

■ **Kenyon Kies** resigns as Rock County administrator to take a job with the Wisconsin Utilities Association. In November, Charles B. Hetrick, 47, assistant manager of Volusia County, Fla., is chosen as new administrator.

■ **April:** Janesville Fire Chief Arthur Sarnow retires. Art Stearns is soon chosen as chief.

■ **MidState Airlines** starts serving Rock County Airport with two daily round-trips to Chicago. The airline pulls out of the airport Dec. 31, like Mississippi Valley Airlines before it.

■ **May 19:** Gary Comeau's main parachute does not open, but his reserve chute does. The Middleton skydiver lands on top of the Richard Schmidt house on North Martin Road instead of in the middle of the fifth annual Sinoissippi Council Scout Show at the Rock County 4-H Fair-grounds.

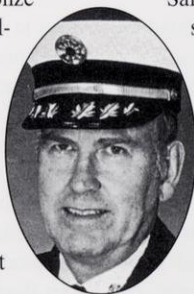
Mrs. Schmidt is sunning herself when she is draped by a parachute and Comeau slides off the roof. The slightly injured parachutist simply

says, "Hello" to which Mrs. Schmidt replies: "We have to stop meeting like this."

■ **June 1:** Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee stops in Janesville for the second time in three weeks as he tests the waters for the Republican Party's presidential nomination race. Baker rips President Carter's handling of the decade's second energy crisis—brought on by the doubling of prices by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)—and says any of the eight potential GOP nominees is "better on his worst day than Jimmy Carter on his best day."

■ **Gregg Sherwood Dodge Moran**, who was born Dora Fjelstad in 1924 in Beloit, pleads no contest to defrauding a bank of \$75,000 and looting \$357,000 from the trust fund of her son, John Francis Dodge. Gregg Sherwood is a former Miss Wisconsin and Broadway show girl who in 1953 became the fifth wife of Horace Dodge Jr., the son of the Dodge Motor Co. founder and heir to \$57 million.

He divorced her nine years later because, he said, he couldn't afford her wild spending. She settled for \$11 million and married her bodyguard, Daniel Moran. They embarked on a 13-year spending spree that included \$25,000-a-



Art Stearns



night parties and round-the-world flights in a private jet. They blew the \$11 million.

■ **June 16:** Rebecca Powell, 23, public relations director at Milton College, is selected Alice in Dairyland.

■ **July 1:** North Central Airlines merges with Southern Airways to form Republic Airlines, which continues to provide two daily round-trips between the Rock County Airport and Chicago's O'Hare Field.

■ **July 31:** Country songstress Barbara Mandrell performs at the Rock County 4-H Fair in red satin pants, cutaway top and red and gold chiffon overblouse. The next night it's Ronnie Milsap in a rhinestone-studded, white silk suit.

Next up is the coal miner's daughter who became the queen of country music, Loretta Lynn. The Oak Ridge Boys harmonize the next night, and rocker Dr. Hook caps off the fair entertainment.

■ **Aug. 3:** The congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church welcomes 13 weary, apprehensive Cambodians to Janesville. The refugees are members of three interrelated families.

Through an interpreter, Man Bin says they left Cambodia for Thailand because "we didn't want to get killed" by the Communist Khmer Rouge.

■ **August:** Rudy's Boys, a tug-of-war team from Orfordville, win the state light and midleweight championships.

■ **Sept. 2:** Fire destroys 64 of 100 units in Hawk Apartments, 1380 W. Main, Whitewater, causing \$1 million damage and leaving 65 people, 50 of them UW-Whitewater students, without places to stay. No tenants are hurt in the fire, but four firemen receive minor injuries.

■ **Sept. 3:** The crash of a homemade amphibious airplane on Labor Day kills pilot Edgar M. Kimball, 26, of 2400 Johnson, and Jeffrey Grossenheider, 26, of 3108 Canterbury, near Veterans Memorial Bridge. The wooden plane seems to do aerobatics before spinning in a dive into a grassy area near the river.

■ **September:** Despite intense community opposition, the Redemptorist Fathers sign an option agreement for the state to buy St. Joseph's Preparatory College, a seminary outside Edgerton, and turn it into a medium-security prison. It doesn't happen.

■ **Oct. 1:** Residents near the Janesville landfill on Black Bridge Road complain of rats on their properties, and the council allocates \$1,200 to exterminate vermin in 60 residences.

■ **Oct. 3:** Pope John Paul II is due in Des Moines, Iowa, tomorrow, and the Rev. John Buscemi, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Buscemi, 1017 N. Marion, is visual coordinator for this part of the pontiff's U.S. tour.

## Tragedy results from apparent jealousy

One of the most horrible crimes in Janesville history—horrible because of the number of victims and type of murder—rocked the community on Aug. 11, 1979.

An arson fire asphyxiated Cheryl A. Klemann, 21, who was six months' pregnant, and Mary F. McGowan, 19.

They lived in an interconnected building housing shops and apartments at 37 S. Main and 111 E. Court.

William Lyons, 36—one of 10 or 11 tenants rescued by firefighters from the burning and smoke-clogged second and third floors—died two weeks later from burns.

Among those rescued from the inferno by firefighters on ladders were Klemann's husband, Daniel, 24, and their daughter, Angie.

Seven firemen were hurt battling the blaze.

Ex-Beloit firefighter Russell L. Dibble, 32, of 417 W. Milwaukee, was charged with three counts of second-degree murder and arson.

He and McGowan were engaged and lived together for a while. But the two broke up, and McGowan was dating another man, the apparent motive for Dibble's torching the building.

Dibble claimed he had a split personality and that his evil half committed the crime.

He initially pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity, but in a plea deal, Dibble pleaded guilty to one count of second-degree

murder in exchange for dropping the other charges.

Dibble said he ignited a bag of trash on a landing near McGowan's apartment, but evidence suggested he poured an accelerant, probably gasoline, on her door.

Regretting that he could not impose a stiffer sentence, Judge Mark Farnum sentenced Dibble to the maximum 20 years in prison.

Cheryl Klemann's mother, Marianne Robinson of Janesville, was outraged at the plea bargain and the sentence. At the hearing, she screamed at Dibble: "You damn killer, I hope you live in hell!"

Tenants described the building as a dump and a firetrap. It was owned by Miles Duffee but leased to Joe Warriner, 2626 W. Avalon.

An inspection the month before cited fire code violations including inadequate fire escapes and extinguishers and a locked exit door. They were not corrected before the fire, but Fire Chief Art Stearns said the violations did not contribute to the deaths.

Nevertheless, the fatal fire prompted an inspection of downtown buildings by state authorities. They found 100 violations in 52 buildings and roundly criticized Janesville building and fire inspectors.

Damage to the 110-year-old building, known as the Fredendall Block was \$171,500, and its two-story portion on East Court Street was demolished. A three-story section on the northeast corner of Main and Milwaukee streets housed offices in 1999.



Russell Dibble

Buscemi takes a Gazette reporter behind the scenes in advance of the pope's visit, and she sees and touches the vestments he will wear, the books he will use to celebrate Mass and the chalice and plate he will use to consecrate wine and hosts for communion. The opportunity fills her with a "sense of awe and wonder."

Buscemi designed a quilted banner as the backdrop for the pope's platform, and many southern Wisconsin Catholics are among the throng of 340,000 who attend the papal Mass. John Paul II reaffirms the church's bans on contraception, abortion, divorce, homosexuality and pre- and extra-marital sex.

■ **Oct. 17:** Chester M. Des Rochers, 54, headmaster of the Wyler School for Boys in Evansville, is arrested for sexually assaulting

boys in his care. He eventually is charged with 16 counts of sexual assault to students and former students, ages 8 to 14. Parents pull their sons out of school, and on Oct. 26, at the urging of one of the parents, Rock County deputies remove the rest of the boys from the boarding school. It closes soon afterward.

While at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Wood for alcoholism detoxification, Des Rochers suffers a fatal heart before he can be tried.

■ **Oct. 31:** Two women and a man walk into Hamlin Jewelers at Creston Park Shopping Center and walk out with two trays of diamond wedding and engagement rings valued at \$10,000. While one woman distracts the sole clerk, her accomplices use some sort of suction



device to lift off the top of a glass display case and scoop up two ring trays.

They conceal the loot under their coats and stroll out.

■ **Nov. 1:** State, county and city cops raid the Star Zenith Boat Club north of Beloit and seize gambling equipment, liquor and \$2,000 cash. Police make no arrests but forward 75 names to District Attorney Steven Needham for possible prosecution.

Among the apparatus confiscated are cage dice and tables for craps, blackjack and poker.

Beloit Township police are miffed they were not informed in advance of the raid in their jurisdiction, but John Mizerka, chief of city of Beloit police, says the township cops weren't told because they ignored past gambling at the club.

■ **Nov. 5:** Janesville Police Chief Kenneth Jones is fighting his forced retirement at age 55, but Ray Voelker nevertheless is sworn in as deputy and acting chief. Jones will be ordered reinstated in December, but Voelker eventually will become chief.

■ **Dec. 3:** During an argument with her husband, Charles, Anita S. Jewett, 35, of 4534 Bingham, makes a phone call to have someone pick up her and her children. Charles shoots Anita twice in the head with a .38-caliber revolver, then kills himself. She survives. The Jewett home is burglarized during Charles' funeral.

■ **Dec. 7:** Parker High students institute Unity Day to show support for the 52 U.S. Embassy workers who are being held hostage in Iran. The hostages have been held for 34 days so far. The students are joined in their pre-dawn 4½-mile march by students and teachers

from throughout the district.

Gov. Lee Dreyfus addresses a crowd of 2,000 at the school, and though he is a Republican, he calls upon the audience and all Americans to stand united behind President Carter.

■ **December:** Slow sales force a cut in production—from 25 to 20 an hour—of pickup trucks at the GM plant, and 200 people are laid off indefinitely.

■ **Sometime in 1979:** 50 inches of snow falls in the first four months, bringing the snowfall for the winter of 1978-'79 to almost 70 inches, a record to this date.

■ Renovation of Parker Pen's world headquarters (One Parker Place) begins in downtown Janesville.

■ Student fares on city buses rise from 15 to 25 cents.

■ The Janesville Fire Department hires civilian dispatchers to free firefighters and paramedics for emergencies.

■ Janesville issues building permits for 198 single-family houses, 15 fewer than in 1978. Twenty-nine duplex permits and three apartment permits for 12 units are issued.

■ Bids for Rockport Pool come in way over estimates, and an opposition group tries to stop the project.

■ Janesville replaces its dilapidated buses.

■ After legal and political fits and starts, Janesville's Tax Incremental Financing District 1 becomes a reality when Janesville Garden Court, an apartment building for seniors, rises on North Main Street, and construction begins on a new Merchant & Savings (M&I) Bank, also on North Main. The street and underlying sewers also will be improved as part of the project.

■ Janesville agrees to lease the old Armory, 10 S. High, to the Rock County Historical Society for use as a museum.

■ Still under construction is the \$10.5 million Mercy Hospital addition, which started in 1971 with the acquisition and demolition of many neighboring houses.

■ At year's end, the annual U.S. rate of inflation is 13 percent; the prime rate for bank loans is 15 percent.

■ Gregg Clatworthy wins his third Janesville city golf championship in four years and the Wisconsin Public Links championship.

■ Stan Fox of Janesville wins 14 midget auto races, most of any driver on the national circuit.

■ Boxer Dan Boyd of Janesville wins the state 112-pound Golden Gloves title.

■ Mike Liebenstein, a Craig football lineman, is chosen as two-way all-state player by both the Associated Press and United Press International and is UPI's Wisconsin Player of the Year.

■ Donna Farley shoots two holes-in-one at the Janesville Country Club in two weeks, the second ace coming on the 113-yard No. 3.

■ Jim Holcomb repeats as city men's tennis champ.

■ Parker sophomore Sharon Dollins wins the girls' state championships in the 100-yard dash and long jump.

■ Beth Huff of Craig is the state's champion two-mile runner, and the school's boys' team of Dave Soddy, Don Groshan, Brad Hanewall and Steve Pomije rule the mile relay at the state meet.

■ Parker's Keith Gay wrestles his way to a tie for the state 155-pound title but loses on the officials' judgment of his overall ability and aggressiveness.



LAST HIGH QUALITY 1/2 TON  
7-31-87 TRUCK BUILT AT JANESVILLE





# 1980-1989

## WEATHERING ECONOMIC STORMS

### Janesville feels pain of recession Unemployment skyrockets during dark days

*Janesville learned about arcane acronyms and obscure contract provisions in the 1980s.*

SUB. UC. TIF. BID. Paragraph 96. Jobs Bank. SUB for supplemental unemployment benefits, UC for unemployment compensation, TIF for tax incremental financing, BID for business improvement district.

Paragraph 96 is the provision in the United Auto Workers' contract that allows workers to transfer if their jobs are moved. Jobs Bank is an employment security program. More than 1,800 jobs and 1,250 workers moved from Janesville to Fort Wayne, Ind., in the mid-'80s to follow production of pickup trucks.

That event marked the turning point in a decade that began in almost despairing depths of a depressed automotive market and a deep and long-lasting national recession.

Some six weeks into 1980, the first of the decade's many layoffs hit the General Motors plant in Janesville.

The harbingers of hard times already had come. The energy crises of the mid- and late-1970s had dissuaded much of the public from buying full-size cars such as the Chevrolet Impalas and Caprices made in Janesville. Economy-minded motorists turned to Japanese imports, slashing U.S. automakers' share of the market.

And the boom in pickup truck popularity—the GM plant's second product was full-size pickups—was still a decade away.

Furthermore, and probably of equal or greater impact in Rock County, was the national economic malaise that came to be called “stagflation.”

When the 1980s started, the U.S. inflation rate was a staggering 13 percent, and the Federal Reserve's policy was to raise interest rates. By April 1980, the prime interest rate—the rate banks charge each other for loans—was a stratospheric 20 percent. The rates banks charged consumers for auto and home loans tagged along. So did unemployment.

As car sales fell through the floor, layoffs at Janesville's GM plant became more frequent and longer. Other companies depended on GM, either for direct business such as JATCO, which hauled finished cars and trucks, or for the indirect business of well-paid autoworkers buying appliances, furniture and clothes.

In May 1980, another huge Rock County employer, Dana Corp.'s Spicer Axle Division in Edgerton, threw in the towel and put 1,600 previously well-paid workers out of work—permanently, as far as Dana was concerned. The reason was that the market for four-wheel-drive vehicles had evaporated, and Spicer Axle made axles for off-road vehicles.

Had Spicer survived the stagflation of the early to mid-1980s, it would have done a land-office business in the 1990s because of the soaring popularity of sport utility vehicles.

Conventional mortgage rates in Janesville climbed above 10 percent in Janesville in 1978. By April 1980, they averaged 17 percent. House building and other construction ground to a virtual halt.

Rock County's unemployment rate climbed relentlessly: 13.6 percent in April 1980, 15.1 percent in May, 17 percent in June.

In the midst of the economic gloom and doom came a ray of light. Caterpillar Tractor

**Left: The last conventional pickup truck rolls off the line at the Janesville General Motors plant. It was just one of many changes for GM—and Janesville—in the '80s.**

**Right: City Manager Phil Deaton cuts the ribbon to re-open North Main Street in 1982, Janesville's first redevelopment in a tax incremental financing district. The program helped the city recover from the recession of the '80s and is still in use today.**





announced in February 1980, that it would build a factory between Janesville and Beloit that would employ 6,000 people. In the meantime, it would build a small factory in Janesville to assemble hydraulic hoses.

But the company's plans changed as the recession—the “stag” part of stagflation—deepened. Instead of building a big factory in Beloit Township, it bought the Dana plant in Edgerton. But the only work Caterpillar ever did there was the hose assembly planned for Janesville. The hollow echoes of 50 people working in a factory of more than 800,000 square feet were the sound of the collapsing American dream.

By the end of 1980, 16,000 people, 10 percent of Rock County's population, were receiving some form of federal assistance such as food stamps and/or Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

In July 1980, another ray of hope pierced the dark economic overcast. General Motors announced that starting in 1981, it would change production on the Janesville car line from big gas-guzzlers to small, fuel-efficient, front wheel drive J-cars. The move looked like a winner. Gasoline prices could only rise because the planet had only so much oil that could produce only so much gas.

But the J-car's subcompact market segment was the auto industry's most competitive, and stagflation proved not only debilitating, but also persistent.

Market-related layoffs on both the car and truck line continued into 1981. Then in October, the car line was taken down to start retooling for what would be Chevrolet Cavaliers and Cadillac Cimarrons. Both shifts were supposed to return to work in six months. But it would be 18 months before the second shift returned to the car line, and 1982 dawned with the indefinite layoff of the truck line.

A plant that in 1980 had 7,100 people bringing home good paychecks was reduced to 1,200 hourly workers—assembly and maintenance—and 700 salaried staffers.

The Janesville-Beloit metropolitan area led the nation in unemployment with a 24.2 percent jobless rate in early 1982. Unemployment compensation and UAW members' SUB benefits eased the burden for many. But the recession—mortgage and new car loans carried 18 percent interest—and layoffs lasted so long that many people ran out of benefits.

And because people who had run out of UC were no longer counted in the unemployment surveys, the real unemployment rate in Rock County was around a devastating 30 percent.

The second shift on the car line was back on the job in June 1983, a year late, and hope glimmered again. But trouble was waiting in the

wings for both the local GM plant and Janesville's second largest industrial employer, Parker Pen.

Because of the recession, people spent what money they had on necessities, not optional purchases in the consumer goods businesses such as pricey, high quality pens and pencils. Most of Parker's business was overseas, where it was doing extremely well, but the U.S. dollar was overvalued. The huge overseas sales shrank to little or no profit for Parker when translated back to greenbacks.

Parker Pen went through five chief executive officers—and the resulting changes in philosophy, policy and practice—in five years. A renovation and automation of the Arrow Park plant in Janesville bogged down, and the company missed a profitable Christmas season.

The handwriting was on the wall for the world's leading producer of pens.

Mortgage rates in Janesville were headed down—14 percent—in August 1984 when GM delivered the news that many had anticipated with dread: The pickup truck line and 1,800 jobs were headed to a new plant to be built near Fort Wayne, Ind., and no product was scheduled for Janesville after the 1986 model year.

Fifteen months later, came the second of the 1-2 punch: Parker Pen's writing instrument business would be sold to a group of European investors. Production likely would continue at the Arrow Park plant in Janesville, but the company's corporate headquarters, whose building was renovated just a few years earlier, would move overseas.

Another 500 good jobs vanished.

“The '80s is when Parker met its demise,” said former Parker Pen vice president Roger Axtell, “and Janesville wasn't doing too well either.”

Axtell, president of the Janesville Area Chamber of Commerce in 1983-86, reflected on the time from his perspective at Parker Pen: “1985 was the depth of it. In 1985, we finished our fifth CEO in five years. It was the most tumultuous year in my business career. ... I got an empty feeling every Sunday night about going to work Monday morning with all this turmoil. ... All the glory and growth of the '70s just frittered away. ... The sands were just slipping out from under us.”

The community felt the same way.

People who bought homes, sent kids to college and planned for their retirements on the good wages they had made were reduced to working any job they could find, sometimes for \$3 an hour. The pay might be in taxless cash, but the work also came without benefits.

“I was a single man, thank God,” said a 44-year-old man who was laid off from a welding job at JATCO that paid more than \$13 an hour.

“I bought a house two weeks before I was laid off. I thought, ‘Holy cow, what's gonna happen now.’”

He signed up for UC and got \$85 a week in SUB pay from JATCO, but the SUB only lasted five or six months. The man, who wished to remain anonymous, was laid off for 13 months.

UC ran out at a year, and payments often lagged for weeks. It would be paid in one sum but after the bills were due.

The man worked as a mason's laborer, as a farm hand and part time for manufacturers when he could.

“Work was hard to find. It was hit and miss. You were damn lucky to find work. I never said no,” the man said. “I worked 14-16 hours a day for \$3 an hour, and I had to buy my own health insurance out of that.”

Not knowing if and when he would be recalled to JATCO, the man was uneasy most of the time.

“It wasn't just General Motors. Everything seemed to be slowing down,” said Marv Roth, then executive director of the chamber of commerce. “Gilman (machine-maker for the auto industry) hit a slow spot; housing hit a slow spot.”

Of Parker Pen's corporate headquarters, he said: “Just imagine the people who lost their jobs at one of the finest pen producing operations in the world. Their jobs were sold right out from underneath them. ...

“We had a problem, but we were going to work our way out of it. It wasn't like the mill closed, and they were selling the place out.”

But that's just what was happening with the pickup truck line and Parker Pen, many in Janesville believed.

Roth had a good reason to remain optimistic about GM.

“I didn't think I'd make so many trips to Detroit,” he said of local and state leaders' efforts to convince GM to schedule a product for the truck line.

“We were assured there would be a new product. Janesville wouldn't close. Janesville was one of the three highest quality plants in the country. But General Motors said, ‘Don't tell the news media.’ They wanted to break the story.”

And General Motors had other motives, both Roth and Jim Lee said. Lee probably carried the most clout when it came to what GM and the union would do. He was chairman of United Auto Workers Local 95 shop committee—the union leaders responsible for negotiations with management.

“Jim Lee was the ace in the hole,” Roth said. “He was as foul-mouthed as they come, but when Jim Lee told you something, you knew he was going to do it. When he spoke, people listened.”



Lee was in the same Detroit meetings as Roth, but he was nowhere near as confident.

"We couldn't guarantee anything because we never knew what was going to happen. Politics and bullshit entered into it much more than sincerity," Lee said. "I wondered what a guy like me was doing, sitting there with all those lives involved."

"The (community) leaders might have thought we had the whole thing, but that's not true. We didn't have it. If Roth thought that, he was wrong."

The product the Janesville people had targeted was the medium-duty truck, which was made in Pontiac, Mich. Lee was told by other union and corporate leaders that the medium-duty truck would stay in Pontiac if the Pontiac UAW local would put into a contract the practices it used to move workers among different plants.

"They (GM executives) play both sides against the middle to get everything they can, every concession, every tax break," Lee said.

GM made a business decision to consolidate pickup production from several plants to Fort Wayne. The company wanted a good nucleus for its work force there, and at the same time, it needed assembly operations nationwide to become as quality-conscious as the Janesville plant and more efficient overall, Roth and Lee said.

"They were putting the screws to us. We were a good work force, and they wanted a stable base (in Fort Wayne)," Lee said. "Me, personally, if I had 10 to 15 years (seniority), I'd be going down there."

And that's what Lee and other Local 95 leaders, unsure of GM's plans, told the rank-and-file in Janesville: If you don't have 15 years of seniority, we cannot guarantee you'll have a job past 1986.

At the same time, corporate brass told local plant management and union leaders that one way to enhance their chances of continued production was to change the local contract to make the plant more efficient.

Lee said he was most nervous when Local 95 leaders tried to convince members of the need for change. Part of that involved bringing in auto-efficiency analyst Jim Harbour to criticize how labor and management were operating.

"Talk about reality," Lee recalled. "He pissed off both sides. But he was right. They made changes. ...

"A lot of shop committees wouldn't do anything for political reasons. They were afraid they would not get re-elected. Our philosophy was: 'Put it to the people and let them vote it up or down.'"

In September 1986, in the biggest meeting in Local 95's history, members voted to change

their contract: to cut the number of job classifications that often led to inefficiencies from 90 to three and to experiment with four-10s, the 10-hour-a-day, four-day work week.

Two months later, GM announced the short-term production of commercial pickups for Janesville. Four months later, the automaker announced medium-duty trucks would be made in Janesville starting in 1989. The 1,800 jobs originally announced, the same number as on the regular pickup line, shrank to about 800 because the market didn't materialize as GM thought it would, but the Janesville plant still had two lines running.

And then, the local plant leaders—management and labor—turned their full attention to securing a more stable product than subcompact cars. That announcement came two years—February 1989—after the medium-duty announcement: The Janesville plant would make GM's next generation of full-size sport-utility vehicles, Chevrolet and GMC Suburbans and slightly smaller trucks now known as Tahoe and Yukon.

At Parker Pen, United Rubber Workers Local 663 was going through the same thing. Its members agreed to contract concessions in May 1986. Pen production would continue here.

Government played a role in the GM decision. The state sited a new Interstate 90 interchange at Avalon Road because GM said it needed one there. Janesville city government already was helping local redevelopment. But until the mid- to late '80s, its efforts were concentrated on the downtown, where many storefronts stood vacant because businesses had moved to Milton Avenue and other outlying shopping areas.

Attorney David Feingold chaired the city's community development authority from its inception in 1976 to the early '80s.

"The CDA was recognizing that Janesville was not availing itself of (federal) funding that could help," Feingold said. "There was a feeling that Janesville had no needs. We thought our needs clearly existed and that instead of letting our tax money go someplace else, we should use it here."

The city created its first TIF district in the late '70s, and construction of Garden Court, a senior citizen apartment building, and a new building for Merchant & Savings (M&I) Bank started on North Main Street.

Tax incremental financing is a tool for governments to attract private investment. It allows municipalities to acquire property, eliminate dilapidated buildings, make improvements such as sewer, water and streets and charge the cost to a TIF district.

The municipality then offers sites in the district to businesses for free or at great discounts

to draw development. As the district's property value rises because of the new investment, the increases in property taxes are used to repay the municipality's costs.

The first TIF district on North Main Street held many benefits, Feingold said. It provided housing subsidized by the federal Section 8 Program for elderly residents. It helped a bank expand its operations, and increased taxes from the new developments improved the street, buried utility lines and built the downtown River Walk and small parks.

TIF 1 and TIF 2—chiefly South Main Street—were highly successful. TIF 3 on the west side of the Rock River was created more on speculation than firm commitments of development, and in 1999, it still was \$3 million in debt. But all the downtown TIF districts improved the central business district.

"In downtown, it was completely obvious that many good things would not happen without tax incremental financing," Feingold said. "It created a decent looking, attractive downtown. Certainly parts of downtown needed it. It was the best use of tax incremental financing."

The city has changed its main TIF focus to industrial development, which Feingold said, "as long it creates jobs, it's hard to argue with." But, he added, the community must remain vigilant that the jobs created are good paying with decent benefits and that the development doesn't come at the cost of the environment.

Axtell gave much credit for Janesville's economic resurgence to Gov. Tommy Thompson, who was elected in 1986.

Axtell worked as liaison to the business community for both the Republican Thompson and his Democratic predecessor, Tony Earl.

Earl realized too late in his term that economic development was crucial to Wisconsin and that business leaders had a negative perspective of the state as anti-business, Axtell said.

"Tommy Thompson did a lot for economic development. You have got to give Thompson credit for the last three years of the '80s. He listened to the business community, and he was a great cheerleader for the state. ..."

"Everything begins with the paycheck," Axtell continued. "Business provides the paycheck that puts kids through school, that pays taxes for schools and Social Security. Nothing can happen without business. Business isn't the oil that makes the machine run. Business is the machine that drives the whole social-economic process."

Feingold agreed and thought a proper role of government is to help the taxpaying community help business help the taxpaying community.

The 1980s' dark economic clouds held many



silver linings, all the men interviewed said.

The Janesville community pulled together with efforts such as Project 1990, a program that successfully restored 1,990 jobs by 1990, Axtell and Feingold noted.

Though the GM plant wound up the decade with 1,400 fewer jobs than at the start—a drop from 7,100 to 5,700—management and labor worked together to make it more competitive and have a much better chance for long-term survival, Lee said.

Roth and Axtell pointed to the economic diversification that the uncertainty of the '80s created and fostered: the growth of local industries such as SSI, Prent Corp. and Lab Safety Supply.

One business that started in 1981 was JC Builders. Owner Jim Comstock started work at GM in 1979 and immediately entered a cycle of layoffs.

"The money was good, but you never knew if you were going to work," he recalled.

Raised in a family of carpenters, Comstock was doing carpentry on the side.

"I didn't want to work so many hours," he said. "I wanted to make a name for myself. What I wanted to do was be a carpenter and make my mark that way."

Comstock began business as a one-man operation doing repair work. He did \$150,000 in sales his first year. In 1999 the business in-

volved remodeling and renovation. It employed 13 people at good wages and did \$1.3 million in annual sales, Comstock said.

"I think my employees are making a good living, and 13 families are affected."

Janesville and Rock County weathered the dark economic storms of the 1980s. The community emerged with a more diversified economy and the realization that it would thrive if it worked together. Labor and management realized that they were in the same boat to weather those storms.

The '90s started with a sky full of bright promises. The cloud that would emerge would come from an unexpected quarter: racism.

## Follow the product: GM workers face a simple choice, and the effects are felt for many years

**T**he rumors about transfers started in late 1985 and lasted for months. It all boiled down to a decision that people working at the Janesville General Motors plant would have to make.

"It was simple," Joe Ennocenti said. "The choice was: Go or stay."

A simple enough decision but one that held enormous ramifications for the workers, their families, their lives and their livelihoods.

The "go" option involved pulling up stakes in Janesville and heading off to the new GM pickup truck plant near Fort Wayne, Ind. If United Auto Workers Local 95 members decided to stay in Janesville, their future employment was in doubt.

Eighteen hundred jobs were tied to the pickup line, one of two at the Janesville plant. In 1985, all that workers knew was that while their bosses and union representatives were trying to secure another product and continued employment, the line had no product scheduled past the 1986 model year.

"We were told, basically, that if we didn't have at least 10 years (seniority) in, we had better follow the product to Indiana," Ennocenti said. "I guess that was the best advice at the time, and a lot of us followed it."

Ennocenti and 1,250 other Janesville GM workers "followed the product." They transferred to the new plant in Indiana under a contract provision known as Paragraph 96.

Ennocenti and his wife, Mary, had a son and owned their home in Afton. A move to Indiana was not something they had plugged into their long-range plans—or even considered before GM's decision to consolidate pickup production from the Janesville plant and one in St. Louis to

the new, \$600 million factory.

"We left for Fort Wayne in April of 1986, but not before a lot of soul searching," Ennocenti said. "It was a very tough decision, but, in the end, we didn't see any alternative."

Ennocenti had a seniority date of Jan. 3, 1977, at the Janesville plant. His nine years meant, according to the advice he was getting at the time, that he would not survive widespread layoffs at the Janesville plant.

"When we finally made the decision, we also decided to make several visits to Fort Wayne to make sure we knew what we were getting in to," Ennocenti said. "We settled into a two-bedroom house in an older part of town on the southwest side because we wanted to be close to a parochial school."

In 1999, the Ennocentis were in their third Fort Wayne home, but they still lived within 12 blocks of their first one.

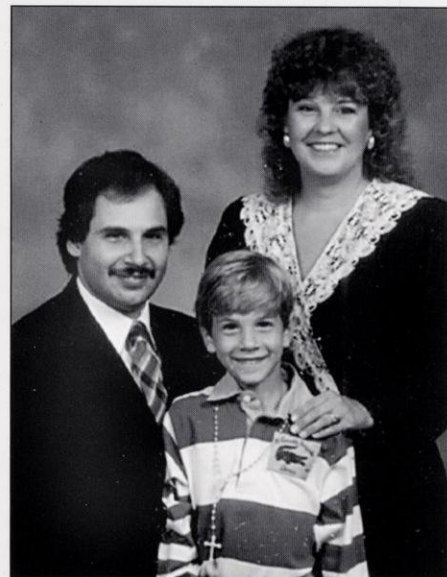
"We were lucky in that we met a lot of nice people right away and were able to get established," Ennocenti said. "Naturally, we were homesick and missed our families, but we realized we were going to be living here, so we made a new start."

Joe and Mary's son, Jason, was an 18-year-old high school senior in 1999.

"He's thinking about going to UW-Madison or UW-Green Bay," Ennocenti said. "That would be great because it would give us an opportunity to get back home more often and watch more Packer and Badger games."

Alan Falk and his wife, Carole, had a different start in Fort Wayne—but a similar outcome.

"Carole didn't want to go," Falk said. "She's very close to her family, and it was really rough



**In 1985 the Ennocenti family, Joe, his wife, Mary, and son, Jason, decided to move when General Motors decided to consolidate its pickup production at a new plant in Fort Wayne, Ind.**

on her, but, like Joe said, what choice did we really have?"

Falk's seniority date at the Janesville GM plant was Aug. 27, 1976. He was just shy of having 10 years in, but it seemed as if it might as well have been no time at all.

"It was very clear at the time that we would not last in Janesville," he said. "I know there's been a lot of second guessing, but we had to go with what we knew at the time."

In fact, Janesville GM management and Local 95 were able to secure other products for



the truck line: interim production of commercial pickups known as crew- and chassis-cabs and long-term production of large medium-duty trucks such as dump trucks, beverage haulers and farm trucks.

Medium-duty production continued in 1999, but it never developed as originally billed.

Initially, GM said medium-duty assembly would provide 1,800 jobs on two shifts, the same as with regular pickup production. When the line started in 1989, the number was scaled back to 1,200 to 1,400 on two shifts—but the second shift never materialized.

About 800 people worked as assemblers on the medium-duty truck line.

Alan and Carole had three children and owned their home in Janesville.

"It was a very major deal when we moved," Falk said. "And it was a very costly move."

Falk's family got hit with a double whammy.

"We sold in a buyer's market, and then turned around and had to buy in a seller's market," he said. "We lost a considerable amount of money."

The adjustment to live in Fort Wayne took longer for the Falks than the Ennocentis.

"It took Carole five years to really be com-

fortable with the move," Falk said. "We made a lot of trips back to Janesville those first few years."

Alan and Carole's oldest child, Jennifer, was starting high school when she moved to Fort Wayne. She went on to earn a degree at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., and worked for an insurance company that underwrites policies for sporting events such as the Summer Olympics in Atlanta. The couple's other two children are also grown and have left the house.

Ennocenti and Falk might have been able to hang onto their Janesville jobs, but neither family had sour grapes about the move. They prefer to look ahead, rather than back.

"We really have no regrets about leaving Janesville, at least not now," Falk said. "This is our home now. This is where we raised our family."

The move was simply adapting to a new situation, Ennocenti said.

"You learn to make the best of what you have," he said. "You can always be miserable wherever you are. The trick is to feel good about where you are at the time."

Ennocenti admitted still having a craving

for Wisconsin once in a while, but it passes.

"I quit smoking 15 years ago, but every once in a while I get a real strong urge for a smoke," he said. "It passes quickly, but it's very intense. That's what it feels like sometimes when I think about Wisconsin, but then I realize Janesville has changed a lot in the past 15 years or so."

A big plus for Falk was the dozens of golf courses—as many as 60—within an hour's drive of Fort Wayne.

"I'm a golfer, so this is like heaven down here," Falk said. "I have no idea why there are so many courses. Maybe it's because the land is not very good for anything else. You can barely get grass to grow in the yard."

His family has settled in, but they are not true Hoosiers, Falk said.

"No, that will never happen," he said. "We're Packers and Badgers forever. In fact, up until these past few weeks, we used to get together and laugh a lot at the Colts."

But in 1999 the Colts were doing much better than the mediocre Packers.

"Now we boast about the Badgers and quietly cheer for the Pack," Falk said. "But will we ever be Hoosiers? Never."

—Stan Milam



# 1980-1989

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1980

■ **Jan. 9:** Sen. Edward "Teddy" Kennedy, D-Massachusetts, appears at Lake Lawn Lodge in Delavan to raise money for Rep. Les Aspin, D-Wis., and to boost his presidential campaign. Kennedy criticizes President Jimmy Carter for an uncertain foreign policy that is "lurching from crisis to crisis." The current crises are Iran's continuing to hold 52 American hostages and the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan.

Kennedy flies in and out of the Rock County Airport for the stop, and on his departure from the airport, he stops his motorcade when he sees Bernice Fairbert of Beloit holding up a poster of one of his assassinated brothers, President John F. Kennedy. Kennedy walks and chats with Fairbert; her friend, Bea Butler of Janesville, and Butler's 4-year-old grandson, Freddy Butler.

■ **Jan. 18:** Touted as a way to stretch fuel supplies and decrease the U.S. dependence on imported oil, gasohol—90 percent gasoline and 10 percent ethanol, or alcohol distilled from agricultural crops such as corn—debuts at three Janesville gas stations. It sells for \$1.11 a gallon, about the same price as premium.

■ **Feb. 4:** Stanley Scheidegger, 42, Beloit, kills his estranged wife, Gloria, 37, with four shots to the upper body in the break room at Freeman Shoe, Beloit, where he had worked and she is an employee. Scheidegger kills himself with two bullets to his chest.

■ **Feb. 11:** 3,900 workers on the Janesville General Motors plant's car line begin a one-week recession-caused layoff.

■ **Feb. 16:** After 17 months of contentious negotiations and an impasse, the Janesville Education Association learns that a state arbitrator has awarded the city's teachers a 17.52 percent increase in pay and benefits over a new two-year contract.

■ **Feb. 22:** Caterpillar Tractor of Peoria, Ill., announces plans to build a factory between Janesville and Beloit that will employ up to 6,000 people. It doesn't happen.

■ **February:** Extreme right-wing, anti-tax and anti-government speakers and groups—including Alton Moss using the alias John L. Freeman and the Posse Comitatus—target Rock County in attempts, frequently successful, to attract new members.



Edward 'Ted' Kennedy

■ **March 1:** Wisconsin's second short-line railroad—Chicago, Madison and Northern Railroad—starts hauling freight from Janesville to Mineral Point on old Milwaukee Road tracks.

■ **March 10:** The local GM plant lays off first- and second-shift workers on its car assembly line for what is supposed to be three weeks because of depressed sales. But the layoffs extend to April 28, and then the assembly rate is cut from 60 to 50 cars an hour, so 850 workers are laid off indefinitely.

■ **March 16:** California Gov. Edmund "Jerry" Brown rips President Jimmy Carter in a campaign stop in Janesville. Seeking the Democrats' presidential nomination, Brown says: Carter is "slippery as an eel ... (and) an embarrassment to the United States ... His foreign policy is a shambles ... Hiding at Camp David, he's lost touch with what it's like to buy a gallon of gasoline."

■ **March 17:** The GM plant lays off 1,200 hourly workers on both pickup truck line shifts for two weeks, again because of miserable sales. Some 250 truck line workers already are on indefinite layoff because of a cut in hourly production from 25 to 20 pickups that went into effect earlier in the year.

■ **March 31:** Rep. John B. Anderson, a Republican congressman from Rockford, Ill., brings his presidential campaign to the Town & Country Restaurant (The Pinnacle Pub & Eatery) in Janesville.

He pushes for his proposed 50-cent-a-gallon increase in gasoline taxes, which he says is needed to promote conservation and reduce the United States' need for foreign oil. Anderson would use the extra gas tax revenue to cut Social Security taxes by 50 percent.

■ **April 2:** Though he is not campaigning because of the Iranian hostage crisis, President Carter wins Wisconsin's Democratic primary, crushing Kennedy and driving third-place Brown out of the race.

On the Republican ticket, Ronald Reagan easily outdistances second-place finisher George Bush.

Anderson is disappointed with his third-place showing. Anderson does finish second

among Republicans in Rock County, but he is third in Janesville. On April 24, he will decide to run as an Independent.

The Democrats' order of finish in Janesville and Rock County is the same as it is statewide: Carter first, Kennedy second and Brown a distant third.

■ **April 7:** GM lays off all Janesville truck builders for another week.

■ **April 9:** The South Central Wisconsin Builders Association protests economic conditions—a deep national recession, unprecedented prime interest rate of 20 percent and mortgage interest rates averaging 17 percent—that have cut new housing starts in Janesville by 86 percent.

In the first three months of 1979, Janesville issued 101 residential building permits; this year, it has issued 14.

■ **April 16:** Because of the GM shutdown, Janesville Auto Transport Co., or JATCO (Commercial Carriers Inc., CCI), lays off 340 of 600 employees, and Dana Corp.'s Spicer Front Axle Division lays off 1,000 people in Edgerton.

■ **April 28:** Only one shift of car line workers returns to the Janesville GM plant; the second shift is out of work indefinitely.

■ **April:** Norwood Mills lays off another 40 people; 65 of the Janesville company's 200 employees are jobless. Burdick Corp., Milton, lays off 99 of 220 people for a week, and Sintered Specialties (SSI), Janesville, lays off 22 workers.

■ **Rock County unemployment** hits a record 13.6 percent.

■ **May 5:** GM lays off the second shift on its Janesville truck line, bringing to 2,700 the number of car- and truck-builders who are trying to make ends meet with unemployment compensation and supplemental unemployment benefits. The combination of UC and SUB gives workers 95 percent of their regular take-home pay, but they still must pay income tax on the benefits.

■ **May 12:** The first shifts of both GM's car and truck lines are laid off for two weeks as are 230 of the white-collar work force of 700. More than 5,700 GM people are out of work.

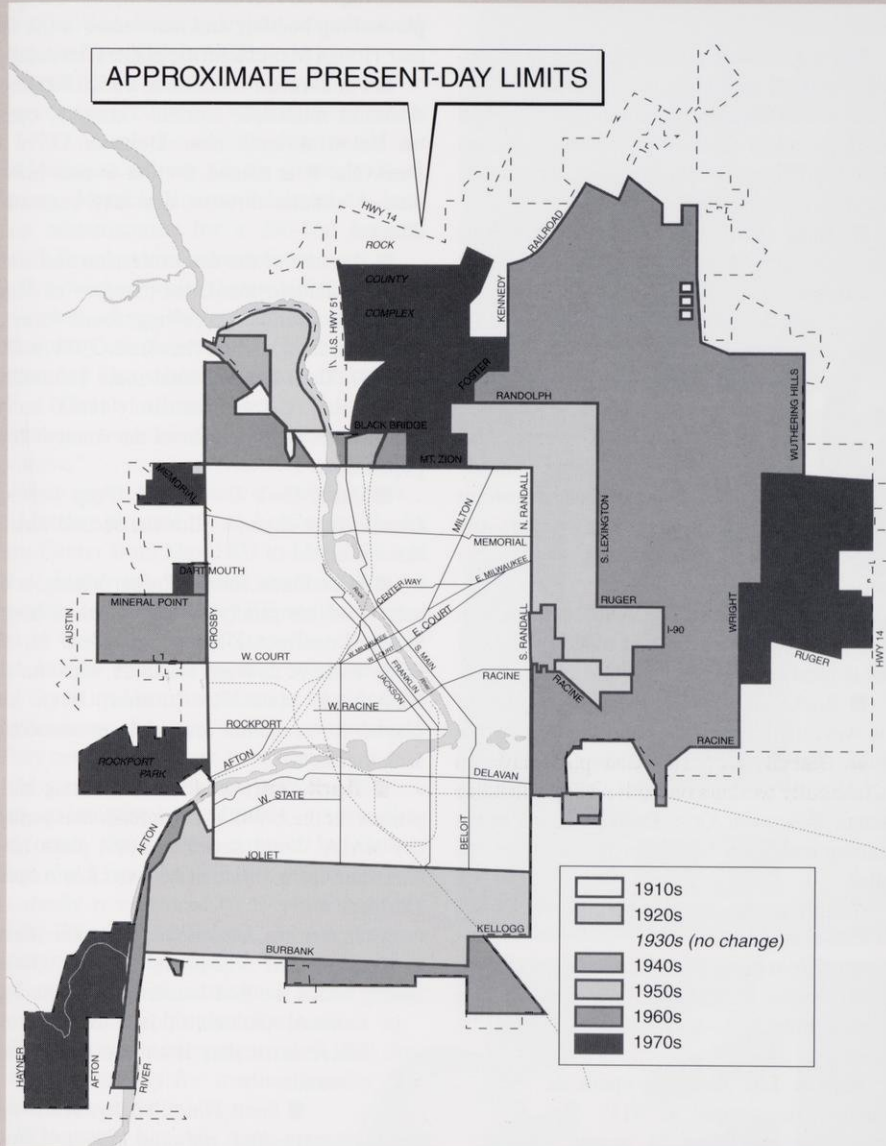
■ **May 30:** Dana Corp.'s Spicer Axle calls it quits in Edgerton, and 1,600 people soon will be jobless. The primary reasons are poor sales of four wheel drive vehicles and the



John Anderson



# Janesville in 1980



**Janesville's city limits in 1980.**



**Area of city:** 22.81 square miles



**Number of churches:** 46



**Number of schools:** 30—including five elementary schools that are former rural schools brought into the Janesville School District.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 121.46  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 200.97  
**Miles of water mains:** 227.88



**Population:** 51,071



**\$1 in 1980 has buying power of \$1.98 in 1999**

country's economic malaise.

■ **May:** For the first time in its 107 years, Baker Manufacturing, Evansville, lays off employees: 75 foundry workers for a week.

■ Janesville unemployment reaches 15.1 percent, more than twice the national rate of 7.5 percent.

■ **June 1:** Graduating senior Tim Garbutt, 1327 Bennett, gives the commencement address to his Craig High classmates—"Reality: It Must Be Faced." Garbutt is not Craig's valedictorian, but he uses his gift of gab to persuade school officials that a speak-

ing contest, not grades, should determine who gives the graduation address. The silver-tongued Garbutt wins the contest.

■ **June 7:** Carnies and townies, many swinging pipes and wrenches, brawl in Edgerton during the 33rd annual VFW Jamboree. At least 10 police officers must break up the many fights that erupt between residents fortified at the beer tent and carnival workers. More than a dozen people are arrested; six are injured.

■ **June 17:** The partially clad body of UW-Whitewater student Mary Kathleen

Thomas, 19, is found in Hillside Cemetery. Thomas, a 1979 Whitewater High graduate studying art at the university, was strangled and beaten with a blunt object.

In November, Michael L. Crabtree, 19, Marengo, Ill., will be found guilty of first-degree murder in Thomas' slaying. He is sentenced to life in prison with a consecutive 10-year sentence for rape.

■ **June 23:** The headline reads "True Blue Dave Green Gives Red" on the story about Green, 54, of 428 Grove, donating another pint of blood to bring his lifetime total to 14



gallons.

■ **June 24:** The first ozone alert in Rock County history is issued to warn young and elderly residents and those with respiratory problems to stay indoors. The warning lasts for 24 hours.

■ **June 28:** Steve Berg and Doug Podzilni, both 18 and recently graduated from Craig, are kitchen workers at Camp McCoy, where they help feed 13,000 Cuban refugees who came to the United States seeking a better life. The refugees came in the Mariel Boat Lift, or Freedom Flotilla, that brought more than 100,000 people to the United States from Communist Cuba.

■ **July 28:** GM announces "vast modernization and expansion" of the Janesville plant to retrofit it for front-wheel-drive, more fuel-efficient compact cars, instead of the large rear-drive Chevrolet Impalas and Camaros it now makes. GM is coy about the new models. They will be "J-cars": Chevy Cavaliers and Cadillac Cimarrons.

■ **July:** Janesville unemployment reaches 17 percent.

■ **Aug. 2-4:** Beefed-up police patrols in downtown Janesville over the weekend result in about 50 arrests of people cruising "the circuit" and/or frequenting bars. Thirty-two are arrested for drinking in public or underage possession of alcohol.

Downtown business owners have complained of litter left by drinking and smoking teens, reckless driving by cruisers, young men urinating in alleys and doorways and "uncouth-looking troublemakers" who intimidate potential customers.

■ **Aug. 8:** A state arbitrator grants Janesville firefighters a 7 percent pay increase retroactive for the first six months of the year and another 6 percent retroactive to July 1.

■ **August:** Hospice Care Associates forms in Rock County to provide support for terminally ill patients and their families.

■ **Sept. 12:** Caterpillar Tractor announces it will buy Dana's Spicer plant in Edgerton, effectively ending its plans for a Beloit Township plant. The Caterpillar operation in Edgerton will not amount to much.

■ **Sept. 24:** Merchant & Savings Bank becomes Bank of Wisconsin (M&I) Bank. In November, it will move from 12 W. Milwaukee (parking lot) to a new building at 100 N. Main (current) location.

■ **Oct. 6:** 750 laid-off second-shift workers are recalled to GM's pickup truck line.

■ **Oct. 14:** 2-year-old Tara Gilbert dies when her Beloit home burns, and her mother, Kathleen, 30, is charged with first-degree

murder, arson and other crimes stemming from regular abuse of the child. Though one other daughter was taken from Gilbert because of abuse, Gilbert still has care of Tara, whom she pins under a dresser before setting fire to the residence.

In 1983, Gilbert pleads guilty to an amended charge of second-degree murder and four other abuse-related crimes in a plea deal in which the arson charge is dropped. She is sentenced to 28 years in prison and eight years' probation. She is paroled in 1992.

■ **Oct. 15:** Barbara Bush makes a campaign stop in Janesville, but it isn't her husband, George, she's pushing for president. Former California Gov. Ronald Reagan won the GOP nomination, and George Bush is his vice presidential running mate.

Mrs. Bush also stumps for Kathryn Helgesen Canary, a Janesville native living in Delavan who is running against Les Aspin, the Democratic incumbent 1st District congressman.

■ **Nov. 4:** After a six-month layoff, the second shift on the car line is recalled to Janesville's GM plant.

■ Rock County and Janesville are part of the wave that sweeps Reagan into the White House. The former actor garners 11,773 votes in Janesville to Carter's 9,241. Anderson, with former Wisconsin Gov. Patrick Lucey as his running mate, is a far distant third with 1,554 votes.

County results are Reagan, 30,960; Carter, 24,750, and Anderson, 4,408.

But Aspin again bucks the trend—as he did in 1972 when Republican Richard Nixon was elected president—and soundly defeats Canary.

■ **Nov. 10:** Janesville opens its fourth fire station at 4117 E. Milwaukee and hires 24 people. Eighteen men staff the new station; an inspector's position is added, and five jobs are created in the new dispatch center at the main firehouse on Milton Avenue.

■ **Nov. 11:** Craig High Principal William McBay announces his resignation "for personal reasons"

effective the next school year. However, three school board members tell the Gazette that unaccounted student funds and a lack of receipts are factors in McBay's resignation.

Several hundred Craig students will rally to support McBay.

■ **Dec. 8:** Janesville and its firefighters agree on a two-year contract that will give the employees a 10 percent raise in 1981 and a 9

percent raise in 1982.

■ **Sometime in 1980:** Simmons USA brings a factory to Janesville with the help of a \$9.5 million industrial bond. Simmons, Janesville's newest industry, employs 100 people making bedding and mattresses in the former Hough Manufacturing plant, 1809 Adell.

■ Pat Dawson Ball Fields, a \$520,000, four-diamond municipal softball complex, opens on Beloit Avenue near Delavan Drive in Janesville. It is named for the former school district athletic director and city recreation director.

■ Because of the deep recession and widespread unemployment, the number of Rock County households receiving some form of state or federal welfare rises from 3,974 in 1979 to 5,267. Their benefits total some \$15 million for the year. The approximately 16,000 recipients are about 10 percent of the county's total population.

■ Janesville's Babe Ruth Prep baseball team is state champion for the second time in three years.

■ Mike Davis, former Parker Viking, is the second of his family to sign a minor-league baseball contract. Davis plays infield for the Little Falls, N.Y., team affiliated with the New York Mets. His brother, Jerry, also played for a minor league team associated with the Mets.

■ Tom Klawitter, formerly of Craig and a pitcher on the UW-LaCrosse team that went to the NAIA World Series in 1979, plays for a Canadian team affiliated with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

■ In boxing, Dan Boyd, a Parker junior, repeats as state 112-pound Golden Gloves champ and is the first Janesville boxer to fight in national Golden Gloves competition, where he makes it to the quarterfinal round.

■ Scott Pliner, 12, Janesville, wins state and national Silver Gloves championships as a 95-pounder.

■ For the first time in its six-year history, the Janesville YMCA Half Marathon has a local winner, 26-year-old Bill McBride with a time of 1 hour, 9 minutes and 15 seconds.

■ Sharon Dollins of Parker repeats as the girls' state high school long-jump champion but misses a repeat 100-yard dash title by less than a tenth of a second.

## 1981

■ **Jan. 3:** William Boerum, 37, director of the Winnebago Mental Health Institute in Oshkosh and former director of the Rock County Health Care Center, is arrested in



Barbara Bush



William McBay



Illinois for the sexual assault of an 11-year-old boy.

The investigation reveals that Boerum is really Raymond L. Matzker. Matzker apparently assumed the identity of a college friend when he fled from a deviate sexual assault charge in New York in 1972.

Working as Boerum as a social worker, Matzker was fired from a Catholic boys' school in 1974 because the school's director did not like Matzker's attitude. On his resume to Rock County, Matzker/Boerum claimed to have been administrator for a 250-bed hospital in Oak Brook, which never existed.

Hoodwinked Rock County officials cannot remember whom they talked to when they called the Catholic school to check Matzker's references. The school director says no one called. County officials "believe" Matzker's references were checked, but they are not "positive."

They apparently did not check Matzker's.

Matzker directed the Rock County Health Care Center from May 1975 to May 1979 and did a decent job by most accounts. But his executive secretary, Shirley Klipstein, describes him as "secretive" and "bizarre" and says he sent out job applications with bogus resumes that she helped prepare. Matzker admitted the falsifications, she says, and he rationalized: "They never check those things anyway."

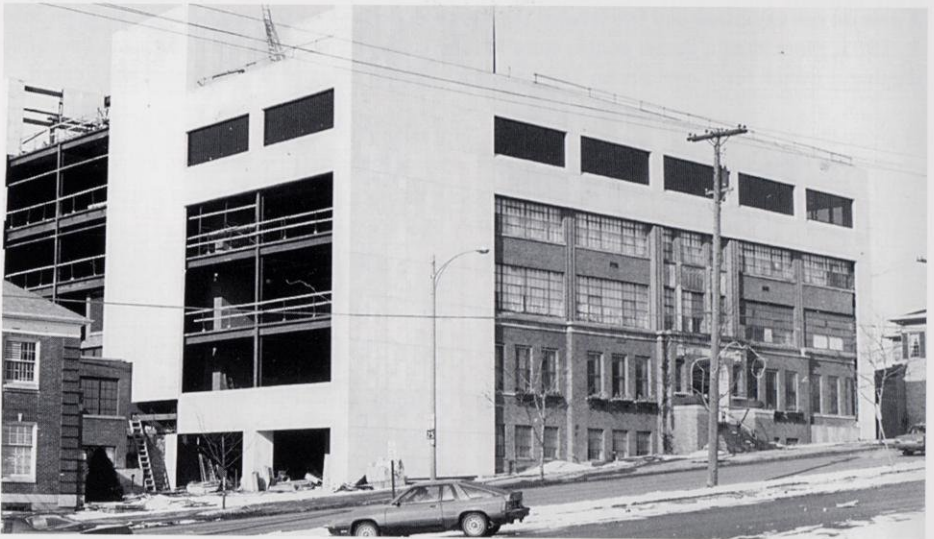
More sex assault charges involving boys are filed against Matzker in Illinois, in Milwaukee and other communities around Milwaukee. He is fired from his \$42,000 a year job and eventually is sentenced to 18 years in prison on the Wisconsin sex assault charges. Matzker is supposed to be paroled in 1990, but he does not cooperate with authorities so his parole is revoked while it is only minutes old.

Matzker serves his sentence until 1999, then is held in custody for treatment under Wisconsin's sex predator law.

■ **January:** Republic Airlines serves notice that it wants to end passenger service to Rock County because its two 48-seat planes leaving Rock County carry an average of only five passengers and the carrier is losing money. But Republic is under federal requirements to provide two Chicago-Rock County round-trips a day and may not legally end service without finding a replacement.

■ **Feb. 5:** Janesville teachers and school board agree on a two-year contract that gives teachers an 18.5 percent increase in pay and fringe benefits. Starting pay for new teachers is \$12,775. Top teacher salary is \$24,247 for a teacher with a master's degree, 30 continuing education credits and 13 years' experience.

■ **Feb. 16:** Poor sales again force a one-week layoff of GM's 3,900 car-line employees



In September 1981, Parker Pen completed renovation and expansion of its worldwide headquarters at South Parker Drive and East Court Street in downtown Janesville. The building was re-covered with a new exterior consisting of 336 travertine panels, each weighing more than a ton. The photos above show the project's progress from the building's original brick exterior to partial re-covering and finally to the new exterior. After the headquarters moved to Europe, the building was later bought and renamed for its address, One Parker Place.





**A natural gas explosion and fire leveled the Agnew & Porter Law Office at 107 N. Main on June 1, 1981. More than a dozen people were injured when city workers ruptured a gas line while digging a trench for a new sewer. The buildings on both sides of the explosion were razed.**

in Janesville.

■ **Feb. 23:** The Janesville School Board decides to close three rural elementary schools—Hill Crest, Happy Hollow and Rock—at the end of the school year because of declining enrollment.

■ **February:** The Janesville City Council raises adult bus fare from 25 to 35 cents. Later in the year, the fare will rise to 50 cents.

■ **March 9:** Both lines at GM are shut down for two weeks. The layoff originally was to be for one week for the 3,900 workers on the car line; then the truck line and its 1,800 people were added, and then another week of layoff.

■ **March 30:** Secret Service agent Tim McCarthy, 32-year-old nephew of Janesville residents Mrs. John Whitcomb and Cal McCarthy, jumps between President Ronald Reagan and would-be assassin John W. Hinckley Jr. and takes a bullet meant for the president. McCarthy is wounded in the chest, liver and lungs. He survives.

Reagan, his press secretary, James Brady, and Washington police officer Thomas Delahanty also are wounded.

■ **April 16:** Richard Masterson resigns from the Janesville City Council because the city administration and council reject his proposal to have an outside, independent auditor examine financial details of a complex land trade the city is involved in to redevelop downtown with tax incremental financing.

His resignation opens the door for the fifth-place finisher in recent council elections—Tom Stehura—to be chosen for the vacant seat.

■ **May 1:** Bids come in way under budget for Janesville's outdoor pool, and Rockport Pool, which faced cutbacks, now looks as though it can proceed as originally envisioned:

a main pool, wading pool and diving well.

■ **May 4:** Three men are killed and one is critically injured in a head-on collision just west of Janesville.

Dead are David P. Klassy, 20, Orfordville; David A. Larson, 79, Beloit, and Norman M. Heintz, 64, of 1264 S. Walnut. Victor L. Hamon, 18, Orfordville, is in critical condition.

Heintz was driving east and Hamon west—each with a passenger at about 55 mph—when Heintz' car crosses the center-line and slams into Hamon's auto.

■ **May:** Rock County Board votes 23-15 to reduce its size from 41 to 29 members to comply with a committee recommendation on reapportionment made necessary by the 1980 census.

■ **June 1:** At 10:23 a.m., a series of natural gas explosions rips through the Agnew & Porter Law Office, 107 N. Main (offices), and ignites a raging fire.

Judy Stevens, a secretary in the law office, suffers burns to more than 35 percent of her body and is in serious condition, and Allen Porter, a senior partner in the firm, sustains burns and cuts and is in fair condition. Also in fair condition is city street worker Michael Stratton, 21, and second-floor resident James Dunlavey, 69.

Ten other people—city workers, building residents and emergency personnel—sustain minor injuries.

The city workers rupture the building's gas line as they dig a trench for a new sewer. One worker warns the law office's occupants to

evacuate, and they are out or headed out of the building when it blows up into flames.

Also damaged are the neighboring Ed and Larry's Fast Vacuum Service, Janesville Youth Center and Old Time Coffee Shop. Preliminary damage estimate is more than \$170,000. The building at 107 N. Main is destroyed by the blasts and blaze, and the site is cleared. The neighboring buildings at 103-105 N. Main and 109 N. Main must be razed.

■ The Janesville council bans smoking in public buildings.

■ **June 15:** The Janesville council includes \$600,000 in a preliminary city bond proposal for a minor league baseball facility just east of Palmer Park. Asked about costs for the baseball venture, Terry Campbell, one of three partners in the deal and a local businessman, wryly replies: "You have to realize they are just ballpark figures."

But on June 29, many residents tell the council they oppose the plan because of the cost and/or the Palmer Park site. Campbell already struck out trying to convince the Rock County Board to allow a team to play on the fairgrounds, where the minor-league Janesville Cubs once played.

The Milwaukee Brewers Class A Midwest League franchise will wind up in Beloit.

■ **July 29 & 31:** The grandstand crowd at the Rock County 4-H Fair is shouting—and twisting—because the performer is Chubby Checker, the rocker who popularized the Twist, the dance that most other rock 'n' roll dances since 1962 are based on.

Providing the most flash at the fair are the Lennon Sisters. The darlings of "The Lawrence Welk Show" in the 1950s and '60s—Dianne, Peggy, Kathy and Janet—are more boogie than bubble music, more Las Vegas than Lawrence Welk as their act includes a striptease down to red and black corsets and black stockings.

■ **Aug. 3:** 13 of 14 Rock County air traffic controllers join a national strike, but the sole controller and supervisors keep the airport operating on a reduced schedule. Nevertheless, Republic Airlines must reduce its schedule, and it uses the strike as an opportunity to abandon Rock County as it said it would.

On Aug. 17, Republic subcontracts with Mid-Continent Airlines, a commuter service based in Dubuque, Iowa, to fulfill Republic's federally mandated obligation to provide Rock County with essential air service. Mid-Continent eventually will change its name to American Central Airlines.

■ **Sept. 22:** The Janesville GM plant makes its 10 millionth vehicle—a white pickup truck. To this date, the plant has produced 7.9



**Chubby Checker**



million autos and 2.1 million trucks.

■ **September:** Parker Pen completes renovation of its worldwide headquarters (One Parker Place) in downtown Janesville. The building is resheathed with a new exterior consisting of 336 travertine panels, each weighing more than a ton.

Two entrance plazas are constructed: one East Court Street, the other on Parker Place. An original sculpture by Beloit artist O.V. Shaffer and titled "Calligraph" graces the north entrance on Parker Place.

■ **Oct. 2:** Janesville dedicates its latest park, River's Edge Park, on North Main Street. The park contains a group of sculpted wooden totems commissioned by the Janesville Art League, which donated \$10,000 to match a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The abstract wooden sculptures are Janesville's first publicly funded outdoor artwork owned by the city, but vandalism over the years forces their removal in February 1995.

■ **Oct. 8:** Rock County supervisors reverse course and vote 23-17 to retain 41 members. The cities of Janesville, Edgerton and Beloit oppose the reversal and file suit. Rural and village residents support the status quo.

■ **Oct. 9:** The Janesville GM plant produces its last full-size Chevrolet car, a red-wood-colored Caprice Classic sedan, and retooling and renovation for the subcompact J-car start. Both shifts on the car line are laid off. Their initial callback date is March 15, 1982.

■ **Oct. 23:** Janesville municipal golf pro Ralph Parker is fired for mishandling \$11,955 in season ticket fees. He says he kept the receipts of 41 season tickets in a safe at Riverside Golf Course to show the city council the importance of season ticket sales, but he was supposed to deposit the money as it was received, and he filed false reports on the money's whereabouts.

Parker deposits the money in a city account the same day he is informed an audit discovered the discrepancy.

The decision angers many golfers, and the city council's decision in December to stick by the administration's action and not discuss the Parker issue directly at a meeting on golf course operations further incenses the linksters.

■ **Nov. 11:** A 5-year-old boy darts into the path of a car at the busy intersection of Harmony Drive and Newman Street, but the young runner is not so fast that he can scoot

past the outstretched arms of crossing guard Lisa Levy, a Jefferson School sixth-grader and daughter of Arlie and Judy Levy, 1206 N. Fremont. The community appreciates Lisa with a Distinguished Service Award.

It must run in the family because several years earlier, Lisa's older sister, Mary, was a guard at the same crossing and successfully shouted an order to a boy to return to the curb after he had run into a car's path.

■ **Nov. 21:** Some 75 volunteers for ECHO (Everyone Cooperating to Help Others), a local charity sponsored by more than 20 churches, pack Thanksgiving dinners for 105 poor Janesville families. ECHO started in 1975.

■ **November:** Rock County Judge Gerald Jaekle rules in favor of the cities and orders the county to proceed with reapportionment and downsizing to 29 districts and supervisors. The county files an appeal, which is rejected.

In 1982, the board again reconsiders and reduces its size to 29 members. But the decision comes too late for the spring election, and the county goes ahead with the election of 41 supervisors, only to conduct another election in the fall to choose 29 supervisors.

■ **Dec. 4:** "Goliath Visits David's Alma Mater" is the headline on the story of NBC Sports coming to Milton College to interview football coach Rudy Gaddini on the upcoming National Football League start of his most successful player, quarterback Dave Krieg.

An injury to Seattle Seahawks starter Jim Zorn forces 23-year-old Krieg into the huddle Dec. 6 against the New York Jets. Though he tosses three interceptions, Krieg, a second-year player, rallies the Seahawks to a 27-23 victory. Krieg completes 20 of 26 passes for 264 yards and two touchdowns and runs a yard for a third TD.

It is the start of a long and productive career for Krieg, the seventh free agent to play in the NFL from 300-student Milton College.

■ **Sometime in 1981:** Janesville residents have turned to fireplaces and wood-burning stoves to conserve oil and gas in winter heating months, but the downside is that 17 of 200 city fire calls result from problems with poorly maintained woodburners and/or their chimneys.

■ **Rock County's Comprehensive Police Services Unit (Metro Unit)** arrests more than 100 county residents on drug charges and seizes

drugs with reported street values of more than \$10,000.

■ The number of Rock County households receiving General Relief, primarily county-funded welfare, rises from 337 to 550.

■ **Mike Dean**, a sixth-grade teacher at Monroe Elementary School who is well-liked by his students and was honored in 1980 as Wisconsin Elementary School Teacher of the Gifted, starts College for Kids, a summer program for gifted and talented elementary students at UW-Rock County.

■ UW-Rock County adds its third structure, the 44,000 square foot multi-purpose building that includes the 350-seat Kirk Denmark Auditorium and the 9,500 square foot gymnasium.

■ Janesville's Babe Ruth baseball team again is state champion.

■ Parker senior Dan Boyd repeats as state Golden Gloves 112-pound champ and makes it to the quarterfinals of the national boxing championships.

■ **Ron Larson** of Janesville Boxing Club is state and regional champ in the Golden Gloves 125-pound novice division, and Eric Siefert at 139 pounds and Eric Spangler, a 165-pounder, win titles in the Junior Olympic state tournament.

■ **Beth Huff**, who in 1979 as a Craig runner was state high school girls two-mile champ, wins the women's division of the Janesville Half-Marathon.

■ **John Westphal**, a Craig grad who walked on to the UW-Madison football team in 1978 and excelled on special teams, wins the team's Spirit Award for his inspirational role in getting the Badgers to their first bowl appearance in 19 years: the Garden State Bowl.

■ Parker sophomore Kris Yahr is girls' state high school tennis champion.

■ **Sharon Dollins** of Parker leaps 18 feet, 10 inches—a Class A record—in the preliminaries on her way to winning her third state long jump title in three years.

■ **Craig senior Don Burrell** wins the boys' state high school championship in the 300-yard low hurdles.

## 1982

■ **Jan. 4:** The second shift on the GM plant's truck line is laid off indefinitely as the car line remains down for retooling. Still on the job are 900 truck assemblers, 300 maintenance workers and 700 salaried staff.

■ The 4,250 workers at the Chrysler plant in Belvidere, Ill., are laid off for a week because of poor sales.

■ **Feb. 10:** Unemployment in Rock



Mike Dean



Dave Krieg



Sharon Dollins



## Killer's cold-blooded rampage holds stateline area in grip of terror

The wave of terror that washed through Rockford, Ill., the last few days of January 1981 spilled into Beloit on Feb. 2.

Donald L. Rains, 26, Beloit, walked into the Radio Shack store at the Beloit Plaza shopping center (Beloit Mall) to buy a part for his radio. He was a CB enthusiast.



Ray Lee Stewart

Waiting on him was Rick Boeck, a 21-year-old who moved to Janesville because of his job managing the Radio Shack store. Boeck was ambitious, enthusiastic and such a good brother and son that his family called him "Mr. Perfect."

A third person entered the store.

Ray Lee Stewart pulled two handguns from his parka. He forced Boeck and Rains to the back of the store, then ordered them to kneel.

Stewart stood behind the young men. Firing both guns, he shot Boeck five times and Rains four times.

"You could see by the way they were lying that they were on their knees when he shot them in the back and head at close range—even after they were down," said Bob Hurley, one of the first Beloit police officers on the scene. "It was obvious they were begging."

Kenny Lee Foust Jr., 35, might have begged for his life. Kevin Kaiser probably did beg for his life because he was just 17 when Stewart forced him into a gas station restroom and shot him once in the face and four times in the chest.

Foust and Kaiser were gas station attendants in Rockford. Stewart got less than \$200 when he rifled the stations' cash registers. Stewart murdered Kaiser on Jan. 28; he killed Foust on Jan. 29. His method of murder was the same: repeated shots to the head and torso.

Willie Fredd might have begged for his life. But his 20-year-old cousin, Albert Pearson, never had the chance.

On Jan. 27, with a .38-caliber revolver in each hand, Stewart barged into Fredd's grocery and pool hall on West State Street in Rockford.

Stewart had a score to settle with Fredd. Ten years earlier, Stewart robbed a dry cleaner and hid in the snack shop Fredd operated. Fredd tipped the cops to where Stewart was and testified against him. Stewart did time for that robbery and others.

Stewart shot the 54-year-old Fredd twice in the chest. If Pearson, a clerk in the grocery, had kept his cool for a few more moments, he might have survived. He hid behind a counter but bolted for the door while Stewart was still in the store.

Stewart's barrage of bullets cut Pearson down in the store's door.

Ray Lee Stewart killed his victims at close range and in cold blood.

Fredd for revenge. Pearson because he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. Foust and Kaiser for a couple of hundred bucks. Boeck and Rains for a police scanner.

Stewart, who was black, would say later that he killed Boeck, Rains, Foust and Kaiser because he wanted to kill white people to avenge the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Pearson and Fredd were black.

Whatever his true motives, Stewart and his bloody wave of murder put the Wisconsin-Illinois state-line area into a state of terror. Convenience stores closed early. People bought dogs and guns.

Because two young African-American men were seen at Beloit Plaza the day of the murders, all young black men were viewed as suspects. Detectives and SWAT teams picked up several young blacks, men and women, as material witnesses.

Racial tension mounted. So did clues and tips, including a lead from Stewart's father, Raymond L. Miller, who eventually received a reward of \$4,400.

Detectives traced the leads to North Carolina, where Stewart was hiding with a relative. He had the murder weapons with him.

Stewart was convicted in Illinois of the murders of Fredd, Pearson and Kaiser and sentenced to death twice. Because of that, Stewart was never tried for Foust's killing but later admitted he did it. Immediately after the jury recommended execution for Kaiser's murder, Stewart turned to Kaiser's mother, Dolores

Clark, smirked and said: "I did it."

Then he laughed and said, "You know you'll be dead long before me." Clark died in 1991, while Stewart was on Illinois' Death Row, appealing his sentence.

While on trial in Rockford, Stewart ran from two unarmed bailiffs. A deputy shot Stewart in the back of his right shoulder, but he ran on. He was found hiding in a barrel in an alley because his Afro hairdo stuck out of the barrel.

Rock County District Attorney Stephen Needham worried Stewart's convictions in Illinois might be overturned or that his sentence might be commuted to life and he could be paroled. Needham tried Stewart in Rock County for the murders of Boeck and Rains and won convictions and life sentences.

Stewart did not spend much time behind bars in Rock County, where he threw excrement at jailers, started a fire in his cell and went on a hunger strike.

He spent 14 years on Death Row—until shortly after midnight Sept. 18, 1996.

The day and evening of Sept. 17, 1996, Stewart met with Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the terminally ill prelate of the Chicago Catholic Archdiocese, and he talked on the phone with the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Both clerics comforted the condemned man.

Stewart ate a last meal of fried perch, potato salad, cole slaw and peaches.

At 12:01 a.m. Sept. 18, Stewart lay down on a gurney and was rolled to the execution chamber. At 12:26 a.m., lethal drugs began to flow into Stewart's left arm.

Stewart coughed and wheezed as if punched in the stomach. His chest heaved three times. His right arm flexed up, then slowly relaxed to hang limp. He died in four minutes.

In his last words, Stewart wished that his death would bring peace to the victims' families. In a statement made shortly before his death, Stewart said:

"One may use the word sorry; one may use the word regret. I don't think those words are powerful enough to explain what I've done. ... However I die cannot be as painful as the deaths I've caused others."

But Ray Lee Stewart never apologized personally to the families of the men he murdered.

County is running about 17 percent, one of the highest rates in the United States. Mortgage rates in Janesville average 18.5 percent, and new car loans carry 18 percent interest.

The Gazette starts a multi-part series—"Close-Up on the Economy"—that runs over many days. Union members lean toward concessions. People take whatever menial jobs

they can find. Neighbors gather to help and console each other.

Middle-class families clip coupons, carpool to the grocery store, forgo steak for soup and



stew and buy clothes at thrift stores.

Domestic disputes increase and worsen; personal bankruptcies and fraud mount, and people delay getting medical and dental work. Social service agencies are strained to their limits.

■ **Feb. 17:** GM announces that only the first shift, about 2,500 people, will be recalled when production of Chevrolet Cavaliers and Cadillac Cimarrons starts here. The scheduled date is May 10 but actually will be June 1 because the plant will not have the right tools and parts on schedule.

■ **March 3:** Gary Schmidt, 23, of 1133 N. Huron, is shotgunned to death as he makes a night deposit at a Beloit bank. Schmidt owns three Co-Op Tapes and Records stores, including shops in Janesville and Beloit.

Terry Lee Erickson, 19, Beloit, is arrested and charged with first-degree murder and attempted armed robbery. His defense is that the sawed-off shotgun went off accidentally—twice—in an armed robbery gone bad when he and Schmidt struggled for the gun.

In August, Erickson is convicted on all counts and sentenced to life in prison.

■ **March 22:** After the golf course flaps of 1981, Janesville leases its Riverside and Blackhawk course to Rajon Corp., a local group formed by Ray Johnson, executive vice president and co-founder of Accudyne Corp. (Alliant Precision Fuse Co.). The move results in the layoffs of seven city workers, but Rajon rehires the popular Ralph Parker as municipal pro.

■ **March 23:** More than a year of discussion and debate on how the Janesville School District should deal with declining enrollments brings a new idea into the mix: a format of kindergarten-through-fifth-grade elementary schools; sixth, seventh and eighth grade middle schools and four-year high schools. But the idea, which will become a formal committee-recommended proposal, includes eliminating one junior high school by 1985.

No junior highs will be closed, and it will not be until 1987 that Janesville goes to the middle school system, and sixth grade will be added to middle school in 1988.

■ **March:** Seneca Foods buys seven Libby's canning plants, including the one in Janesville at 418 E. Conde.

■ **April 3:** Members of UAW Local 95 in Janesville vote 77 percent in favor of a new national contract that includes concessions by workers to save GM \$2.5 billion and revive the automaker in the midst of the deep recession and terrible sales.

Concessions include relinquishing nine personal paid holidays, giving up annual pay raises and halting cost-of-living increases for nine

months. The new contract squeaks by with a national vote of 52 percent in favor.

■ **April 5:** 900 hourly and 70 salaried workers are recalled to the GM factory as second-shift pickup truck production resumes.

■ **May 3:** After an hour of impassioned entreaties from residents, the Janesville City Council votes 6-1 to endorse an "immediate, mutual and verifiable freeze on the production, testing and deployment of all new nuclear weapons systems by all nations possessing them." The lone dissenter is Tom Stehura, who says he believes "in a strong nation negotiating from a position of strength. We have to support the government and let them deal with this issue on an international level."

Though the nuclear freeze idea captures the imaginations of Americans everywhere and results in many such resolutions and "nuclear-free zones," it goes nowhere in getting either the United States or Soviet Union to stop developing and producing nukes. President Reagan is in the midst of the largest peacetime military build-up in U.S. history.

■ **May 20:** Milton College, strapped by \$4 million in debt and shunned by high school graduates, announces it will close its on-campus programs to concentrate on off-campus offerings. By year's end, the 138-year-old Liberal Arts College is totally finished, and the campus buildings are up for sale. More than 85 people—from the college president to professors to janitors—lose their jobs.

■ **May 31:** Rock Aqua Jays boat driver Kevin Freund, 25, of 1108 Morningside, dies after a collision between two of the water-skiing club's boats during a Memorial Day practice session at Traxler Park.

Three boats are involved in a maneuver called "threading the needle." Freund's boat is one of the outside craft, and it drifts into the path of the inside boat piloted by Tom Cullen, 40, of 406 Apache. Freund, a technician with Michigan-Wisconsin Pipeline, is thrown from his boat, and all club members on shore jump in the water to pull him out.

■ **June 1:** Chevrolet Cavaliers and Cadillac Cimarrons start rolling off the renovated, retooled Janesville car assembly line, but the second shift, laid off in October 1981, does not return and will not work all year.

The Cimarron is the first non-Chevrolet car to be made at the Janesville plant since it started making cars in 1923. The truck line makes

both Chevrolet and GMC pickups.

Some 2,500 people return to their jobs, but as many as 2,000 other employees remain out of work and will run out of unemployment compensation and supplemental unemployment benefits.

The \$150 million project boosts the plant's size by 500,000 square feet to more than 3 million square feet, brings more automation and more than 50 robots to the plant, but the technological efficiencies also cost 300 jobs.

■ **June 18:** Diane Ellis, 23, of 413 N. Parker, is ordered to stand trial on nine counts of arson for fires she allegedly set in downtown Janesville. Causing damage ranging from \$9,700 to \$19,000, the fires were set from May 15 to June 8 in the areas of North Main and North River streets and North Parker Drive.

Several other downtown fires also were arson.

In October, Ellis pleads guilty to five counts of arson in a plea deal, and she is sentenced in November to five years in prison and 10 years' probation.

■ **June:** 2,000 people splash and swim in Rockport Pool as it opens on Janesville's southwest side.

■ **July 1:** Janesville native Dena Feingold, daughter of Leon and Sylvia Feingold, becomes assistant rabbi at Congregation Shalom, a Reform congregation in Fox Point, and the first female rabbi in Wisconsin.

■ Mercy Hospital raises daily room rates by \$10: A semiprivate costs \$112, a private room \$117.

■ Wisconsin adopts a new drunken driving law that reduces the legal level for intoxication from a blood alcohol concentration of 0.15 to 0.10 and makes it an offense to drive with a BAC of 0.10 regardless of what else the driver does.

■ **Aug. 31:** The Janesville banks holding the loans of defunct Milton College auction off its contents—from blackboards, desks and double ovens to football uniforms, a concert grand piano and human skeleton. Bidders include other colleges, food and hotel chains, antique dealers and local folks.

Rudy Gaddini, former football coach and athletic director, appeals to the crowd to let him buy his old oak desk, which he and his wife personally refinished, for \$20. Despite shouts of "Give it to him," Gaddini is outbid. Within a matter of days, though, a group of Gaddini's friends and neighbors pools \$80 and buys the desk for him.

■ **August:** Janesville has a 21 percent rate



Diane Ellis

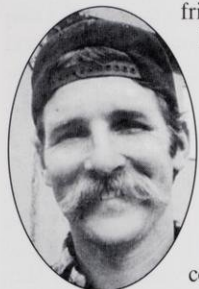


Dena Feingold



of unemployment, and Rock County's is 19.3 percent, fourth highest in the country. But because many people have exhausted their benefits, the true unemployment rate is closer to 30 percent.

■ **Sept. 2:** Don Emerson, 39, Janesville, and many of his relatives and friends, most of whom are laid off from General Motors, are busy converting an old, three-story 15,000 square foot tobacco warehouse at Centerway and Academy Street into a restaurant and multi-bar complex.



**Don Emerson**

Emerson doesn't yet have a liquor license, but his dream will take shape as The Trax Complex, an intriguing bar chockful of games, antiques, collectibles and good times. It will prove a popular entertainment place in both its short life and spectacular death.

■ **Sept. 25-26:** The Rock County Airport is the scene of truly death-defying stunts as Air Show '82 fills the skies with stunt fliers, wing walkers, warbirds, antique and novelty aircraft and sky divers such as the Army's Golden Knights.

Professional aerobats and private aviators from all over the country fly in to participate in the fund-raiser for the Janesville YMCA. Poor weather keeps many pilots from winging in, though, and the two day crowd is a disappointing 22,000.

■ **Oct. 1-3:** The Milwaukee Brewers head to Baltimore needing to win only one game against the second-place Orioles to win the American League East title. But Baltimore takes the first three games of the series, tying the Brewers and setting up the season's last game as do-or-die for both teams.



**Robin Yount**

The Brewers do not die, winning the final game 10-2 after taking a 3-0 lead on the strength of two solo home runs by Robin Yount.

■ **Oct. 8-10:** With their backs in a familiar position—against the wall—the Brewers come home trailing the five-game American League Championship Series 0-2 to the California Angels. Ben Oglivie's back is against the left-field wall as he prepares to catch Bob Boone's fly, but a fan reaches over and snags the ball. The umpire erroneously rules a home run, and the Angels rally to cut the



**J.M. Bostwick, once a department store, later acquired by Used but Nice Office Furniture, was renovated as part of TIF District 2 in Janesville. The store became the Olde Towne Mall in the middle of the block, and the Lappin-Hayes Block at the corner of Main and Milwaukee streets was renovated.**

Brewers lead from five runs to two. But Milwaukee hangs on to win, 5-2.

The Brewers trounce the Halos 9-5 in Game 4 to even the series, setting up another do-or-die Sunday. Down 3-2 in the seventh inning, the Brewers load the bases, and Cecil Cooper lines an opposite field single to score the tying and eventual winning runs.

Janesville, Milwaukee and the rest of Wisconsin go nuts as the "Come-back Kids" win the American League pennant and look forward to taking on the St. Louis Cardinals in the World Series.

■ **Oct 12-20:** Milwaukee starts the series like gangbusters, winning Game 1 in St. Louis 10-0 and jumping to an early lead before dropping the second contest 5-4. The World Series returns to Milwaukee for the first time since the Braves lost the championship series to the New York Yankees in 1958.

The Brewers' booming bats fall almost silent in Game 3 as Milwaukee loses 6-2, but the Brew Crew roars back to win the next two games. They need a six-run seventh-inning rally to win Game 4 7-5, and in Game 5, a 6-4 Milwaukee win, Yount becomes the first player in World Series history to have two four-hit games. One hit is an opposite field home run in the seventh.

In Game 6, the Cardinals crush the Brewers 13-1 to set up yet another do-or-die game for Milwaukee. The Brewers die in a seesaw Game 7 that St. Louis salts away with a two-run eighth inning for a 6-3 win.

■ **Oct. 15:** Janesville Little Theatre opens its production of "Star-Spangled Girl," a Neil Simon comedy, in the Franklin Junior High

auditorium, the first time in 50 years that the troupe has not performed on the third floor of the Crossroads building on South Main Street.

The building is formerly the Janesville Public Library built with a Carnegie grant in 1902-03. Housing the Senior Center on its first two floors, the building is the subject of controversy. Earlier in the year, the council rejected a plan to renovate it to make it more accommodating for both the seniors and the thespians, and the rejection forces JLT to move.

In 1999, the building still housed the Senior Center, and it was again the subject of controversy as the council wrestled with the questions of renovation, expansion or replacement.

■ **Nov. 4:** Janesville investors scramble to get into the bull market because the day before the Dow Jones Industrial Average posted its largest single daily gain to this date—43.41 points—to close at a new high, 1,065.49.

■ **Nov. 31:** Rock County's high rate of unemployment, lingering and festering with the deep recession, forces the county board to reach into reserve funds for \$303,000 to cover the precipitous rise in the number of General Relief cases, which have grown from 555 in January to 791 by October. The extra allocation brings the county's outlay for the year to \$1.5 million.

■ **Dec. 25:** A Christmas gift from the weather man: 58 degrees and sunshine.

■ **Sometime in 1982:** The city of Janesville starts work on the Crosby-Willard Bridge.

■ Under renovation as part of Tax Incremental Financing District 2 in downtown Janesville are the 128-year-old Lappin-Hayes



Block (offices) at the southwest corner of Main and Milwaukee streets and the Bostwick store (Olde Towne Mall) in the middle of the block. TIF 2 also includes improving South Main Street and sprucing up its appearance with a "streetscape" as was done to North Main Street as part of TIF 1.

■ Janesville activates a new water system, featuring a 5 million gallon reservoir, that divides the city into two zone and improves water pressure to the west and far north sides.



**Mary Kaye Derouin**

■ Lane Larson of Craig High School ties Chris Weber's single-game Janesville basketball scoring record with 49 points in a 93-88 win over Madison East.

■ Mary Kaye Derouin repeats as Janesville's women's golf champ, and Gregg Clatworthy is

men's champion for a fifth time.

■ Janesville's Babe Ruth team again rules the state baseball tourney.

■ Mercy Hospital gets its first computerized tomography, or CAT, scanner.

## 1983

■ **Jan 1:** The 17th suspicious fire in Janesville since May 15, 1982, races through a downtown business and apartment building at 409-411 W. Milwaukee, causing \$71,000 damage. Tenants Carol Tracy and Richard Van Pool are leaning out the second floor of the smoke-filled building when they are saved by firefighters. The tenants tell the firefighters that more people are inside.

Firefighter Rich LaCount strains his back while rescuing a young girl from the building, and five other firefighters also are injured. Eleven of the arson fires were cleared with the conviction of Dianne Ellis in October 1982.

■ **Jan. 23:** Ossit Church Furniture Co. on Hyatt Street is the 18th victim of a fire believed to be arson. A sprinkler system turns out to be both savior and spoiler for the company, extinguishing the fire so that flames and smoke cause only \$1,000 damage but doing another \$99,000 damage by soaking the carpentry business on all four floors.

The sprinkler is not hooked to an alarm, so it spews water on materials, machines and finished products for a long time before being turned off.

The fire is one of the straws that breaks Ossit's back, which closes before the end of the year. Founded in Milwaukee in 1867, the company moved to Janesville in 1935 and employed 88 workers, mostly skilled wood-

carvers and carpenters, at its height in 1949.

■ **Feb. 3:** Though the Janesville council maintains City Manager Philip Deaton is doing a good job, it refuses to raise his salary of \$44,524 because it wants "to establish a model of economy in local government."

■ **Feb. 28:** Arthur Fletcher of Whitewater retires from the General Motors plant in Janesville after 31 years without missing a single day or ever having arrived a minute late, a record no one else can claim. "I loved my work, and I loved the people I worked with," says the former spotwelder and receiving inspector.

■ The Fenzl Chevrolet-Cadillac dealership at East Milwaukee Street and Wright Road closes abruptly, putting 30 people out of work and leaving the Chevrolet city of Janesville without a Chevy dealer for the first time since 1918. Jack Fagan, the local Ford dealer, expresses an interest in buying the franchise, which he will do after divesting himself of his Ford business.

■ **March 10:** William D. Alm, 25, Janesville, pleads no contest to the felony of causing injury by conduct regardless of life in a racially motivated attack on two Madison brothers who are black. Another Janesville man, Harland G. Meske, 22, already pleaded no contest to the same charge and was sentenced to 30 months in prison.

On Oct. 7, 1982, in Madison, Alm and Meske, who are white, made racial slurs to the brothers, then attacked them with a metal pipe and baseball bat. One of the victims underwent surgery for a fractured skull. Charges of attempted murder and endangering safety are dropped for Alm when he pleads no contest.

■ **March 27:** Fire guts the lobby of the Jeffris Theater, 319 W. Milwaukee (vacant Park Cinema), and sends smoke into the adjoining Monterey Hotel, where the fumes asphyxiate resident David Lee White, 44. Arson is suspected.

The theater will reopen Sept. 2 as Ormson Cinemas 1 & 2.

■ **March 31:** Earl and Elaine Anderson, an elderly Janesville couple, are killed on Highway 14 southeast of Oregon when their car is hit by one that runs a stop sign. The other driver, Lydia A. Reitman, 43, Madison, is hospitalized in good condition.

■ **April 4:** Sears, Roebuck and Co. announces that it will cease retail sales in Janesville and trim its operations at the two-building complex on West Milwaukee Street (parking lot) to servicing of catalog customers only. More than half of 30 full- and part-time workers lose their jobs.

Sears has operated a retail store in Janesville since 1928.

■ **April 9:** Adult Dancing opens on Milton Avenue in Janesville. At the business, young women strip for men, down to a G-string if the tips keep coming.

For more money, the women will dance with the men and allow themselves to be fondled "anywhere and to any extent except the vaginal area," Gazette investigative reporters discover. The men can disrobe as well, but the dancers will not touch them below the waist.

City officials believe the business is operating legally and say they have received no complaints about it.

■ **April 24:** The Bliss family, whose patriarch is Robert Bliss, celebrates 100 years of ownership of The Janesville Gazette. Robert is editor and publisher.

■ **May 9:** The Bank of Wisconsin honors several local entrepreneurs as part of Small Business Week.

Recognized are Don and Gerry Hedberg of Lab Safety Supply for "innovative products and methods of manufacture that maintain and improve the viability of their company"; Ann Lane and Joan Blackburn of Lane-Blackbourn Gallery for "development of their small business from an original concept to its current success"; Chuck and Carol Roherty of Mr. Steak (Roherty's Restaurant & Irish Pub) for "donation of their time and effort and products and service to the civic and charitable projects in our community," and Steve Van Galder of Van Galder Bus Co. for "ongoing ideas which result in the expansion of his business."

■ **June 1-3:** A year after they were supposed to be back on the job, 1,700 second-shift workers return to the car line at the Janesville GM plant. During this period, the number of workers recalled and still on layoff and the number of jobs lost to automation and a switch to mass relief change from report to report, reflecting the state of flux the GM plant and its workers were in.

(Mass relief is when the line stops and all workers take a simultaneous break. The previous tag relief practice employed 200 replacement workers who did various jobs as individuals took breaks while the line kept moving.)

As of this date, GM local management reports that the plant is at full production with 6,500 employees, of whom 5,600 are hourly workers, and that 500 people remain indefinitely laid off. The car line's two shifts employ 4,200, and the pickup truck line's two shifts employ 1,800 people. The remaining 500 are salaried and support personnel.

Current hourly pay for GM assemblers is \$12 an hour, while skilled trades workers make \$14 an hour.

Just as GM layoffs ripple through the community, so does the callback as JATCO pre-



## 1981 murder still lives in appeals courts

**T**he murder of Randall D. Bleiler was the case that spanned the '80s and still lived on in appeals courts in 1999.

The effort to solve the June 26, 1981, killing had a slow start.

"No suspects, no motives, no clues," was the lead of *The Janesville Gazette* story three days after Bleiler's beating and stabbing death.

Bleiler was staying at Debbie Buchanan's house at 817 McKinley, Janesville, the night he was killed. Neighbors found his bloody body on the couch after Buchanan's sons, ages 6 and 7, told neighbor children: "Randy looked terrible."

Bleiler had been unemployed for weeks before his death. Some who knew him said he feared revenge for a drug deal that had gone bad. Sources told the *Gazette* that Bleiler had received a large quantity of cocaine, perhaps \$15,000 worth, from a "a big-time dealer in southwestern Wisconsin" on a loan but hadn't paid his drug debt.

Police investigated for months, but they had little luck solving the crime.

In September 1981—three months after the murder—it was revealed that a former Waukesha County man, Paul Gossett, in custody for a California bludgeoning death, was a suspect in the Bleiler killing.

Gossett later was dropped as a suspect, however, after his roommate's testimony placed Gossett in California at the time of Bleiler's death.

It wasn't until Nov. 20, 1982—17 months after the murder—that Michelle Lambert, 19, of 238 Madison, Janesville, was arrested along with her two cousins, Dennis Shetler, 22, of 620 Lincoln, Janesville, and Burt Shetler, 20,



**Michelle Lambert**



**Jody Mayo**

of 225 Chicago, Milton.

Prosecutors alleged that Buchanan's 7-year-old son had seen Lambert and the Shetler brothers beat and stab Bleiler. Later, it was revealed that the 7-year-old had been hypnotized in the months after the murder to aid his memory.

It also was disclosed that Lambert had borne Bleiler's child.

After videotapes of the boy's hypnosis sessions were played in court, however, Rock County Judge Gerald Jaeckle ruled they were inadmissible.

Without the boy's eyewitness testimony, Rock County District Attorney Stephen Needham said he had no choice except to drop the charges against the three on April 29, 1983.

But investigators didn't give up.

A secret John Doe investigation led by Rock County Judge Patrick Rude was initiated June 23, 1983.

On Dec. 20, 1983—2½ years after the murder—Lambert was arrested again, this time with Jody Mayo, 21, no fixed address. The criminal complaint claimed that a friend of Mayo's three times heard Lambert and twice heard

Mayo say they were involved in Bleiler's death.

But before the two could be put on trial, another suspect surfaced.

Jeffery Scott Holmes, also known as Jeffery Beck, confessed March 9, 1984, from his Alabama prison cell that he killed Bleiler. Holmes said he hit Bleiler with a pipe because Bleiler owed him \$160 for drugs.

Holmes also told investigators he had an accomplice, but investigation later showed the accomplice, who was murdered before Holmes' confession, was on a tugboat on the Mississippi River on the night of the murder.

Lambert's trial was first. A jury was chosen in Kenosha County because of extensive publicity about the case in Rock County. They heard 14 days of testimony and deliberated eight hours before convicting her of murder April 12, 1984.

"I'm not guilty! I didn't even do it!" Lambert cried as the verdict was read.

Rock County Judge Mark Farnum sentenced her to life in prison.

Eighteen days later, a Rock County jury convicted Mayo of murder. She, too, was sentenced to life in prison.

Despite years of appeals, both women still were incarcerated in 1999.

In the early 1990s, Lambert told prison guards and social workers that she acted alone and that Mayo was innocent. It also surfaced after her conviction, however, that Lambert suffered from mental illness.

Fifteen years after her conviction, Mayo still had a pending appeal. The parole review panel has repeatedly refused her parole, saying: "She continues to deny her crime."

—Sid Schwartz

pires to recall 120 laid-off workers and other businesses look forward to GM dollars being pumped back into the local economy.

■ **June 30:** Dennis Lippincott, 38, of 2044 Burbank, is killed when the Blackhawk Airways plane he is piloting crashes into a West Virginia mountain. The twin-engine Beechcraft was flying industrial cargo from West Virginia to Iowa.

■ **July 1:** 63 years after it was first proposed, the Crosby-Willard Bridge opens to link the south and west sides of Janesville. The \$2.5 million bridge stretches 815 feet over the Rock River and features 15-foot driving lanes and a 8-foot walkway.

Celia Koeberl, 2207 S. Willard, who has waited patiently and with good humor for the bridge to be built while she drove around town

to get her six kids to Parker High School, is given the honor of cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

■ **July 9-23:** Southern Wisconsin swelters in 15 days of 90-degree or above temperatures, with readings of 98 and 99 on July 21-22, and the month sizzles to a close with four more days of 90-plus temps.

■ **Aug. 17:** The 134-year-old Shopiere Dam on Turtle Creek springs a leak, which local folks will repair, only to have the dam deteriorate further. Sixteen years later in 1999, the dam finally was headed for removal after numerous attempts to fix and save it fail.

■ Myrtle Trostem of Orfordville reports to work at Parker Pen, not unusual because she has been doing so for 60 years. The 80-year-old started at 22.5 cents an hour in the accounting

department on Aug. 17, 1923.

Al Diotte, Parker Pen executive vice president, says: "She has set her own standard kind of high, and she is a loyal, dedicated employee who has contributed to the progress and success of the company in many ways."

Among Miss Trostem's admirers is President Reagan who sends her a congratulatory letter.

■ **August:** The month melts with 12 days of 90-degree or higher temperatures. Aug. 19 sizzles as a 100-degree scorcher.

■ **Sept. 6:** *Gazette* readers learn the story of Flirt, an English setter owned by Dr. and Mrs. Henry Levihn, 2011 Eastwood. While hiking and fishing in White River National Forest, Colorado, the Levihns lose Flirt, one of their two English setters.



They cannot find her before they must return home, and the 12-year-old setter apparently has a run-in with a bear, which leaves her badly wounded and dehydrated.

But Flirt encounters a guardian angel who carries her off the mountain and to a veterinarian, who puts her on the road to recovery. The Good Samaritan also arranges to have Flirt stay with friends until her owners can be found.

The Levihns' Rocky Mountain bumper turns into a Rocky Mountain high thanks to the good-hearted hiker, singer John Denver.

■ **Oct. 2:** Eunice Kennedy Shriver, sister of late President John F. Kennedy, turns over the first shovel of dirt for an addition to St. Coletta School, an institution for developmentally disabled people in Jefferson. Shriver's 65-year-old sister, Rosemary Kennedy, has been a resident at the school for 35 years, and the Kennedy Foundation gives a \$1 million gift to the school in honor of the 93rd birthday of the family's matriarch, Rose Kennedy.

When Rosemary was a young woman, her father, Joseph Kennedy, had her undergo a lobotomy in the mistaken belief it would cure her flightiness.

■ **Oct. 17:** Sally Cullen, a French teacher at Marshall Junior High School, is chosen as one of four "Wisconsin Teachers of the Year."

"She has touched and, I'm sure, brightened the lives of many with her enthusiasm for life, her excellence as a teacher and her care and concern for her students," one student says.

■ **Nov. 1:** Watertown lines its streets with flags and banners to welcome home astronaut Daniel Brandenstein, who piloted the space shuttle Challenger on its orbital mission Aug. 30 to Sept. 5.

■ **Nov. 11:** Janesville artist Gary Gandy is chosen "Artist of the Year" by the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Ducks Unlimited for his painting of mallards landing on a glassy, calm bay. Tony DiNicola, another Janesville artist, is one of four runners-up.

■ **Dec. 15:** Janesville officer Craig Fritz decides to wear a bullet-proof vest on his second-shift patrol, and the vest snags a .44-caliber bullet headed for the five-year police veteran's chest just above his heart. But the round still penetrates his undershirt.

Fritz is treated and released for a minor wound, and his assailant, Albert W. Edmonds, 40, also is lucky to be alive because he caught three police bullets: in the shoulder, leg and hip.

A convicted felon and recent resident of the London Hotel (Hilltop Cafe), 121 E. Milwaukee, Edmonds buys a handgun from the Janesville Sport Shop and robs Milton Avenue Pharmacy, 1259 Milton, about 9 p.m. of some \$2,600 in cash and checks. He also takes the drugstore owner's car for his getaway.

Chased by cops, Edmonds crashes into a squad car in the 800 block of Richardson Street and takes off on foot with Fritz and officers Leonard Loertscher and Steve Kopp in pursuit.

When cornered, Edmonds turns to Fritz and says, "Now, you're going to get yours" and blasts off two shots, one of which hits Fritz. Fritz returns fire.

Loertscher sees Edmonds take off running again and orders him to stop, but the gunman spins around in a half crouch and points his weapon at Loertscher, who fires three times. Kopp sees Edmonds in his crouch, and when the robber ignores Kopp's order not to move, Kopp fires once.

At his trial in July 1984, Edmonds claims Fritz fired first and that he fired repeatedly in self-defense over his shoulder and tried to surrender. Edmonds is convicted of attempted murder, armed robbery and theft and is sentenced to 84 years in prison.

But an obscure technicality over the judge's jury instructions wins Edmonds a retrial in 1988, where he again claims self-defense but is again convicted, this time for attempted murder and armed robbery because the charge of theft of the druggist's car was disallowed. Edmonds is sentenced to 60 years in prison.

■ **December:** The year's extreme weather continues with 12 days when the thermometer dips below zero—normally the month has three—and 20 inches of snow. The coldest day was Christmas Eve with a Santa-stunning, traffic-stopping minus 23.

■ **Sometime in 1983:** GM and the UAW start a "Care & Share" program in which the company matches employees' gifts and the proceeds are distributed to the needy. After the national program expires, Local 95 continues it on its own, and the Janesville totals are 61,578 food items, \$46,586 in worker donations and a corporate match of \$69,375. In addition, local GM employees give \$194,000 to United Way.

■ Rock County's General Relief fund, benefits granted to poor people with no other recourse, spends a record \$2.2 million.

■ The Craig Cougars win the state Class A baseball championship, and the Janesville American Legion squad takes the state baseball title with a 26-0 record.

■ Ross Kingsley, former All-State basketball player from Craig, signs a minor-league baseball contract with the Atlanta Braves and plays shortstop for a rookie league team in Pulaski, Va.

■ Gregg Clatworthy repeats as Janesville men's city golf champ.



Gregg Clatworthy

■ Mike Scott of Janesville wins the ninth annual Janesville YMCA Half-Marathon.

■ The Janesville Public Library puts its card catalog and circulation information on computer.

## 1984

■ **Jan. 7:** The Janesville Public Library starts a year-long celebration of its 100th birthday, not as a building but as a community collection. In 1884, a group of local women raised \$150 to buy books and other reading material from the Young Men's Association and made the collection available to Janesville residents.

■ **January:** Janesville's sewer rates rise for the first time since 1968, and the average household bill jumps from \$7.11 to \$18.19 per quarter.

■ **Feb. 6:** President Reagan returns to his boyhood home of Dixon, Ill., 87 miles from Janesville, to celebrate his 73rd birthday.

■ **Feb. 8:** Milton School District's new anti-drug program, which requires students to take urine tests if they are suspected of drug and/or alcohol use, draws the attention of state and national media, and reporters descend on the community.

■ **Feb. 11:** Janesville's most decorated and highest ranking military man, Brig. Gen. Victor F. Bleasdale, retired from the Marine Corps, dies in London at age 88.

Bleasdale, whose family lived in rural Janesville west of the city, served in both World Wars and Latin America. His decorations include the Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross (both second only to the Medal of Honor), Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart and Nicaraguan Cross of Valor.

■ **Feb. 13:** Total TV, a Janesville-based cable television company that is Wisconsin's largest with 90,000 subscribers and anticipated annual revenue of \$22 million, announces it will be bought by Jones Intercable, a Colorado company.

Owners of 70 percent of Total TV's stock are founder Jim Fitzgerald Sr. and contractors J.P. Cullen and Bill Ryan, all of Janesville; and Stuart Shadel Sr. of Milton.

■ **Feb. 18:** Craig Knutson, Rock County assistant administrator and a Clinton native, becomes administrator, filling the vacancy left by the resigning and often controversial Charles Hetrick.

■ **March 14:** The Janesville Community Development Authority picks a Madison partnership—TMB Development and Carley Capital Group—to redevelop the 109-year-old Cotton Mills building in the 200 block of North Franklin Street into apartments.



The apartments were still in business in 1999, but Tax Incremental Financing District 3, of which the project is the cornerstone, remained in debt to the tune of more than \$3 million because of high costs to establish it and lack of firm commitment for investment before it was started.

Changes in TIF law allowed the city to transfer revenues from other districts to pay off TIF 3's debts, which the city did but must continue to do if TIF 3 was to break even.

■ **April 9:** Mail pickup service from a postal box in front of the Tiffany Cafe ends, and as of May 1, Tiffany will not have a ZIP code and will no longer be an address. Tiffany's small post office closed four years earlier.

■ **April 16:** The Janesville City Council OKs borrowing \$2 million to build a new Senior Center on North River Street, but it rescinds the decision two nights later when council members Mike Miles and Mary Schmidt change their votes after hearing many complaints about the cost. The council will review various options before deciding on renovating the current Senior Center in the Crossroads Building, formerly the Janesville Public Library.

■ Conventional mortgage rates in Janesville average 14 percent.

■ **May 10:** A 25-year-old Beloit man is arrested on a charge of lewd and lascivious behavior. He goes into a store in the Beloit Plaza, takes several pieces of women's lingerie into a dressing room and occasionally swings the door open to ask the female clerk how the undergarments fit. The lingerie is often too small, exposing the fashion conscious cross-dresser.

■ **May 11:** In an attempt to curb unsafe driving and stem illegal and rowdy behavior in downtown Janesville by circuit riders and bar hoppers, the Janesville police increase patrols, including having officers walk beats, and the city desynchronizes the traffic lights from 9:30 p.m. until early morning.

Since March 30, police have written 46 tickets for moving violations, including two for drunken driving, and have made 29 arrests on charges such as drinking in public and disorderly conduct.

■ **June 2-3:** Elephants—and acrobats, clowns and wild animal tamers—return to Janesville as the Zor Temple Shriners bring the Carden International Circus to town for an old-fashioned circus parade downtown and four shows at the Rock County 4-H Fair-grounds. Thousands line downtown streets for the festive parade, and some 13,000 people flock to the fairgrounds.

■ **June 16:** The Janesville Cavaliers, a semi-pro football team, start play in the

Northern States Football League with a 13-0 loss to the Chicago Lincolnwood Chargers at Monterey Stadium.

The Cavaliers, named for the GM plant product and rooted on by the cheerleading Cavalettes, are coached by Jerry Schliem, who coached the Delavan Red Devils for three years. Lightning Mitchell is the Cavaliers' general manager.

■ **June:** The city dedicates a new amphitheater in Lower Courthouse Park on South Main Street.

■ **July 6-7:** 40,000 fans attend two concerts by the Grateful Dead at Alpine Valley Music Theater in Walworth County.

■ **Aug. 6:** Legends, a bar at 11 N. Main, sponsors a "Brat Fest" as part of Janesville's community effort to raise \$420,000 in the "Make Monterey Happen" fund drive to renovate the local high schools' football stadium in Monterey Park.

Ken Bick, retired principal of Janesville High School and beloved educator, says thanks but no thanks to a local petition drive to rename the stadium for him. "I just love the name (Monterey) ... the sound of it and everything," Bick says.

The stadium, park and nearby Monterey Bridge, first built in 1846, received their names from the area south of the Big Rock and the Rock River after it bends west and widens. An early settler, Capt. Ira Militimore, operated a quarry there, and the story goes that residents likened the sound of rock blasting at the quarry to the booms of artillery at the Battle of Monterey in the Mexican-American War of 1846-48.

■ **Aug. 8:** David Fiegel, 12, Sharon, awakens to the screams of his 10-year-old disabled sister, Kari, and finds their house in flames. He runs through heavy smoke to find and carry his sister, who is blind and uses a wheelchair, to safety.

The electrical fire starts in an antique radio and guts the house, causing \$26,000 damage.

■ **Aug. 9:** Ken Weir, 46, owner of Ken's Klub, a Janesville bar, pleads guilty to one charge of delivery of cocaine in federal court in exchange for 12 other counts being dismissed. He will be sentenced to six years in prison.

■ **Aug. 15:** Mark Staskel, 20, Milton, pleads guilty to stabbing his 16-year-old sister, Marcy, to death in their home. Mark is committed to Mendota State Health Institute.

■ **Aug. 31:** GM makes official what many in the community have known and/or feared for months: It will not make standard pickup trucks in Janesville after the 1986 model year because it will build a \$600 million factory near Fort Wayne for truck production and no product is scheduled for the Janesville GM plant's

second line after then.

Eighteen hundred people stand to lose their jobs, but GM officials hold out hope that another product will be selected for the Janesville truck line.

■ **September:** The 13,000 square foot River's Edge Office Building, 111 N. Main, opens in downtown Janesville, where buildings were lost to a gas explosion and fire in 1981.

■ **Oct. 11:** BANCWIS Corp., owner of Janesville's Bank of Wisconsin (M&I Bank) and Bank of Evansville, announces that it has agreed to be acquired by Valley Bancorporation.

■ **Oct. 19:** Astronaut Donald "Deke" Slayton is grand marshal for a parade in Evansville that is part of NASA Community Involvement Week. Slayton, a Sparta native, orbited the Earth in an Apollo spacecraft and docked with a Soviet Soyuz capsule.

■ **Oct. 23:** Scott Alf, 15, Beloit, is found dead, shot three times with a .22-caliber rifle, on a bicycle path just north of Beloit in Beloit Township. Five hours later, police arrest Gerald Kramar, 16, Beloit.

Kramar is waived into adult court on a charge of first-degree murder, but the waiver is appealed all the way to the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The court takes until 1986 to decide Kramar should be tried as an adult.

Kramar is found guilty and sentenced to life in prison. An appeal is filed, but the conviction is upheld in 1989. In 1999, he remained in prison with a possible parole date of 2002.

■ **Nov. 3:** A car plunges off the Monterey Bridge over the Rock River, and its occupants—Thomas Piazza, 31, Beloit, and Kimberly R. Valley, 23, of 15323 Kensington—drown. Their injuries from the car's 40-foot fall are minor.

■ **Nov. 6:** CBS News selects Janesville's Ward 14 for one of its thousands of exit poll interview sites, and most of the local voters tell the pollsters they voted for President Reagan and Vice President George Bush over the Democratic ticket of former Vice President Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro.

Ward 14 votes 503 for Reagan and 423 for Mondale as Janesville goes 12,095 to 10,338 for the Republicans and the county votes 32,265 to 26,146 for the GOP.

Rep. Les Aspin, though, again proves impervious to the Republican landslide as he garners 56 percent of the vote for his eighth term despite being targeted by the national Republican Party as vulnerable.

■ **Nov. 30:** The only explanation for a flash of light in the night sky and two loud booms—seen and heard as far away as Milwaukee and Rockford, Ill.—is that a meteor landed somewhere in southern Wisconsin.



■ **Dec. 15:** Darlene Unrine waits from 5 a.m. until the store opens at 9 a.m. when more than 200 people surge into the J.C. Penney store in Janesville to snatch up 72 Cabbage Patch dolls in 15 minutes.

The shoppers, mostly women, push each other and grab dolls out of each other's hands. Three Cabbage Patch fanatics charge into a Gazette photographer and knock him into a set of barbells.

Unrine gets her doll.

■ **Sometime in 1984:** Parker Pen Co.'s Writing Instrument Group posts two quarterly losses, then bounces back some, but the strong U.S. dollar is hurting the company's sales, most of which are overseas. Furthermore, a renovation of its Arrow Park factory in Janesville is behind schedule, cutting into profits. The company's temporary help subsidiary, Manpower, continues to go great guns as its operating profit rises 33 percent.

■ GM recalls another 254 workers to bring total employment to about 6,800 people, and the plant begins work on a \$10 million facility to pretreat its industrial wastewater before it flows into the Janesville sanitary sewer system.

■ Through October, the Rock County Social Services Department receives 676 cases of child abuse and neglect, including 249 involving sexual abuse. In the same period in 1980, the department handled 205 total cases, of which 42 were sexual. Officials attribute the increase to better reporting, greater public awareness and the stress put on families by hard economic times.

■ The Janesville housing market starts to recover: 132 new houses are the most since 186 in 1980.

■ The Craig Cougars repeat as state baseball champions.

■ Mike Boehning of Craig rules the state in the 110-meter high hurdles.

■ Parker swimmers Rochelle Smith and Jenny Gullickson earn state championships: Smith with a state record time of :59.58 in the 100-yard backstroke and Gullickson in the 50-yard freestyle.

■ Both Janesville Babe Ruth teams—the 12- and 13-year-olds and 14- and 15-year-olds—win state titles.

■ Gregg Clatworthy wins his seventh city men's golf championship, and Barb Figi repeats as women's champ.

■ Steve Stricker of Edgerton is the top high school boys' golfer.

## 1985

■ **Jan. 4:** David Hatch, 20, Beloit, jealous that his girlfriend, April Rankins, 17, also of Beloit, is dating another man, abducts her and takes her to his home where he shoots her



**Construction on the new Rock County Jail and Sheriff's Department started in the summer of 1985 at Highways 51 and 14. The old facility, above, on Water Street, was too crowded. It had an average daily population of more than twice the maximum rated capacity. In 1999, the old jail stood empty and gutted, waiting to be redeveloped.**

twice in the head with a .22-caliber handgun.

Hatch also shoots Beloit police officer Peter Larsen, a 15-year police veteran responding to the kidnapping, twice in the head before shooting himself in the head. All survive, but Rankins and Larsen are hospitalized for months in comas while Hatch's wound to the forehead is superficial.

Rankins will remain in a coma and die in March 1986. Larsen is almost totally disabled as a semi-comatose quadriplegic, but eventually he is able to comprehend people speaking to him and can communicate with his eyes and nods of the head. He dies Nov. 15, 1998.

Hatch is convicted of kidnapping, two attempted murders and endangering safety by reckless use of a weapon and is sentenced to 77 years in prison. He will be eligible for parole in 2004.

■ **Jan. 13-Feb. 16:** The high temperature in Janesville stays below freezing for 33 straight days.

■ **Feb. 4:** Caterpillar Tractor announces that its operation in Edgerton will cease in May. In 1983, Caterpillar raised the hopes and expectations of a recession-beleaguered Rock County by announcing it would build a plant between Janesville and Beloit to employ 6,000 people.

Then the company decided to buy Dana Corp.'s former Spicer Axle factory in Edgerton for the intended Beloit Township operation; at the same it started work on a Janesville facility to assemble hydraulic hoses.

Caterpillar moved the hose operation, employing 50 people, to the 835,000 square foot Edgerton plant.

The hose factory is all that ever amounted of Caterpillar's grand plans for Rock County. The Beloit Township site is offered to both General Motors for its upcoming Saturn project and to Toyota for a U.S. factory. Neither locates in Rock County.

■ **Feb. 5:** Janesville businessman Jim Fitzgerald puts the Milwaukee Bucks up for sale. The National Basketball Association franchise will be bought by Herb Kohl, Milwaukee businessman whose father started the Kohl grocery and department store chain in Milwaukee in 1928.

Kohl will retain ownership of the Bucks and become a U.S. senator. Fitzgerald will buy and sell another NBA franchise, the Golden State Warriors.

■ **Feb. 6:** Passenger air service to and from Rock County Airport is down to one federally subsidized round-trip to Chicago a day provided by American Central Airlines.

The subsidy is \$124,000 a year; the average number of passengers is fewer than three a day. Within a month, American Central will declare bankruptcy and stop providing "essential air service" to Rock County.

■ **March 9:** Two Edgerton teens—Daniel J. Nehls, 16, and Todd A. Yarolimek, 15—drown when Nehls' car flips over into a pond west of Edgerton near Hartzell and Stebbensville roads.

Two other passengers—Mark H. Fritz and Kenneth W. Balch, both 18 and of Edgerton—escape from the submerged car.

The car is traveling more than 80 mph when it skids out of control, hits the edge of the frozen pond, flips onto its top and breaks



through the ice. One of the survivors tells deputies the teens were drinking before the accident.

■ **April 15:** The Janesville Fire Department becomes the first in Wisconsin to institute a policy that new recruits must not smoke tobacco on or off the job.

The reason is that veteran firefighters can receive heart and/or lung disability benefits based on the presumption the debilitating conditions came from on-the-job exposure to fumes such as carbon monoxide when in fact firefighters can suffer the same disabilities from smoking.

None of seven recruits objects to the condition of employment.

■ **May 1:** Norma Rafferty's quick action is credited with saving a pair of Janesville sailors from drowning or death by hypothermia in Lake Koshkonong.

Rafferty, a lakeside resident living in Oakwood Park subdivision in Jefferson County, sees Judy Crary, 43, of 420 Cornelia, and Tom Stevens, 60, of 403 S. Harmony, struggling in the water after their 14-foot sailboat overturns. Rafferty calls the Rock River Safety Patrol, which plucks the pair from cold water roiled by 3- to 4-foot waves.

Stevens is treated for hypothermia.

■ **June 13:** Two Illinois women are arrested on charges of prostitution after a male guest at the Janesville Motor Lodge (Best Western), 3900 Milton, tells Janesville police he and a friend took the young women up on their offer of sex for cash. The man, who is not arrested, says he came forward because he felt guilty.

■ **June 14:** Frank Stratton closes the Star Restaurant and Tobacco Bar, 12 N. Main (vacant lot), after operating it for 17 years. New owners will remodel the business and open it as the Three Star Family Restaurant in 1986.

■ **July 3:** The Gazette, WCLO and other local businesses sponsor Janesville's first Concert in the Park, a free Independence Day celebration performed in Lower Courthouse Park by the Beloit-Janesville Symphony Orchestra.

■ **July:** Construction begins on a new Rock County Jail and sheriff's department office at Highways 51 and 14. Cost is \$10.5 million as the county's Pinehurst building is used as part of the new structure.

In November, the old jail on Water Street has an average daily population of 172 while the facility has a maximum rated capacity of 82 inmates.

■ Also under construction is the Janesville Fire Department's \$258,000 training site on County F.

■ Roger Axtell, vice president of marketing for Parker Pen, publishes his first book, "Do's

and Taboo's Around the World," which provides business travelers with tips on behavior and protocol while abroad.

■ **Aug. 1:** Stephen Hemming, 26, who got his first "break" in theater when he was a student at Marshall Junior High School, is in his third season with American Players Theatre in Spring Green. A 1977 Craig graduate, Hemming has roles in four Shakespeare plays.

■ **Aug. 15:** Federal, state and local police arrest 46 of 63 people named in warrants generated by an undercover sting operation in Beloit that operated out of a storefront to supposedly buy and fence stolen goods and to purchase drugs.

Forty-six of the people named in the warrants live in Beloit; two live in Janesville. Agents say they participated in more than 500 transactions that netted \$54,000 in stolen property, \$5,000 in guns and \$12,000 in drugs.

■ **Aug. 16-25:** Janesville celebrates its sesquicentennial, or 150th birthday, with a historical pageant, bus tours, horse-drawn trolleys, barbecues and block parties, beards and mustaches, arts and crafts fair, religious displays and church tours, water-ski shows, dances, sports tournaments, time capsules, a rock 'n' roll show featuring Chuck Berry and Tommy James, Civil War re-enactment and a parade with 160 units including 11 marching bands, 40 floats, equestrian groups, and antique and classic vehicles.

Sheila Gensler-Everhart, 3042 W. Memorial, is named First Lady of the Sesquicentennial for selling the most tickets to the Bower City Review pageant.

■ **Sept. 3:** Arrested because he hasn't paid a \$68 fine for disorderly conduct, Gordon Benage, 21, Janesville, hangs himself in the city jail. Benage, who was drinking but does not appear intoxicated, commits suicide by hanging himself with his shirt.

■ Harold Partridge, 38, a Janesville GM worker, becomes the 11th person to receive a liver transplant at University Hospital, Madison. The donor is a 23-year-old man who died in a Kentucky motorcycle accident.

■ **Sept. 17:** Art Scholl, an aerobic flier who performed at air shows at the Rock County Airport in 1982 and '83 to raise funds for the Janesville YMCA, dies in a crash over the Pacific Ocean while performing a stunt for the movie "Top Gun." Scholl, a Brown Deer native who took a Gazette reporter with him on a series on daredevil air maneuvers before the '83 air show, also flew aerobatics for the movie "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom."

■ **Sept. 30:** The Janesville City Council postpones indefinitely an ordinance proposed by Councilman Jim McLean that would require

the use of passenger restraints in open trucks such as pickups and flatbeds.

"I didn't believe it would get so complicated," McLean says. "I thought it was so simple that anyone could just buy a piece of rope (to use as a restraint)."

■ **Oct. 3:** Frank Douglas, geography teacher at Craig High School, is Wisconsin's Teacher of the Year for secondary schools.

Douglas is known for his tough final map exams—only six students in 34 years score 100 and earn the coveted all-you-can-eat steak dinners—and his "Living Scholarship" program in which he takes students on summer vacation trips to sites around the world.

■ **Oct. 21:** Seasons, an upscale restaurant, opens where the King's Pub folded, 7 N. Main. Seasons will not last long.

■ **October:** Parker Pen announces it will sell its pen business, the Writing Instrument Group, to a group of London-based investors, including former Parker Pen executives. The company's temporary help subsidiary Manpower continues as a separate enterprise.

The sale will be completed in early 1986, and the Writing Instrument Group will become Parker Pen USA Ltd. The new owners pledge to continue production at the Arrow Park plant in Janesville, but Manpower retains control of and closes corporate headquarters downtown (One Parker Place).

Manpower does not announce plans for the building, but it will be sold to Janesville businessmen Fred Fox, Norm Weitzel and Arthur Donaldson.

■ **Nov. 6:** A Rock County Highway Department dump truck driven by Richard Hatlen, 54, rural Evansville, smashes into a car driven by a Chicago woman at Highway 14 and County A. Hatlen is turning left onto County A but doesn't see the car, he tells deputies.

The woman, Nancy Spanos, 31, is killed instantly. Her father, Myron L. Grover, 62, is in guarded condition at Mercy Hospital.

The county and Hatlen will be sued, and the suit is settled out of court in 1987 for \$550,000, of which the county will pay \$150,000 and its insurance company will pay the remainder.

■ **Nov. 8:** Parker Pen lays off 36 workers, the second wave of layoffs since October when 75 employees—the entire third shift and part of the second at the Arrow Park plant—were let go. The latest layoff reduces the number of production workers at the Janesville pen factory to 180.

■ **Nov. 11:** Rodney Ambrose, 18, of 214 Pease, is killed when the stolen car he is driving hits a freight train at the crossing at State Line and Old Factory roads in Boone County, Ill. Though the accident occurs in Illinois, Ambrose's body, which was thrown from the



car, and the car wind up in Walworth County, Wis.

Ambrose is trying to elude a deputy from Winnebago County, Ill., when he hits the train.

■ **Dec. 12:** David and Denise Snyder, 48 S. Randall, get in the true holiday spirit by returning \$180 they found at Woodman's Super Market to Carol Christopher, a Stoughton woman who lost her Oscar Mayer pay envelope at the grocery the day after Thanksgiving.

The Snyders took out a found ad in the newspaper and were deluged by calls, many from would-be cheats trying to con them out of the cash. But they manage to find Christopher who says the money will go for groceries, bills and a "little set aside for Christmas."

■ **Sometime in 1985:** Rock County farmers milk 24,000 cows, plant 172,000 acres of corn and harvest 62,000 acres of soybeans. In 1970, they had 31,500 dairy cows, 138,000 acres in corn and 26,000 acres in soybeans.

■ Janesville is expanding and upgrading its wastewater treatment plant at a cost of \$16 million.

■ The city and Rock County open a joint sanitary landfill on the south side of Black Bridge Road, across the street from the city's old polluting landfills, which the federal government has ordered remedial action for as part of the Super Fund program.

■ Janesville renovates the first two floors of the Crossroad building (former Janesville Public Library) into a new Senior Center at a cost of \$600,000.

■ In winning the National Water Ski Show Tournament at Traxler Park, the Rock Aqua Jays set a world record with an 18-person, four-level pyramid.

■ Janesville's Tom Klawitter, 27, makes the Opening Day roster of the Major League

Minnesota Twins as a left-handed relief pitcher, but his big league career is cut short when bone chips are discovered in his pitching elbow and he has season-ending surgery in June. Before the operation, "The Klaw" gets a shot to be the Twins' fifth starter, but he lasts only three innings in two outings.

The stats of his short season in the big: nine innings, seven hits, seven earned runs, 13 walks, five strikeouts, earned run average 6.75.

■ Craig's Don Brovik wins the WIAA boys' golf championship.

■ Mary K. Derouin wins the Janesville women's golf tournament for the fourth time.

■ Charlie Fisher of Janesville runs a personal best time of 1 hour, 13 minutes and 6 seconds to win the Janesville Half-Marathon.

■ B.J. Surhoff hits .332, belts seven homers and drives in 58 runs for the Beloit Brewers.

## 1986

■ **Jan. 11:** Two groups have left, and the remainder of Janesville's 120-member Company C of the Wisconsin National Guard's 32nd Infantry is getting ready to ship out to West Germany to participate in NATO war games known as Reforger (Return of Forces to Germany). The Janesville troops will be in Europe for three to five weeks.

■ **Jan. 23:** Steve Raby, an exuberant, life-loving 19-year-old Janesville man well liked by his former teachers, is murdered in a robbery of the liquor store where clerked on Highway 51 just south of Janesville.

About \$150 is stolen.

Within two days, three Janesville men—Jeffrey A. Thompson, 21; Victor L. Green, 22; and Terrance L. Moe, 22—are arrested. In plea bargains, Green and Moe will plead guilty to second-degree murder and testify against Thompson, who pulled the trigger on the shotgun that killed Raby.

Green and Moe both receive 25-year prison sentences.

At his trial, Thompson contends that the shooting was an accident that occurred when, while holding the shotgun on a cooperative Raby, he looked over his shoulder at a car that pulled into the parking lot and the gun discharged.

Thompson initially is sentenced to life for Raby's murder and an additional 30 years for armed robbery. But in 1987, an appeals court orders a new trial because a written summary of an interview Thompson had with probation officers—he was on probation from an earlier armed robbery—was improperly admitted as evidence during his trial.

A Racine County jury finds Thompson guilty of second-degree, not first-degree, murder. Rock County Judge Patrick Rude, upset with the verdict, immediately sentences Thompson to 40 years—20 years for murder, 10 years for being a repeat offender and five years each for committing the murder while armed and for concealing his identity. The original 30-year sentence for armed robbery stands.

Thompson's public defender files a motion for a resentencing, which Rude grants so he can state his reasons for the record. Rude again sentences Thompson to 40 years. Thompson's subsequent appeal is denied. In 1999, Thompson was in an out-of-state prison and eligible for parole in 2003.

While he is in Rock County Jail, Thompson

marries Rebecca Gorski, who promises to wait for him even if he must serve a long prison term. In 1991, she files for divorce, which is granted the next year.

Raby's parents sue Moe and Thompson and receive a settlement of more than \$49,000 from the insurance company that holds Moe's parents' homeowner's policy.

■ **Feb. 14:** Donald A. Domek, 54, a former GM worker from Brodhead, is sentenced to six years in federal prison for his role in dealing drugs, including heroin and cocaine, at the GM plant. Domek pleaded guilty to charges of using a telephone to facilitate the distribution of heroin and conspiracy to distribute cocaine in exchange for dropping the charge of distributing heroin.

■ **Feb. 28:** Truck driver Lee D. Leeder, 50, of 1125 N. Huron, is on his way home from work when he comes on the scene of a Rock County squad car crashed into a pickup truck on Center Avenue and fire flickering in both vehicles.

Deputy Eric Runaas is trapped in the squad car, beating on the driver's window because the doors are jammed shut. Without his emergency lights or siren on, Runaas was pursuing a traffic violator at more than 70 mph, but he ran into the pickup, which was pulling out of a parking lot.

Runaas breaks the glass, and Leeder pulls Runaas to safety. Then Leeder pulls Russell E. Sagar Jr., 21, who has a broken neck, to safety from the burning truck. Fire engulfs both vehicles.

Both Sagar and Runaas are hospitalized. The pickup driver, Jennifer L. Zachow, 18, Afton, is treated and released.

Zachow and Sagar will file suit, claiming Runaas did not even have the squad's headlights on, which he denies. Sagar's case goes to court, and Runaas is found 75 percent negligent and Zachow 25 percent. The county will pay \$13,825 in damages to Sagar, and Zachow and the county settle out of court for \$8,000 in damages.

Leeder will be honored with a citizen's award from the Janesville and Wisconsin professional police associations.

■ **February:** The shortest month turns out to be the one with the most snow of the winter: 15.5 inches.

■ A Protestant chaplaincy program is resurrected for the Rock County Health Care Center with the Rev. Ralph Sandgren conducting the program at the facility and Rock Haven.

■ **March 10:** 110 of Rock County's 502 dairy farmers sign up for a federal program that will buy their herds if they agree to give up dairying for five years. The program is designed to cut national milk production so



Tom Klawitter



that prices will stabilize.

In Rock County, dairy farms account for 38 percent, or \$42 million, of annual cash receipts from farm income. The dairy farmers submit bids for the buyouts, and in Rock County, 30 of the 110 bids will be accepted.

■ **March 20:** The low temperature on the first day of spring is 6 degrees. The month will end with a three-day heat wave of 80-plus temps.

■ **March 31:** Gov. Anthony Earl names Roger Axtell, former Parker Pen vice president, as his personal representative to the business community.

■ **April 2:** The Trax Complex—two bars and a restaurant created from a renovated tobacco warehouse at 120 N. Academy—closes as workers remove fixtures and decorative antiques to be held by MCI Mechanical Contractors in lieu of a \$72,332 judgment against Trax.

Trax will reopen in a few days with enough equipment to operate the first floor bar and grill. But the resurrection is short lived, and in November, The Trax Complex files for liquidation of assets in federal bankruptcy court.

■ **April 4:** Ex-city employee Raymond R. Williams, 56, rural Janesville, pleads guilty to a federal charge of conspiracy stemming from the theft of tires from the city garage and their interstate transportation from Jan. 25, 1983, to Sept. 20, 1985.

The value of the tires stolen ranges from Williams' attorney's estimate of \$26,000 to the city's figure of between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

Williams is sentenced to three years in prison and almost \$29,000 restitution.

Federal prosecutors charged that 221 tires valued at \$41,000 were taken and fenced with the help of Jack C. Lovejoy, a tire dealer in Rockton, Ill. Lovejoy is sentenced to three years in prison, three years' probation, a \$15,000 fine and \$28,000 restitution for convictions of interstate transportation of stolen property and conspiracy.

■ **April 20:** Joggers, walkers and bicyclists raise more than \$15,000 in the 10th annual Janesville/Milton CROP Walk. CROP is an acronym for Christian Response on Poverty, a program to alleviate hunger locally and in developing nations.

■ **May 4:** Special worship services for mentally handicapped people start at Orchard View Alliance Church, 2707 Bond. The brainchild of Betty Engel and Ellen Overson, the program is designed to try to fulfill the spiritual needs of developmentally disabled people with story telling, music, plays, movies, object lessons, sharing and prayer.

■ **May 5:** United Rubber Workers Local 663 votes to accept concessions including a

wage freeze, reduced benefits and a reduction in paid holidays from 13 to 11 to cooperate with Parker Pen USA to make the company profitable and to save their jobs.

■ **June 2:** Jonah R. Harris, 19, of 238 Madison, is sentenced to 60 days in Rock County Jail for disorderly conduct because he burned a cross in the yard of a Janesville black family Aug. 23, 1985. A jury takes 20 minutes to convict Harris.

■ **June 12:** Mothers all over Janesville wash shaving cream from their kids' hair and clothes as the last day of school is marked and marked again with traditional shaving cream fights.

■ **June:** The Rev. Joseph Strange, who helped found St. William Catholic Church in Janesville, retires at age 72 with 46 years in the priesthood.

■ **July 3:** WCLO, Janesville's AM radio station, changes its music format from Top 40 rock 'n' roll to easy-listening popular music such as that of Tom Jones, Connie Francis and Frank Sinatra.

■ **July 5:** David Schliem, 29, Janesville, suffers second and third-degree burns to his face and head in a firecracker accident.

■ **July:** Bert Dyble, a former Parker Pen vice president, and Richard T. Holznecht, former marketing manager for Parker's Panoramic packaging subsidiary, buy Panoramic from Parker Pen USA Ltd. Though Parker Pen remains Panoramic's biggest customer, the new owners seek new customers to expand the business.

■ **Aug. 7:** Erskine Hall, 49, South Beloit, Ill., shoots and kills his ex-wife, Gracie Hall, 40, in her home at 1806 Green Valley, Janesville. Hall returns to South Beloit, where he kills himself with a shot to the head.

The Halls are divorced but are dating in a reconciliation attempt at the time of the murder-suicide. Hall spends the night before the shooting at his ex-wife's home, and he walks their 10-year-old daughter, Nicole, to his car, then goes back inside and kills his wife before driving Nicole to his parents' home.

■ **Sept. 21:** 3,000 GM workers—a turnout described as the "biggest ever" for a contract vote—approve changes in their working agreement to try to convince corporate decision-makers to schedule another product for the Janesville truck line.

Skilled trades workers vote 56.4 percent and assemblers vote 76.1 percent to reduce the number of job classifications from 90 to three, a reduction seen as crucial to greater efficiency

and a new product.

Another experimental change to a four-day, 10 hour a day weekly schedule squeaks by with a 51.6 percent margin from day workers but appeals to 69.3 percent of second-shift workers.

■ **Sept. 26:** City Manager Philip Deaton, who weathered criticism, no raises and an attempted no confidence vote from the city council, leaves Janesville after 10 years to manage Olathe, Kan.

■ **Oct. 1:** President Reagan appoints Alan Tracy, president of Tracy Seeds, Avalon, as his special assistant for agricultural trade and food assistance. Tracy has worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture since 1981 as a deputy secretary for marketing and regulation and as deputy undersecretary for international affairs.

■ **Oct. 12:** John D. Sampson, 19, Madison, falls to his death from his 10th-floor dormitory room at UW-Whitewater. Toxicology tests show his blood alcohol concentration is 0.237, more than twice the legal level of intoxication of 0.10.

■ **Nov. 4:** With no serious opposition, Rep. Les Aspin rides a 74 percent majority to his ninth term.

Republican Tommy Thompson narrowly carries Rock County, 19,359 to 18,905, on his way to ousting Democratic Gov. Anthony Earl.

■ **Nov. 29-30:** Vandals damage 40 properties—mostly windows in vehicles and houses—on Janesville's east and south sides, causing more than \$7,100 damage.

■ **November:** GM announces it will build commercial pickup trucks—crew cab and chassis cab models—on the Janesville truck line for two years with 1,100 workers, 700 fewer than the number who made conventional pickups.

More than 1,250 workers have accepted the company's transfer offer and are moving to Fort Wayne, Ind., to follow production of conventional pickups.

The Janesville plant is hiring workers for the interim commercial pickup assembly. Known as "86ers," the new hires are told their jobs are only temporary.

■ **Dec. 3:** A head-on collision on Highway 26 just north of Janesville kills both drivers: LaVerne H. Downs, 48, Whitewater, and Robert G. Hustad, 49, Fort Atkinson. The van driven by Downs, who might have suffered a heart attack, crosses the center line and hits Hustad's pickup truck.

■ **December:** Janesville's first "Walk-In Messiah" draws hundreds to Trinity Episcopal Church. Sponsoring the event and performing are the Craig and Parker string orchestras.

■ **Sometime in 1986:** Janesville Teamsters Local 579 donates almost three acres at



Rev. Joseph Strange



1112 Burbank for a 50-unit apartment building for senior citizens, which is under construction.

■ The Janesville YWCA receives 3,979 calls on its domestic abuse hot line and shelters 139 women and children from such abuse.

■ The Janesville YMCA is trying to raise \$3.3 million to expand and renovate its facility. By year's end, the Y raises more than \$1.1 million, but the fund drive bogs down, and the Y can only renovate but not expand its building.

■ Mortgage interest rates in Janesville fall back below 10 percent, averaging 9.5 percent at year's end.

■ St. Patrick's Catholic School in Janesville starts offering Spanish in its junior high level grades, and St. Mary School in Janesville adds a pre-kindergarten.

■ Since its start in 1985, Janesville Christian School, 5122 Driftwood, has grown from 36 to 102 students. The school is sponsored by 11 local churches.

■ Janesville Little Theatre offers dinner-theater performances.

■ Parker High, long a power in Big Eight wrestling, produces its first state champ: 132-pound Shane Fleming, who amasses a 33-0 record.

■ Parker senior Jenny Gullickson wins the 50-yard freestyle in a national YMCA swim meet with a time of 23.9 seconds.

■ John Offerdahl, former football standout at Fort Atkinson High now playing linebacker for the Miami Dolphins, is named defensive rookie of the year for the NFL's American Football Conference.

■ Scott Pliner, a Parker senior, wins the Wisconsin Golden Gloves boxing title for 165-pounders.

■ Students at Monroe Elementary School—with the help of many local businesses—transform an undeveloped crescent-shaped 9 acres near the school into Jackman Nature Park complete with limestone walks, 500 trees including a birch grove, a small amphitheater and a gateway.

The park will be lost to the construction of the new Marshall Middle School in 1995-96.

## 1987

■ **Jan. 6:** Ted Scalissi, 2111 Mineral Point, dies at age 65. Scalissi coached football at four schools, including Milton College, and taught physical education and coached for many years at Milton Middle School.

With partner Bob Luchsinger Sr., Scalissi officiated almost 1,000 basketball games in southern Wisconsin over 23 years.

■ **Jan. 12:** Apex Airlines, a division of MST Aviation, Belvidere, Ill., begins flying two daily round-trips from Rock County Airport to

Mitchell Field in Milwaukee. On the first day of service, there are no passengers.

■ **Feb. 12:** GM announces that in 1989 it will start making its new generation of medium-duty trucks on the second line at its Janesville plant, which makes conventional pickup trucks and soon will make commercial pickups as a temporary product until 1989.

The initial announcement is that 1,800 people—the same number who make standard pickups—will make the medium-duty trucks on two shifts. But the second shift will not materialize.

The last of 1,250 Janesville autoworkers will transfer to Fort Wayne, Ind., in the spring to follow assembly of standard pickup trucks.

Janesville plant management and UAW Local 95 set their sights on the perennial good-seller Suburban, a full-size sport utility vehicle, to replace production of subcompact J-cars on the car line. While the J-cars Chevrolet Cavalier, Pontiac 2000 and Buick Skyhawk are selling well, GM soon will drop Cadillac Cimarron and Oldsmobile Firenza because of poor sales.

The change from conventional to commercial pickups on the truck line and a cut in production on the car line cost the plant about 800 jobs before the end of the year.

Some 350 new workers hired to replace transferees to Indiana are laid off, and Local 95 manages to have 440 workers placed in Jobs Bank, a new employment security program that puts laid-off workers in non traditional jobs or training.

At year's end, the plant employs 5,600 people, 1,500 fewer people than the plant's peak employment of 7,100 in 1980.

■ **Feb. 18:** The Trax Complex burns in an

arson fire. The loss is \$225,000.

Discovered at 4:30 a.m., the fire rages throughout the day and into the night because the old tobacco warehouse-turned-bar has brick exterior walls and interior cinderblock fire walls that contain and concentrate the fire on the 86-year-old building's wood-filled interior.

Firefighters, 10 of whom receive minor injuries, are content to let the blaze burn.

At 9 p.m., two cranes are brought in to knock the walls of the burning building into its center.

Spectators fill the municipal parking lot across Centerway from Trax, create traffic jams on Centerway and Center Avenue and watch the building burn from as far away as hilltops in Milton.

The business and its principal owner, Don Emerson of Janesville, have hundreds of thousands of dollars of liens placed against them but no fire insurance. Building owners Gil Sedor and Ken Hendricks, both of Janesville, have \$200,000 insurance on the building and file a foreclosure motion against the business the day before the fire. They are trying to sell the building when it burns.

Many of the antiques already removed from the building, including a Wurlitzer juke box and a system of fans driven by a single belt, will be auctioned off.

Though the fire was determined to be arson—two fires are set in the building and ventilation holes reportedly are drilled to make sure the fires had enough air—and a \$6,000 reward is offered, the Trax fire and who set it remained a mystery in 1999.

■ **Feb. 28:** Kathy Edwards, 27, finds a wallet containing \$1,453 cash on Hamilton Street



The Trax Complex burned on Feb. 18, 1987. The former tobacco warehouse turned restaurant and bars was ablaze due to arson. The construction of the huge building—a brick exterior and cinderblock firewalls—made fighting the fire nearly impossible, so firefighters let it burn. The fire could be seen miles away and many residents drove past the fire on Centerway to gawk.





**Firefighters battled a blaze at the Creston Park Shopping Center on Nov. 29, 1987. The fire completely destroyed six stores in the mall and damaged 14 others, forcing the shops to close during the busy holiday season. The shopping center reopened on March 12, 1988.**

in Janesville. The wallet also contains the name of its owner, Timothy G. Wilson, 1418 Hamilton, who gives the honest Edwards a \$30 reward for returning his possessions.

■ **March 2:** Emmanuele Palazzolo, a Milton pizzeria owner, is one of 18 men convicted in the "Pizza Connection" drug case that involved the Mafia's smuggling heroin into the United States, distributing the drug through pizza parlors around the country and laundering millions of dollars back to Europe.

■ **April 11:** The Jones family—mother Yvonne, children Tom Jr. and Barb—announce that they will close Franklin Lanes, 18 N. Franklin (no longer standing), when the bowling season ends later in the month.

Opened Nov. 4, 1926, as Franklin Gardens, the building served as a theater, a night club and dance hall, where the Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman bands performed; auditorium for car shows, wrestling matches and prize fights, including a promotional appearance as a corner man on Nov. 4, 1935, by up-and-coming heavyweight Joe Louis; roller skating rink and bowling alley.

■ **May 1:** A fire at the home of Janesville contractor William "Concrete Bill" Ryan, 2306 Laurel, asphyxiates Ryan's son Rex Patrick Ryan, 37.

The younger Ryan is trapped in the basement, where the fire starts when he apparently falls asleep while smoking. The elder Ryan is hospitalized and suffers long-term effects from smoke inhalation.

An annual memorial golf tournament named for Rex Ryan will be established to raise money for college scholarships for one Parker and one Craig graduate each year.

■ **David A. Schindler, 35, of 14 S. River St.,**

is found guilty of the second-degree murder of his infant daughter, Marie, 3 months, who was found dead in her crib Nov. 14, 1986.

She died because of a blood clot caused by a skull fracture, and the condition of her body reveals she was abused and neglected most of her short life.

Schindler will be sentenced to the maximum 20 years in prison by Judge J. Richard Long, who calls the murder "the most vicious and heinous crime that I have seen in the 30 years I have been a judge and an attorney."

In 1999, Schindler was in prison with a possible release date in 2000.

■ **Henry L. Hardnett, 11 months old,** crawls out the kitchen door of a second-floor apartment on Jackson Street in downtown Janesville and falls off the fire escape. Lucky for Henry, he hooks his clothes on a nail and is spotted by Wisconsin Bell lineman James D. Breit, 1105 Wuthering Hills, who rescues the kicking baby.

■ **May 3:** Steve Sheiffer, former manager of Concord, Mass., becomes Janesville's eighth city manager. His annual salary is \$63,500.

■ **May 9:** David Timplin Jr., 8, of 459 N. Washington, is found unconscious and burned in his burning, smoke-filled apartment and is rescued by firefighter David Peterson and revived by firefighter Kevin Murray.

His father, David Sr., suffers severe burns, and father and son are hospitalized in critical condition. A daughter, Jessie, 5, is hospitalized because of smoke inhalation.

■ **May 25:** Stan Fox, 35, Janesville, drives a car owned by A.J. Foyt to a seventh-place finish in the Indianapolis 500.

■ **June 10:** Mirrors sway, plant leaves

shake, furniture trembles, pictures rattle and walls quiver as a "gentle rock" from an earthquake in southeastern Illinois is felt in southern Wisconsin and 15 other states. The quake measures 5.0 on the Richter scale.

■ **July 8:** Two residents of Janesville's Old Fourth Ward use the word "ghetto" to describe their deteriorating neighborhood at a meeting of neighbors and city officials, and the Gazette uses the word in a banner headline the next day in a story on the meeting and neighbors' concerns.

The neighbors are concerned about dilapidated housing, neglectful absentee landlords, squalor, garbage, drug trafficking, speeding traffic, thefts, robberies, rowdiness, violence and twice as many police calls as in 1986.

The headline angers many, but the attention and publicity help spur government and neighborhood action—in the form of dedicated police patrols, programs to improve housing and provide summer jobs for teens and a neighborhood potluck picnic.

■ **July 29:** An intense thunderstorm that packs severe winds peaking at 103 mph smashes five airplanes and damages two buildings at the Rock County Airport. It also closes the Rock County 4-H Fair early but not before country star Loretta Lynn gets in one of two planned shows.

Lynn sings through the cloudburst, at one point exhorting her band: "Let's keep going until someone gets killed."

■ **James Harlan, 56, Beloit,** is cutting grass on a large tractor behind the Oasis on Milton Avenue when a bank caves in and tips the tractor into a pond.

Harlan is trapped underwater. But Duane Demrow, a 22-year-old dishwasher at the nearby Hoffman House restaurant, hears a co-worker call 911 for the accident, rushes to the pond, dives in and holds Harlan's face above water. Demrow, 312 E. Memorial, gives mouth-to-mouth resuscitation until firefighters take over and tow the tractor off Harlan, who will be hospitalized in serious condition.

■ **July 30:** At 11:58 p.m., the Janesville GM plant finishes making its last conventional pickup truck and begins changing over for production of commercial pickups, which starts Sept. 10.

LuAnne Dooman of Janesville wins the last pickup, a fully loaded, four-wheel-drive model, in a Local 95 raffle.

■ **Aug. 2:** Maximum-security prisoners move from the old Rock County Jail on Water Street in downtown Janesville to the new jail at Highways 51 and 14 north of the city.

The move completes the transition of the jail and sheriff's department to the 78,000 square foot, \$11.2 million facility.



**Stan Fox**



■ **Sept. 15-16:** Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band are in Janesville for the wedding of the band's organ player, Danny Federici, to Kathryn Helmeid of Janesville.



The couple, Springsteen and other band members hope to keep their presence in Janesville quiet, but it's hopeless, and much of Janesville turns into celebrity gawkers.

**Bruce Springsteen** Kellogg Avenue outside Asbury United Methodist Church, where the wedding is, and onlookers are disappointed that Springsteen ignores them walking into and out of the church.

Big Twist and the Mellow Fellows start the entertainment at the reception at KANDU Industries, but Springsteen and the E Street Band—minus saxophonist Clarence Clemons, who is recuperating from eye surgery—finish it with a rousing rock 'n' roll set.

The local folks who meet Springsteen describe him as a regular—albeit tanned, muscular and good-looking—guy.

■ **Oct. 17:** Dorothy M. Patterson, 79, is raped and beaten in her Milton home. She dies from her severe injuries a week later, and making the crime more horrible is that her grandson, Thomas R. Hankey, 38, is the man who assaulted and murdered her.

At the hospital, a nurse asks Patterson who assaulted her, and she replies: "I can't say it because it hurts too much. My grandson did it," according to testimony in the case.

Dorothy's husband, Carl, 85, is hospitalized with a stroke when the assault occurs, and he dies the same day his wife does.

Hankey is arrested in Illinois and fights his extradition to Wisconsin for 14 months.

Before his trial in 1990, Hankey changes his plea from not guilty by reason of insanity to guilty in a plea bargain that drops some charges. He is sentenced to life plus 20 years for first-degree murder and first-degree sexual assault.

While still incarcerated, Hankey dies Aug. 31, 1999, in University Hospital, apparently of natural causes.

■ **October:** The month is the coldest October on record for Janesville as the monthly mean temperature of 44.2 degrees is 9 degrees below average.

■ **Nov. 16:** A twin-engine airplane crashes about four miles northwest of Fort Atkinson onto Tom Beane's farm, and all eight people aboard are killed.

The victims include businessmen from Illinois and Connecticut who are flying from Chicago to Baraboo to tour a printing plant.

■ **Nov. 29:** Fire starts in a storeroom at the Young Folks Shop & Carriage House and is fed by paint in the Sherwin-Williams Paint Store, and before the raging blaze is checked three hours later, it destroys four other stores—Budget Printing, Hamlin Jewelers, Big Ed's Sew 'N' Vac and Lisa's Style Shop—in the Creston Park Shopping Center.

Fourteen other stores sustain smoke and/or heat damage in the afternoon fire. Holiday shoppers and store workers must evacuate the mall.

Two firefighters receive minor injuries, but David Olson, 14, of 704 E. Milwaukee, is hospitalized in serious condition because of an asthma attack he suffers in the parking lot after he rides his bike to the inferno scene. It is believed that heavy smoke and excitement triggered the attack.

The loss eventually is estimated at \$1.8 million, which is reported as the city's greatest fire loss, but other fires' losses are not adjusted for inflation. The fires that ripped through businesses on the Milwaukee Street Bridge in 1913 and 1942, for example, each caused more than \$4.2 million damage when adjusted to 1999 dollars. When adjusted to 1999 values, the Creston Park fire caused \$2.36 million damage.

By late summer 1988, every returning merchant will be back in business, but restoration of Creston Park Shopping Center will take nearly a year. Some of the damaged businesses relocate, and Hamlin Jewelers goes out of business.

■ **Dec. 14-15:** A blizzard blasts Janesville and southern Wisconsin with 12 inches of snow—the record single snowfall to this date—constant winds of more than 50 mph, gusts up to 73 mph, lightning and thunder.

All county roads are officially closed as plow crews and deputies cannot see in white-outs and are overwhelmed by drifts. Firefighters struggle to get to fires in Milton, Orfordville, Footville and Brodhead that are caused by the freakish lightning. Trees topple and tangle power lines, scattering outages around the area.

Schools, businesses and industries close. Mail is delayed. Court proceedings are postponed.

Two men—Charles Duxstad, 71, Clinton, and William Trezona, 83, Beloit—suffer fatal heart attacks while shoveling the heavy, wet snow.

■ **Sometime in 1987:** The question of where to put Janesville's new post office—on Milton Avenue in the old Woodman's Super Market or downtown as it has been—splits the community with City Manager Sheiffer, Rep.

Aspin and downtown business people on the side of downtown and City Councilman Lew Mittness and others supporting Milton Avenue.

The post office will be on Milton Avenue with a part-time postal substation established downtown.

■ Blackhawk Technical Institute becomes Blackhawk Technical College and adds a building that houses most of the programs previously located in its old Beloit campus.

■ Parker senior Todd Alderman is state champion in the vault in boys' gymnastics.

■ Mike Lexa, former baseball star at Parker and Indiana State University, plays for the Minnesota Twins Class A minor-league franchise in Kenosha.

■ Jeff Bruegger repeats as Janesville city men's golf champ.

■ Greg Vaughn, a 22-year-old outfielder, bats .305, belts 33 homers and knocks in 120 runs to lead the Beloit Brewers (Snappers) to the title of the Class A Midwest League Central Division.

■ Juan Nieves, a former Beloit Brewer, pitches the first no-hitter in the history of the parent club, the Milwaukee Brewers.

## 1988

■ **Jan. 1:** An early morning house fire causes triple tragedy for the Hasley family of rural Orfordville. Smoke inhalation kills George Hasley, 63; his son, Clark, 27, and grandson, Matthew, 3.

Managing to escape the blaze in the two-apartment farmhouse on Spring Valley Road are the men's wives, Margaret, 59, and Zondra, 23, and a second grandchild, 1-year-old Allen.

The fire appears to have started in a back kitchen, where a wood-burning stove might have had a defective chimney.

■ **Jan. 3:** The Janesville Gazette publishes a Sunday paper, a first for the newspaper.

■ **Feb. 14:** Band-O-Rama, featuring 900 student musicians in 10 bands from Janesville's elementary, middle and high schools, draws a capacity Valentine's Day crowd to the Parker High gym.

■ **March 1:** The state reports that six cases of AIDS, resulting in five deaths, have been reported in Rock County since 1982.

Total number of AIDS cases in Wisconsin is reported as 268, of which 168 resulted in death. The entire United States has 54,233 reported AIDS cases and 30,355 reported AIDS deaths.

■ **March 31:** Seeking victory in the Wisconsin Democratic presidential primary, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis brings his campaign to Beloit, where he shakes hands at the Beloit Corp. gate and takes questions from Beloit College students.

Dukakis says he wants to build the United



States' economic future with good jobs and better wages, and he pledges special emphasis on redeveloping the Midwest's Rust Belt.

■ **April 2:** Presidential politics continue to simmer in Rock County as Democratic candidate Al Gore Jr., a senator from Tennessee, comes to Playmore Bowl in Janesville.

Gore maintains that he is the only Democratic candidate with national and international governmental experience and says the Palestine Liberation Organization must recognize Israel before the two sides, engaged in another round of bloody violence, can negotiate any kind of peace.

At Playmore, the future vice president of the United States rolls a 136.

■ **April 4:** Speaking in Janesville on the 20th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. is one of the men to first reach the wounded civil rights leader.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson is seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, and he tells a crowd of 2,000 at the Rock County 4-H Fairgrounds that King left the nation "with a challenge, an unfinished business that we must address today. Our challenge today is to find economic common ground, to forget about race, sex and religious lines. ..."

"We the people, the farmers, the workers, the black, the white, we can rise together. We are one people."

■ **April 5:** Dukakis wins the Wisconsin Democratic primary with 47 percent of the vote with Jackson second and Gore third. The results are reflected in local balloting as Dukakis takes Janesville and Rock County with 4,961 and 12,218 votes respectively.

Jackson garners 2,205 city votes and 5,855 county votes while Gore polls 1,728 in the city and 4,349 in the county.

Vice President George Bush is running essentially unopposed on the Republican side and winds up with 7,085 votes in Rock County to TV evangelist Pat Robertson's 805.

■ **April 30:** Zane and Zachary Bradley, 2½-year-old twins, scamper around fire trucks at Janesville's central fire station on Milton Avenue. Not bad for a pair who on March 25 suffered severe carbon monoxide poisoning and first- and second-degree burns in a fire at their home at 715 W. Van Buren.

Authorities determined the fire started when one of the twins heated batteries in a microwave oven. Firefighter Kevin Murray rescued the boys from their burning house.

The twins' mother, Terri Bale, 23, cannot

come to the fire station because she is still recuperating from a fractured pelvis and broken heel she suffered jumping from the second floor during the blaze.

■ **May 3:** To protest possible, but not probable, layoffs of 88 teachers, about 250 Craig students leave high school in the morning and march a mile to the Educational Services Center, the district's headquarters, and occupy the parking lot. They are suspended for a day for "unlawful assembly."

One of the reasons for the public protest, students say, is that Principal Richard Jorgensen reneged on a student assembly at which he was going to explain the reasons for the layoff notices: uncertainty about state school aid and a requirement that teachers facing layoff be notified by May 1.

At Parker, where the protest idea started with a student petition, Principal William Reis has been meeting with students to explain the situation, and he urges teachers to do likewise. Nevertheless, 60 to 75 Parker students leave the school, and most go to Riverside Park where they meet Craig students who left the Educational Services Center.

The next day, 16 students leave Edison Middle School and walk more than three miles to the Gazette to express their concern about the possible layoffs.

Many Parker students along with teachers and parents from throughout the district take their concerns to the next school board meeting.

■ **May 8:** Julie L. Mittness, 29, daughter of Janesville City Councilman Lew Mittness, is killed in rural Albany when the motorcycle on which she is riding is side-swiped by a car. The cycle driver, Andrew J. Buol, 24, Janesville, is in fair condition with severe leg injuries.

The car driver, an Albany man, is arrested on a charge of homicide by intoxicated use of a motor vehicle.

■ **June 27:** Patty (Wickhem) Amundson, a vice president at Valley (M&I) Bank, becomes the first woman inducted into a Janesville Rotary Club when she joins the Noon Rotary.

■ **June 28-29:** Almost 2 inches of rain falls in downtown Janesville from Tuesday evening to Wednesday morning, the first measurable rainfall in 50 days, since 0.89 of an inch fell overnight May 8-9.

The dry conditions force many communities to cancel or postpone Fourth of July fireworks displays, but Janesville's pyrotechnical demonstration goes on.

■ **June:** Glen Oaks School, a school for handicapped and developmentally disabled children, closes, and in the fall, its 27 students

will transfer to Parker High, Franklin Middle School and two elementary schools, Jackson and Lincoln.

■ **July:** Wait long enough and every style will come back into fashion: Women's skirts are back above the knee, though they are simply called short, rather than mini, because the word mini implies the ultra-short micro-minis of the late '60s and early '70s.

Plaid also is back in style, especially for the again-fashionable women's pedalpushers. Women's blouses typically are classic cotton tops ranging from sleeveless to baggy three-quarter sleeves.

Fashionable men wear suits in a crisp European style with clean lines, narrow lapels, natural shoulders and straight cuffless trousers. But what most guys—and many women—wear most of the time are jeans or khakis, T-shirts or golf shirts and baseball caps.

■ **Aug. 10:** On a 5-3 vote, the Janesville School Board approves a comprehensive sex education curriculum that begins in kindergarten and extends through 12th grade. While the district previously taught elements of sex education in science and health classes starting in junior high, it had no comprehensive curriculum.

The board's vote ends two years of research, discussion and debate by a districtwide committee of educators, students, parents, clergy and health-care professionals. The topic sparks controversy as many adults don't think schools should teach about sexuality or enter into teaching moral values, which they believe are strictly parental roles.

■ **Aug. 12:** Police raid Simply Alluring, a lingerie modeling business at 14 S. Jackson (Ink Dermagraphics), and arrest four women and one man on prostitution charges. Two of the women also are arrested on drug charges, and two more women will be charged with prostitution before the investigation is over.

Also charged because of the investigation by the Rock County Metro Unit is ex-Janesville police officer Jeffrey D. Gustafson, 30, who resigns after being placed on administrative leave after the women are arrested and his name surfaces in the probe.

Gustafson, a nine-year cop, is charged with misconduct in public office, patronizing prostitutes and falsely acting as a police officer because he allegedly asked for and accepted oral sex in exchange for not ticketing one of the lingerie models for driving on a revoked license and paid another woman at Simply Alluring for oral sex.

In a plea deal, Gustafson will enter a special plea in which he does not admit guilt but concedes that the state has enough evidence that a jury might find him guilty. The felony charge of



Michael Dukakis



## Gang rape, beating only start of sordid saga

The night before the Janesville couple's 27th wedding anniversary was supposed to be romantic, enjoyable, perhaps exciting.

Instead the night of November 10, 1988, turned into a nightmare of vicious violence and brutal rape. Before the savage ordeal was over, the 45-year-old woman had been raped repeatedly and roughed up by a gang of five teenagers, and she had to watch as the youths beat and kicked her 50-year-old husband to within an inch of his life.

Five teenagers were arrested and charged in the crimes: Anthony Merriweather, 18; Deirick D. Connor, 18; Stanley Peacock, 19; Craig Clifton, 19; and Tyree D. McAtee, 17.

Connor was from South Beloit, Ill. The others lived in Beloit. McAtee was waived into adult court. All were charged with first-degree sexual assault—some with several counts—and aggravated battery.

The assailants were black; the couple white. Race—and the couple's sexual life-style—became issues.

In interviews after the attack, the husband said he thought he and his wife were attacked because they were white people in a black neighborhood. The wife said they were attacked because the opportunity presented itself, but "the severity of the attack was because we were white."

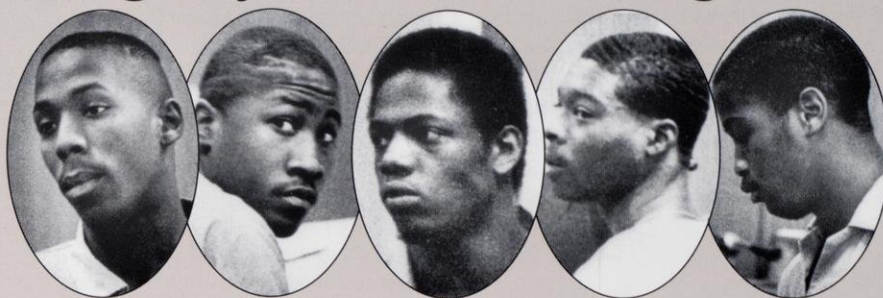
Police found no evidence of a racial motive and said they thought the teens attacked the couple because they presented an opportunity for violence as strangers in the Merrill neighborhood.

African-American community leaders deplored the assaults. While race might have motivated the "criminal segment" who attacked the couple, racism was not inherent in the black community, said the Rev. Floyd Prude, president of the Greater Beloit Minority Coalition.

Eight days after the gang rape and beating, the Wisconsin State Journal quoted unnamed sources who claimed the woman provoked the attack by lifting her miniskirt and revealing to the teens that she wore no panties.

The woman vehemently denied that she exposed herself or in any way invited the assault. A medical condition precluded her wearing underpants, the woman maintained.

Defense attorneys investigated the couple's sexual history, trying to dig up information that they were "swingers" who enjoyed inter-racial, group sex. The defense lawyers filed motions trying to make the couple's private life part of the case. But Judge Edwin



**From Left: Stanley Peacock, Anthony Merriweather, Deirick Connor, Craig Clifton and Tyree McAtee**

Dahlberg cited Wisconsin's rape shield law in ordering the motions sealed and prohibiting the lawyers from talking about the couple's sexual history.

Because one of the original defense attorneys joined the Rock County District Attorney's Office, special prosecutors from the Wisconsin Attorney General's Office handled the case. A jury from Racine County would be chosen because of all the publicity the case generated.

A week before the trial started, Peacock, McAtee and Connor pleaded guilty in deals arranged with the prosecution. Peacock and Connor admitted they sexually assaulted the woman and beat her husband. McAtee admitted he aided the sexual assaults and aggravated battery.

The three pleaded guilty to all charges. The prosecution agreed to argue for "substantial" but not maximum sentences.

At Merriweather and Clifton's trial, prosecutor's statements and testimony from the couple painted the following picture:

The couple went to Illinois to buy lottery tickets, stopped in Beloit for gas but got lost and found themselves in the neighborhood of Mr. D's, a notorious Beloit lounge. But the couple had had fun there the week before while interviewing a prospective employee and decided to stop for a drink.

Instead, they found the door locked, and they were confronted by a large group of young black men, who taunted them and "grabbed, pawed and mauled (the woman) inside and outside her clothing."

The woman said she was raped three times on the stairs to Mr. D's. The young toughs beat the husband to the ground and dragged the woman to a stairwell in an apartment house two blocks away.

There, they again repeatedly assaulted her sexually. When her husband, who ran through the neighborhood banging on doors and yelling for help in vain, tried to intervene, the thugs

savagely beat him—Merriweather using a pipe—and kicked him senseless.

The gang kicked her husband "just like they were playing football," the woman testified. "I saw these guys running up and kicking him in the face. ... He would moan every time they would kick him. They were saying 'die, die, die.'"

Then, two of the group raped her again. In all, the woman said, she was raped or otherwise sexually assaulted 13 times.

The defense tried to draw another picture.

Defense attorneys' statements and defense witnesses' testimony was that the couple went to Mr. D's looking for sex with young black men and that the woman was hugging, kissing and walking with teens "like two lovebirds on a stroll."

The couple went willingly to the house, the defense contended, and the woman consented to sex with two of the teens. But when the husband said, "That's enough," he was attacked, and the woman was forced into more sex with those "who didn't get their turn on the stairs," defense attorney Walter Isaacson said.

The jury deliberated for 4½ hours before finding Merriweather guilty on three of four charges of first-degree sexual assault and one count of aggravated battery while armed. Clifton was convicted of one count each of first-degree sexual assault and aggravated battery.

Merriweather was sentenced to 75 years in prison. He will be eligible for parole in 2008.

Clifton was sentenced to 30 years. Connor and McAtee received 20-year sentences. All three were eligible for parole in 2000.

Peacock was sentenced to 10 years in prison and eight years of probation. He was paroled in May 1999 and returned to Beloit.

The couple charged that their lives were forever damaged not just by the horrible attacks on them but by insensitive, sensational media coverage.



misconduct in office is dropped, and Gustafson receives one year of probation and a \$1,000 fine for the two misdemeanors.

■ **Summer:** Hot and dry are the keywords of the season: Eight days of high temperatures of 100 or above—three times in June, once in July and four times in August, including readings of 102 on June 25 and Aug. 1. Forty-five days of 90 or above temps.

The drought stunts the corn crop and reduces the alfalfa crop by a third to a half, so forage for Rock County dairy cows is in tight supply.

■ **Sept. 20-22:** The Metcalf family—husband and wife Tom and Sandy; Tom's brothers, Terry and Mark, and children Tom Jr., Kelly and Kevin—host Wisconsin Farm Progress Days and 100,000 visitors on the family farm of 3,000 acres just east of Janesville on County MM.

The Metcalfs operate a diversified farm including a 150-head dairy herd of Holsteins, a dairy beef enterprise, 2,000 acres of corn, 500 acres of soybeans and 500 acres of specialty vegetables for canning and food-processing.

Farm Progress Days features many demonstrations including some not usually associated with day-to-day farm: sheep herding with dogs, dressage riding and dog obedience. Fashion shows, bands, youth activities, humorous and spiritual presentations also are part of the massive event.

In a summer of extreme drought and heat, Farm Progress Days gets off to an ironic start in fields turned to seas of mud by thunderstorms that roll through the area and under cool, gray skies that deliver more rain.

■ **Sept. 21:** Mary Lou Marhee, 48, of 2123 Pioneer, tries to escape her burning house but is found dead, apparently overcome by smoke and heat, just inside the front door.

Two dogs also die, but firefighters save three guinea pigs. Damage is \$50,000; cause is undetermined.

■ **Oct. 22:** The World War II-era battleship USS Wisconsin is recommissioned for active sea duty.

Area sailors serving aboard it are Doug D. Sessler and Gregory J. Wuttke, both of Milton; James D. Chamberlin, Beloit; James R. Hunt, Edgerton; Frederick W. Catron, Fort Atkinson; Scott B. Repinski, Sharon, and Laverne W.R. Jones, Walworth.

Participating in the recommissioning ceremonies are three sophomores from Craig High: Jeff Koehn, Scott Loveland and Jim Sandvig, all U.S. Navy Sea Cadets.

■ **Nov. 5:** Noted sex therapist Dr. Ruth Westheimer tells a packed auditorium at UW-Whitewater that most sexual "difficulties stem from the inability to communicate."

■ **Nov. 8:** Janesville and Rock County buck the national trend and local voting tradition by backing Democrat Michael Dukakis over Republican George Bush, but Bush nevertheless is elected president by carrying 40 states.

Janesville votes 691 to 409 for Dukakis, and he carries the county 29,673 to 27,860.

Rep. Les Aspin cruises—76.2 percent of the total vote, 76.8 percent of the Rock County vote—to his 10th term, and Milwaukee Bucks owner Herb Kohl, a Democrat, carries both Janesville and Rock County as he is elected U.S. senator.

■ Jo Lenard of Williams Bay is inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, N.Y., as one of 300 young women who played for the All American Girls Professional Baseball League—the league that started in World War II when Major League Baseball was in the doldrums because most good players were in military service.

The AAGPBL was made famous in the movie, "A League of Their Own."

Lenard, a Chicago native, was a star left-fielder for the Rockford (Ill.) Peaches.

■ **Dec. 15:** Mercy Hospital shows off its new eight-bed psychiatric unit in an open house. The unit is open, not locked, and geared toward short-term treatment.

■ **Sometime in 1988:** Janesville Little Theater turns 59 years old and earns the distinction of being the "longest continuously operating community theater in the United States."

■ The GM plant increases assembly rates on both the J-car line and commercial pickup line and recalls 350 laid-off workers. A handful decline.

The number of people in the Jobs Bank employment security program also drops from 439 to 83.

■ Gazette Printing Co. (Bliss Communications) sells two radio stations in Rice Lake and Huron, S.D., and buys the Monroe Evening Times. Sidney "Skip" Bliss becomes president of Gazette Printing, and David A. Johnson is promoted to general manager of The Janesville Gazette.

■ Gilman Engineering & Manufacturing expands and calls back laid-off workers largely because of designing and building tools for GM's Saturn plant in Tennessee.

■ The car driven by Stan Fox of Janesville breaks down on Lap 1 of the Indianapolis 500, but because a crash even earlier on the first lap takes three cars out of the 33-car field, Fox is credited with finishing 30th.



Bob Suter

■ The Craig Cougars make the WIAA basketball tournament and make Coach Bob Suter the first coach in Wisconsin to have teams in basketball, baseball and football qualify for championship tournament play. Under Suter, the Craig baseball team finishes the regular season with a 15-0 record, the first perfect regular baseball season in Janesville high school history, but Craig falls to crosstown rival

Parker, 12-6, in the tourney opener.

■ Lynn Klipstine of Parker is state girls' Class A discus champ.

■ Jeff Bruegger wins his third straight city men's golf championship, and Holly Nehs, a June graduate of Parker, repeats as women's golf champ of Janesville.

■ Local horseshoe pitchers Sid Anderson, Dan Bloom, Bun Carley and Bob Runaas combine to win the state title.

■ Steve Stricker of Edgerton wins the Big Ten golf title for University of Illinois and All-America honors.

■ Janesville's unemployment rate drops to 3.8 percent.

## 1989

■ **Jan. 8:** Prices for portable, cellular telephones in Janesville range from \$1,200 to \$1,500, and two local dealers say they sell between 80 and 150 cell phones a year. Car cell phones require installation; other cell phones are in bulky bags. The only providers of cellular service in the Janesville area are Ameritech and a new company, Cellular One.

■ **Jan. 20:** Sister Mary Michael Berry announces her retirement as administrator of Mercy Hospital, a position she has held for 25 years. In July, the hospital's board of directors will choose a new chief executive officer, Javon Bea, formerly chief operations officer for Providence Hospital, Southfield, Mich.

He is the hospital's first lay administrator since 1907, when the Sisters of Mercy bought the Palmer Memorial Hospital. Bea starts work in October.

■ **Feb. 13:** Gov. Tommy Thompson jumps the gun on a planned GM announcement slated for the next day and reveals that the automaker has picked its Janesville plant as the assembly site for its next generation of full-size sport utility vehicles: Chevrolet and GMC Suburbans, Chevy Blazers (Tahoes) and GMC Jimmys (Yukons).

The SUVs will supplant production of small J-cars, chiefly Chevrolet Cavaliers, whose mar-



Javon Bea



## Four murder cases from '80s fool authorities, remain unsolved

**T**he decade of the 1980s left four unsolved murders on police books in southern Wisconsin. The crimes were:

■ **Aug. 9, 1980:** Timothy Hack and Kelly Drew, both 19, disappeared from a wedding dance at the Concord House in eastern Jefferson County.

Before Drew, who was from Hebron, and Hack, who was from Fort Atkinson, left the dance, Drew told friends that she and Hack would meet them later in Fort Atkinson.

The two never arrived.

The disappearance set off the biggest search in Jefferson County history. Private airplanes and helicopters from Milwaukee television stations scoured the area in the days after the two vanished.

As the weeks dragged on, authorities asked farmers and hunters to be alert for clues to the teens' whereabouts.

Ten weeks after they vanished, the couple's bodies were found eight miles northwest of Concord. An autopsy failed to reveal causes of deaths.

Ten years after the murders, Keith Mueller, who then was Jefferson County sheriff, said: "The only way this thing will be solved

now is for someone who participated in the killings, or who knows who did them, to break down and confess."

■ **Aug. 5, 1982:** Barbara J. Nelson, 34, of 300 N. Main, Edgerton, was abducted from the Mini Stop and Shop in Albion where she worked as a clerk. About \$355 also was missing from the store.

Five days later, Nelson's body was found at the edge of a cornfield along Bray Road east of Elkhorn. She had been shot at least twice with a .25-caliber gun. Nelson was bound with duct tape, and she had been badly beaten.

A motorist who may have seen Nelson trying to get away from her captors along Bray Road gave authorities a description of two men. They were driving an older model dark blue pickup truck, the witness said.

Police sketches of the men believed involved were circulated and spurred three dozen calls to police. None resulted in an arrest.

■ **June 5, 1988:** Virginia Bothum Hendrickson's stabbed and slashed body was found in her home north of the Rock County Airport at 1112 N. Nilans.

Hendrickson, 23, had been stabbed more than 40 times, and her throat was slashed from ear to ear, nearly decapitating her. Her 1-year-old daughter was found crying but unharmed in her crib upstairs.

Blood stains were found on the sidewalk outside Hendrickson's residence, leading investigators to speculate that she escaped her killer only to be caught and dragged back into the house.

Hendrickson's estranged boyfriend took a lie detector tests in the weeks after the killing, but the results were inconclusive.

Another Janesville man reportedly confessed to the killing, but police concluded the confession was false.

■ **Jan. 7, 1989:** James H. Elliott, 35, Janesville, was found shot to death in a pickup truck on Beloit's east side.

A bullet from a .38-caliber or 9mm pistol struck Elliott in the right temple.

A secret John Doe investigation conducted in the months after the killing was believed to be linked to the murder investigation, but no arrests ever resulted.

—Sid Schwartz

ket segment is fiercely competitive and already cost GM two of five J-car makes, the Cadillac Cimarron and Oldsmobile Firenzas. The automaker soon will discontinue the Buick Skyhawk. One of three J-car plants—Leeds, Mo.—has closed.

The last J-car is scheduled to be made in November 1990, when the line is to be retooled for SUV assembly, which is scheduled to start with pilot models in March 1991. The formal GM announcement says the number of workers on the line will drop from 3,800 to 3,300 with job losses covered by normal attrition such as retirements or deaths.

■ **February:** Photographs by Gary Porter are on display at UW-Rock County's art gallery. Porter, a former Gazette photographer working for the Milwaukee Journal (Journal Sentinel) is exhibiting some of the pictures he took in 1987 in India, Nepal and Bangladesh for the Journal's series "Empty Cradles: The Global Tragedy of Child Mortality."

Porter's work won him the Overseas Press Club's newspaper photography award for 1987. A recipient in another category that year was Barbara Walters.

■ **March 14:** The Janesville School Board

bans the use of tobacco in district buildings, vehicles or on school property. Pushed by board member Jeff Thomas, a doctor, the ban will take effect with the new school year in September.

■ **March:** Production of commercial pickup trucks ends at the GM plant, and the line starts retooling for assembly of medium-duty trucks, which starts in August. But medium-duty truck production, originally announced as involving 1,800 jobs, actually will take 1,200 to 1,400 people—if two shifts are working.

The second shift never develops, and what was a line providing work for 1,800 people becomes an operation providing 800 jobs.

■ **April 13:** Janesville Fire Chief Arthur Stearns, the 35th fire chief in city history, announces he will retire in late December. Stearns was hired in November 1959 when he was 24 to fill the vacancy created on the department by the death of fireman William Finnane, who died from a skull fracture suffered when a parapet fell on him while fighting the Schlueter Co. fire on Nov. 11.

Later in the year, Stearns donates a kidney to his second child and only daughter, Marie Madden, 30, Rockford, Ill.

■ **May 1:** The Janesville City Council makes legal a long-standing practice of local dog owners: letting their pets run free in an eastern, undeveloped section of Palmer Park. Until now, city ordinances banned pet owners from exercising their animals in all city parks from May 15 to Sept. 15. And another provision required the owners to have their pets on leashes no longer than 6 feet.

The new law opens the undeveloped 38 acres to unleashed dogs and cats—no other pets—as long as they are under their handlers' effective control and the people pick up the pets' droppings. All other city park areas remain off-limits to pets during summer months.

■ Janesville City Council members OK the plans of Horizon Investment and Development Corp., Madison, to develop a \$4 million apartment building in financially beleaguered TIF 3 on the west bank of the Rock River downtown. The city will give Horizon the land and demolish the old Sears and Rock River Manufacturing buildings to make room for the apartment buildings.

Acting as master developer, Horizon will involve other developers to construct three apartment buildings.



■ **May 7:** The state reports that 1,604 people of Hispanic descent lived in Walworth County in 1988, making up 2.2 percent of the county's total population and ranking Walworth sixth among Wisconsin counties for Hispanic population. Many residents are former migrant workers who settled in the county or their descendants.

■ **Janesville's Let's Go Fly a Kite** event draws 150 people. Winners include: youngest kite flier, Daniel Hunter, 6 months; oldest flier, George Poppas, 58; smallest kite, Doug Helmer with a 3-inch kite; and highest flying kite, Mike Warner and Charles Holznecht.

■ **June 1:** Washington School fourth-graders Heather Sanders and Manda Howard celebrate the last day of school by pooling their chore money to rent a limousine, tool around town, play with the TV, compact disc player and telephone and suitably impress their friends.

■ **June 5:** Under construction is a 60-by-6-foot wooden pedestrian bridge over a pond at Janesville's newest park, Rotary Gardens on Palmer Drive. The brainchild of Dr. Robert Yahr, the gardens are a joint project of Janesville's two Rotary Clubs.

At this time, the development schedule for Rotary Gardens is 10 years, but the new botanical park will prove so popular with volunteers and the public, that it will develop much sooner.

■ **June:** Mercy Hospital adds the Ask-A-Nurse program, a telephone information and referral service, to its offerings.

■ **July 2:** The water-skiing Rock Aqua Jays pass the hat at their regular Sunday show and raise \$2,300 to help former club member Joe Weins buy a wheelchair compatible van. Weins was paralyzed from the neck down in a car crash Sept. 5, 1988.

■ **July 7:** Donald R. Dodge, 48, Fulton Township, is sentenced to 10 years, 11 months in federal prison after his guilty pleas to charges of distributing cocaine and possessing firearms for use in drug trafficking.

When police broke down Dodge's door April 13, they found cocaine, marijuana, 130 marijuana plants, \$81,000 and several weapons including an AK-47 assault rifle. Besides the prison sentence, Dodge agrees to relinquish all his assets, including a \$150,000 house and several vehicles, to the federal government.

In November 1990, Dodge simply walks away from a federal prison camp. In March 1993, he is arrested while working construction in Colorado. He is helping to build a new federal prison.

■ **Aug. 7:** Dean R. Everhart, 26, Janesville, is killed when the trench he is working in col-

lapses and buries him in 9 to 13 feet of dirt. Everhart is an employee of Madison Underground Inc., Cottage Grove, which is putting in replacement pipe for a sanitary sewer in the Milwaukee suburb of Brookfield.

■ **August:** The office staff of Lab Safety Supply moves into its new quarters on South Wright Road, and the warehouse will relocate over the Labor Day weekend. The new building, constructed with the help of a free site given by the city as part of Tax Increment Finance District 4 encompasses 180,000 square feet, of which 160,000 square feet are for warehousing, and the company, once a division of but now bigger than Science Related Materials, employs 400 people.

At the end of 1998, Lab Safety employed 625 full-time workers and 111 part-timers.

■ **Sept. 1:** Kerry Stiff, 34, a member of the Janesville School Board, dies from heart failure resulting from complications brought on by muscular dystrophy, a disease he had since birth. His death ironically comes on the Friday of the Labor Day weekend, a weekend that for years found Stiff and his family organizing the local fund raising efforts of the annual Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon.

■ **Sept. 4:** Fire guts a Janesville public works building at 523 S. River St. (Angus-Young Associates, an architectural firm), causing \$325,000 to \$400,000 damage. No one is working in the building at the time of the blaze, and no one is injured.

The building is historically significant because the 102-year-old structure was Janesville's first waterworks building, a privately owned enterprise that pumped water free to public buildings, including churches, schools and fire department engine houses. The city bought the building and the waterworks in 1915.

The city will come close to demolishing the structure, but local historic preservationists will persuade the city to find someone to restore and renovate it, which Angus-Young Associates does in 1996.

■ **Sept. 8, 9 and 11:** The Rolling Stones, veterans of the British Rock Invasion of the early 1960s and arguably "The World's Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band," play to shoulder to shoulder crowds at Alpine Valley Music Theater.

■ **Oct. 16:** Unit 3 of UAW Local 95, representing 30 cafeteria workers at the Janesville GM plant, goes on strike because national negotiations break down with Greyhound Food, the vendor that operates the cafeteria and many others in GM plants.

The strike puts Local 95 and its members in the highly uncomfortable position of having to

cross fellow union members' picket lines because a provision of their contract prohibits them from honoring the picket lines. Jim Lee, Local 95 shop chairman, is angry and calls off all joint union-company activities, such as business meetings, for as long as Local 95 members must cross the picket lines.

■ **Nov. 1:** Kym Flynn, a Craig junior, is the winner of a contest among Janesville high school art students to design a new shoulder patch for the Janesville Police Department. She got the idea of a bald eagle with outstretched wings and legs from the back of a dollar bill.

Flynn wins \$200 in the contest sponsored by the Janesville Professional Police Association, the local officers' union.

■ **Nov. 18:** The Silver Moon opens at the intersection of Highway 14/11 and County C/M in rural Darien. Performing on the first night at the blues roadhouse are co-owner Glenn "Herschel" Davis and his band, Straight Shooter. Soon, co-owner Curt "Chainsaw" Rodeheaver, also a blues player, will introduce the Moon's menu of tasty treats.

■ **Nov. 26:** Two 20-year-old Green Lake women—Amy L. Block and her passenger, Nicole L. Pavalec—are killed when Block runs the stop sign on County A at Highway 14 just east of Janesville and her car is hit by a pickup truck driven southbound on Highway 14 by Douglas R. Schuldt, 28, rural Walworth. Schuldt is hospitalized for chest injuries.

Since 1985, the intersection, controlled only by stop signs on County A, has been the scene of 26 accidents. Twelve of the accidents have killed three people and injured 26 others.

■ **Dec. 15:** Duane Rath, 48-year-old president of Rath Manufacturing, 2505 Foster, announces gifts for 115 employees at the company's Christmas party: free college scholarships.

The company will pick up the tab for any child, age 18 to 24, of a full-time employee who has worked for Rath for at least a year. The scholarships will be the equivalent of a college education at UW-Madison, including books, room and board.

The company's work force is relatively young, so in the future Rath Manufacturing, maker of stainless steel tubing for the dairy, food and pharmaceutical industries, could be educating 25 to 30 students a year.

"The only thing I ask is that you nurture and encourage your children to do and be the very best they can be," Rath tells the workers. Employees are flabbergasted and overjoyed.

■ **Sometime in 1989:** The city of Janesville reports that since 1980, 70 percent of new homes have been built on the east and northeast sides, 20 percent on the west



side and 10 percent on the south side.

■ Stage One, a Janesville community theater group, starts its 10th season.

■ Richard Hartung, director of the Rock County Historical Society, resigns and takes the same job with the Evanston (Ill.) Historical Society, and Dana Thorpe, formerly director of the Beloit Historical Society, takes the helm of the county group.

■ Terry Printing, 1212 Plainfield, buys a five-color press and adds six employees, boosting its work force to 30.

■ Janesville gets a new interchange on I-90 at Avalon Road, an interchange that GM says is crucial to continued work at its

Janesville plant and which local government pushed for that reason.

■ Janesville's American Legion baseball team wins its seventh state championship and its first Great Lakes Regional title and finishes third in the Legion World Series. Managed by Jerry Davis, the team's overall record is 44-8.

■ Jeff Thelen, Craig baseball standout, pitches two no-hitters, compiles a stingy season earned run average of 0.52 and signs with the Minnesota Twins.

■ Janesville's 13-year-old Babe Ruth base-

ball team again wins the state title.

■ The city's semi-pro baseball team, the Aces, is co-champion of the Wisconsin State League with Marshfield.

■ Milton High School wins the WIAA Division III state football championship for the second time in four years, and the Associated Press chooses Coach Jerry Schliem as state football coach of the year.

■ Steve Stricker of Edgerton wins his third Big Ten golf title for the University of Illinois and repeats as All-America.



**Steve Stricker**







# 1990-1999

## HELP, HYPE & HOPE

### City splashes in media spotlight As century winds down, Janesville finds itself in national headlines

*In the last decade of the 20th century, many events splashed into major stories for Janesville, Rock County and southern Wisconsin.*

Some of the major stories were big because they involved people or groups who were celebrities or influential in government or business. Or they produced exciting videotape. Others were local stories that exemplified issues of national interest or which piqued curiosity far beyond the borders of the city and county.

The events were like stones tossed into the region's pond, creating major media splashes whose ripples extended beyond the city and area to whet the interest of the state, nation and sometimes the world.

The death of blues guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan in a helicopter crash at Alpine Valley Music Theater near East Troy in 1990.

The Salter report that blasted Rock County social services that same year.

The search for the girl who became all of Janesville's lost daughter, Michelle Ebeling, also in 1990.

The decade-long controversy over Milton High School's Redmen nickname.

The Ku Klux Klan and Geraldo Rivera in 1992.

The selection of Rep. Les Aspin as secretary of defense and his subsequent resignation under fire in 1993.

The birth of Miracle, the white buffalo calf in 1994.

The murder of Duane Rath, a successful businessman and generous philanthropist, the same year.

The United Auto Workers' strike against the General Motors plant in Janesville in 1996.

The establishment of a clubhouse in Janesville by the bandit biker gang, the Outlaws, and the 1997 raid of the clubhouse by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

The towering inferno of the Walworth propane fire in 1998.

The race for U.S. Senate in 1998 between two Janesville politicians, Russ Feingold and Mark Neumann.

The starvation death of Kay Kuffer in 1998.

The business death of Parker Pen Co. in 1999.

The horrific van crash that killed seven young people in 1999.

Historians and commentators looking back on the 1990s will view it as the Decade of Media: the avalanche of faxes, epidemic of cell phones, eruption of cable TV, cacophony of talk radio and seductive embrace of the World Wide Web.

Just as the century's other great events and trends touched, affected and often shaped Janesville, so it was with the media in the 1990s.

One obvious factor was the local newspaper, The Janesville Gazette. Pressed by the immediacy of the electronic media and with a nucleus of seasoned staff, the newspaper devoted more of its space and resources to explaining the how and why of stories rather than simply the who, what, where and when.

Anna Salter's scathing criticism of the Rock County Social Services Department and other agencies charged with protecting the welfare of children is a case in point. The newspaper devoted

**Left: Five service clubs teamed together to help make Rotary Gardens a reality in Janesville. The gardens cover 12 acres and have been developed and maintained through donations and volunteer labor.**

**Right: The birth of Miracle, a female white buffalo, on a rural Janesville farm was just one of the feel-good stories that brightened up the 1990s.**





ed several stories and much space to the initial report, which removed what had been a cloak of confidentiality around the social services system.

The newspaper persistently followed up on ensuing developments. People who defended the system were asked why. People who wanted to change it were asked how.

When Salter returned to Rock County two years later, its commitment to change surprised her.

"The media certainly played a role," County Administrator Craig Knutson said. "It certainly focused a bright light on the system as a whole and generated more public interest on the issue."

"That translated into an impetus to move forward and do something to fix the situation. Absent that pressure, would the county board and administration have done something? That's speculation. Would it have happened as fast? I don't know."

"The media certainly played a role...She (Salter) could have gone into any county in Wisconsin and found the same thing. But she came here, and it did result in improvements to the system."

The same year, Michelle Ebeling ran away. She had been an honor student at Craig High School and athlete whose life was changed by a brain injury in a high-jump accident. Frustrated by memory loss and disorientation, Michelle "up and left," she said then.

The ongoing story—of the community's concern and voluntary search—was covered daily by the local paper and other Wisconsin media. Michelle was found in North Carolina, far from the front pages that carried her picture, so the coverage did not help find her.

But it did tell Janesville something about itself.

Michelle's mother, Pat Ebeling, believed God alone was responsible for her daughter's safe return, but she also thought the community reaction to Michelle's disappearance had a positive effect.

"It gave people a sense they could do something," Pat said in December 1999. "I think only God brought her back. God knew where she was, and God was using this to bring out people's Christian sense of caring. And Michelle never suffered from any exposure because it (coverage) was done discreetly."

Since then, Michelle has successfully gotten on with her life, and the Ebelings have returned to their cherished privacy.

The media, including the Gazette, were both praised and slammed for their coverage of the KKK and failed local organizer Ken Petersen in 1992.

The newspaper followed its "shine the light" philosophy and reported not only who was behind the racist organizing effort here but also

Petersen's checkered record as a paid drug informant and used-car dealer whose business practices spawned a lengthy list of complaints and criticism.

The story was a legitimate local issue: A white supremacist group with a history of violence was seeking members here.

Janesville did not have a shining record on race relations. The city and Rock County were hospitable to the KKK in the 1920s, and the city was inhospitable to blacks. In the 1920s, local real estate agents proposed establishing a separate "colony," in effect a ghetto, for blacks.

And it wasn't until 1962 that the Gazette stopped its practice of identifying people of color by race in stories that did not deal with racial issues.

The de facto segregation that existed between Janesville and Beloit was probably caused by two factors: Janesville's perceived prejudice against African-Americans and the fact that earlier in the century more blacks found work in Beloit's factories and created a community there.

Regardless of the reasons, Janesville still was mostly white entering the 1990s, and race was always an issue, even if it was not always apparent.

But Petersen and his bigoted cronies from outside Rock County seemed to thrive on publicity, especially that from the national media who descended on Janesville to cover what became a hot topic: the racists railing about their pet peeves and young, vocal and occasionally violent anti-racist protesters from out of town.

The demonstrators' antics made for good TV and played into the hands of the publicity-craving white supremacists.

"The most difficult thing from a law enforcement standpoint was trying to balance public safety with right to free speech and to demonstrate," said George Brunner, chief of Janesville police who was the department's second highest officer at the time.

"At that time, law enforcement in Rock County and Janesville found itself in the middle of the KKK, other special-interest groups and our citizens. There was a certain part played by the media—whether written, TV or whatever—of continually presenting those events that encouraged other radical groups to come in and demonstrate against the Klan."

"They (outside protesters) really were different from our local citizens who demonstrated peacefully or simply ignored the Klan. It was really a strained situation at the time."

The Geraldo fiasco went beyond honest journalism.

Rivera essentially created the so-called "white power summit meeting" that drew 60 armed bigots and more than 100 anti-racist protesters to the dead end of South Cherry Street on

Aug. 16, 1992. It became a shouting match that could easily have blown up into a melee, if not a riot.

Petersen, Rivera, so-called national white supremacy leaders and anti-white supremacy investigator Doug Seymour all worked both ends against the middle to bring the racists and tabloid TV cameras to Janesville.

Rivera wanted a ratings-grabbing season premier. Petersen and his creepy cronies wanted exposure on national TV. Seymour wanted to see who the national instigators were and how they related to each other, and he wanted the public to see them as well.

But when the events of that Sunday in August started to unfold, they did not present the opportunity for titillating video. The racists were on South Cherry; the protesters were at the Rock County Courthouse, and the two would not have met.

But Rivera and his producer showed up at the courthouse, and the protesters soon were marching to South Cherry Street.

"I think the Geraldo thing really was a scripted event," Brunner said. "I think the march on Cherry Street would not have happened if Geraldo was not there. It created a very dangerous situation."

The widely publicized fistfight between Rivera and a neo-Nazi also appears to have been part of the script. Rivera remarked to a Janesville police officer that the fight was not supposed to have happened until later in the day, and Rivera's two bodyguards, who hovered around him at the courthouse, stood back when fists and feet were flying.

Petersen's abortive attempt to organize a KKK group backfired. The community instead joined to denounce racism and appreciate its growing differences. Racism reared its ugliness later in the decade, but most residents recognized the slime for what it was. As the '90s ended, Janesville was home to more blacks and Hispanics and greater acceptance of minorities.

Balancing all the hype of Geraldo and the Klan was the hope of Miracle the white buffalo calf in 1994.

The birth of the female calf realized the prophecies of the Lakota Sioux that White Buffalo Calf Woman, who taught them to value women, children, nature and peace, would return some day. Reverent American Indians arrived at the farm of Dave and Valerie Heider within days of Miracle's birth.

They came to pay homage to the white buffalo. They believed Miracle was the second coming of one of their most sacred figures and that the calf's birth heralded harmony among the races and revival of Indian beliefs. Among those beliefs is respect for the environment.

Many of those beliefs are incorporated into



New Age philosophy, a popular media topic in the '90s, and Miracle attracted pilgrims and reporters from all over the world. The Heiders lost their privacy, but they gained insight into Indian spirituality and the respect of many for not selling or grossly commercializing Miracle.

The Feingold-Neumann race of 1998 also was a media magnet.

Feingold put his mouth where the money wasn't. A champion of campaign finance reform, he jeopardized his re-election on principle: He had tried to outlaw the unregulated campaign donations known as soft money, and he asked his Democratic Party and sympathetic special interest groups not to spend any soft money on TV ads on his behalf.

Some soft-money ads did appear for Feingold, but his campaign mainly was devoid of unregulated donations.

Neumann was what Washington insiders called a "true believer." A religious man, he was staunchly opposed to abortion rights, which Feingold supported. Neumann also was a stickler for a balanced budget, which he believed was essential to the United States' economic well-being.

Neumann saw Feingold and his generally liberal vote in the Senate as impediments to correcting what Neumann believed were serious faults with America, so he waged an aggressive—some would call it ruthless—campaign of TV ads against Feingold.

To many across the nation, the race was more than Feingold vs. Neumann. It was campaign finance reform vs. soft-money mud-slinging. Many cynical pundits thought Feingold slit his own throat. His narrow victory surprised them.

The UAW Local 95 strike against the Janesville truck plant also was more than it appeared on the surface. The national UAW wanted to prove a point in the midst of national negotiations. It did not have to strike the Janesville plant to stop production there because it also struck a crucial parts plant whose shutdown soon would close other factories.

But the Janesville plant was GM's most profitable, making popular, pricey and high-profit full-size sport-utility vehicles. The UAW's point was that it knew where GM's cash cow was and that it had the guts to turn off the milk machine.

As 1999 ended, the Janesville plant was assured of many years of work on the SUV line because the latest generation of Chevrolet and GMC Suburbans, Tahoes and Yukons was being made there. But the plant also faced the loss of more than 1,200 jobs because its second line, making medium-duty trucks, was scheduled to move in a couple of years.

In the mid-1980s, a similar announcement created deep consternation in the community and a flurry of efficiency enhancing changes at

the GM plant in an effort to win medium duty production and security for good paying manufacturing jobs.

In the '90s, the concern—at least that expressed publicly—was nowhere near as great. In fact, while GM was stressing greater productivity, Local 95 was demanding more workers. The union undoubtedly had legitimate concerns about having enough people on the job to ensure safety and quality, but the atmosphere was markedly differently than the 1980s, when "jointness" was a buzzword.

The change in attitude and atmosphere probably was due to the economic well being of the country, county and city.

In the 1980s, inflation was rampant; unemployment and interest rates were soaring, and the future looked bleak and dismal.

In the 1990s, unemployment was at a historic low. If someone wanted to work, he or she could find a job. Maybe not a \$20-an-hour job. Maybe not a job with full benefits. But most people were working or could work.

Inflation was in check. Interest rates were low enough that the housing and automotive markets thrived. Stock markets reached all time highs.

The 1990s were the good times. Maybe too good.

Mae Thompson, a 100-year-old resident of Evansville, thought that today's children are spoiled by all their material possessions. Thompson lived on a farm and raised a family during the Great Depression of the 1930s. She lost a son to World War II, a war she thought the United States should have avoided.

"Everything they see, they get," Thompson said of 1990s kids. "Their parents get it for them.

The parents get it just to please 'em. It just ruins them sometimes."

The children of the 1990s are not lazy, Thompson said.

"If they want something badly, they'll work for it," she said.

But she thought they should be made to work more often to learn the value of a dollar and respect for a job well done.

Janesville and Rock County endured much in the 20th century: the Great Depression and GM sitdown strike in the 1930s, the farm depression of the 1920s, recession and economic uncertainty in the 1980s, many wars and the loss of its sons, especially The Janesville 99 in World War II.

The community endured drought, storms, crime, fires, tragedies large and small.

Founded by mostly native born white Americans, Janesville learned to accept immigrants and minorities and appreciate their contributions to its economy and culture. It matured from a bawdy, boozing railroad town to a strong city confident of its ability to survive and thrive in tough times, economic, social, political or international.

Janesville and Rock County worked for their success and stood up for their rights. The community watched its sons and daughters create art, make music, excel in studies and sports, build businesses and strengthen society.

Janesville mirrored the United States in the 20th century: Its strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures, determination and doubt.

As the 20th century drew to a close, Janesville and Rock County had their feet on the ground, hands on the job and eyes on the future.

## Residents rise up to meet challenges

Janesville and Rock County came to grips with many challenges in the 1990s. They weathered challenges and hardships before, emerging stronger each time: World War I in the teens, the Great Depression in the '30s, World War II in the '40s, the Vietnam War in the 1960s and '70s.

They overcame the economic challenges of the 1980s: soaring inflation, crippling interest rates, astronomical unemployment and uncertainty over the city's two biggest employers, General Motors and Parker Pen.

When the '90s started, GM and Parker Pen were secure locally: new products for GM, new management and redirected focus for Parker Pen. The '90s presented social, not economic challenges, that tested the community's resolve and strength.

The Ku Klux Klan slithered out from under its rock and dragged the garbage of racism with it.

Rock County had to face the hard facts that its social services system and other agencies were not doing as good a job as they could to protect children.

Janesville needed a new library. The city's children needed more places to play and learn.

The community met those needs—and others.

On Jan. 31, 1990, Michelle Ebeling did not meet a van that was supposed to take her to a nurse's aide training program at St. Elizabeth Nursing Home.

The 17-year-old Craig High School student had suffered a severe brain injury the year before while practicing the high jump at St. Paul's Lutheran School. Michelle landed in an uncushioned area and hit her head.

The injury's lingering effects were devastating for the honor student: Her vision was impaired, and she regularly lost her short-term memory and became disoriented.



The story broke the next day, and a day after that, Friday, Feb. 2, 100 people gathered at St. Paul's, the Ebeling family's church. They fanned out over Janesville, searching for the elder daughter of Tim and Pat Ebeling, 420 S. Ringold.

But many more people were looking for the popular Michelle. Besides the police, every postal carrier and newspaper carrier, city bus driver, trash collector and street department worker and route drivers for many businesses were keeping their eyes out for Michelle.

Badger Helicopters put a chopper in the air. Every block in Janesville was covered.

Michelle's uncle, Dan Bickel of Marengo, Ill., came to coordinate the search, which grew to at least 300 volunteers, perhaps 1,000. Some handled tracking dogs; some rode horses.

Many volunteers were members of the St. Paul's congregation. Many others didn't know the Ebelings. They gave up their time and comfort to search in cold and snow because a vulnerable girl was lost, a neighbor girl.

A reward was offered. The FBI and police nationwide were alerted. Psychics phoned in their visions. The faithful gathered to pray.

After the weekend's extensive, exhausting search, efforts were scaled back. The community was on edge. Could Michelle be gone so long and still be safe and unharmed?

The morning of Thursday, Feb. 8, "joyful pandemonium filled the Ebeling house—whoops, laughs and tears of joy and prayers of thanks." The Janesville Gazette reported under a hammer headline that proclaimed: "Found!"

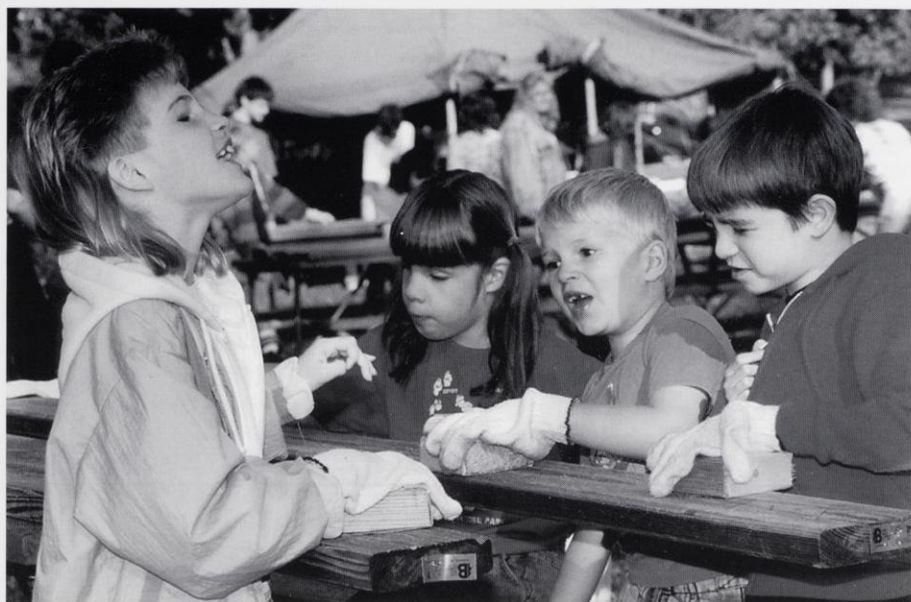
On her return from Yadkinville, N.C., Michelle explained that she thought—erroneously—that she missed her ride for the fourth time and that she would be in trouble at home and school.

Her impairments frustrated her.

"I was just so upset I couldn't handle it any more, so I up and left," Michelle said. "I just said a prayer and left."

Michelle hitched rides with truck drivers. She was lucky or blessed enough to meet only friendly, helpful people. No one hurt or threatened her. Truckers bought her meals and let her sleep in their cabs. She wound up 700 miles from home. She didn't realize how long she had been gone or remember where she had been.

**Residents of all ages helped make the dream of CAMDEN Playground a reality by volunteering their sweat and blisters. Built to help fill the needs of disabled children, CAMDEN Playground is a delight for all children of the area.**





A father and son driving a pickup and a car in tandem spotted Michelle lying across the highway. The son had to swerve to avoid hitting her. The men took Michelle to a truck stop, bought her breakfast and called police.

Blackhawk Airways donated a plane and pilot so that Pat and Tim Ebeling could bring their daughter home immediately. Michelle's 14-year-old sister, Marcia; friends, relatives and journalists met them at the airport. The St. Paul's congregation rejoiced in thankful prayer.

In November 1989, a small non-profit group of Rock County folks started making known the needs of other children, children like 8-year-old Camden Hookstead.

Camden, a Milton resident, was mentally and physically disabled. He made progress in school when he was mainstreamed with children without disabilities. But the other kids could play on the playground, enjoy the swings and slides, exercise their imaginations with their bodies.

Camden did not have a playground that was accessible and safe for him and other children with handicaps.

Volunteers used Camden's name as an acronym to fashion a name for their group: Community Accessibility Medium Dealing with Exceptional Needs.

The CAMDEN group hoped to fashion a playground that blind kids, deaf kids, kids who use wheelchairs could enjoy. The CAMDEN group started on a slow campaign to first raise awareness, then money and material, then the volunteers who would work and sweat to build the playground.

The organizers approached the city of Janesville and made an offer the city couldn't refuse: If the city would set aside space in a park, the CAMDEN group would build the playground and give it to the city.

Park Director Tom Presny recommended Palmer Park. The city council gave its approval.

The CAMDEN group hired top-notch playground consultants to design the play area.

On Sept. 29, 1992, the group broke ground for Phase 1 of CAMDEN Playground. Among the speakers were CAMDEN President Sherry

Kuelz, volunteer coordinator Joyce Tucker and U.S. Rep. Les Aspin.

The next spring, Phase 2 started with the sound of pounding hammers and buzzing saws, but a lack of volunteers slowed its first couple of days.

Nevertheless, Phase 2 was essentially done two weeks later with features that would become well-known to children from Rock County and throughout the Midwest: the tree fort, the castle, enchanted forest, space ship, pirate ship, dragon and stage.

Work continued into 1994 with finishing touches.

More than 3,000 volunteers built CAMDEN. Hundreds of them got blisters and splinters; all of them earned a feeling of satisfaction.

By August 1994, the group raised \$163,000, spent \$150,000 and saved \$13,000 for maintenance. But with all the volunteer labor and donated materials, the 175- by 200-foot playground was valued at \$600,000.

The city gave more than the land: 500 hours of administrative time, \$10,000 in equipment rental and \$10,000 in labor.

CAMDEN Playground received awards. As the parent of any child, disabled or otherwise, who has played at CAMDEN will attest, CAMDEN's true award and reward are children's delighted eyes.

Rotary Gardens delights the eyes, ears and noses of adults and children alike.

It is a shining, growing, evolving example of what Janesville can do when it sets its mind, heart and hands to a task.

On May 16, 1999, Rotary Gardens celebrated its 10th anniversary. Its 14 theme gardens—including English cottage, Japanese, French/Italian, Alpine, Scottish and North American—attracted 70,000 visitors in 1998 alone.

The idea for Rotary Gardens sprouted in the imagination of Dr. Bob Yahr, a retired orthodontist and long-time member of the Janesville Noon Rotary Club. He, too, made the city an offer too good to turn down: Set aside the land; we'll do the work.

"Everybody thought we were nuts. But it's been wonderful," Yahr said. "I certainly envisioned a nice garden after five years and a great garden after 10 years.

"However, it's nicer than I envisioned. It's fantastic. Everything has turned out beautifully."

Five Janesville service clubs—Morning and Noon Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis and Jaycees—have worked together to integrate Rotary Gardens into what the city calls Blackhawk Park Complex, which includes Lions Beach and Pond, Kiwanis Pond (formerly Atlas Pit), Blackhawk Golf Course and Palmer Park.

Rotary Gardens, encompassing 12 acres and a 2-acre pond connected by a channel to Lions, has been developed with donations and volunteer labor.

In 1991, the second year of development, volunteers, including many who are not service club members, labored almost 20,000 hours on Rotary Gardens.

The late Duane Rath, a local businessman and philanthropist, donated the Rath environmental Center, which includes a solarium, gift shop and educational room.

Nan Draper Lewis of Janesville commissioned an artist to create a sculpture for the gardens. The Nowlan family donated a fountain for the French/Italian garden.

Yahr winters in Arizona six months of the year, but when he's home in Janesville, he works on Rotary Gardens six hours a day five days a week. A group of retired men, who refer to themselves as the "grumpies" for grumpy old men, spend hours upon hours tending to the gardens.

They planted 10,000 bulbs that bloomed in 1999 to herald the 10th anniversary with a symphony of colors.

Rotary Gardens' annual operating budget grew with the flowers, trees and shrubs: from \$50,000 to \$374,000 in 1999. Revenue came from an endowment fund, fund-raisers, Friends of Rotary Gardens and private donations.

Rotary Gardens is open year-round and offers many festive and educational programs. Rotary Gardens can be rented for weddings, meetings and other special occasions.

"We're an asset to the community and here to provide another opportunity toward improving the quality of life," Executive Director Kim Emerson said. "We're here for everyone and anyone to enjoy."



# 1990-1999

## CENTURY NOTES

### 1990

■ **Jan. 3:** Janesville police officers Dave Kumbier and John Olsen kick in the door at 302 Rock and help 11 people, including 10 members of an extended family, escape the burning, smoke-filled building. Mary Wilson, 81, lives in one apartment, and the second houses 10 members of the extended family, whose family surnames are Rom, Oum, Chan and Sonn.

■ **Jan. 8:** Carmen Grant, 22, is found dead of multiple stab wounds in her trailer at 1463A Rock-Jefferson County Line Road. Her boyfriend, Carl Anderson, also suffers stab wounds in what is a domestic fight, and he contends he acted in self-defense. Nevertheless, Anderson is charged with second-degree intentional homicide. But in a plea bargain, Anderson pleads guilty to the lesser charge of homicide by negligent use of a knife, and he is sentenced to five years of probation.

■ **January:** Larry Grorud, one-time president of the firefighters' union and most recently deputy chief, is appointed chief of the Janesville Fire Department.

■ **Feb. 2:** The Alliance for a Drug-Free Janesville starts with the first meeting of its steering committee. Police Commander George Brunner tells the group that drug and alcohol abuse is a problem in Janesville and that the city has "more than 40 drug houses."

■ **March 13:** A tornado slashes across the northwest corner of Rock County, ripping the roof off Phil and Janice Golz's farm house and demolishing the neighboring house of Phil's parents, Marvin and Peggy Golz. The twister skips north and east and severely damages Sarah Dunbar's home.

In all, the tornado damages property—houses, barns, sheds, silos and vehicles—at 11 Rock County residences and two businesses. Property and trees in Dane and Green counties also are damaged. Though many people are home at the time of the 5 p.m. storm, no one is reported injured, though many scramble for shelter.

■ **April 5:** Alan Tracy, former Avalon farmer who served in various roles at the U.S. Department of Agriculture during the Reagan administration and later as special assistant for agriculture to Reagan, is named secretary of the Wisconsin Department of

Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

■ **April 19:** The first two houses in the Mole & Sadler's subdivision in Janesville are hooked up to city water and sewer, ending almost a year of having to drink and cook with bottled water and having to bathe in shipped-in water from holding tanks. In 1989, the subdivision's wells were found to be contaminated by toxic pollution from the old Riverside Plating Co. just west of the subdivision.

The subdivision on the western shore of the Rock River south of Riverside Park had remained outside city limits, but the need for city water forces the residents to ask the city for annexation.

■ **May 10:** One to 4 inches of snow blanket southern Wisconsin in a rare May storm. The storm proves to be a killer as Rick A. Barnett, 39, of 422 S. Fremont, dies when the car in which he is riding slides out of control on Interstate 90 in a construction zone south of Madison and slams into a semitruck. Two Edgerton men in the car—driver Daniel Dickson, 36, and Doug Eastman, 42—are hospitalized with life-threatening injuries. The truck driver is not hurt.

■ **May 11:** Professor Julia Horbostel, who has taught at UW-Rock County since it opened in 1966, is honored as Teacher of the Year by the two-year college.

■ **May 12:** The Gazette establishes the Janesville Sports Hall of Fame with the induction of Pat Dawson, who was a coach at Janesville High and school and city athletic director; Stan Du Frane, former basketball coach at Janesville and Craig high schools whose teams won eight Big Eight championships; Evelyn Kettle, renowned local bowler and promoter of youth bowling; Bob Krueger, former Janesville High basketball coach who became basketball coach and athletic director at UW-Stevens Point; Bob Luchsinger Sr., former pro baseball player, perennial city handball champ and longtime basketball referee; Bob Morgan, Parker

High's first basketball coach whose team won the state title in 1971; the late Ted Scalissi, former Milton College football coach who refereed with Luchsinger as a basketball officiating team; and the late Kenneth Kitelinger, former Janesville High coach and school district athletic director.

■ **June 1:** Rock County

Habitat for Humanity starts building its first home at Lafayette Street and DeSoto Drive in Janesville. The family donating its sweat equity is that of Lori Tesch. One of her two sons is disabled, and the family's apartment is not big enough for his wheelchair and other needed medical equipment. Tesch will buy the home at cost and with no interest.

■ **July 1:** About 100 people gather at Lower Courthouse Park in Janesville to observe the first anniversary of Voice for Choice, a Janesville group supporting abortion rights. Among the 13 speakers is Democrat Tom Lofton, a candidate for governor. The rally also draws about 200 protesters opposed to legal abortion.

■ **July 9:** Inspired by Duane Rath's program to give full four-year college scholarships to employees' children, Janesville housing contractor Mark Neumann offers scholarships of \$1,000 a year for up to four years for employees, their spouses and children. Owner of Neumann Development, the contractor is a former teacher at UW-Rock County, Milton College and Milton High School who has a political career awaiting him.

Rath announced his scholarship at a company Christmas party in 1989.

■ **July 18:** The Janesville YMCA announces that it will end a 98-year-old practice when it stops renting rooms to single men in the fall. Eight residents must find new homes.

■ **July 21:** Shelly Ellis, 30, a Janesville native living in Fort Wayne, Ind., wins the skillet toss at Edgerton's Tobacco Heritage Days with a heave of 98 feet.

■ Jerald and Rita Reif of Milton win \$4.84 million in the Lotto America Megabucks drawing. Jerald, 43, works at GM, and Rita, 44, drives a school bus.

■ **Aug. 18:** John P. Pavlovskis, 50, Beloit, is sentenced to 60 years in prison for the March 11 kidnapping and rape of a 9-year-old Janesville girl. Pavlovskis is tried in Illinois because that is where he took the girl and repeatedly assaulted her.

Pavlovskis was convicted in 1966 of a similar offense in Minnesota, and he was convicted of killing his wife in Arizona in 1978. But the murder conviction was vacated, and the charge was eventually dismissed because Pavlovskis was not tried again in a timely manner.

■ **Aug. 27:** Stevie Ray Vaughan, legendary blues guitarist and singer, is



Larry Grorud



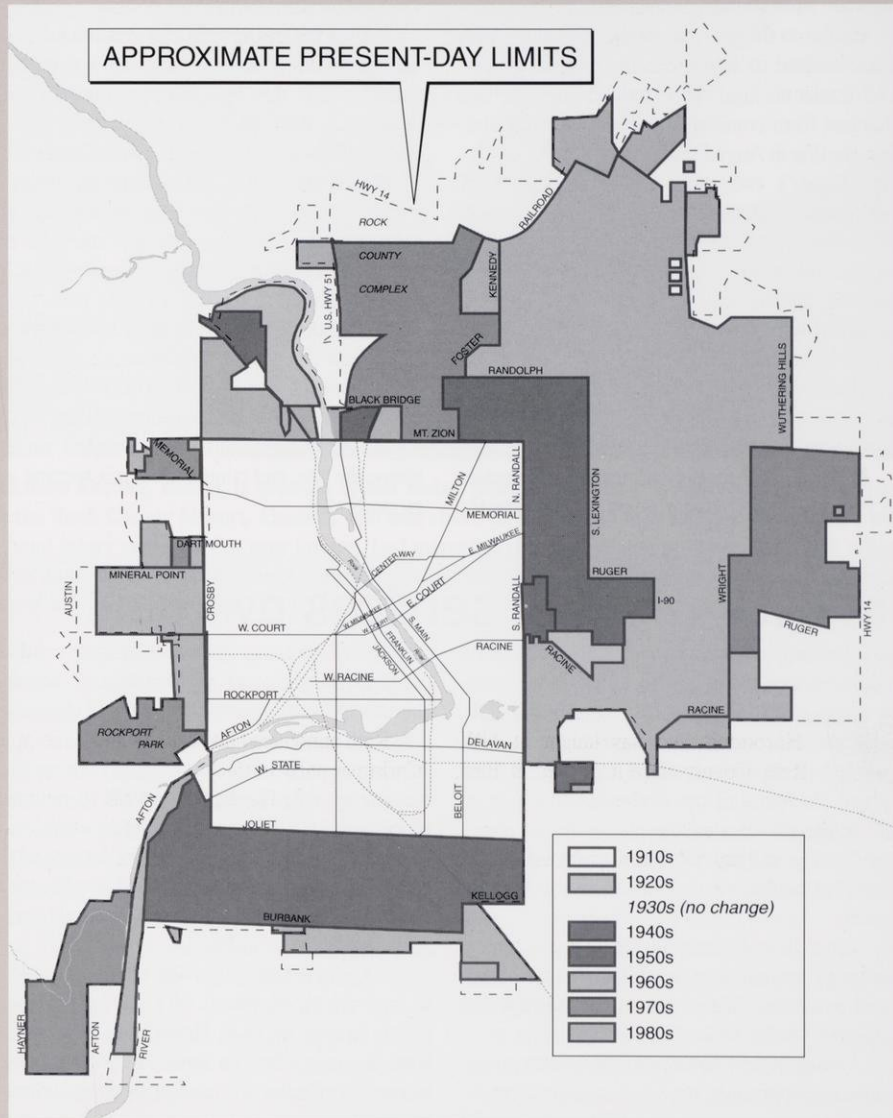
Alan Tracy



Stevie Ray Vaughan



# Janesville in 1990



**Janesville's city limits in 1990.**



**Area of city:** 24.094 square miles



**Number of churches:** 42



**Number of schools:** 27, including parochial schools, UW-Rock County and Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped.



**Miles of storm sewer:** 133.73  
**Miles of sanitary sewer:** 227.04  
**Miles of water mains:** 261.56



**Population:** 52,210



**\$1 in 1990 has buying power of \$1.31 in 1999**

killed with four other people when their helicopter crashes in a dense early morning fog near Alpine Valley Music Theater in Walworth County. Vaughan performed there the previous two nights with another blues and rock legend, Eric Clapton, and bluesman Robert Cray.

Joining them for an impromptu jam during the second concert was Chicago blues great Buddy Guy and Stevie's brother, Jimmie.

■ **Sept. 13:** The Rock County Board approves a \$77,500 out-of-court settlement for David and Jewel Walker, whose 46-year-old son, James J. Walker, was killed by Deputy Joseph

Sprecher early in the morning of May 3, 1989.

Sprecher tried to pull Walker over for speeding, but Walker pulled into his own driveway on Prairie Avenue in Beloit. As Sprecher wrote the ticket, Walker, who was legally intoxicated, asked to go inside to use the bathroom. When he did not come out, Sprecher entered the house and found Walker sitting with a handgun.

The two men scuffled, and Sprecher tried to run from the house, only to wind up in the basement. As Walker came down the stairs, Sprecher fired a shot that killed Walker.

Sprecher told investigators that Walker shot at

him first and that he heard the bullet zing by him, but the investigation showed that only Sprecher fired a shot.

Rock County District Attorney Perry Folts ruled the shooting was justifiable self-defense in the line of duty. In agreeing to the settlement, the county and Sprecher denied all liability.

■ **Oct. 1:** The Milton School District receives a letter from Carol Hand, a Milton resident of Native American ancestry, asking that the Milton High School nickname, the Redmen, and its logo, a cartoon Indian waving a tomahawk, be eliminated because they are offensive to American Ind-



ians. Her request ignites a fire of controversy that will alternately flare and smolder for nine years as Milton residents both defend and criticize the Redmen nickname.

■ **Nov. 2:** As a protest to U.S. military action in the Persian Gulf, Peter Roang, Janesville natural foods grocer and peace activist, stages a last-minute write-in campaign against Rep. Les Aspin, the long-time Democratic incumbent representing the 1st District and chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

Aspin supports Operation Desert Shield, the U.S.-led multinational force defending Saudi Arabia against possible invasion by Iraq. Iraqi invaders already occupy Kuwait. Roang's campaign is only a protest, and Aspin easily wins reelection Nov. 6.

■ **Dec. 1:** Carla Miller, Cory Givhan, Richard Zierath and Christine Hermanson, all National Guard soldiers who live or work in Janesville or have relatives living in Janesville, are among the troops training at Fort McCoy for deployment in Desert Shield, which soon will become Desert Storm.

■ **Dec. 20:** The General Motors plant in Janesville builds its last Chevrolet Cavalier and begins renovating and retooling the assembly line to make full-size sport-utility vehicles, the Chevy and GMC Suburban, Chevrolet Blazer (Tahoe) and GMC Jimmy (Yukon). Some 3,400 assemblers are laid off during retooling.

Earlier in the year, the factory's medium-duty truck reached its scheduled rate of production—17.5 trucks an hour. The medium-duty line was changed from commercial pickup truck production starting in August 1989.

At year's end, plant employment is 5,500 jobs: 3,400 people on the Cavalier-turned-Suburban line, 1,550 people working on the medium duty truck and maintenance, and 550 salaried employees.

■ **Sometime in 1990:** Mercy Hospital adds a sports medicine clinic and centers for cancer treatment and plastic and reconstructive surgery to its services. The hospital also opens clinics in Albany, Evansville and Orfordville.

■ The Rock County Historical Society launches Project 640, a five-year effort, to renovate the

Tallman House. The city of Janesville is matching a \$250,000 gift from an anonymous donor, and the combination will provide the bulk of the money needed for the project. The name 640 is for the \$640,000 fund raising target, but the historical society actually raises another \$153,700 for a total of \$653,700.

Part of the project involves restoration of the Tallman House's unusual plumbing system: Roof gutters collect rain that flows into copper tanks on the third floor, which provide running water to the lower floors and keep a basement cistern full.

■ In eight months, Janesville residents deposited 420 tons of newspaper, glass, plastic and aluminum at three sites as the city starts its first municipal recycling program, a voluntary drop-off program. The city expected only 100 tons.

■ The city of Janesville, General Motors and more than 20 other industries agree to a \$14.58 million cleanup and prevention of pollution at the old municipal landfill sites south of Black Bridge Road. Escaping methane is detected directly above the site, and contamination is seeping into groundwater.

## Scathing report results in social services overhaul

**A**нна Salter, a consultant from New Hampshire, issued a scathing report blasting the Rock County Social Services Department for failing miserably to protect the county's children from abuse, chiefly sexual, on Aug. 13, 1990.

A steering committee hired Salter, a nationally recognized expert, to develop a model program for handling sexual abuse of children, and the consultant ripped the social services department for 10 years of consistent failures that, she said, would only grow worse unless corrective measures were taken.

The root of the problem, Salter maintained, was that two vastly different philosophies split the four social services units responsible for investigating child abuse into two camps.

One camp believed in quickly removing the abuser from the home and aggressively investigating allegations of abuse even if the family maintained the abuse did not happen or would not happen again.

The second camp's overriding goal was keeping families together, so it tried to avoid removing either the victim or the abuser from the home, or it would not investigate if the abuser—typically an adult male—moved out of the home and the remaining adult—most often the mother—promised to protect the child.

The department's top administrators told Salter they tolerated the different philosophies and practices because they reflected the debate in the social services profession.

Furthermore, one part of the bureaucracy often worked at odds with other parts. Social workers often avoided getting involved, Salter charged, and social workers worried more about what their supervisors might think or do than about the young victims of abuse.

Salter also faulted the police, district attorney's office and judicial system, but most of her criticism landed on the social services department.

"In a choice between loyalty to each other, to other professionals in the field, to other adults and to abused children, we must speak for the children," Salter said.

Ursula Myers, director of the county social services department, acknowledged her department might have problems, and she said Salter's criticisms and charges would be reviewed. Within two months, Myers took an extended sick leave and later retired.

Dennis Kirchoff succeeded her.

Members of the Rock County Social Services Board, made up of county supervisors to oversee the department, either declined to comment or commented defensively, saying, for instance, that the 42 cases Salter cited specifically were only a small number of the more than 3,000 cases of alleged sexual abuse of children the department looked into since 1980.

Within three days, Myers transferred the two unit supervisors who believed in keeping families together in the face of abuse and appointed other supervisors.

County Administrator Craig Knutson asked the state Department of Health and Social Services to investigate and recommend changes it thought were necessary.

In November, the county board approved creation of a multidisciplinary team to review problematic child abuse and neglect cases. In February 1991, the final state report corroborated Salter's criticism but expressed confidence the county social services department would correct the problems.

In April 1991, the Janesville YWCA decided to lead the development of a child advocacy center, known as Care House, and later that year, the county hired a former state child protection coordinator to manage child protective services here.

In 1992, the county juvenile probation department and youth home merged with the social services department, and two residents joined county supervisors on the social services board, a move the county board had rejected immediately after Salter's report.

Also in 1992, a new set of supervisors was named to the social services board.

In 1992, the social services department blended the competing philosophies that split the agency before, Kirchoff said. "We protect children, and when possible, we do that in the context of the family."

Salter returned in 1992 to present a training conference. Rock County's commitment to change the system she castigated surprised her.





**Michelle Ebeling, center, is greeted by her sister, Marcia, and other friends during her arrival at the Rock County Airport. Ebeling, who had short-term memory loss and disorientation from a head injury suffered the year before, had missed a ride and wound up more than 700 miles from home. Janesville residents banded together to search for the missing girl before she was found and returned home.**

But the pollution poses no threat to people and only a slight danger to the environment. Nevertheless, the federal Environmental Protection Agency orders a cleanup and prevention program that is expected to cost the industries \$7.87 million, the city \$5.25 million and the federal government \$1.46 million.

Installed will be a methane collection system, monitoring wells and new clay caps. As 1999 ended, city officials anticipated the city will not have to install a groundwater pumping and treatment system that the original cleanup plan included, and the city saved substantial money on earlier construction and anticipated more savings during the more than 30 years the plan was designed for.

City officials anticipate the cleanup and prevention program will cost closer to \$9 million than \$15 million.

■ Franklin Lanes, 18 N. Franklin, also known as Franklin Gardens, is bought and demolished by the city to clear room for a parking lot for Bank One.

■ Lear Seating constructs a 120,000-square-foot factory off Wright Road in Tax Incremental Financing District 4 to supply seats for the GM plant's medium-duty trucks. Lear is a just-in-time supplier that plans to employ up to 300 people by the end of 1991. Another just-in-time supplier that located in Janesville with 60 employees is Midland Steel, which provides frames for the large medium-duty trucks.

Just-in-time supply is a cost-cutting move by

GM: Rather than bear the expense of warehouses and storage for its parts, the automaker requires suppliers to deliver components just in time for assembly. The suppliers must locate facilities where they can supply GM plants on tight production schedules.

■ Holly Nehs is Janesville women's golf champ for the third time in four years. She also wins the Wisconsin Women's Public Links championship and the Badger State Games.

■ Brothers Graham and Mike Riley win the WIAA boys' doubles tennis championship for Craig High School.

■ NASCAR driver Rich Bickle Jr. of Edgerton finishes 28th in his first Daytona 500.

■ Janesville's Stan Fox has the oldest car in Indianapolis 500 field of 33, and when it breaks down after 10 laps, he must settle with a 33rd place finish.

■ The semi-pro Janesville Aces baseball team wins the Wisconsin State League championship.

■ Janesville pitchers playing minor league professional baseball are Rick Dunnum with a Florida Class A team affiliated with the Houston Astros, Tony Bouton with a Texas Rangers rookie league affiliate in Florida and Jeff Thelen with a Minnesota Twins Class A team in Kenosha.

■ Mike Sipe of Janesville wins the Janesville men's golf title for the second year in a row.

■ Chris Pastore of Janesville birdies four of the last five holes to win the men's Wisconsin Public Links Golf Tournament, which is played at Janesville's Riverside Golf Course and Krueger Municipal in Beloit.

## 1991

■ **Jan. 3-6:** Some 60 Rock County residents report for active duty as the National Guard's 32nd Military Police Company prepares to go to Fort McCoy and get ready for assignment in Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield.

■ **Jan. 16:** Whether in the Corner Bar (Deano's West Side Pub), in their workplaces, in stores at the Janesville Mall or in their homes, local residents watch TV as CNN reports live from Baghdad the intense bombing that begins the Persian Gulf War.

Janesville residents flock to gas stations to top off their tanks in case the war results in a fuel shortage. Two dozen anti-war protesters sit with candles outside the Janesville office of Rep. Les Aspin. Hundreds of other residents gather in churches to pray for friends and relatives in the military and for a quick end to the fighting.

■ **Feb. 5:** The 32nd Military Police Company, 140 soldiers from the Janesville and Milwaukee areas, begins deployment to Saudi Arabia. Three other units with Rock County members already shipped out to the Persian Gulf: the Air National Guard 128th Air Refueling Group; the 13th Evacuation Hospital, a National Guard unit based in Madison; and the 12th Medical Detachment, an Army Reserve unit based in Beloit.

■ **Feb. 11:** 3,000 autoworkers at the Chrysler plant in Belvidere are laid off because of slumping vehicle sales in a national recession. Most Janesville GM workers are laid off because the plant's old car line is being renovated and retooled to make sport-utility vehicles. About 800 Janesville workers continue making medium-duty trucks on one shift.

■ **Feb. 28:** Most southern Wisconsin residents express relief and satisfaction that the Persian Gulf War ends with a cease-fire. Some anti-war protesters and Americans of Arab descent continue to question the U.S. motives for the war and express deep concern for the tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians killed, wounded or left homeless in a land shattered by one of the most extensive—if not the most extensive—aerial bombardment campaigns in history.

■ **March 27:** A year after a tornado tears through extreme northwest Rock County, another storm system takes almost the same path and spawns several twisters, which wreak severe damage and havoc in Rock, Dane and Jefferson counties.

A falling tree kills a Dane County farmer. A



**Rich Bickle Jr.**



twister kills cattle, damages the house and demolishes several buildings at the Paul and Barbara George farm north of Evansville. Many other houses and outbuildings are damaged; trees are snapped or uprooted; utility poles are toppled.

Several animals are killed.

■ **April 1:** Scott Angus, a Fort Atkinson native and employee of The Janesville Gazette since December 1978, becomes the newspaper's editor, succeeding Mark Torinus.

■ **April 15:** The first 500 GM workers are back on the job on the new sport-utility assembly line where pilot models are creeping along in what is supposed to be almost a year-long acceleration to an eventual production rate of 44 an hour. The plant will not meet the target date.

■ **April 18:** Gazette readers learn that Bob and Sima Wexler will close J.J. Smith, a jewelry store at 119 W. Milwaukee, (Sweet Sensations by Sheila). The store has operated in downtown Janesville since 1910, and Bob's father, Marvin, bought it in 1934.

Bob entered the business full-time after returning from World War II in 1945, and he and Sima married in 1947. Sima is a member of the Mercy Hospital Board and a past member of the city council and library board. Bob was the first president of the downtown Business Improvement District and served on the YMCA Youth Board.

■ **April 30:** Relatives, friends, supporters, color guards and the Janesville Fife and Drum Corps greet the 32nd Military Police Company on its return to Janesville. During the war, the company helped guard one of the largest prisoner-of-war camps, where more than 15,000 Iraqi POWs were housed.

Some members of the Army National Guard 13th Evacuation Hospital already have returned to the States, and Moriah Rhame of Janesville will relate how she and her comrades experienced four Iraqi Scud missile attacks.

■ **May 1:** Searchers find the body of 11-year-old Brian Miller in the Rock River north of Avalon Road. The Janesville boy has been missing since April 24 when he was sent by a bait store operator on an errand to the spillway under the Monterey Bridge. He apparently fell into the river then and drowned.

Miller is the fourth person to drown near the Monterey Bridge in 19 years, prompting calls for the city to make the area safer. The city responds with several improvements, installing a more secure railing and making a deck wider.

■ **May 6:** For the first time, Parker High School awards letters to its scholars. Students in the top 10 percent of the sophomore, junior and senior classes receive italic "P's" to put on their school jackets. Athletes receive block-style "P's."

■ **May 25:** Melissa Holder, a 14-year-old student at Marshall Middle School, wants to be part of the in-crowd so she and two other girls

swipe her family's car for an early-morning joy ride. But the escapade ends in tragedy when one of the other girls, also 14, drives the car but loses control, and the car crashes into a tree off Kennedy Road.

Melissa is killed. The other girl, who told police she was drinking beforehand, is injured but survives.

■ **May:** The AIDS Support Network, based in Madison, opens its first branch office in Janesville. In 1989, the network helped eight AIDS-stricken people in Rock County; in 1990, it helped 20.

■ **June 6:** Matthew Goelzer, 2105 Ruger, is 11 minutes younger than his twin sister, Kristen, but he finishes his high school career four-hundredths of a grade point ahead of her stellar academic achievements. The twins are honored as valedictorian and salutatorian at Craig High graduation ceremonies.

Both had just one B during high school, but Kristen's came in an all-year physics class while Matthew's was in a half-year choir class.

■ **June 19:** A Janesville ordinance that all homes have working smoke detectors takes effect.

■ **June 23:** One of the seminal rhythm & blues artists and an American music legend, Ray Charles, lets the Riverfest crowd in Beloit know "What'd I Say."

■ **June:** Ground is broken on the UW-Whitewater campus for the \$9 million Irwin L. Young Auditorium.

■ **July 8:** Janesville Public Library officials confirm that George and Nancy Parker have committed to creating a \$100,000 endowment to pay for library programs.

George is the grandson of Parker Pen Co. co-founder George Parker and a former president and chairman of the writing instrument company, now owned and operated by a European group.

■ **July 9:** A Marshfield company announces it has bought the former Ormson Cinema, which is the old Jeffris Theater, 319 W. Milwaukee, and will reopen it in the fall as a five-screen movie theater known as Park Place Cinema 5 (vacant).

■ GM officials announce that medium-duty truck assemblers in Janesville will be laid off for two weeks in August because of slow sales. The company also announces that the number of workers on the plant's other line, the car line being converted into a sport-utility line, will drop from 3,500 to 2,800 because of increased automation and fewer vehicles per hour being produced.

Three hundred people are guaranteed employment in the Job Banks program.

The number of salaried personnel has dropped from 700 in 1978 to 500. The number of workers on the medium-duty line has dropped from

1,800 people making pickup trucks on two shifts to 800 people on one shift.

■ **Lear Seating** announces it will hire 110 more people, boosting the company's Janesville work force to between 350 and 375, because of the increase in work when Suburban production starts in earnest and because the Janesville factory will supply seat frames to other Lear operations.

■ **Aug. 5:** The Janesville truck-modification operation of Monroe Truck Equipment has had to postpone its company picnic three times, and employees are working 12 hours a day, seven days a week to modify GM medium-duty trucks for use in Kuwait, either to fight the oil-field fires set by retreating Iraqi troops or to serve as garbage trucks because Kuwaiti garbage trucks were blown up in the war.

■ **Aug. 31:** The Rock Aqua Jays set another world record with a water-skiing pyramid: 34 people in a four-level formation.

■ **Sept. 2:** A Labor Day tradition returns to Janesville as an estimated 40,000 people turn out downtown to watch a two hour parade with 253 units.

From 1952–1976, the Parade of Champions was the centerpiece of Janesville's Labor Day festivities, but it died for lack of sponsorship.

The Parade of Champions was itself a reprise of Labor Day parades staged in the city until the late 1920s or early '30s.

Organizers of the 1991 event plan to make their celebration, Labor Fest, an annual event.

■ **Sept. 9:** Fire destroys The Carlton, a landmark building in downtown Edgerton that once was a hotel and now houses a restaurant, lounge and the beginnings of a bed and breakfast.

Owners Tom and Sue Kinnaird and their four children flee their third-floor apartment down a fire escape. No one is injured.

Three neighboring buildings are damaged. Total loss is estimated at \$350,000. The cause is not immediately known and is under investigation.

■ **Sept. 29:** The first arrests for possession of crack cocaine are made in Janesville as police arrest two women and a man at a local motel.

■ **Sept. 30:** Another two-week layoff starts for the Janesville GM plant's medium-duty truck line because of poor sales.

■ **September:** The Janesville Noon Kiwanis Club votes unanimously to sponsor a new city park, 9.3 acres on the southwest corner of Holiday and North Pontiac drives. The city council names the park for the club—Kiwanis Community Park—and the park joins the Kiwanis' other civic recreation projects: Kiwanis Trail along the Rock River and Kiwanis Pond (formerly Atlas Pit), which is next to Blackhawk Golf Course.

■ **Milton** gets its first stop-and-go traffic signal lights at the intersection of Highways 26 and 59.



Ray Charles



■ **Oct. 4:** Janis Atkins sits at the receptionist's desk for the last time at the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped. Totally blind and a 1946 graduate of the school, Atkins has been the school's receptionist for 20 years.

She knows nearly every one of the 200 people at the school—teachers, students, administrators and maintenance workers—by the sounds of their voices and their walks.

■ **Nov. 3:** Janesville native Russell Feingold, now a Democratic state senator living in Middleton, announces that he is running for the U.S. Senate seat held by Republican Bob Kasten.

■ **Nov. 18-19:** Students at Wisconsin School for the Deaf in Delavan skip classes and camp out of their residential dorms to protest what they charge are an incompetent dean of students and a lack of staff with proficiency in sign language.

The state Department of Public Instruction responds by reassigning the dean of students to another school.

■ **Dec. 2:** Fawn Mylenbusch, a junior at Edgerton High School, dies from head injuries suffered when she fell off a car Nov. 30 while "car-surfing."

The practice involves lying face-down on the roof of a moving car and holding on to the edges of its open windows. Mylenbusch fell from the top of a car going about 50 mph on a rural road when the driver made a U-turn at an intersection.

The driver, Alison Houge, one of Mylenbusch's best friends, will plead guilty to charges of first-degree reckless homicide and obstructing and be sentenced to probation.

■ **Sometime in 1991:** The federal Environmental Protection Agency honors 20 companies nationwide, including Terry Printing of Janesville, for recycling and pollution-reduction programs.

■ Businesses starting in Janesville include Campi's Prime Rib (Restaurant & Lounge), 4323 N. Highway 26; Carousel Consignments, 31 S. Main; Main Street Saloon, 117 N. Main; and Toys 'R' Us, 2723 Milton.

■ Under construction is a \$1.5 million, two-story addition that will add six classrooms and a library to Washington Elementary School, 811 N. Pine. The school district has a total enrollment increase of 300 students, reversing a 17-year downward trend, and hires 20 new teachers.

■ Stan Fox of Janesville finishes eighth in the Indianapolis 500.

■ The Craig girls' cross-country team wins the WIAA Division 1 title, the first state championship for a Janesville high school girls' team.

■ Janesville's Senior Babe Ruth baseball team again is state champ.

■ Mark Sievert of Janesville signs a minor league contract with the Toronto Blue Jays.

■ Craig and Parker join forces to put a high school hockey team on the ice, and the schools

adopt the old Janesville High nickname, the Bluebirds.

■ Holly Nehs again is Janesville women's golf champ, and Mike Sipe wins his third consecutive city men's golf championship.

■ Golfer Steve Stricker of Edgerton wins his second Wisconsin State Open.

## 1992

■ **Jan. 5:** As evidenced by ads in Rock County newspapers and printed material left in a Beloit store, the Ku Klux Klan is trying to recruit members in the area. The KKK, its hatred, hypocrisy and the ignorant, double-dealing people who are its so-called leaders will make news in Janesville, Rock County and ultimately the nation throughout the year.

■ **Jan. 13:** Rock County Judge J. Richard Long tells his judicial colleagues at their quarterly meeting that female lawyers should not wear miniskirts and black stockings in the courtroom.

"Some of these attorneys look worse than the criminal defendants," the judge says.

■ **Feb. 3:** 303 local GM workers return to jobs in the plant. The workers are those in the Jobs Bank employment security program who lost their regular jobs to technological advances or productivity improvements.

Because of the start-up of the new Suburban line, the nontraditional jobs the workers would have done in the plant were suspended, and the employees instead worked for 50 non-profit organizations, mostly in Rock County.

■ Construction starts on the Rock Theater, a seven-screen movie house at 1620 Newport, Janesville.

■ **Feb. 17:** Jeffrey Dahmer is sentenced to 15 consecutive life sentences for the murders of 15 young men and boys in Milwaukee.

Authorities could not find enough evidence to charge Dahmer with the murder of a 16th Milwaukee victim, and he also confessed to killing a hitchhiker in Ohio.

Dahmer drugged his victims, had sex with them or with their bodies after he killed them, dismembered the bodies and occasionally ate his victims' flesh.

He is the most prolific serial killer in Wisconsin history. He will be beaten to death in prison Nov. 28, 1994.

■ **Feb. 18:** The Janesville Library Board goes on record in support of a 29,000-square-foot expansion with an estimated price tag of \$5.3 million. The decision to proceed lies with the city council and will generate much debate and discussion over how much and what the library needs and who will pay for it.

■ **Feb. 29:** Karen Kennedy, 3149 W. Danbury, gives birth to a Leap Day daughter, Kelsey, but the happy event means that Karen and husband, Steve, cannot attend another happy event, the fourth birthday party of their son, Kristopher, who was born on Leap Day 1988.

■ **March 8:** Michael and Sherie Johnson of Milton have AIDS, but instead of keeping their conditions to themselves, the couple have become outspoken advocates for AIDS awareness and testing.

Twenty-two people with AIDS are reported living in Rock County. Since 1986, when the state started keeping records, 13 people have died in Rock County.

■ **March 9:** Robert W. Bliss, publisher emeritus of the Gazette and active in the newspaper's parent company, Gazette Printing, since 1928, dies at age 88.

■ **April 3-4:** The local rock 'n' roll band Sleeper, a regionally popular group in the 1970s, reunites for two shows to raise money for the long-term physical rehabilitation of Tom Goodwin, son of Sleeper guitarist Matt Goodwin, who was injured in a traffic accident.

■ **April 30:** Four white police officers who beat Rodney King, a black motorist, in Los Angeles are acquitted, and the decision sparks riots in LA and elsewhere, including Beloit.

One Beloit man is hospitalized in critical condition with injuries suffered when he was beaten during the melee, and at least 42 incidents of vandalism, mostly broken windows, are reported. Two other people sustain minor injuries.

Seven people are arrested on charges ranging from theft and unlawful assembly to burglary and looting. At least three people will be arrested and charged with aggravated battery in the man's beating.

The next day, 100 students from Beloit Memorial High School march from the school to the Beloit Mall to protest the California jury's decision.

■ Craig senior Clayton D. Willi, 18, of 629 S. Main, is sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to the first-degree murder of Jo Ellen Stuhr, 25, outside her rural Beloit home March 25.

Willi, who had been dating Stuhr's niece, told investigators he killed the young woman when they started arguing about the niece. Stuhr died of multiple head injuries and gunshot wounds.

■ **May 8-9:** American Indians from five states gather at the UW-Rock County campus for the first "Drums Along the Rock," a traditional powwow.

■ **May 16:** Buddy Melges of Zenda is at the helm when America3 outsails the Italian boat Il Moro di Venezia to reclaim America's Cup, the oldest trophy in sports.



Jeffrey Dahmer



# Racism rears its loathsome head in southern Wisconsin

Racism took center stage in Janesville in 1992 and put the city in the national spotlight.

It started in January, when anonymous ads began appearing in area newspapers soliciting membership in the Ku Klux Klan.

The man behind the local KKK was exposed Jan. 9, when Ken Petersen and his wife, Carol, sat in a conference room at The Janesville Gazette and explained why they were trying to organize the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Janesville.

"I've been interested in the organization for several years," Ken Petersen told a reporter, "because I believe that white people are not being treated equally. I believe we are the ones being discriminated against."

The next day, hours after the Gazette reported Petersen's Klan-organizing efforts and detailed his lengthy police record, Petersen announced he was disbanding the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

But it was far from the end of the Klan in Janesville—and the beginning of the public's awareness of Petersen's penchant for saying one thing and doing another.

On Feb. 4, Thom Robb, grand wizard of Knights of the Ku Klux Klan headquartered in Arkansas, announced he would debate a Janesville man, James Yarbrough, an African-American and a Beloit Equal Opportunity Commission officer.

On Feb. 15, about 500 people gathered outside the Janesville courthouse for a KKK news conference and the debate between Yarbrough and Robb.

Police had erected a snow fence to separate the Klan members from anti-racist protesters. More than 90 police officers, some in riot gear, were ready to deploy.

Yells of "White power!" from white supremacists brought replies of "Racist Nazi scum!" from young protesters. Seven were arrested, all for disorderly conduct.

An ecumenical worship service the next day at St. John Lutheran Church in Janesville brought together 400 people from a wide range of faiths as a show of unity in the face of KKK bigotry and belief in white supremacy.

The second Klan rally of the year was May 30 at Janesville's Rockport Park. Klan members raised a 20-foot cross wrapped in burlap and soaked with kerosene. But they never lit it—probably because they feared a

\$500 fine.

The snow fence and helmeted police kept Klan members and anti-racist protesters far apart.

Officers sprayed the crowd with a fire hose. A small cadre of college age radical anti-racist protesters—most from Minnesota, Madison and Milwaukee—fired back with rocks, pieces of broken snow fence and globs of mud. Most protesters were peaceful but vocal.

No serious injuries were reported, and eight of the 300 protesters were arrested.

The rally cost taxpayers about \$25,000 in police overtime.

During the rally, about 1,200 people gathered across town at Traxler Park as a show of racial harmony. The Party in the Park was organized by the Janesville Human Rights Task Force and YWCA.

Tension in the mostly white community rose with the summer heat.

On June 1, the community printed "An open letter to local and national Ku Klux Klan organizers." The names of those signing the anti-racist letter filled a full page of the Gazette with small print.

On July 25, Petersen led Klan members on a midnight march in the 200 block of Cherry Street, a neighborhood that had complained for weeks about harassment by the Klan.

Meanwhile, Petersen was planning a third Klan rally. It was supposed to happen Aug. 16 in Monterey Park, but Petersen called it off on Aug. 14, claiming he was concerned for public safety.

It might have been his own safety he was more worried about: The city set up the spot for the KKK platform behind a softball backstop. The racists would have nowhere to run if demonstrators got within a stone's throw.

Despite the cancellation, Yarbrough vowed that a counter-Klan rally still would happen at the Janesville courthouse.

As promised, on Aug. 16 more than 100 anti-Klan protesters gathered at the courthouse.

Yarbrough had said his anti-Klan group was going to march to Monterey Park, but at the courthouse that day, Yarbrough told the crowd: "If you choose to march against the Ku Klux Klan, I will be in front."

Though Petersen claimed to have called off the meeting, 60 racists from 13 white supremacy groups—including the KKK, skinheads and neo-Nazis—from 11 states were waiting

for the demonstrators on the street in front of Petersen's house at the dead-end of South Cherry Street.

Until reinforcements arrived, only a handful of Janesville police officers stood between the screaming anti-racists and a gaggle of white supremacists brandishing clubs, bats, boards and pipes.

In the end, however, the only fight was between talk show host Geraldo Rivera and a member of a neo-Nazi organization from Illinois. Rivera had started to interview Petersen when John McLaughlin approached. Rivera and McLaughlin exchanged words and then started to swing.

Both men were arrested, and the incident put Janesville into a less than flattering national spotlight.

Rivera claimed he came to Janesville to cover an unprecedented summit meeting of racist leaders. The bigots said they were here to coordinate their racist efforts.

In fact, both Rivera and the racists used each other—and Janesville.

Rivera used the show to kick off a new season and grab ratings for his tabloid TV show. The white supremacists used the event to get the publicity they craved.

Petersen, who claimed he organized the Klan in Janesville because Rock County authorities no longer wanted or appreciated his services as a paid drug informant, got the attention he sought and vexed the authorities he thought slighted him.

Doug Seymour, an anti-Klan investigator who acted as the undercover liaison between the bigots and Rivera's staff, got the summit meeting and publicity he wanted to identify and expose the racist leaders.

The anti-racist protesters expressed no desire and had no plans to march to Petersen's house until Rivera and his producer arrived at the courthouse and the producer spread word of the racist gathering.

Before the marchers arrived on Cherry Street, a group of eight anti-racists was chased by 20 white supremacists from outside Petersen's home. Some of those fleeing ducked into a nearby house, and their pursuers followed.

A woman in the house grabbed a gun, put it to the head of one of the bigots and pulled the trigger.

"Click."

The gun did not fire, preventing a possible killing and riot.

Two of the white supremacists involved in the scuffle later were arrested.



Ken Petersen





**More than 100 anti-Klan protesters gathered and marched in an August 1992 rally in Janesville. About 60 people belonging to racist groups waited for the protesters, but somehow major violence was averted. Geraldo Rivera, who was in Janesville during the rally, highlighted the scene in his talk show later that fall.**

Eleven days after the rally at his house, Petersen again announced he was disbanding his KKK group. But after only a week, Petersen, his wife and four others were seen erecting a KKK sign on property along the Sugar River in western Rock County.

Rivera's nationally syndicated talk show premiered for the season Sept. 14 featuring the Aug. 16 white supremacist rally in Janesville as an example of "Hate in the Heartland." Janesville community leaders denounced the show as "junk TV" and "highly sensationalized."

Another defection by Petersen and his wife was announced Oct. 14 at a La Crosse news conference called by the Center for Democratic Renewal. Seymour, investigator for the center, said the Petersens had defected from the Klan and gone into hiding because they feared their former bigoted buddies would try to kill them.

Asked how they could trust Petersen, a used-car dealer with a checkered reputation who had claimed before to have quit the Klan only to resume racist recruitment, a center representative said: "We check and double-

check everything he says."

Documents turned over by Petersen indicated he'd had contact with racist organizations in 37 states but had managed to lure only about a dozen Rock County residents into membership.

Organized racist events in Janesville came to an end with the passing of 1992, but racism didn't die.

In September 1994, a cross was burned outside the South High Street home of an interracial couple. Three teen boys were arrested, and one of them told police he burned the cross to impress Petersen, whose home the boys had visited.

In the next weeks, KKK fliers were found on car windshields in Janesville. One woman speculated she may have been a target because she was the mother of an interracial baby.

In January 1995, a cross was burned in Palmer Park. Petersen told the Gazette he had no idea about the cross burning.

On Aug. 19, 1995, it was Walworth County's turn. Seventeen out-of-town members of the KKK rallied in front of the Walworth County Courthouse in Elkhorn. Most of the 400 who

attended were there to yell opposition at the racists.

The Klan rallied and railed in Beloit on Dec. 6, 1997. A dozen white supremacists gave Nazi salutes on the steps of the Beloit courthouse to their dozen supporters. About 300 police stayed between the Klan and 400 anti-racist protesters. Nine radical anti-racist demonstrators were arrested for vandalism or violence.

At the same time, between 400 and 500 people attended an alternative rally at the Beloit College Field House organized by the Coalition of Concerned Citizens to promote and celebrate diversity, tolerance and cooperation.

As was the case at all the previous rallies, most of the racists and anti-racist protesters were from out of town.

Petersen's shenanigans with the Klan showed that prejudice and racism still lived in Janesville and Rock County, a hotbed of KKK activity in the 1920s. But the community's efforts to organize alternative events, denounce bigotry and ignore the white supremacists showed that racism and racists were not welcome in Rock County.

—Sid Schwartz

Melges, 62, won a gold medal sailing in the 1972 Olympics, and he is only Olympic gold medalist to win the America's Cup as well.

■ **June 20:** The temperature drops to 37 degrees, record cold for the date in Janesville, and frost damages crops already weakened by drought.

■ **June:** Alice Plautz of Janesville, who was a nurse in Vietnam, is named Wisconsin Vietnam Veteran of the Year by the state chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America.



**Alice Plautz**

■ **July 28:** Wynonna Judd wows an appreciative crowd at the Rock County 4-H Fair with a voice that is an "instrument in its prime that hits the twang in country, the rasp of the blues and the yearning in gospel."

■ **July 29:** Glory days, or at least their memories, return to Janesville as Ray Nitschke and Fuzzy Thurston, two Green Bay Packer legends, sign autographs at the Rock County 4-H Fair.

■ **Aug. 1:** Young teens get the hip-hop beat they crave from rapper Marky Mark and the Funky Bunch at the Rock County 4-H Fair.

■ **Aug. 5:** The Olympic Games are in full swing in Barcelona, Spain, and Janesville is part of them—in the form of Snakes, braided elastic fastening cords invented by Jim Flynn with help from Matt McGrath, both of Janesville.

The U.S. rowing team ordered them to transport their boats from the Olympic Village to the race lake because the hooks on more traditional bungee cords nick and scratch the boats' shells.



■ **Sept. 8:** Two candidates who can call Janesville home prevail in primary elections for U.S. Congress.

City native Russ Feingold, a state senator living in Middleton, uses a humorous ad campaign to make up for a shortage of campaign funds and low poll ratings to beat two other Democrats to win the nomination to run against Republican incumbent Bob Kasten for U.S. Senate.

And Janesville builder Mark Neumann creams Kenneth Elmer of Evansville, 16,543 to 3,451, to win the Republican nomination for the House of Representatives race. Neumann faces the unenviable task of running against Democrat Les Aspin, an 11-term incumbent with a large campaign war chest.

■ **Sept. 10:** Gillette Co. agrees to buy Parker Pen for \$561 million. Gillette says it has no plans to change or close any plants, including Arrow Park in Janesville, where 650 people are employed.

The work force has grown by 235 since 1986 when a group of European investors bought what was the Writing Instrument Group of the Parker Pen Co., founded in 1892 by George S. Parker and W.F. Palmer.

■ **Sept. 12:** Michael B. Wade, 47, formerly of Janesville, is sentenced to five months in federal prison and five months in a halfway house because of his guilty pleas to federal charges of running an illegal gambling operation for almost three years from his Janesville home.

In addition, Wade is forced to forfeit his duplex to the government.

Already sentenced to two months in jail, three years of probation and a \$2,000 fine was Terry S. Duller, 34, of 4910 Brentwood.

■ **September:** 12 to 15 percent of 1991 UW-Whitewater graduates are "underemployed," working jobs that require no professional training, such as hospital housekeeping. Eight percent were unemployed six months after graduation.

Meanwhile, the percentage of Wisconsin families earning middle incomes—defined as \$25,000 to \$50,000—has slipped from 47 percent to 43 percent in the past 15 years.

■ **Oct. 3:** Michael J. Weis, 43, who farms on County B west of Footville, apparently is trying to fix a self-propelled corn chopper from underneath the machine when it rolls over him and kills him.

Ten days later, some 50 friends and neighbors pitch in to harvest the corn on the Weis farm.

■ **Oct. 5:** Janesville crosses an historic boundary when the city council annexes 60 acres east of Highway 14. The parcel is south of County A.

■ **Oct. 26:** For the first time in 24 years, the Janesville Public Library restricts a book to adults only. The steamy volume is the provocative pictorial by the rock goddess Madonna: "Sex."

■ **Nov. 3:** A record voter turnout of 77 percent in Rock County and almost 96 percent of reg-

istered voters in Janesville helps Democrat Bill Clinton unseat President George Bush and native son Russ Feingold oust Republican Sen. Bob Kasten.

Traditionally Republican Rock County votes 31,156 for Clinton, 21,941 for Bush and 15,700 for third-party candidate Ross Perot. Rock County votes for Feingold 39,092 to 26,758 over Kasten.

Aspin garners 60 percent of total 1st District ballots to best Republican Mark Neumann and third-party candidate John Graf. Rock County results are Aspin, 41,132; Neumann, 22,853; and Graf, 2,124.

■ **Nov. 16:** Following public opinion, the Rock County Board rejects a half percent sales tax, 19-9.

■ **Dec. 5:** By better than a 2-1 margin, Janesville voters turn their backs on a \$28 million school district proposal to build a new middle school to replace Marshall, construct a new elementary school, remodel and expand Craig High and Franklin Middle schools and improve athletic fields at Parker High School.

■ **Dec. 25:** Gregory Aue, 32, is found dead with his hands and feet bound in his burning apartment at 215 S. High. He was beaten to death, and Aue's killer tried to burn his body.

On May 26, 1994, Joe Pearce will be found guilty of Aue's murder and arson. Pearce will be sentenced to life in prison. His earliest possible parole eligibility date is in 2029.

■ **Dec. 30:** Parker High's girls basketball team, which finished second in the spring WIAA Division 1 championship tournament, beats the No. 1 team in the country, Chicago Marshall, 66-63, in the Optimist Charity Classic Tourney in Milwaukee. The Vikings start 1993 as the state's No. 1 girls' high school basketball team and No. 11 nationwide.

■ **Sometime in 1992:** Donald and Geraldine Hedberg, known to all as Don and Gerry, sell Lab Safety Supply, a business they grew in Janesville, to W.W. Grainger for \$160 million.

■ The average annual salary for Janesville teachers is \$36,636, slightly above the state average and 4.4 percent more than the national average. Primary reasons for the above-average salaries are that Janesville teachers are highly educated and have many years of experience.

Starting pay is \$22,500; top salary for a teacher with a doctorate and 20 years of experience is \$44,957.

■ Janesville has its best housing construction year since 1978: 208 single-family houses, 41 duplexes and 10 apartment buildings.

■ After the Janesville Police Department directly lobbies the city council, council members OK hiring nine new officers.

■ The Janesville Boys & Girls Club grows to 512 members from its initial enrollment of 121 children in fall of 1989. The club expects to have

1,000 members before the school year ends.

■ The General Motors plant in Janesville needs 10 more months and many more workers than anticipated to reach its target of making 44 full-size sport-utility vehicles an hour. The plant was supposed to reach its daily assembly quota in February with 2,800 workers, but it takes until mid-December and 3,300 workers to achieve the goal. Nick Matich replaces Mike Spitzley as plant manager in May.

■ Isuzu and GM announce they have chosen the Janesville plant to make a small medium-duty truck with a forward-sitting cab starting in 1994 with one shift of 50 workers.

■ The number of full-time equivalent employees at SSI Technologies grows to 1,300 from 115 in 1982. The company makes sensors for the automotive industry and products from powdered, or sintered, metal.

■ Janesville race driver Stan Fox crashes on Lap 63 of the Indianapolis 500.

■ Craig gymnast Beth Salzman wins the girls' gymnastics state vault title.

■ Another Cougar, Eric Smothers, wins the state pole vault championship.

■ Both of Janesville's Babe Ruth teams win state baseball championships.

■ The Parker High boys' basketball team breaks a 49-game losing streak in Big Eight competition with a 73-71 victory over Madison La Follette and later has a satisfying 66-65 win over Craig.

■ Janesville starts a Pop Warner youth football program that draws 250 players.

■ Holly Nehs again is Janesville's women's golf champion, and Chris Pastore wins a three-hole playoff to return to the winner's perch in the men's city tourney.

■ The Janesville Police Department assigns liaison officers to full-time duty in Craig and Park-er high schools.

■ The average price of houses sold in Janesville continues to rise. The 1992 increase is about 8 percent following increases of almost 7 percent in 1990 and 9.5 percent in 1991. The average price of an existing Janesville house is \$68,745.

## 1993

■ **Jan. 1:** Mark D. Mielke Jr., 21, and his passenger, Gwen E. Engebretsen, 21, both of Footville, are killed when their car runs off Mineral Point Road and hits a tree. Mielke's father, Mark Sr., died in a traffic accident on Dec. 22, 1990.

■ **Jan. 20:** Rep. Les Aspin resigns his House seat to become secretary of defense in the new Clinton administration. A special election will be conducted to fill Aspin's 1st District post.

■ **Feb. 7:** Screams for help at 3:30 a.m. awaken James Lumb, a year-round resident of Maple Beach Subdivision on Lake Koshkonong. Joseph Lechner, 29, rural Milton, drove his all-terrain



vehicle through the lake ice while participating in an ice fishing contest.

Lumb grabs a garden hose and pushes his rowboat over the ice to where he can toss the hose to Lechner and pull him to the boat. Milton Fire Department personnel then pull both men to safety.

■ **March 1:** The Alliance of Greater Janesville, an anti-drug and alcohol abuse group, and the Boy Scouts of America Sinissippi Council announce that they soon will start Safe Rides, a program that will give drunk or stoned teenagers free, confidential rides home on Friday and Saturday nights.

■ **March 7:** John Scott Sr. dies at age 81 after a life in which he promoted interracial understanding in predominantly white Janesville.

Scott, an African-American, moved to Janesville in 1948, and he and his wife, Mildred, raised five children there, an often difficult task because theirs was one of the community's handful of black families.

In 1961, with intervention from the federal government, Scott finally landed a job in Janesville—at the GM plant. In 1975, Scott founded a local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and in 1981, a scholarship program for minority students from Craig and Parker high schools was named for Scott.

■ **April 1:** The Rev. Phillip C. Keyes, 66, a Catholic priest living in Porter Township and heading an independent ultraconservative parish in Mukwonago, pleads no contest and is found guilty of sexual assault on a 10-year-old boy at the priest's home.

Keyes will be sentenced to a year in jail and 10 years of probation.

■ **April 6:** Republican Mark Neumann, a Janesville builder, and Democrat Peter Barca, a state Assembly representative from Kenosha, win their respective parties' primaries for the right to square off May 4 in a special election to fill Aspin's vacant House seat.

Neumann defeats state Rep. Charles Coleman of Whitewater.

Barca bests Jeffrey Neubauer, state Democratic Party chairman; Samuel Platts, an Elkhorn minister; state Rep. Wayne Wood of Janesville; and Dr. Jeff Thomas of Janesville.

■ **April 15:** Fire destroys First Baptist Church of Clinton, one of the village's oldest buildings. Three firefighters sustain minor injuries. Cause and a damage estimate are not immediately available.

The church was built in 1849 at Clinton Corners and was moved in 1858 to 309 Allen.

■ **April 16:** The rain-swollen Rock River overflows its banks and floods parts of Riverside Park and Mole & Sadler's subdivision on the river's west bank.

■ Janesville Red Cross volunteers and blood donors mark the 20th anniversary of the community's first Bloodmobile collection.

■ **May 4:** Democrat Peter Barca defeats Republican Mark Neumann by 740 votes, 55,578 to 54,838, but the official canvass of votes reduces the margin to 723. Neumann requests a recount, but he still winds up 673 votes short.

■ **May 14:** Janesville police ticket eight drivers as the city starts enforcing its new anti-cruising ordinance and effectively kills the city's downtown circuit, which is the name for both a loop of one-way streets and the practice of cruising them.

The ordinance will be challenged and found to be constitutional.

Circuit-riding downtown has been a fact of young life in Janesville since July 1956 when the city changed four downtown streets into one-way routes. While the anti-cruising ordinance flips off the switch on the downtown circuit, it does not stop cruising as young people from Janesville and elsewhere in the area take their vehicles and their desire to see and be seen to Milton Avenue.

By year's end, the number of arrests downtown for violations usually associated with the circuit—vandalism, disorderly conduct, drinking and drug offenses and motor vehicle violations—drops 57 percent compared with 1992.

■ **May 18:** Fred and Lou Jane Warner, 825 N. Osborne, Janesville, are ordered by a federal court to pay a \$167,000 settlement to Larry and Jewel Forrest for reneging on the sale of their former Beloit house to the Forrests because the Forrests are black. The Warners are white.

In addition, the Warners are subject to a number of conditions on future sales of real estate. The settlement is called the largest in Wisconsin history, and Forrest, a retired Army sergeant and Vietnam veteran, hopes the case will wake people up to both their rights and responsibilities.

■ **May 30:** Driving the oldest car in the field, Stan Fox of Janesville lasts 64 laps in the Indianapolis 500.

■ **June 14:** The Janesville City Council votes 4-3 to reverse itself and end what was supposed to have been a four-month experiment with traffic diversion in the Fourth Ward.

Fourth Ward residents complained for years about speeding, noisy traffic in their neighborhood bordering downtown, but they dislike even more the cones, barricades and yellow flashing lights that turn their neighborhood into a maze

that few can traverse easily.

■ **July 14:** Janesville's Sears catalog store at 2811 Milton reopens after a two-month hiatus and a change in ownership. Sears ended its catalog months earlier, and the Janesville store was one of just 350 of 2,000 catalog stores picked to remain open.

The reopened store sells appliances and lawn and garden equipment.

In 1983, Sears, which operated a retail store in Janesville since 1928, scaled back its operations here to only the catalog store. The reopened store returns a retail Sears operation to the city.

■ **July 28:** A country classic, none other than the Man in Black, Johnny Cash, performs at the Rock County 4-H Fair and draws almost 16,000 people to the fairgrounds.

Three nights later, another classic act, this of the rock 'n' roll variety, Cheap Trick, plays a by-the-numbers concert of the Rockford, Ill., group's greatest hits.

■ **Aug. 1:** Vicky Joranlein gets goosebumps as she clammers 25 feet above the Rock River on the backs and shoulders of her water-skiing Rock Aqua Jay teammates to be the top person on a five-high pyramid.

At 4-foot-11, 76 pounds, the athletic 15-year-old is the perfect person to top off the first five-high pyramid created by amateur water-skiers. The Aqua Jays also set records as the first amateur group to build a three-high pyramid in 1974 and first with a four-high in 1981.

The club has been working on the five-high since 1985.

■ **Aug. 3:** The Janesville Police and Fire Commission selects George Brunner, No. 2 person in the police department, as the city's 15th police chief, succeeding the retiring Ray Voelker.

■ **Aug. 4:** Randy Christiansen, former clerk of courts for Rock County and a former deputy sheriff, is sentenced to five years in prison on a conviction of third-degree sexual assault. The 22-year-old woman who is the victim in the case alleged that Christiansen had started assaulting her when she was 9.

In exchange for Christiansen's no-contest plea, the prosecution dropped three other sexual assault charges, two charges of obstructing and two charges of misconduct in office.

■ **Aug. 5:** Two Hell's Angels, outlaw bikers, on their way to the annual motorcycle rally in Sturgis, S.D., are beaten, robbed and stripped of their colors, or gang insignia, by members of the Outlaws, another bandit biker gang, outside Slick's, a well-known bar on Janesville's Milton Avenue.

The incident triggers a deadly war between the



Johnny Cash



George Brunner



gangs that continued through 1999.

■ **Sept. 2:** Carol Streuly, 27, a former Janesville resident, is sentenced to nine months in jail and seven years of probation for child neglect.

On May 29, 1991, Streuly's 16-month-old daughter, Autumn, suffocated to death when she accidentally locked herself in a car while Streuly slept in her Janesville home. Streuly also was convicted of neglecting her 3-year-old daughter, Amber.

■ **Sept. 12:** After 10 years of pained silence, Kelly Waterman goes public with charges that her cross-country coach and humanities teacher at Craig High School, James Holt, sexually abused her for two years when she was a student.

Within four weeks, two more young women—Renee (Halsey) Schillo and Carole Gridley—tell the Gazette similar stories: They trusted Holt and turned to him for someone to talk to, but he eventually made unwanted passes and began kissing and fondling them.

In Waterman's case, she says the situation evolved into a sexual relationship between a middle-aged teacher and a junior in high school.

In 1992, Waterman went to the school district with her charges. After an internal investigation, Superintendent Don Mrdjenovich recommended Holt be fired.

Holt denied the charges but resigned, he said, because he wanted to protect his family, especially his father, Fred, who was district superintendent from 1959 to 1978, from the bad publicity.

Janesville police investigated Schillo's charges within a year of the alleged abuse and recommended Holt be arrested and charged with misdemeanor sexual assault, but the Rock County District Attorney's Office did not pursue the case because it thought it could not be proved beyond a reasonable doubt.

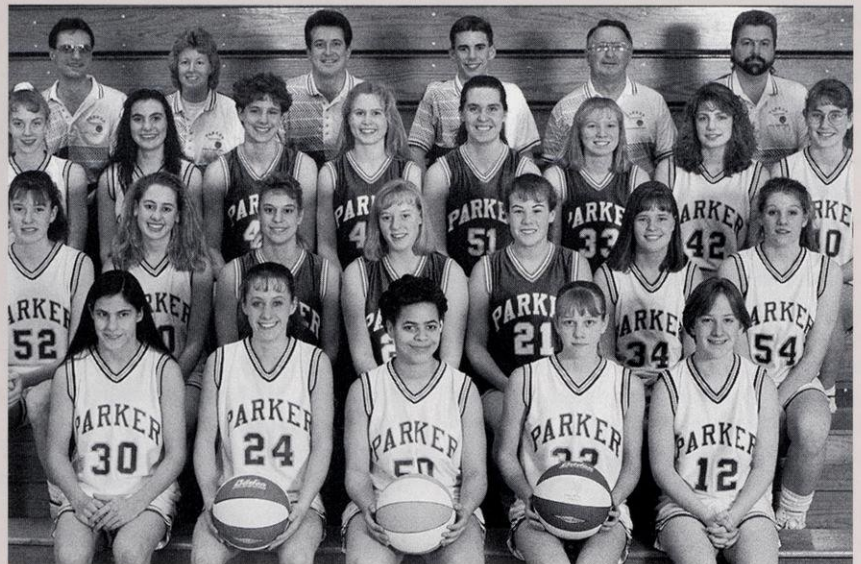
By the time the women come to the Gazette with their stories, the statute of limitations on the alleged crimes has expired.

The Gazette investigates the allegations thoroughly and agonizes over whether to print them. Holt is a respected educator and member of the community, and no official action was taken against him, except for the school district investigation. Officials are bound by law to keep the investigation confidential from the press and public, but they also wrote about it and the superintendent's recommendation for dismissal to Waterman.

The Gazette is both praised and castigated for publishing the women's charges. Holt denies the allegations. The Gazette stands by its stories.

■ **Sept. 30:** James S. Trudgeon Jr., 49, former executive vice president at M&I Bank, Beloit, is sentenced to 2½ years in prison for embezzling more than \$575,000 from the bank and to make restitution.

Also a member of the board of Beloit Catholic



The Parker Viking girls' basketball team won the state WIAA Division 1 title on March 13, 1993. Team members included, front row, from left: Shawn Burrow, Melissa Mayfield, Amy Beck, Brenda Torres and Lisa Schumacher; second row: Tammy Olson, Margo Gloede, Deb Danner, Amber Dongarra, Katie Bartling, Vanessa Elrod and Sarah Harrington; third row: Becky Williams, Gwen Vogel, Jennah Burkholder, Amy Miller, Tait Scieszinski, Betsy Borg-wardt, Michele Burkholder and Amy Tessmer; fourth row: assistant coach Joe LaChance, assistant coach Jane Dooley, head coach Tom Klawitter, manager Braddy Bohlman, assistant coach Dale Barry and assistant coach Mike Brunhoefer.

## Viking girls bring state title to Janesville

“We’ve got it! We’ve got it!” a triumphant Coach Tom Klawitter exclaimed at 9:58 p.m. Saturday, March 13, 1993.

“It” was a convincing 58-40 victory by his Parker High girls’ team over Middleton. “It” was the coveted gold basketball trophy. “It” was the WIAA Division 1 championship.

Led by the Burkholder sisters, senior Jennah and junior Michele, the Vikings amassed a 26-1 record to culminate a march to the state championship that really started in the 1989-90 season.

That season, Jennah Burkholder was a promising freshman; the Vikings went 22-3 and made it to the state quarterfinals. A 23-2 season in 1990-91 also ended in the quarterfinals.

In the 1991-92 season, the Vikings posted a sparkling 25-2 record but had to settle for second place in the state when they lost the title game to Hartford, 60-51.

The destiny of the 1992-93 team became apparent on Dec. 30, 1992, when Parker beat the No. 1 team in the country—Chicago Marshall—66-63 in a Milwaukee tournament. The Vikings started 1993

ranked No. 1 in Wisconsin and No. 11 nationwide.

The lone regular season loss was to Sun Prairie, but pressure on the team and Klawitter mounted with expectations for a state championship.

In the quarterfinals, the Vikings spanked previously undefeated West Allis, 72-63. Mounting a tough challenge, Eau Claire Memorial nearly upset Parker in the semifinals, but the Vikings prevailed 46-40.

Leading Middleton in the championship game was Wisconsin’s all-time scoring leader for girls’ basketball, Angie Halbleib, who set a tournament record with 44 points against Fond du Lac in the semifinals. But Parker’s tenacious defense hounded Halbleib and held her to 17 points.

The Vikings blasted Middleton with a balanced attack. Jennah had 18 points and eight rebounds. Michele racked up 14. Tait Scieszinski scored 13 points, and Amy Miller posted 10.

Jennah and Michele were named to the All-Big Eight team.

Klawitter, who had a 96-8 record over four years, was named Wisconsin coach of the year by the Associated Press.



High School, Trudgeon says he used most of the money to help the school through difficult financial straits from 1985 until 1993.

■ **Oct. 4:** Defense contractor Alliant Techsystems of Edina, Minn., buys Astra UPC Corp., a Virginia corporation, and with it Accudyne of Janesville and another subsidiary. Accudyne makes fuses and other components for military ordnance.

■ **Oct. 12:** The Rock County Airport becomes a movie set for the day as filming for "I Love Trouble" uses the airfield as the fictional Spring Creek Airport.

The movie stars Julia Roberts and Nick Nolte as competing Chicago reporters on the trail of scandal in Dairyland, and Nolte is at the airport to film a brief scene of getting on an airplane. One of the extras for the movie is 10-year-old Andrew Witkins of Beloit, who plays a member of a Boy Scout troop.

■ **Oct. 13:** Woolworth Corp. announces it will close its department stores in Beloit and Janesville. The Janesville Woolworth's (Janesville Athletic Club Riverfront Centre) has operated downtown since 1912.

■ **Oct. 30:** Pumped to near delirium by the Badgers' football victory over archrival Michigan, students stampede at UW-Madison's Camp Randall, creating a literal human crush that injures at least 69 people, seven critically.

■ **Dec. 15:** 11 months into his new job, Les Aspin, 55, announces he will resign as secretary of defense Jan. 20 for what he claims are personal reasons.

The real reason is that Aspin has become an easy target for Republican critics of the new Clinton administration because of its flawed "don't ask, don't tell" policy on homosexuals in the military and the perceived boondoggie of the U.S. peace-making mission in Somalia.

U.S. troops won a firefight Oct. 3 with a Somalian warlord's forces, but the cost was high: 18 Americans killed, 78 wounded, and one captured. The Somalis dragged an American's body through the streets.

It was later learned that Aspin had turned down a field commander's request for tanks and other armored vehicles—which, if Aspin had OK'd it, could not have been met before the Oct. 3 battle—but GOP foes of Clinton's policies lock on to Aspin as a target.

■ **Sometime in 1993:** The state bans yard waste from sanitary landfills, so the city of Janesville ends the practice of regularly collecting grass clipping and bundled brush with other garbage.

■ Rock County adopts a countywide 911

emergency telephone system.

■ Jeff Bruegger defeats seven-time champ Gregg Clatworthy to win his fourth men's city golf title but first since 1988.

■ Holly Nehs again is Janesville women's golf champion.

## 1994

■ **Jan. 1:** The UW-Madison football Badgers go 9-1-1 in the 1993 regular season to win a share of the Big Ten championship and the team's first trip to the Rose Bowl in 31 years. There, the Badgers best UCLA, 21-16.

■ **Jan. 17-18:** Low temperature for Jan. 17 is minus 26, and the high is a frigid minus 4. The low for Jan. 18 is 28 degrees below zero, 1 degree above the all-time low recorded temperature for Janesville, set on Jan. 23, 1936.

Jan. 18 does tie a record for lowest high temperature, minus 15, also set on Jan. 23, 1936.

The low temperatures for the next three days are identical: minus 26. In all, January has 14 days with lows below zero, including nine straight days. Three days have highs below zero.

■ **Feb. 1:** An 87-year-old woman suffering from Alzheimer's disease wanders from her niece's rural home on Van Allen Road and is found huddled in life-threatening cold—minus 17—wearing only jeans and a sweater. The woman suffers frostbitten fingers and is hospitalized in fair condition.

■ **Feb. 19:** First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton visits Blackhawk Technical College to push for her and her husband's health care system overhaul.

Rodham Clinton tells the crowd of 1,600 that the United States has best health care in the world but the "stupidest financing system. ... I've talked to thousands of Americans who work every day but don't have insurance. But their taxes pay for insurance for those on welfare."

The Clintons' plan, she says, is to make the employer-employee insurance system available to more people at lower cost by creating large purchasing cooperatives that would allow small businesses to negotiate better, less costly coverage with insurance companies.

Rodham Clinton is probably only the second first lady to visit Janesville while her husband is in office. Bess Truman accompanied her husband, Harry, when he made a seven minute stop on May 14, 1950, while riding a train from Madison to Chicago.

First ladies who visited Janesville either before or after their husbands were president include Eleanor Roosevelt in the late 1940s, Jacqueline

Kennedy and Barbara Bush. A 1994 story mentions Pat Nixon and Rosalynn Carter, but their visits did not turn up in Century of Stories research.

■ **March 1:** Matthew J. Smith, 32, of 1520 Claremont, pleads no contest to his sixth and seventh charges of drunken driving. The plea deal dismisses seven charges of driving on a revoked license and other charges and calls for Smith to serve two years in jail with work-release privileges and pay fines totaling \$3,056.

■ **March 3-4:** Just three years after Craig and Parker high schools joined to form a Janesville high school hockey team, the Bluebirds—the nickname of old Janesville High—come from three goals down to beat Fond du Lac, 5-4, in the quarterfinals of the state championship tournament.

However, the Battling 'Birds fall 2-0 in the semifinal game to Madison Memorial, which doesn't score its first goal until well into the final period and whose second goal was an empty-net score with time winding down.

■ **March 28:** Amy Houseman, 18, of 1426 Oakland, is killed when her car is hit by a train where the tracks cross Van Allen Road east of Janesville. A passenger, Nicole K. Lou, 18, one of Houseman's senior classmates at Craig, is hospitalized in good condition.

The accident—and another the year before in which two Beloit boys were killed from excessive speed not a collision with a train—prompt La Prairie Township residents to demand and receive safety improvements at the crossing from the town board.

■ **March 30:** John Eyster, social studies teacher at Parker High School who will lead his 21st Washington Seminar to the nation's capital in April to get hands-on education about government, is featured on The Disney Channel's "Salute to the American Teacher."

■ **April 16:** Charles and Cheryl Holznecht know the impact of violence because of their jobs: He's a Rock County court commissioner; she's a counselor at Wilson Elementary School.

Their offer—"A One-Shot Deal"—to buy guns for \$25 each brings 68 weapons, including 11 sawed-off shotguns and rifles and one bayonet, to the Janesville Police Department.

Their goal is to raise community awareness as well as reduce the number of guns in private hands. Most people turning in guns say they are concerned that children would get ahold of them.



Jeff Bruegger



Hillary Rodham Clinton



John Eyster



## A 'Miracle' takes place in Wisconsin

The world changed for Dave and Valerie Heider of rural Janesville on Aug. 20, 1994. For those who subscribe to American Indian spiritual beliefs, the world simply changed—for everyone.

The Heiders raised exotic animals, including American bison, and early on that Saturday in August, one of their buffalo cows gave birth to a female white buffalo calf.

The Heiders knew the calf was rare—"She's our little miracle," Valerie said, giving the calf her name—and they contacted local newspapers. The Associated Press picked up the story and distributed it worldwide.

Five days later, American Indians arrived at the Heider farm just south of Janesville on South River Road.

The Oneida man leading the group told the Heiders that the spirits told him of the birth of a white buffalo calf while he and his family attended an Indian spiritual ceremony in South Dakota. When he returned to his Wisconsin home, he read about Miracle and drove immediately to the Heider farm.

The Indian asked the Heiders if they would pray with him in a pipe ceremony.

"We watched him pray to the four directions and for world peace," Valerie said. "He cried right out loud because it was so meaningful and so sacred to him.

"That's when I turned to David and I said:

"There must be something to all of this.'"

All of this is the Lakota Sioux legend of White Buffalo Calf Woman.

In the past, the tribe had gathered in a time of trouble: There was no game, and the people were starving.

A beautiful young woman came to the Sioux, gave them a sacred pipe and taught them to pray: "With this holy pipe, you will walk like a living prayer."

She told the Sioux of the value of women, children and buffalo. She told the people she would return. As she walked away, she rolled on the ground four times, emerging as a white buffalo calf.

The Sioux cherished the sacred pipe, and the buffalo became plentiful and sustained them.

Those who take the legend to heart believe that the birth of the white buffalo calf is an omen of peace, good fortune and reconciliation of divided humanity.

"For many, it's like the second coming of Christ," Dave said.

The Oneida pilgrim was among the first of some 250,000 people—with motives spiritual, inquisitive and mercenary—who have visited the Heider farm since Miracle's birth. Representatives of some 300 tribes—including the African Masai and Australian Aborigines—have visited the farm. Celebrities have come to see Miracle.

The visitors have left thousands of gifts: woven web-shaped Indian dream catchers, pipes, pouches of tobacco, scarves, beads, feathers, photographs, treasured mementos. The Heiders save some of the gifts for Miracle's museum and burn the rest as instructed by Indian elders.

Besides pilgrims, the Heiders have been inundated by reporters from all over the world. David Letterman wanted to fly Miracle to New York for his late-night show. The Heiders' privacy is a thing of the past.

The Heiders have received many offers for Miracle.

Rock 'n' roll star Ted Nugent, an avid outdoorsman, offered to buy Miracle as did media magnate Ted Turner. An Indian tribe offered to trade 750 head of bison for Miracle.

She is not for sale, the Heiders maintained. They were moved by the calf's soothing, inspiring effect on believers.

In September 1999, a veterinarian performed surgery on Miracle to remove a bone chip from one of her hooves and clear up an infection the chip had caused. Miracle recovered well.

Miracle's coat changed colors as she matured and was not white at the end of 1999. It was blondish brown.

But that doesn't make her less sacred to American Indians, whose medicine men said the buffalo's changing colors are part of the legend and prophecy of White Buffalo Calf Woman.

■ **April 25:** Curbside recycling collection starts in Janesville. The cost is budgeted at \$415,000, but a state grant and revenue from recycled material are expected to make the net cost to the city \$159,000.

■ **May 1:** Body piercing is alive and well—although sometimes more than a bit painful—in Janesville at Diamond Ted's Tattoo & Body Piercing Studio, 941 N. Washington. Besides ears, the most popular piercing points are navels, noses, nipples and eyelids.

■ Alexander R. Munro, 19, of 6654 Wood Ridge, is killed in a head-on collision on Highway 14 west of Janesville. Making the accident more horrific is the fact that the other driver, David Ambrose, 24, Edgerton, has not only been drinking and driving a stolen car but also has been driving recklessly that day in an attempt to kill himself.

He steals another car Sept. 21, two days before he is to enter a plea agreement, but he is found in Milwaukee. Ambrose pleads guilty to homicide by intoxicated driving and the two car theft charges and is sentenced to 10 years in prison.

■ **May 16:** After being closed for two weeks to pack and move 200,000 items, the Janesville

Public Library reopens in a temporary home, the former Kmart store (Rock County Job Center), 1900 Center. The library will stay in temporary quarters until September 1995 while its building on South Main Street is renovated and expanded.

■ **June 15:** Rick Crites, Kevin Alwin, Terri Corwith and Bill Gempeler all are honored with General Motors Life-Saving awards in a dinner at the Janesville Country Club for the combined efforts that kept their colleague, Terry Emard, from bleeding to death after an accident at the GM plant in January.

Emard caught his leg in a machine on the Suburban assembly line, and his partner, Crites, shut down the apparatus. Corwith, a safety representative, and Alwin ran to the sounds of Emard's screams. Alwin pulled the belt off his jacket for use as a tourniquet and ran to call for help.

Corwith and Gempeler applied the tourniquet and comforted Emard, who had to wait for some 20 minutes while millwrights cut apart the machine to free his mangled leg.

■ **July 13:** Married less than three months, Gary R. Duncan and Julie Flood Duncan, both 33, of 3327 Royal Road, are killed in a plane crash in Pennsylvania.

Gary, the pilot, was both a GM employee and a flight instructor for Roessel Aviation at the Rock County Airport. Julie recently learned she was pregnant.

■ **Aug. 7:** Richard Kyle, 46, bales hay on his Milton farm despite winning \$100,000 the day before in the Wisconsin Lottery Powerball game. Regardless of the windfall, the cows still must be milked and fed, and other chores must be tended to.

■ **Aug. 26:** The Rolling Stones bring their Voodoo Lounge tour and a monster stage set to Camp Randall, and before swinging into "Satisfaction," lead singer Mick Jagger asks the crowd how many people are there from Milwaukee.

He then startles more than a few in the crowd of 55,000 by asking: "How 'bout J-J-Janesville?"

Many Stones fans from Janesville applaud and shout heartily.

Mick saw the city's name on an Interstate sign when the Stones were traveling from the Dane County Airport to the stadium.

■ **Sept. 3:** Jerry Jeff Walker and the Gonzo Comrades deliver good music, a friendly attitude and a fine time to the Labor Fest grounds in Janesville.



The author of "Mr. Bojangles," Walker visited the Heider farm earlier in the day and mentions the white buffalo calf, Miracle, several times during his one hour show.

■ **Sept. 13:** By a margin of only 435 votes—5,876 to 5,451—Janesville voters approve building a \$13.7 million middle school to replace Marshall.

■ **Oct. 16:** Bishop William Bullock celebrates Mass at St. William Church and informs parishioners that their pastor, the Rev. Robert Reardon, has resigned because he has AIDS and must rest and receive treatment. The next day, a spokeswoman for the Madison Diocese says that the diocese doesn't know how the 55-year-old priest contracted the disease.

Congregation members are stunned and saddened that their well-liked, down-to-earth pastor has a terminal illness.

■ **October:** The Gazette starts a new page—JNL—that is designed for and by 10- to 14-year-old students. The students name the page and insist that JNL is not an acronym and has no meaning other than the letters themselves.

The students develop and write stories under the direction of a Gazette editor.

■ **Nov. 3:** Janesville's "Mr. Recreation," Pat Dawson, dies at age 90.

In 1929, Dawson, a star athlete at Beloit High School and Beloit College, joined the Janesville school system. He coached many sports and became director of athletics and physical education.

Dawson also served as recreation director for the city of Janesville, which named its softball complex for him in 1980.

■ **Nov. 4:** Because of numerous fire and housing code violations that are deemed a threat to health and safety, the city of Janesville closes the Regency Hotel and London Pub, 121 E. Milwaukee (Hill Top Cafe), and at least 33 residents are homeless except for motel rooms or the hospitality of friends and relatives.

The owner is Sam Dalip, who blames low-income residents for the problems. Hotel tenants say they paid plenty in rent but Dalip did not maintain the building.

■ **Nov. 8:** The third time is the charm for Republican Mark Neumann of Janesville who defeats Democratic incumbent Peter Barca for the 1st District seat in the U.S. House. Neumann wins by less than 2 percent of the total vote.

In a seeming political reversal, Barca does not carry his home county of Kenosha, and Neumann loses Rock County to the Democrat, 23,985 to 18,740.

■ **Dec. 15:** The \$3 million Rock County Juvenile Detention Facility opens next to the Rock County Jail on Highway 14.

■ **Dec. 25:** It's both a merry Christmas and happy birthday for Clare Linn Larson of Beloit, who celebrates her 105th birthday. She remem-

## Shocking murder doesn't stop the giving

It was sensational and tawdry and tragic. The murder of Janesville philanthropist and millionaire Duane Rath on Oct. 5, 1994, shocked the entire community.

The events of the night that ended in the stabbing of Rath, 53, and suicide of his lover, Frederick "Ted" Hurdman, 48, probably never will be known.

Police later surmised that Hurdman might have killed Rath in a jealous rage over another man. Hurdman, a former Green Beret with a violent temper, stabbed Rath at least 12 times with a pair of large kitchen knives.

Friends theorized that Hurdman could have become violent if he found out that Rath was ready to cut off Hurdman's money. Rath supported Hurdman and his expensive hobby of showing horses.

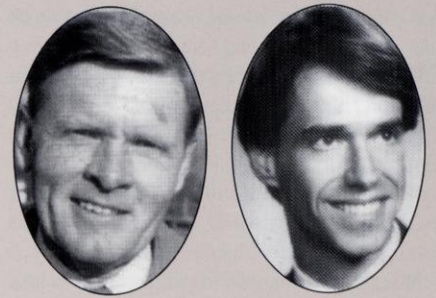
Hurdman asphyxiated himself with carbon monoxide from the exhaust fumes of a Land Rover and Mercedes-Benz in the garage on Rath's Janesville estate, 1720 S. River Road.

Rath's death was especially tragic because just a few years earlier he had sold his company, Rath Manufacturing, which was started by his father.

An astute businessman, Rath built the company into a great success. He was named Wisconsin Small Businessman of the Year in 1975.

He also had started a foundation and was ready to seek out causes dear to his heart.

Rath already had donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to various AIDS and Alzheimer's charities and to Rotary Gardens in Janesville.



**Duane Rath**

**Frederick Hurdman (1980s photo)**

Friends at the time noted Rath's intelligence, kindness and generosity.

He was known nationally for establishing a fund that still pays to send the children of full-time Rath employees to college.

He was also an active investor in the historic community of Mineral Point.

Despite the fact that Rath held some bitterness toward the city he grew up in—he told an acquaintance once that it wasn't easy growing up homosexual in such a conservative community—he never turned his back on Janesville.

He bequeathed his \$500,000 Janesville estate to Cedar Crest, a retirement community, and his will named Hurdman as the heir of a \$1 million home in Key West, Fla., cars, furniture and antiques. The Key West property and the rest of Rath's assets went to his foundation.

Despite his death, Rath's charity—through his foundation—continues to help and enrich lives.

—Marcia Nelesen

bers candles burning on the Christmas trees of her girlhood as she grew up on the prairie of North Dakota.

Clare has relatives to share those memories with. Her 95-year-old sister, Gertrude, is her roommate at Beloit Convalescent Center, and her daughter, LaVaughan Larson Kunny, lives in Beloit.

■ **Sometime in 1994:** Rick Dehring, social studies instructor at Blackhawk Technical College, is the only Wisconsin teacher to win the 1994 Teaching Excellence Award from the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development.

Christine Flottum, special needs instructor at BTC, is chosen by the Wisconsin Vocational Association as Specialty Services Member of the Year.

■ **Restarting after an arson fire on Jan. 17, 1992,** Gray Brewing Co., 2424 W. Court, changes its focus from specialty sodas to micro brewed

ales and wins two gold medals at the 1994 Great American Beer Festival.

■ **The Lincoln-Tallman Restorations,** whose \$853,000 interior and exterior restoration project is completed during the year, draws 14,100 visitors.

Exterior restoration cost \$653,000, and refurbishing the inside cost \$200,000.

■ **Some 600 GM workers laid off at other plants move to Janesville,** some to fill existing jobs left vacant by retirements or death but most to help increase production of the popular Subur-bans, Tahoes and Yukons, for which GM has six months of back orders.

United Auto Workers Local 95 wants new jobs to be filled by local new hires because the transferees have more seniority than workers hired locally in 1986 to staff the old pickup line, which at one point had no product scheduled but which became the medium-duty truck line. The issue and a "modern operating agreement" contract rejected by Local 95 members remain



points of contention between the union and local management as the year ends.

■ The plant's GMC Suburban wins a best-in-class initial quality award from J.D. Power & Associates, an auto-rating firm.

■ The city of Janesville extends sewer service to the Rock County Airport.

■ Janesville builds the first legs of its popular bicycle and pedestrian trail system.

■ Golfers play 80,855 rounds at Riverside and Blackhawk golf courses in Janesville, which are leased to and operated by GreenVisions Inc.

■ Stan Fox of Janesville crashes head-on into the wall in the Indianapolis 500, but because the accident occurs with only three laps to go, he finishes 13th in the 33-car field.

■ Jeff Bruegger and Holly Nehs repeat as Janesville's city golf champions.

■ Janesville's Senior Babe Ruth team again wins the state baseball title.

## 1995

■ **Jan. 6:** The Leyes family—parents Dick and Elnora and son Randy—close their downtown Janesville Floral Shop, 54 S. Main, (Frankie's on Main Pizzeria) to consolidate the business at 1021 Mineral Point.

Janesville Floral has been a downtown fixture since 1893, when George and Fred Rentschler started the business with greenhouses in the 200 block of South Main Street, which were removed in 1918 to make room for the new Janesville High School (Marshall Apartments). The store at 54 S. Main was built in 1927 with the new feature of a "huge neon tube sign." The store's electric cash register might also have been a first for the city.

Dick and Elnora started managing the business in 1948 and bought it in 1951.

■ **Jan. 31:** The Craig wrestling team wins its first meet over crosstown rival Parker since 1975.

■ **Feb. 4:** Ashley Clark, 609 S. Main, falls off the railroad trestle across the Rock River north of the Centerway bridge and dam, but luckily for the 11-year-old, he falls only 8 feet before landing on a concrete abutment, rather than in the dark, swirling water 45 feet farther down.

His pal, Phillip Conaway, 8, of 1421 Gartland, scampers across the trestle and runs to Mercy Hospital for help. Police and fire personnel rescue Clark, who has a broken arm.

■ **February:** GM wants its Janesville plant to boost production of Suburbans, Tahoes and Yukons, and after often contentious negotiations with Local 95, the company agrees to hire 500 more people to help accomplish the goal.

Most of the new hires will be local folks referred by current employees rather than transferees from other plants. The required local referrals prompt some employees to sell referrals.

■ **March 1:** A Janesville School District survey shows that of Janesville 12th-graders, 46 per-

cent report trying marijuana at least once and 13 percent have used pot more than 100 times.

■ **March 4:** World War I veteran Thomas Kerr, 99, dies of a heart attack after a fire starts in his home at 1014 N. Pine.

Kerr's daughter, Roberta, comes home to find the house filled with smoke. She alerts neighbor Donald Homan who tries to carry Kerr from the house but cannot because of the smoke.

Police and firefighters think the fire started when Kerr's flannel shirt ignited as he reached across a hot electric stove, and his consequent anxiety triggered the heart attack, which an autopsy revealed.

■ **April 17:** Work starts on the expansion and renovation of the Rock County Courthouse in Janesville. The first part of the project is a new parking ramp on the west side of the courthouse.

Cost for the ramp is \$898,615; J.P. Cullen & Sons of Janesville is the general contractor.

■ **April 21:** Working undercover, Janesville police officer Joe Zwaska arranges to buy cocaine from 15-year-old Leon Kelley, but Kelley tries to rob Zwaska and shoots him in the stomach.

Zwaska returns fire, and Kelley runs. Two of Zwaska's five shots find their target, and Kelley dies in a Rockford, Ill., hospital.

The investigation will show that Zwaska was legally intoxicated—blood alcohol concentration of 0.12—at the time of the shooting. Officers on the Rock County Metro Unit are allowed to drink while working undercover, but Janesville Police Chief George Brunner describes Zwaska's level of intoxication as "clearly unacceptable."

A special prosecutor will rule the shooting was justifiable self-defense and that Zwaska was not impaired or influenced by the alcohol he drank. The officer tells detectives that he would take beer on undercover assignments so that he could use the excuse that he was drinking to avoid doing drugs with the people he was investigating.

Brunner will backtrack on his earlier comment, saying that a blood alcohol level of 0.12 is unacceptable under "normal circumstances" such as when officers are not working undercover. Zwaska will return to regular patrol duty in Janesville. In 1996, the Wisconsin Professional Police Association will bestow its highest honor, the Award of Valor, on Zwaska, a 15-year police veteran.

■ **May 17:** Isa Dzeladini, owner of Burch's Cottage Inn in Delavan, pleads no contest to three counts of unlawful sexual contact to avoid trial on a total of seven charges resulting from waitresses at the restaurant alleging sexual harassment in the form of unwanted remarks, advances and fondling.

Dzeladini is sentenced to six months in jail,

three years of probation and almost \$2,500 in fines and fees.

■ **May 18:** Daniel Tuescher, 24, Janesville, is found guilty of attempted second-degree intentional homicide, attempted armed burglary and being a felon in possession of a gun for shooting Janesville Patrolman Tom Schaefer during a botched burglary of Applebee's Grill & Bar, 3024 Milton, on Jan. 14.

Tuescher had two partners in the crime: Scott A. Hamilton, 29, and David J. Speer, 30, both of Janesville, who earlier pleaded guilty in deals that called for their testimony against Tuescher.

Schaefer responded to a silent alarm at the restaurant after Hamilton fired a shotgun blast through the door, then waited with his cronies to see what would happen. The crooks did not see Schaefer, who did see Tuescher come around a corner carrying a shotgun.

Schaefer fired 16 shots, one of which grazed Tuescher. Tuescher fired the shotgun twice. Slug fragments hit the officer in the side, and doctors said his bullet-resistant vest probably saved his life.

Speer is sentenced to three years of "intensive sanctions," which involve wearing an electronic monitoring bracelet. Hamilton is sentenced to three years in prison.

Tuescher is sentenced to 22 years in prison, but a technical mistake in how Judge John Lussow instructed the jury will result in Lussow ordering a new trial on the attempted murder conviction.

In 1998, Tuescher and David O'Leary, Rock County district attorney, will reach a plea bargain in which Tuescher pleads guilty to a lesser charge of first-degree recklessly causing injury while armed. He is sentenced to 15 years in prison, the term to run concurrent with his prison sentence on the other convictions.

O'Leary explained that he was wary of trying Tuescher again because he could not count on the testimony from Speer and Hamilton, both of whom already received their plea deals. Schaefer, who is unhappy with the deal, receives a Meritorious Award from the Wisconsin Professional Police Association.

■ **May 21:** Les Aspin, 56, dies in Washington, D.C., a day after suffering a stroke. A former Marquette University economics professor, Aspin represented Wisconsin's 1st District in the U.S. House from 1970 until 1992 and became the highly influential chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

He resigned from Congress to become President Clinton's defense secretary, then resigned that post when he became the focal point for Republican criticism of the Clinton administration's defense policies and practices, the most notable of which was the perceived snafu in Somalia.

■ **June 12:** The Janesville City Council votes



Les Aspin





The car of Janesville's Stan Fox flew through the air after hitting the wall in the first turn of the first lap of the Indianapolis 500 on May 28, 1995. Fox, running in his eighth Indy 500, started the race in 11th position. As he dipped into Turn 1, the left tires of his car hit the 'rumble strips' on the track's inside apron. His car veered wildly to the right, hitting the outside retaining wall at about 200 mph, careened back onto the track and was hit by the car of Eddie Cheever (rear right). Fox suffered a serious head injury, and surgeons operated to relieve pressure on his brain created by the injury. Although his feet and legs were exposed during the crash, they were not injured. The crash proved to be career ending, but Fox stayed involved in racing. He also started a support group for people with brain injuries and their families. Fox helped to organize events at tracks around the country where people with brain injuries met drivers. Fox also was in New Zealand when the clock turned midnight on Dec. 31. On a track there he drove the first lap in the year 2000.

to select a site for a proposed youth sports facility to provide playing fields for burgeoning soccer, football, softball and baseball programs for kids.

At the end of 1999, the city had invested about \$1 million to acquire 85 acres between Ruger Avenue and Wright Road and improve the Youth Sports Complex with a road, parking lot, sidewalks, washroom building and other features while local sports groups were contributing \$1 million in improvements such as lights and bleachers.

The first phase of the complex improves 35 acres with four football and 16 soccer fields. A baseball diamond was in the works.

■ The council also votes to create a public-access channel on local cable TV that will become JATV-12.

■ **July 5:** Tom Evert, 48, principal at Craig High School, is chosen as Janesville's new school superintendent. Besides his experience at Craig, Evert



Thomas Evert

has directed student services for the Janesville, Beloit and Sheboygan school districts.

■ **July 18:** Perhaps the most beloved educator in Janesville history, Ken Bick, dies at age 91 because of complications resulting from a head injury suffered July 5 in a traffic accident. He started his career as a teacher and football coach in 1928 at Milton Union High School, and he was appointed supervisor of Janesville playgrounds the same year.

In 1929, he started teaching junior high science and math classes in Janesville, and in 1936, he became vice principal of Janesville High School. Bick was chosen as Janesville High principal in 1946.

In 1967, a new high school, Parker, started, and Janesville High became Craig. Bick retired in 1969 as Craig principal.

Bick had a passion for the outdoors and nature, and he was long active with the local



Ken Bick

Rotary Club and was warden of Camp Rotamer. His list of accomplishments and honors is long, including winning a baby beauty contest in which neighborhood girls entered him in 1907 when he was 3.

Bick was also known as "The Janesville Clipper" for his practice of clipping newspaper articles about local folks and sending them to the people wherever they were.

Bick's ability to find people was uncanny. During World War II, former Janesville High student Walter Hulick was serving on a ship in the South Pacific. Though Hulick's ship was under radio silence in contested waters, Bick got a congratulatory message through to him on his graduation from high school in absentia.

■ **Aug. 19:** 17 members of the Ku Klux Klan, mostly from Illinois and Michigan but with at least one member from Walworth County, stage a rally in front of the Walworth County Courthouse in Elkhorn. The event draws 400 people, most in vocal opposition to the racist KKK but about 30 supporters of white supremacy as well. Two Milwaukee men are arrested for disorderly conduct for clashing with KKK supporters.

To counter the racist rally but not to contribute to the media circus and publicity surrounding it, a Walworth County group borrows an anti-KKK strategy from an Illinois community and organizes Project Lemonade. Rather than attend the Klan rally, people stay away and donate money to Project Lemonade for every minute the bigots speak. The effort raises \$11,000 for organizations opposing hate groups.

■ **Oct. 1:** Two street fights involving groups of young males, many swinging bats, pipes and chains, mar Janesville's Sunday night. At least one 17-year-old from Rockford, Ill., tells police he is in a street gang, and a witness says many of the combatants wore red and blue bandannas, often displayed as gang colors.

Janesville police, who arrest several of the young men on various charges, are reluctant to call the rumbles "gang-related."

■ **Oct. 13:** Steve D. Richardson, 26, Beloit, is sentenced to 10 years in prison and 10 years of probation on three convictions of homicide by drunken driving.

On Nov. 16, 1994, Richardson, who was drinking shots and beer at the Turtle Tap and whose blood alcohol level was 0.16, drove his car across the center line of County P east of Beloit and smashed into a car carrying three members of the Matthew Bell family of Clinton. Killed were Matthew, 32; his wife, Betty Jo, 27; and their daughter, Keshia, 8. Their 12-year-old son, Charles, was at home.

■ **Nov. 2:** Researchers confirm the presence of zebra mussels in Geneva Lake. The mussels upset the aquatic food chain and can clog municipi-



pal water intake pumps and foul underwater equipment.

■ **Dec. 11:** The Janesville City Council approves a fifth fire station. The new station will be built on the northwest side at 1414 Newport, and Fire Station No. 2 will move from West Racine Street farther south to a new building at 1545 S. Washington. Remodeling two other stations also is part of the plan, whose total cost is estimated at \$2.34 million.

■ The council also changes the pet ordinance that limits the number of dogs and cats a household may have to four. The limit remains four, but now three of the animals can be dogs or cats, instead of the two-plus-two that was the limit.

■ **Sometime in 1995:** Janesville teachers donate 112 personal-leave days so Joan Klipstine, a teacher at Edison Middle School, can take time to be with her husband, Dick, a retiring teacher diagnosed with terminal cancer. The teachers' union, the Janesville Education Association, approached administrators with the plan, and the administration and school board endorsed the idea.

■ Janesville farmer Randy Hughes, who broke into the organic food business a couple of years earlier with Blue Farm Corn Chips, is selling his organically grown soybeans to Japanese tofu producers for \$13 to \$18 a bushel while non-organic soybeans are fetching \$6.50 a bushel.

■ Ann Marie Krause, a math teacher at Blackhawk Technical College, is named Outstanding New Vocational Teacher in the United States.

■ Carol Cullen becomes the first female president of the Janesville YMCA's board of directors in the organization's 103-year history.

■ Holly Nehs wins the Janesville city women's golf championship for the sixth straight time and eighth time overall.

■ Chris Pastore wins his third city's men's golf title as two-time defending champ Jeff Bruegger does not play in protest over the tournament's greens fees.

■ Janesville's 2.5-mile biking and walking trail attracts almost 5,000 users a day, making it the city's single most popular recreational facility.

## 1996

■ **Jan. 1:** Smoking is prohibited in the Rock County Jail.

■ Seventeen-year-olds are no longer juveniles when they are arrested and charged with crimes in Wisconsin. They are treated as adults.

■ **Jan. 2:** A \$10,000 donation "walks in the

door" of the Janesville Salvation Army office and makes up the shortfall in the agency's 1995 fund drive to raise \$171,000. A local family foundation that wishes to remain anonymous makes the contribution.

■ **Jan. 25:** Janesville businessman Jim Grafft's bid of \$350,000 is accepted for the bankrupt and vacant Monterey Hotel. When the hotel opened Feb. 15, 1930, it was one of the finest hotels in the region, but it soon fell victim to the Great Depression as the company that issued the bonds for the building went bankrupt.

Local investors bought the Monterey in 1936, and it and its restaurant, later called the Orleans, flourished through the 1950s. Guests included John and Jackie Kennedy before he was elected president, the King of Siam, Eleanor Roosevelt after FDR's presidency, jazz legend Louis Armstrong and Henry Luce, Time-Life publisher.

The Monterey struggled through the 1960s and early '70s under a new partnership. In the mid-'70s, a different owner cleaned up the hotel, but in 1983, a fire in the neighboring Jeffris Theater, filled the hotel with smoke and killed a resident.

In 1989, Archie Johnson sold the Monterey and the Orleans to the San Francisco realty firm that resold it to a group of California doctors who declared it bankrupt.

■ **Feb. 1:** Dick Davis, patriarch of the family that owns and operates Davis Citgo Service, 45 E. Racine, dies at age 61 of a stroke. For decades, Davis was the cavalry, driving the wrecker

that came to the rescue of motorists stranded by breakdown or accident.

■ **Feb. 3:** The day's high temperature is 8 degrees below zero, and the low is minus 23. It's the fifth straight day when the mercury can't break zero. Lows continue well below zero for another four days.

■ **Feb. 4:** UW Whitewater, which was the scene of racial unrest among students in the 1960s when it was Whitewater State University, receives the 1995-96 regional Celebration of Diversity Award from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators for maintaining cultural diversity in student programming, hiring and staff development.

■ **March 8:** Gregory Anderson of Janesville is sentenced to life in prison with no parole consideration for at least 15 years for the horribly brutal beating murder of his 34-year-old wife, Susan,

on May 26, 1995.

Anderson beat and stomped on Susan so badly that her skull was cracked from ear to ear, all but three ribs were broken and her liver was split from being crushed between her chest and spine. More horrible was that the couple's two children—a 7-year-old boy and 6-year-old girl—heard the beating and heard their mother repeatedly say "I love you" to which Anderson responded with "I will kill you" and more blows and kicks.

■ **March 17:** Janesville is home to three major social groups of teen-agers defined by the teens themselves and often evident by their clothes and hairstyles.

Jocks and preps regularly participate in school sports and extracurricular activities. Guys typically wear buttoned flannel shirts or polo shirts, loose but not baggy jeans or khaki cotton pants and athletic shoes. They wear their hair short. Girls often wear skirts, knee socks and loafers.

Stoners and skaters often skateboard and play their own rock 'n' roll in bands. Guys wear leather jackets, loose but not baggy jeans or khakis, unbuttoned flannel shirts and T-shirts either tie-dyed or with rock band logos and Vans or Airwalk shoes. Girls wear long flowered dresses and clunky shoes with stacked soles and heels.

The chief activities of wannabes are hanging out, cruising the mall and dancing at clubs. Guys and girls emulate the hip-hop fashion of urban African-American teen-agers: huge baggy jeans, pants and tops; bandannas and backward ballcaps, sports team jackets and athletic shoes.

Janesville also is home to at least three street gangs: Gangster Disciples, Asian Gangsters and Outlaw Loco Bloods.

■ **April 16:** Brodhead High School announces "The Magnificent Seven," the seven seniors who will graduate as co-aledictorians, all with perfect 4.0 averages.

They are Chrystal Blakslee, Anne Klopfenstein, Adrienne Kolb, Sarah Lamont, Natasha Laube, Kim Petersen and Emily Searls.

■ **April 19:** Stephen Hemming, who first started acting at Marshall Junior High School in Janesville and became "perhaps Madison's most popular and versatile classical actor," dies at age 37 of AIDS.

■ **April 27:** Richard Davis, who has played bass with Benny Goodman, Leonard Bernstein, Igor Stravinsky, Sarah Vaughan, Bruce Springsteen and Van Morrison, brings his jazz quintet to Craig for the final event in the Janesville Concert Association's season.

■ **May 13:** The Janesville City Council votes to give public financial support to the expansion and renovation proposal of the Janesville YMCA and Boys & Girls Club. The city will pay \$2.23 million—mostly local money but with almost



Randy Hughes



Ann Marie Krause



Stephen Hemming



\$500,000 of federal grants—to buy and demolish several properties, including the historic French house on Franklin Street, and to vacate and close a block of Franklin and reroute traffic.

In 1999, the improved facility opens with a 33,000-square-foot expansion at a total cost of \$5.8 million with the rest of the money coming from private donors large and small.

■ **June 6:** The expanded, renovated Hedberg Public Library reopens in Janesville.

The library formerly was called the Janesville Public Library but was renamed the Geraldine Hedberg Public Library for the benefactor, who with her husband, Don, donated \$4.66 million to the library project. Total cost is \$8 million including furnishings and electronic equipment such as a new computer system.

The Hedbergs' was the largest of private donations that paid 80 percent of the library's cost; the other 20 percent came from local property taxes. The library now has 63,000 square feet compared to the 40,500 it had before, new furnishings and much more natural light.

■ **July 4:** Young and old don red, white and blue, festoon bicycles with crepe paper and wagons with balloons for the Fourth of July parade and party in Janesville's Jefferson Park neighborhood, bounded by Atwood Avenue and Wisconsin, East Holmes and Van Buren streets.

The neighbors have been celebrating Independence Day with the parade and accompanying festivities for at least 35 years. The parade winds up at the traditional spot, St. Elizabeth Nursing Home on St. Lawrence Avenue, where the nuns serve ice cream bars. Some 300 people chip in for a pig roast and bring a dish to pass. Children's games, a family softball game, pony cart rides and a square dance round out the afternoon and evening.

■ **Aug. 8-10:** Cliff Funk of Janesville gets some company from people with a similar hobby: restoring and collecting the greatest flop in American automotive history—the Edsel.

A Ford Motor Co. product, the Edsel lasted only from 1958 through the 1960 model year, and its name became synonymous with failure. Funk, who owns an Edsel from each model year, is joined by a couple of hundred other Edsel fans and about 100 Edsels, named after Henry Ford II's son, as the International Edsel Club stages its annual convention in Janesville.

■ **Aug. 12:** The Tallman Arts Festival, staged on the grounds of the Lincoln-Tallman Restorations, celebrates the 40th anniversary of the ice cream social that started the annual event. The arts festival itself, which this year features exhibits by more than 80 artists and crafts people, started in 1970.

■ **August:** The House of Mercy, a homeless shelter sponsored by Mercy Health System, opens in what was once a convent and most recently a

substance abuse rehabilitation facility at 320 Lincoln, Janesville, to provide shelter for families, women and children but not single men. It is filled to capacity most of the time.

■ **Sept. 2:** A team of Belgian draft horses bolts in the middle of Janesville's Labor Day Parade and runs down Milwaukee Street toward the bridge, but Alvin Bluhn races ahead of the careening team on his Arabian stallion and heads the big Belgians off before a crash.

■ **Sept. 15:** Three people are killed and a fourth is in critical condition because of a head-on crash on Highway 26 north of Townline Road.

Dead are Julie Garcia, 37, Milton, and an Orfordville couple, Daryl and Valerie Kersten. Daryl was 54; Valerie, 49. Their son, Robert, 27, is critically injured.

The accident occurs when Garcia's north-bound minivan crosses the centerline, sideswipes another vehicle and slams into the Kerstens' car. Garcia, the mother of five, is drunk at the time of the accident. Her blood alcohol concentration is 0.184, almost twice the legal intoxication level of 0.10.

■ **Sept. 18:** At 12:30 a.m., Rose Marie Boeck of Baraboo breathes a sigh of relief and starts celebrating. Later in the day she does something she has avoided for almost 16 years: visit the grave of her son, Richard.

A Janesville resident, Richard Boeck was gunned down in cold blood in a robbery of a Radio Shack store in Beloit on Feb. 2, 1981.

The reason for Boeck's relief and graveside visit is that her son's killer, Raymond Lee Stewart, is executed in Illinois. In 1981, Stewart killed Boeck, Donald Rains of Beloit and four men in Rockford, Ill. Stewart was sentenced to die for three of the Illinois murders, and he admitted the fourth. He was sentenced to life in prison for the Wisconsin murders.

Gazette reporter Mike DuPre' is one of 11 media representatives who witness Stewart's execution.

■ **Oct. 17:** Driver Jason Mead, 21, Afton, is killed, and three young men in his car are seriously injured when Mead loses control of his car in a construction zone and crashes on Janesville's Center Avenue while being pursued briefly by Howard Erickson, Rock County sheriff.

Erickson tells investigators Mead sped up behind his unmarked squad car on the left and turned directly in front of him as he entered an intersection and that Mead appeared to be chasing a third car.

Mead was drinking before the accident, but tests indicate he was not legally intoxicated. Erickson acknowledges at the scene he had a glass of wine hours before the accident, but he declines to take a blood test. Erickson tells reporters the next day he was not drinking but later admits he was. Reporters also learn Erickson had a beer at

least an hour before he drank the wine.

The accident ignites a controversy, and the State Patrol investigates, including in the probe a re-enactment of the sheriff's stated drinking. The re-enactment indicates Erickson would have had a blood alcohol concentration of zero at the time of the accident. The investigation clears Erickson of any policy violations or poor judgment, but it does not satisfy Mead's friends and family.

Facing only write-in opponents, Erickson will be re-elected in November.

■ **Oct. 30:** UAW Local 95 strikes the GM truck plant in Janesville. The stated reason is local issues, chiefly the number of workers, which Local 95 maintains is insufficient to do safe, quality work while keeping up with increases in the production rate.

But the UAW and GM are at loggerheads over a national contract, and industry analysts think the strike here is part of the UAW leadership's national strategy to weaken GM because the Janesville plant, making popular and pricey full-size sport-utility vehicles, is the automaker's most profitable assembly operation. The UAW also strikes a crucial metal-stamping plant in Indianapolis whose shutdown causes other assembly plants to halt production.

The Indianapolis plant settles its local strike after three days, on the same day a national agreement is reached. The Janesville strike lasts seven days and ends with GM agreeing to add 350 workers—242 by year's end with most jobs filled with local new hires.

The last time Local 95 struck the Janesville plant was for one day, March 12, 1977.

■ **Nov. 1:** Alliant Techsystems, Minnesota parent company of Accudyne in Janesville, reverses its earlier decision to close Janesville operations and put 450 people out of work. Coerced by Gov. Tommy Thompson and coaxed with \$2.5 million in state aid, Alliant agrees to invest \$3.5 million in Janesville and guarantee at least 250 jobs for seven years.

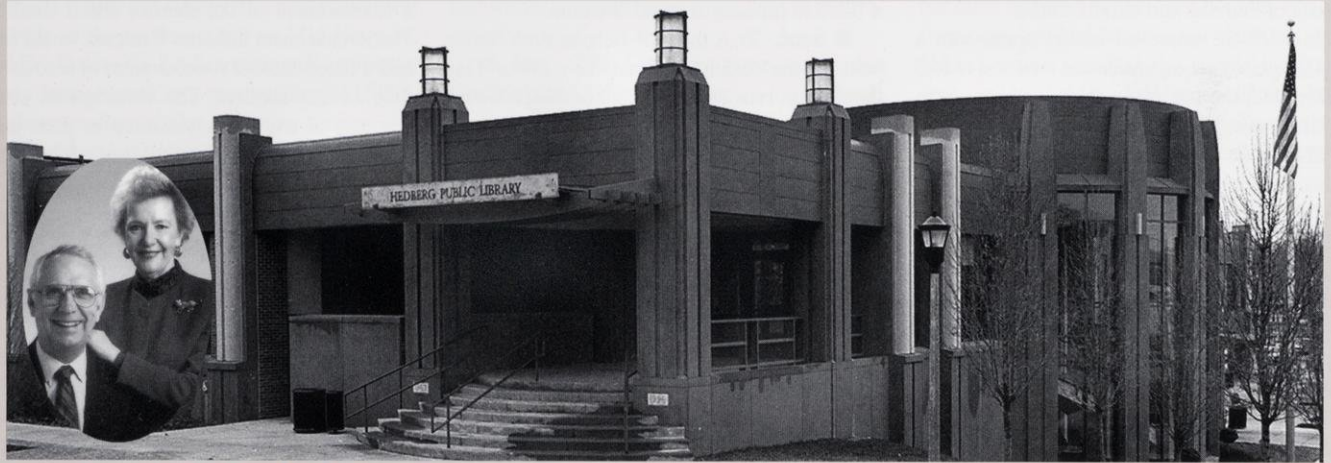
■ **Nov. 5:** Rock County again votes Democratic as it chooses President Clinton over GOP challenger Bob Dole, 32,450 to 20,096. Third-party candidate Ross Perot garners 6,800 votes in the county.

The county also votes for Democrat Lydia Spottswood of Kenosha, 32,053 to 27,355, over Rep. Mark Neumann of Janesville, and his hometown rejects him 20,943 to 16,267. But the Republican incumbent prevails elsewhere in the far-flung 1st District and is re-elected 118,397 to 113,850.

■ **Dec. 9:** Despite overwhelming scientific evidence that fluoride results in a 30 percent reduction in dental cavities for children and no evidence of health risks, the Orfordville Village Board rejects a proposal to fluoridate the village's drinking water.



## Community contributions build library



**Above: Janesville's Hedberg Public Library. Donald and Geraldine Hedberg, inset, were the main contributors to the new library. The couple donated \$4.66 million toward the \$8 million cost of the facility.**

The last chapter of the eight-year tale of the renovation and expansion of the Janesville Public Library into the Hedberg Public Library was written June 6, 1996.

That was the day the essentially new library opened to the public and rave reviews such as that offered by Bev McCullick, who brought her 5-year-old son, Josh, to the library:

"I'm very impressed. It's gorgeous, beautiful. It makes kids excited to learn and read. That's the way it should be.

"A lot of thanks should go to the people who contributed. I think it's great that they thought enough of the city to do this."

Chief among the contributors were Don and Gerry Hedberg, who gave \$4.66 million of the library's total cost of \$8 million. Almost 900 large and small donors contributed \$1.75 million.

Twenty percent of the total, \$1.59 million, came from Janesville property taxpayers.

Gerry Hedberg, who died April 23, 1998, was the lead voice on the library building committee calling for sufficient space, innovative design, quality construction and comfortable amenities for staff and patrons.

Other major donors were the Janesville Foundation, \$300,000, and the Grainger Foundation, \$325,000. The Grainger Foundation is a private agency separate from W.W. Grainger Inc., the corporation that bought Lab Safety Supply in Janesville from the Hedbergs, but the Grainger family is the main donor to the foundation.

Spacesaver Corp., Fort Atkinson, contributed new shelves worth \$265,000, and an anonymous donor kicked in \$100,000. The Hed-

bergs' daughters—Peggy Stich, Carla Westcott and Lara Hedberg—each made donations of between \$25,000 and \$100,000.

In addition, 36 local businesses, estates and trusts, couples and individuals gave amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$100,000.

Some 300 donors gave less than \$50 each. Those were contributions made in the public campaign that raised \$1.11 million to buy the library's new computer system for \$450,000 and furnish it tastefully for \$660,000.

The Hedberg Public Library saga started in May 1988 when the library board made official what library users and employees had known for a while: The place was crowded and getting more so every day. Built in 1968, the library reached its intended capacity in 1979.

In 1990, a consultant quantified the need: the 40,500-square-foot library needed another 25,000 square feet. And it was found that the corners the Janesville City Council cut in the 1960s to win the votes to build a new library precluded simply adding a floor to the existing building.

The cost estimate of between \$5 million and \$6 million elicited a collective wince from local leaders.

Patience is the key word in the politics of potentially spending millions of tax dollars. It took almost two years before the library board formally asked the council for a \$5.3 million expansion and renovation.

Council members balked. They told City Manager Steve Sheiffer to develop an affordable option. He promised a "hard and arduous process."

About a year later, in April 1993, the Hed-

bergs made the process a lot easier with an initial pledge of \$3 million. But the kind of library Gerry Hedberg envisioned was more than the council members could take—even though she and her husband were paying the lion's share.

The Hedbergs twice increased their gift. The council decided \$1.59 million would be the limit of the taxpayers' share.

The Janesville Foundation gift made the total \$6.55 million, but only \$5.1 million was available for actual construction because of costs such as buying land and paying the architect.

The first bid process brought only one bid, and it was \$2.4 million over budget. The committee started cutting items; then the Grainger Foundation announced its donation.

The Hedberg Public Library has 63,000 square feet with the administrative area on a separate, lower floor from the collection and circulation and reference departments.

The children's library was expanded and made easier to use for its short, lively patrons and their parents. The library has big windows overlooking Main Street, the Rock River and a city park; a skylight serves as a focal point, and a rotunda front merges two entrances.

The library's exterior is brick and copper, and the copper will develop a green patina as it ages.

Architect for the project was Meyer Scherer & Rock Castle, Minneapolis, and Miron Construction, Menasha, was general contractor.

When the library building committee reviewed designs, members often spoke of the "wow factor," having the building so impress people that they would say "Wow!"

When the Hedberg Public Library opened, Carron Pembleton of Janesville said: "I came in from downstairs and first saw the (curving) staircase. Wow!"



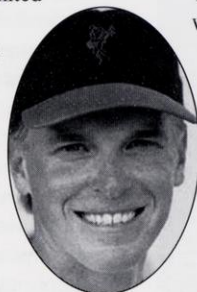
■ **Dec. 11:** Mark Warren of Milton, a captain in the 64th Operations Center of the Wisconsin Army National Guard, knows he will be home for Christmas but that he also will spend the first half of 1997 in Bosnia as part of a United Nations peace-keeping force.

■ **Sometime in 1996:** The Parker team of Jason Slater, Alfie Settles, Ben Brikowski and Nate Arndt win the state track meet title in the 1,600-meter relay.

■ Jason Pernat of Milton is the WIAA Division 1 state heavy-weight wrestling champion.

■ Chris Pastore repeats as champ of the Janesville city men's golf tourney.

■ Edgerton native Steve Stricker wins two golf tournaments on the PGA tour: the Kemper Open and the Western Open.



Steve Stricker

paper vehicles with bumper stickers. They wear foam rubber cheese wedges on their heads and take great pride in being called Cheeseheads or Cheddarheads.

They decorate their offices, shops and stores with Packer stuff and talk incessantly about glory days past, present and future. Gazette readers have been getting their fill because the newspaper has dispatched three reporters to the Super Bowl city, New Orleans: one to cover the game, two to cover the fans and festivities.

Green Bay scores a quick touchdown and adds a field goal to take a 10-0 lead, but the Pats come back with two touchdowns to lead 14-10 at the end of the first quarter, making more than a few Packers fans nervous. But the Pack will not be denied, scoring two touchdowns and a field goal in the second quarter for a 27-14 lead at the half.

New England almost makes a game of it with a third-quarter touchdown, but Desmond Howard returns the ensuing kickoff 99 yards for a TD. Quarterback Brett Favre connects with tight end Mark Chmura for a 2-point conversion and the final score of 35-21 for a Green and Gold victory.

■ **Feb. 18:** By only 31 votes, 3,865 to 3,834, Janesville voters approve the school district's borrowing \$21.7 million to build a new elementary school on the northeast side, expand Wilson and Lincoln elementary schools and make \$9.7 million in improvements to the district's computer and communications technology.

■ **Feb. 28:** Janesville police officer Brad Weins is dispatched to 2219 E. Green Valley to a report of three children trapped in a smoke-filled house. Weins kicks in the door and finds the Gainedi children—Srividy, 13; Sriramy, 4; and Venkat, 4—upstairs.

Himself the father of three, Weins tucks each of the younger children under an arm and leads the 13-year-old down the smoke-clogged stairs to safety.

■ **March 15:** The Elkhorn High girls' basketball team snaps Kimberly's 51-game winning streak with a 51-48 upset, and the Elks win the WIAA Division 2 girls' basketball title for the first time ever.

■ **March 31:** In an echo of Janesville's railroad past, Chester Harzowski comes within an inch of having his head crushed. The 78-year-old ex-railroad man has had enough Southern Comfort to drink that he waves annoyedly at the whistle from the slow-moving train as it and he cross Five Points.

Harzowski, 307 N. Academy, staggers and stumbles between the tracks, and the diesel engine passes 25 feet over him before squealing to a halt. His head is wedged between the rail and a fuel tank, and only the smallest paramedic on duty—

Kent Shea at 5-foot-4 can wriggle under the train to extricate Harzowski, who is hospitalized in fair condition with a broken leg, fractured pelvis, cracked ribs and several head injuries.

■ **April 1:** Another strike at the Arrow Park pen factory gets edgy, but this time, the company is known as Gillette Stationery Products, not Parker Pen. Two pickets are arrested for disorderly conduct for using picket signs to whack the pickup truck of the head of the security firm hired by Gillette as he speeds through the picket line.

United Steel Workers Local 663 (Local 663 was affiliated with the United Rubber Workers, which has merged with the steel workers union) has been on strike since March 22 because the rank-and-file rejected a tentative contract over financial reasons. The company has hired temporary workers.

■ **May 10:** Nathan BriarMoon, 22, Janesville, and Joseph Bequette, 19, Evansville, are found not guilty of all charges in the murder of Russell Miller, 33. Miller was severely beaten in the basement of his home at 2602 Harvard on Dec. 3, 1996, and died two days later.

The prosecution is unable to produce any physical evidence linking BriarMoon and Bequette to the crime partly because it was a month before they were arrested. The prosecution comes up with a young Janesville woman, Karen Odom, who should be a star witness because she says she waited in the car while BriarMoon and Bequette went to Miller's home and beat him. But jurors obviously put little credence in her story.

The defense tries to shift the focus of suspicion onto Odom and two other young men in the Bequette-Odom-BriarMoon circle: Timothy J. VanDiver and Charles Smythe, both young Janesville residents who testify against the defendants.

District Attorney David O'Leary thinks the right men were arrested and tried, and lawyers on both sides agree that it is almost certain that no one ever will be convicted of Miller's murder unless a major break erupts in the case.

■ **June 1:** Eight boys from a single Boy Scout troop, St. William Troop 539 in Janesville, qualify for Eagle Scout.

The Scouts and their Eagle projects are: Kyle Illbeck, 17, replaces shrubs at St. John Vianney Church; Cory Fritsch, 15, helps improve Rotary Gardens; Matt Husen, 15, relocates a sign and does landscaping at Rockport Park; Craig Meichtry, 17, improves Waveland Park; Rick Morris, 15, leads a landscaping project for a Habitat for Humanity house; Maury Mueller, 16, plants trees at Rockport Park; Ryan Mullen, 15, does research for a book on veterans' memorials in Rock County; and Jared Schultz, 14, constructs a baseball diamond in Loch Lomond Park.

St. William Church honors the Eagle Scouts with a ceremony Oct. 19.

## 1997

■ **Jan. 2:** The new Marshall Middle School opens with a half day of orientation for eighth-graders. The last time Janesville opened a new public school was in 1971 with the inauguration of Edison Junior High (Middle) School.

■ **Jan. 17:** General Motors has good news and bad news for the Janesville plant. The good news is that the factory's light-duty assembly line will continue to make full-size sport-utility trucks, the next generation of Suburbans, Tahoes and Yukons, starting in 1999.

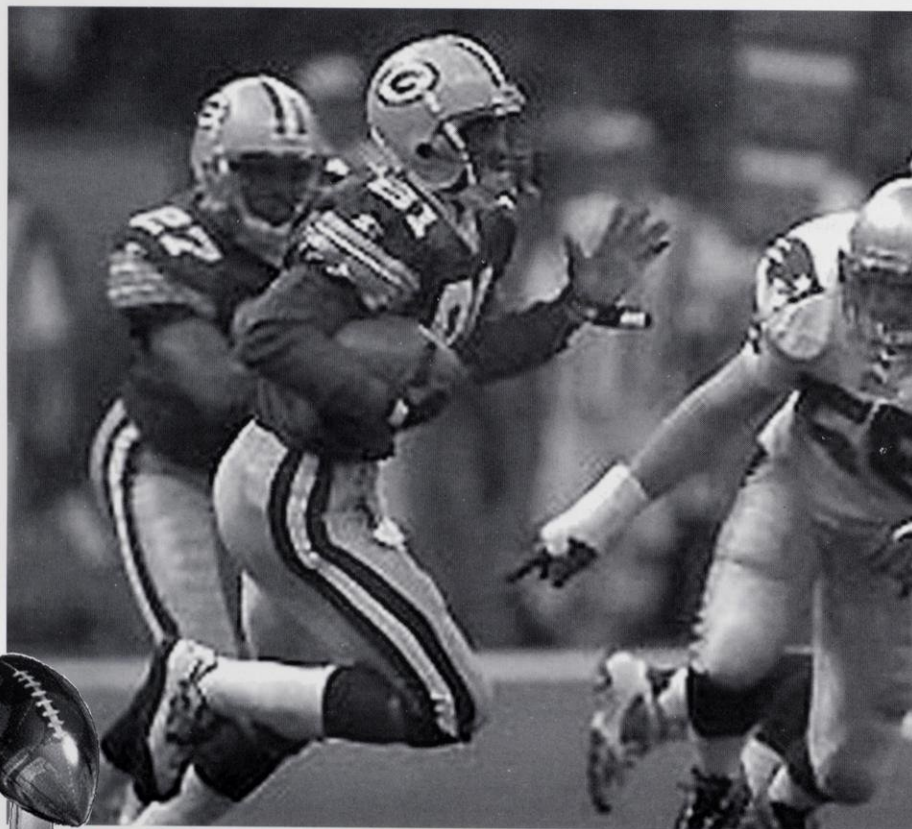
The bad news is that medium-duty truck production—which saved a Janesville assembly line—will move to a Michigan plant in late 2000 or early 2001. Some 1,200 jobs—assembly, maintenance, support and salaried—are linked to medium-duty production, and GM also will shoot for a 20 to 25 percent productivity gain on the SUV line.

At this time, the Janesville plant employs 5,600 hourly and salaried personnel. The announcement indicates the plant's work force will shrink to 3,300 people at the end of 2001. When the new SUV line starts in 1999, GM management officials still indicate they are aiming for a work force of 3,300. They anticipate that normal attrition such as retirements will cover the job losses.

■ **Jan. 26:** Stores in southern Wisconsin close early, and the streets empty of virtually all but emergency personnel. Football fans and nonfans alike gather at homes, bars and other public places, around cheese-and-sausage trays, outdoor grills and barrels of beer—but never too far from TV sets—to watch the Green Bay Packers play the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XXXI.

For two weeks, Wisconsin has been going bonkers in anticipation of Super Bowl Sunday. Fans wear green and gold Packer garb around the clock. They fly flags from their cars and trucks and





**Top:** Packer coach Mike Holmgren, above, was carried off the New Orleans Superdome field on the shoulders of his players after the Packers claimed their first NFL title since 1967.

**Above:** Desmond Howard, with the ball, returned a kickoff 99 yards for a touchdown and was named Most Valuable Player in sparking the Green Bay Packers to a 35-21 victory over the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XXXI on Jan. 26, 1997.

**Left:** The Lombardy Trophy.

■ **June 9:** Janesville police start bicycle patrols because the bikes can go where cars cannot and cycling officers can cover more ground than cops walking beats.

■ **June 10:** Ten heavily armed agents from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms arrest a member of the Outlaws motorcycle gang at the Outlaws clubhouse at 1263 S. Cherry.

ATF agents also search the clubhouse and remove several boxes of evidence for a 51-page federal organized crime indictment that charges 17 Outlaws—including 12 members of the chapter headquartered in Janesville—with murder, bombing, arson, attempted murder, assault, robbery, vehicle theft, counterfeiting and drug dealing.

■ **July 17-19:** 143 cast members present "The Wizard of Oz" in four performances by Spotlight on Kids, a Janesville community theater group, at UW-Rock County.

■ **Aug. 1:** John Benson, state superintendent of public instruction, announces he wants to close the 147-year-old Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped by the end of the 1997-98 school year.

Benson's reasoning is that enrollment at WSVH in Janesville, Wisconsin's first state school of any kind, has been dropping and that \$6.3 million that the school receives annually be redirected to help individual districts help their students with vision problems.

But students, their families, staff and alumni pledge to fight to keep the school open. The decision rests with the Legislature, which will balk at Benson's recommendation and continue the school.

■ **Aug. 9:** Flames race though Delavan-Darien High School, and the blaze collapses the roof of the library and guts the library and nearby classrooms and offices. The fire starts from a faulty electrical outlet on a Saturday morning during summer vacation. No one is injured.

A massive cleanup means the start of classes is delayed only three weeks until Sept. 10.

■ **Sept. 1:** A hitched team of eight ponies and 64 llamas—300 feet long—sets a world record for longest team. Owned by Floyd and Pat Zopfi of Hartford, the team tows a wagon in the LaborFest Parade.

■ **September:** W-2, or Wisconsin Works, starts as a replacement for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the welfare entitlement program that provided money to households based on the number of children in the homes.

W-2 forces recipients to work and gives aid on a rate based on number of hours spent in trial jobs, training and/or community service projects. Benefits end after two years.

ECHO, Janesville's church-based charity, reports an increased demand for services, and the W-2 welfare reform is believed to be the cause.



■ **Oct. 13:** Locked in contentious contract negotiations with the Janesville School Board since May, local teachers reduce the voluntary work they do at school.

Sticking points are local issues, but they are set in a framework of statewide dissatisfaction by teachers over what they see as losses in salary increases and bargaining power because of property tax control measures instituted by the Legislature and governor.

Negotiations will come to an unexpected settlement Dec. 16 with a contract that gives about 220 veteran teachers 5.22 percent raises of \$2,421 a year. To pay for those raises, teachers without master's degrees and less than 13 years in the district get smaller raises. Nineteen teachers at the bottom of longevity ladder get only \$500 annual raises.

■ **Oct. 21:** For the third time in two years, rural Clinton voters reject a proposal to borrow more than \$10 million to build a new middle school and upgrade the district's technology.

Voters living in the village pass the referendum by 45 votes, but it loses in the entire district, most of which is populated by farm families and other rural residents, by more than 226 votes. The final tally on the question to borrow \$11 million is 1,029 no votes vs. 803 yes votes, which reflects voting in April when a proposal to borrow \$13.7 million won in the village but lost the overall district's support by 220 votes. The first referendum was in April 1996.

■ **Oct. 28:** A 110,000-square-foot, two-story Sears store celebrates its grand opening in the Janesville Mall. It is the first full-service Sears in Janesville since 1983 when the old downtown store closed. The new store employs 200 people and has Janesville's first escalator.

In 1993, Sears discontinued its catalog, and its catalog-service store in Janesville became a dealer store selling appliances and tools. The opening of the new Sears store prompts the closing of the Janesville dealer store and a smaller Sears department store in Beloit.

■ **Nov. 18:** Milton voters accept, 1,757 to 660, a proposal to borrow \$7.25 million to expand and renovate the city's high school.

■ **Nov. 19:** Expansion and renovation projects start on two Janesville elementary schools: Wilson and Lincoln. Costs are \$2.745 million for Wilson, \$1.855 million for Lincoln.

■ **Dec. 5:** Followed by state troopers and headed off by Rock County sheriff's deputies, Charles Tainter, 49, of 863 E. Memorial, stops his blue minivan on an exit ramp at Avalon Road (Highway 351) and kills himself with a shot to the head.

The 9mm pistol he uses is the same one with which he shot his wife, Karen, 44, five times in the head two days before. Tainter leaves a note explaining that his motive for murder was an-

guish over his wife's filing for divorce.

■ **Dec. 6:** For the fifth time in six years, the Ku Klux Klan stages a rally in Rock or Walworth counties.

With "howled insults to black people, Catholics, Jews and homosexuals" and raised-arm Nazi salutes, a dozen bigoted white men in sheets and pointed hoods attract an equal number of bigoted supporters to the Rock County Courthouse in Beloit.

The racist KKK also attracts about 400 anti-racist, very vocal protesters and 300 police officers. The cops keep the groups apart and arrest nine people who agitate for vandalism and/or violence. Most of the racists, anti-racists and cops are from outside Beloit.

At the same time, between 400 and 500 people attend an alternative rally at the Beloit College Field House organized by the Coalition of Concerned Citizens to promote and celebrate diversity, tolerance and cooperation.

■ **Dec. 30:** Arthur Wiedemer, 82, is asphyxiated while trying to extinguish a fire in his farmhouse at 9550 Creek Road in Darien Township. Arthur makes sure his wife, Dorothy, 78, is out of the house before trying to put out the flames, probably ignited by a heat lamp in a bedroom.

The family dog, a mutt especially devoted to Arthur, stays by his side and also perishes in the fire.

■ **Sometime in 1997:** The Parker football team beats Craig for the first time in 15 years and posts its first winning season in the same period.

■ The Parker team of Matt Mohr, Aaron Arndt, Matt Runaas and Jason Slater is state champion in the 1,600-meter relay, and Slater takes the state title in the 400-meter run.

■ Holly Nehs wins her seventh city women's golf championship in eight years and ninth overall.

## 1998

■ **Jan. 17:** Ruth and Don Cherry of Janesville, holders of season tickets to UW-Madison men's basketball games, thoroughly enjoy the first game ever played in the new \$76 million Kohl Center, made possible in large part by a donation of \$25 million from Sen. Herb Kohl, who also owns the Milwaukee Bucks. The Badgers beat Northwestern University, 56-33.

■ **Jan. 25:** Virtually all of Wisconsin is glued to TV sets as the state's beloved Green Bay Packers defend their Super Bowl title against the Denver Broncos. But the magic of New Orleans '97 and Super Bowl XXXI will not be repeated as quarterback Brett Favre throws an incomplete pass on fourth down with 30 seconds left, and the Broncos and John Elway win

an exciting Super Bowl XXXII, 31-24.

Fans in Janesville and Rock County snap off their TVs, leave parties in abrupt silence and mope for days after the loss by their heavily favored Packers.



Marcel Marceau

■ **Feb. 5:** The most famous mime artist in the world, Marcel Marceau, is in Wisconsin for a performance at the Madison Civic Center and interviews with the media in Janesville.

The art of mime, telling a story with action and expression but without words, is ageless and will endure, Marceau says, because what makes mime work—comedy, conflict and pathos—are intrinsic parts of the human condition.

■ **Feb. 28:** A car crashes into a 30,000-gallon tank of liquid propane at the Ferrellgas yard in Walworth and ignites a raging blaze.

Volunteer firefighters use several hoses to deluge the tank with 3 million gallons of water for 24 hours to keep the tank cool. They let the towering inferno burn itself out and prevent an explosion that could "level half of Walworth."

The fire turns out to be the result of one of the most bizarre suicides in Wisconsin history. Willard F. Bates, 47, Delavan, rams his car into the propane tank on purpose. Then, when the crash doesn't kill him, Bates crawls into the trunk, closes it and awaits death, authorities determine.

■ **March 17:** Whitewater bars open at 6 a.m. so St. Patrick's Day celebrants, chiefly UW-Whitewater students, can get an early start slamming their green beers and shots of Irish whiskey. Some students stand in line starting at 4:20 a.m. for the prestige of being first to get drunk.

One bar sells tappers of beer for a dime, and students covet "I survived St. Patrick's Day" T-shirts that a couple of bars give away to their first customers of what will be a long day—and night.

■ **April 17:** After 85 years of operating in Milton, Burdick Inc., the city's oldest manufacturer, announces it will move operations and 180 jobs to Deerfield in October.

Only about 20 of Burdick's employees live in Milton, says the company, a manufacturer of electronic medical instruments and appliances. The reason for the move, the company says, is that Deerfield is closer to a metropolitan area, Madison, and that will make recruiting young engineers easier.

At the end of 1999, the old Burdick building at Milton Avenue and Plumb Street was vacant and for sale.

■ **April 23:** "One of Janesville's most generous benefactors, a woman of will and intelligence, substance and style, conviction and conscience" dies.

Geraldine "Gerry" Hedberg—who with her husband, Don, grew a home-based business into



a national company valued at \$160 million, Lab Safety Supply—succumbs at age 68 to a 3½-year battle with cancer.

The Hedbergs' donation of \$4.66 million to renovate and expand Janesville's public library was the biggest in city history.

■ **May 20:** TV actor Chris Burke, who is moderately mentally retarded because of Down's syndrome, gets hands clapping and hips swaying as he performs two music and comedy shows at KANDU Industries, a sheltered workshop for developmentally disabled adults in Janesville.

Burke played Corky in the show "Life Goes On" and has appeared in "Touched by an Angel."

■ **May 21:** TV news crews from Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison start arriving in the tiny Walworth County community of Pell Lake between 4:30 and 5 a.m. because Lakeside Grocery and Deli has sold the winning Powerball ticket worth the world's largest single lottery prize to date: a lump sum of \$104.3 million.

After taxes, the prize will pay \$57.36 million to Frank and Shirley Capaci of Streamwood, Ill.

■ **May 26:** An animal cruelty case against a Beloit man is dropped because prosecutors don't think they have enough evidence, but animal welfare workers in Rock County are convinced that dogs, chiefly pit bull terriers, are being trained for dog-fighting and that fights to the death are being staged here for gambling.

■ **May 29:** Debra Head, 46, shoots and kills her husband, Harold, in their Johnstown home. Her defense is that she suffered years of mental and verbal abuse and was afraid Harold would hurt her.

But Debra wakes Harold up and shoots him twice, and the jury will find her guilty of first-degree intentional homicide on Feb. 12, 1999. She is sentenced to life in prison. Head will be eligible for parole in 2012.

■ **June 12:** Strikes at GM parts plants in Michigan force the Janesville sport-utility line to shut down, idling more than 3,300 workers. On June 24, the Janesville factory's 1,200 medium-duty truck employees are laid off because of the strikes, and more than 1,000 other workers at local GM suppliers also are temporarily out of work.

The Janesville workers are laid off until Aug. 3.

■ **June 25:** A tornado skips and twists through rural Evansville, demolishing three houses—those of the Gunn, Eggers and Sanwick families—and damaging three others along Highway 14 in Center Township.

The tornado's winds roar at more than 170 mph. Damage—to the houses, outbuildings, trees, power poles and lines—is estimated at \$700,000,

but no one is hurt.

■ **July 14:** After months of debate and discussion—sharpened by the March 7 arrest and subsequent conviction of Craig basketball star Aubrey Lewis-Byers for marijuana possession—the Janesville School Board authorizes random drug testing of athletes.

Some student athletes protest the loss of their right to privacy, but participation does not drop for fall sports. Seven athletes test positive for banned substances—five for nicotine, two for pot—in the fall sports season.

■ **July 24:** Rabies is detected in Rock County for the first time in 15 years. A week before, a puppy owned by a Janesville family killed a bat that was found to be rabid. The puppy is euthanized, and residents are warned to be wary of bats.

■ **July 31:** Art Fuller, 49, is sentenced to life in prison with no chance for parole until 2058, when Fuller would be 109 years old. Fuller, who has a long history of mental illness, was convicted June 17 of shooting his wife, Helen, to death and dismembering her body.

Fuller confessed to police that he shot his wife March 11, 1996, and then used an X-Acto knife and hacksaw to cut her body into nine pieces so he could move the 227-pound corpse secretly from their basement. He later led police to the park in Dane County where he had hidden the body parts behind a pile of logs.

Helen's family had to identify her body from a photograph of the severed head.

The Fullers have a daughter, Margaret, who was 5 at the time of her mother's murder. Nobody knows what Margaret saw in the two days it took Arthur to cut up Helen's body in the basement, but she told detectives she saw "Daddy hitting Mommy with an orange crayon."

Helen's family believes the "orange crayon" was the X-Acto knife.

■ **July:** Using a satellite global positioning system, farmer Randy Hughes cuts a huge maze in 40 acres near the intersection of Highways 14 and 11 just east of Janesville.

The maze's paths wind for 2 miles and form a farm scene—a barn, two silos and a sunrise—outlined by the state of Wisconsin. The maze is to celebrate Wisconsin's Sesquicentennial, its 150th birthday, and to promote the contributions of agriculture, especially corn, to the state's economy.

The Hughes family has been growing corn in Wisconsin for all those 150 years, and the family acquired the land that the maze is in almost 100 years ago. The maze remains open through Halloween and attracts 50,000 visitors.

■ **Aug. 2:** The hearts of teen and preteen girls throb, their goo-goo eyes well with excited tears,

and their throats squeal and scream as five pretty boys of pop music, 'N Sync, perform at the Rock County 4-H Fair.

■ **Aug. 4-6:** 3.25 inches of rain falls in 24 hours, and the downpours keep coming, amounting to 5.27 inches by the morning of Aug. 6. Streets, sewers, underpasses and greenbelt areas flood in Janesville.

Two bridges wash out near Clinton. Albert and Betty Kohls, rural Clinton, are in their car on Bradford-Clinton Town Line Road when a bridge gives way underneath them and their car floats 150 feet downstream and rests on a creek bank. They clamber out and into a tree, where they wait for rescue from Rock County deputies and Clinton firefighters. Albert's mother, Janette, 86, and her friend, Marian Rye, 77, are trapped in a car on a submerged bridge about two miles away on Highway 140. They are rescued unharmed by deputies.

Floods cause \$2 million damage in Rock County. Some 160 homes and businesses are damaged in Janesville alone, and the Clinton wastewater treatment plant sustains \$700,000 in damage.

On Aug. 5, flood waters overflow a storm sewer drain in Palmer Park, and 13-year-old Mitch Eddy of Janesville, who is playing with pals in the water, is sucked into a drainage pipe and narrowly skirts death when he is rescued by three passers-by and a police officer.

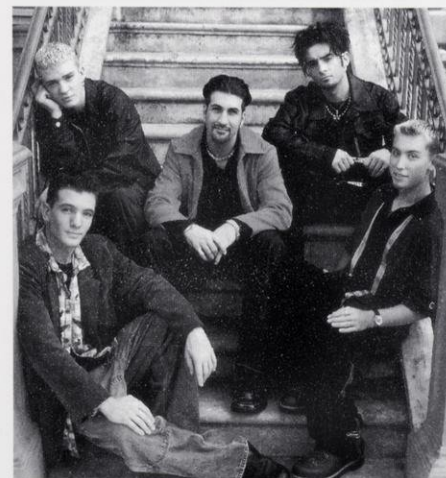
Eddy is hospitalized in critical condition with extensive brain damage.

■ **Aug. 29:** Charles and Susan Brown, a Delavan couple in their 40s, are killed when Jeffrey A. Schyvinck of Cambridge pulls his sport-utility vehicle into the path of the Browns' motorcycle on Highway 59 at County N.

Schyvinck, who moves to Edgerton, will plead guilty to homicide by intoxicated use of a motor vehicle in September 1999.



Debra Head



Much to the delight of teen and preteen girls in the area, the pop group 'N Sync performed at the 1998 Rock County 4-H Fair.



■ **Summer:** The Janesville School District starts construction on the northeast side of the city's first public elementary school since 1970. Students name it Kennedy.

■ **Sept. 5-7:** The 43rd annual Rock County Thresheree at Thresherman's Park on Highway 51 between Janesville and Edgerton gives collectors and admirers of steam-powered and other antique farm equipment a chance to shine their machines, fire up their boilers and swap stories of harvests past.

■ **Oct. 17:** First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton returns to Janesville, this time to stump for local Democratic candidates, not health-care reform as she did in 1994.

She admires the new Marshall Middle School where she speaks and joins a panel discussion on education. Some 1,500 people turn out to hear her criticize Republicans for



Russ Feingold



Mark Neumann

dragging their feet on improving education until they are faced with elections and for proposing to privatize Social Security.

Lauren Rallo, a 1997 Parker graduate at the rally, admires Rodham Clinton "because she's a strong female in a world where there aren't as many as there should be. And as a young woman who has hopes of becoming a lawyer, it's nice to see a woman in her position who is strong."

■ **Nov. 3:** Democratic incumbent Russ Feingold, a Janesville native, defeats Republican Rep. Mark Neumann, a Janesville resident and former home builder, in the election for U.S. Senate 864,349 to 835,498, a narrow 2 percent. Feingold outpolls Neumann 28,935 to 20,110 in Rock County.

The race makes national news because Feingold, a leader for campaign finance reform, asks the Democratic Party and special-interest groups not to spend soft money—unregulated political donations—on ads attacking Neumann. The Neumann campaign uses a lot of money—soft and otherwise—to wage an aggressive TV ad campaign against Feingold. Many political pundits and regular voters criticize Neumann's ads as being negative and playing loose with the facts.

To run for Senate, Neumann gives up his House seat, which is won by political newcomer Paul Ryan, a 28-year-old Janesville native. A

Republican, Ryan beats veteran Democratic congressional campaigner Lydia Spottswood of Kenosha. Rock County voters give Ryan 25,299 votes to 23,206 for Spottswood.

■ **Nov. 25:** On the night before Thanksgiving, the day of feasts, an ironic tragedy is revealed in Janesville: 15-year-old Kay Kuffer dies of starvation and dehydration.

Afflicted with cerebral palsy, mental retardation and epilepsy, Kay weighs only 15 pounds. Kay's mother, Karen, 50, of 1204 Newman, is charged with felony child neglect.

The sensational case divides opinions.

Many believe Karen is a monster who watched her child waste away rather than care for her. Police officers who saw Kay's body, emaciated like that of a Nazi concentration camp victim and etched with bone-deep bedsores, are incensed. Many people wonder how Kay, the child of an incestuous encounter between Karen and her older brother, Wayne, slipped through the cracks of the social services and school systems.

Others, relatives of cerebral palsy victims, say Karen should be commended for keeping Kay alive as long she did. Karen's supporters maintain that extremely low body weight is not uncommon among cerebral palsy victims, who often refuse to eat as Kay did because convulsions make swallowing difficult.

On Feb. 24, 1999, Rock County Judge Richard Werner will rule that Karen is mentally retarded and therefore incompetent to stand trial. District Attorney David O'Leary decides not to try to have Karen committed because, though she has a low IQ, she can care for herself and is not a threat to others.

■ **Dec. 24:** Mitchell Eddy walks into the Christmas Eve candlelight service at First Lutheran Church in Janesville.

It's an amazing accomplishment because the 13-year-old essentially drowned Aug. 5 after he was sucked into a storm drain by flood-waters in Palmer Park. Mitch's head was underwater for eight to 20 minutes. When he was pulled out, Mitch was not breathing; his lungs were full of water, and he had no pulse or heartbeat. He remained in a coma for four or five days, and after regaining consciousness, Mitch was unresponsive for three to four weeks.

Special treatment at a Milwaukee rehabilitation center brought Mitch back from his brain storms, seizures, extreme sensitivity to touch and sound and helped him to stand and walk again. Mitch can understand speech and enjoys wrestling with his brother, Andy, but he still cannot talk. Regardless, his mother, Susanne Eddy, and Andy are happy to have Mitch back.

■ **Sometime in 1998:** Holly

Nehs wins her 10th women's city golf championship, becoming the most successful golfer in Janesville history in local tournaments. Jan Hoffman won nine city men's tourneys.

■ Chris Pastore wins the city men's golf championship for the fifth time.

■ Craig's boys' baseball team rides a 13-game winning streak to the WIAA Division 1 state title.

■ Janesville's Junior Babe Ruth baseball team is state champion.

## 1999

■ **Jan. 1:** Underdogs by 10 points, the UW-Madison Badgers ride the huge shoulders and pile-driver legs of running back Ron Dayne to a 38-31 upset of the UCLA Bruins. Dayne rushes for four touchdowns and is voted MVP, but a key play is turned in by freshman cornerback Jamar Fletcher who intercepts a pass by Bruin quarterback Cade McNown and returns it 46 yards for a touchdown, putting the Badgers up 38-28.

It is Wisconsin's second Rose Bowl victory in five years.

■ **Jan. 19:** Citing soft global markets and excess capacity, the Gillette Co. announces that it will close its Arrow Park plant in Janesville and put 300 people out of work.

About 90 workers in its Special Markets Division will keep their jobs and move to a smaller facility in Janesville, the company says, and 300 or so manufacturing and support staff employees will be laid off over the summer.

Gillette bought the legendary Parker Pen in 1992 in a \$561 million deal. George S. Parker began producing Lucky Curve pens in Janesville in 1888, and in 1891, Parker and W.F. Palmer formed a partnership that became the Parker Pen Co.

As 1999 drew to a close, a for-sale sign stood sentinel in front of the once-bustling, 216,000-square-foot Arrow Park plant on North Parker Drive.

■ **Jan. 30:** Robert Fejdasz, 30, Elkhorn, shoots Gerald Webber, 49, Roscoe, Ill., four times in the chest and kills him.

Webber is threatening his estranged wife, Teresa, 29, with a knife at her home at 3230 Midvale, Janesville, when Fejdasz opens up with a .45-caliber automatic pistol. Fejdasz works as a doorman at the Vegas Gentleman's Club, and Teresa is a dancer at the Walworth County strip bar.

Fejdasz is arrested on a preliminary charge of first-degree murder but police release him in two days because no formal charges are filed. After waiting seven months for results of evidence tests from the Wisconsin Crime Laboratory, District Attorney David O'Leary decides not to bring charges because he thinks the shooting is justifiable



Holly Nehs



defense of another person because Fejdasz thought Teresa was in imminent danger of death or serious injury.

■ **Feb. 9:** Holly Borchardt, 33, Janesville, becomes the first woman to bowl a perfect 300 game in Janesville since Donna Rusch did it Feb. 25, 1965, at Franklin Gardens.

Borchardt strikes perfection 12 times for her A&M Computers team in the Women's City League at Rivers Edge Bowl (formerly Playmore), 215 S. River St.

■ **Feb. 11:** Home Depot opens in Pine Tree Plaza, Janesville's newest shopping center, north of Highway 14 on Deerfield Drive.

The opening also draws protesters from Earth First! who demonstrate against Home Depot's sale of lumber from old-growth forests. Five demonstrators are arrested on charges of trespassing and disorderly conduct.

In 1958, Creston Park Shopping Center and a McDonald's restaurant opened on Milton Avenue in what had been open fields. Since then, the area along Milton Avenue and Highway 14 has become crowded with retail stores—including many major department stores—and fast-food restaurants.

■ **March 16:** Evansville School District voters reject an \$18.9 million building referendum that would have built another school and added an auditorium.

The 1,314-915 defeat follows an outcry from residents of a mobile-home park the district planned to buy and raze to accommodate the new school. The referendum comes in response to crowding in the elementary school, which is nearly 200 students over capacity.

■ **March 25:** Seven young salespeople are killed when a van, carrying 15, flips on Interstate 90 near Janesville, throwing all but three passengers onto the highway.

The driver, a 20-year-old Iowan named Jeremy Holmes, admits trying to switch places with a passenger at 81 mph after he spots a police squad car pulling out behind him on the highway.

The accident prompts Wisconsin and other states to investigate the parent company of the traveling sales crew, which whisked young people from their homes and into a life of strenuous door-to-door subscription sales. Several lawsuits alleging mistreatment of workers and responsibility for the deaths are filed against the parent company, Subscriptions Plus of Oklahoma, and YES, which employed the salespeople.

Holmes, who was leading the sales group, will plead guilty to causing the deaths of seven people and injuries to five. He will be sentenced in June to seven years in prison and four years of probation for the crimes.

■ **April 5:** Tom Burgraff, an art teacher at



**Two magazine sales people find comfort in each other's arms after a van crash on Interstate 90 near Janesville killed seven of their co-workers. The accident prompted an investigation by Wisconsin and other states in the practices of having young people sell magazine subscriptions door to door.**



**Jeremy Holmes**

Janesville's Jefferson Elementary School, likes to have fun as he teaches—he calls the glue used for papier-mache “elephant snot,” for instance—and his students have fun as they learn. The combination results in Burgraff's being chosen Wisconsin PTA Elementary Teacher of the Year.

Burgraff is the fourth Janesville teacher honored by the state PTA since 1995. The others are Mark Dax, 1995; Judy Snyder, 1996, and Helen Bifano, 1997.

■ **April 6:** Edgerton voters approve borrowing \$11.8 million to improve their school district's technology, make its facilities more accessible to disabled people and to build an auditorium and auxiliary gym for Edgerton High School.

■ **April 7:** Marshall Apartments stages a grand opening of the \$5 million renovation by Stone House Development and Housing Horizons of Madison. The developers turned the former Marshall Middle School, once Janesville High School, 408 S. Main, into 55 stylish, spacious apartments with big windows and unusual touches such as blackboards on the walls.

The first tenant is Christi Boughton, 32, who graduated from Marshall in 1982.

The developers donate the old Marshall auditorium to a community group known as Janesville Performing Arts Center. The develop-

ers name the auditorium the Yeaton Theater for Lithaferrin Yeaton, who taught social studies at Marshall from 1966 until she retired in 1985. Yeaton's son, Ed, is a Marshall graduate who works for Kimberly-Clark, parent company of Housing Horizons.

■ **May 13:** Voters in the Parkview School District defeat a building referendum by nearly 2-to-1.

A pair of referendum options would have given the district a new high school and a swimming pool. The total project was expected to cost \$16.9 million.

■ **May 16:** The end for the original Slick's has the potential to be a blast but is appropriately anticlimactic.

A Janesville bar some consider a landmark, Slick's Bar and Grill, 1405 Milton, is notorious for its greasy but delicious hamburgers, shaky but jammed dance floor and incongruous mix of clientele: professionals in business suits, outlaw bikers in leather, farmers in overalls, grandmothers in head scarves, autoworkers in T-shirts, cops and firefighters off-duty and out of uniform.



**Crawford Gates**

The bar has been sold and will be demolished to allow Hembrough Automart to expand, and for days, Slick's regulars, fortified at the bar, have been taking anything and everything for souvenirs. After taking everything that isn't bolted down, they start on stuff that is bolted down and rip out what they think is a plumbing pipe but instead rupture a natural gas lateral at 9 p.m.

Instead of partying until 2 a.m., the Slick's crowd must evacuate. “Everybody put out their cigarettes and then left real nice,” says 19-year bartender Don Dickinson. Slick's Bar & Grill will reopen Nov. 15 at 309 Rockport.

■ **May 31:** Crawford Gates retires after conducting the Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra for most of its 45 years.

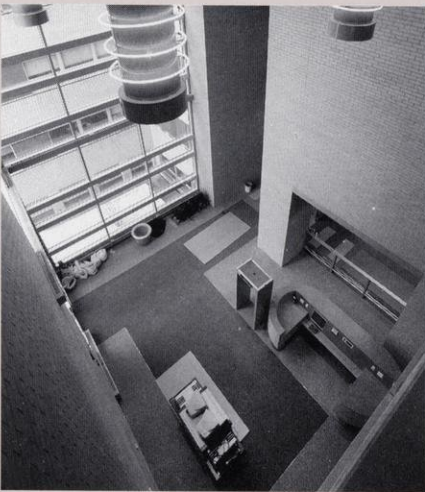
■ **June 3:** Sponsored by the Whitewater Ministerial Association, a family of eight refugees from Kosovo arrives with one suitcase among them for a temporary stay in a house owned by First English Lutheran Church.

The refugees are ethnic Albanians fleeing the war in Kosovo. A U.S.-led NATO air force is bombing Serbia and Kosovo to stop the Serbs' ethnic cleansing—forced evacuation—and murder, rape and robbery of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

■ **July 19:** After years of discussion and emotional, often acrimonious debate, the Milton School Board votes 5-2 to retire the high school's



## Design problems delay courthouse opening



**T**he expansion of the Rock County Courthouse in Janesville was dedicated Feb. 27, 1999, a year behind schedule.

Supposed to take two years, the \$15 million project took three years, and portions of the old building still had to be renovated.

Design problems, the project supervisor's retirement, the architect's resignation and discoveries of old footings that had to be removed and utility lines that had to be moved all compounded to delay work. Design problems included stairways that had to be modified to meet fire codes, and ledges that support exterior brickwork had to be modified.

Renovation of the building's old section was expected to be complete by March 2000. The expansion more than doubled the size of the

courthouse, whose construction started in 1955 and which was occupied in 1957.

The courthouse expansion contains five courtrooms, new offices for judges and offices for the clerk of courts and the county's general services department.

Judges had been concerned about their security, but the expansion provided them with a private elevator, and their bullet-proof benches were described as "fortresses" by Rob Leu, the county's director of general services and coordinator of the courthouse project.

Prisoners coming to court proceedings no longer are escorted through public hallways. Instead, they wait in holding cells, then take a private elevator to secured areas just outside the courtrooms.

controversial Redmen nickname and logo.

American Indians say the Redmen nickname is derogatory, racist and offensive. Many Milton residents agree with them. Others are tired of the controversy and media attention and simply want the issue to end.

On the other hand, many students and alumni say it is used out of respect for American Indians and should be retained out of tradition.

In September, students vote for a new nickname, Red Hawks, but cheerleaders refrain from

using it in what would be its first football game because they are afraid of being shouted down by Redmen supporters.

The vote is Red Hawks, 597, and Mavericks, 325. But 294 high and middle school students write in Redmen, and on 117 of either Red Hawk or Maverick ballots, Redmen also is written in. A number of ballots are returned blank.

As 1999 ended, a group called Citizens for Better Representation garnered enough signatures to force a recall election of three school

board members who rejected the Redmen nickname: Dale Beaty, Wilson Leong and Mike Pierce.

And a group called Citizens to Save Our School Board formed to campaign to keep the three members on the panel.

The three board members survived the recall.

■ **Aug. 8:** Ebony "Rudy" Evans, 14, Janesville, dies of complications resulting from her cerebral palsy, and her parents, Emmitt and Bonnie Kilgore, make a last-minute decision to donate her organs.



Rudy's liver goes to Sean Heavy of Orlando, Fla., and the transplant saves the 11-year-old's life.

■ **Aug. 27:** Mark Jacobson, 34, Beloit, is killed when his homemade aircraft crashes on take-off from the Rock County Airport.

Jacobson is a partner in Gail Force Air Charters, which was Blackhawk Airways until 1996 when Jacobson and his father-in-law, Bob Hansen, bought it from Dick Wixom. Jacobson crashes in a Breezy, a small, light airplane with an open cockpit that is built from a kit.

■ **Hugh McCafferty, 37, former Janesville resident, is sentenced to the maximum nine years, four months in California for charges related to his illegal entry of a California couple's home. McCafferty has a 17-year record as a peeping tom, prowler, burglar and attempted rapist with arrests and/or convictions in Wisconsin, California, Indiana and Oklahoma.**

■ **Sept. 2:** The teen-agers themselves are pitching in to transform the Janesville Boys & Girls Club's old clubhouse, 407 Van Buren, into a teen recreation center.

A \$50,000 donation from Jerry and Alyda Mulder is making the project possible. The main Boys & Girls Club shares a building with the Janesville YMCA.

■ **Sept. 3:** Janesville businessman Jim Grafft is undergoing extensive physical therapy to help him recuperate from his 35-foot-fall May 14 from the roof of a vacant factory to its concrete floor.

Grafft suffered numerous broken bones, al-most ripped his nose off and has undergone seven major surgeries. Lucky to be alive but in constant pain, Grafft is held together with pins, plates, screws and wires.



Dennis Vierk

By the end of 1999, he was walking with a cane.

■ A minor earthquake centered just south of the Wisconsin-Illinois state line sends mild shivers through Rock County. The quake registers 3.5 on the Richter scale.

■ **Sept. 6:** Former Janesville resident Sara Rogers marches in the LaborFest Parade as a representative of the Wisconsin AFL-CIO.

Rogers is the labor organization's vice president and first woman elected to one of the group's top three positions.

■ **Oct. 3:** Rollin' Pin, a bakery at 19 N. Arch and a Janesville favorite renowned for its eclairs and cream puffs, closes.

■ **Oct. 15:** Dennis Vierk, principal at St. Paul's Lutheran School, is one of 59 principals nationwide honored for outstanding leadership by the U.S.

## Cooperation allows for Y/B&G expansion

Janesville opened its heart and wallet and rolled up its sleeves for many projects in the 1990s.

Some endeavors—Rotary Gardens, CAMDEN Playground, Youth Sports Complex—required volunteer muscle and sweat as well as public and private dollars.

Professionals did the actual work on the expansion and renovation of the library and the expansion and renovation of the YMCA and Janesville Boys & Girls Club. But it was government and political leaders with vision and nerve and private individuals who either gave money or helped solicit it who made the community-enriching projects possible.

After considerable discussion and debate, the Janesville City Council decided in 1996 to give public financial support to what became known as the Y/B&G project.

The debate was often sharp. Not only did the project require considerable money, it also involved vacating a block of heavily traveled, one-way Franklin Street and rerouting downtown traffic.

And unlike the library, which is a tax-supported public building and service, the Y/B&G project involved giving public money to two private nonprofit organizations that pay no property tax. Furthermore, many people considered the YMCA's adult fitness areas and programs as competition for the private, tax-paying Janesville Athletic Club.

But the need that the Y/B&G proponents expressed wasn't for adults but for children.

The kids who enjoyed the Boys & Girls Club did so even though space was cramped in their aging clubhouse at 407 W. Van Buren. In the

small game room, the pinball machines were shot; video games rarely worked, and the air hockey board was held together with duct tape.

The YMCA didn't have enough gym space to accommodate more than 1,600 young basketball players. Parents did not have enough parking or a good place to drop off their kids.

City Manager Steve Sheiffer supported the project, and eventually so did a majority of council members. The council OK'd a budget that would have spent \$3.23 million of public money, including up to \$2 million from local property taxes.

The actual public cost turned out to be \$2.23 million with about \$1.74 million coming from local sources.

The city's help was contingent on the organizations' raising \$4.5 million. They set a goal of \$6.3 million, and the fund drive coordinated by Carol Cullen and Bill Kennedy raised \$4.8 million.

Several heavy hitters stepped to the plate with major donations.

J.P. and Marianne Cullen contributed a cool \$1 million.

J.P. made his money in the construction business started by his grandfather, and that company bears his name—J.P. Cullen and Sons. But it was his sons—Mark, David and Richard—who ran the business, which was general contractor for the Y/B&G project.

J.P. started going to the Y when he was 10 in 1935 to swim and play basketball.

The Hedberg Foundation—whose principal donors, Don and Gerry Hedberg, gave \$4.66 million personally to the library project—gave \$500,000 to the Y/B&G expansion. They exer-

cised in Y programs in the 1980s and thought meeting the two groups' needs with one project made sense.

An anonymous donor ponied up another half million.

Jim Fitzgerald and his wife, Marilyn, who is J.P. Cullen's sister, gave \$250,000. Fitzgerald started and sold Total TV, Wisconsin's first cable TV company, and he owned and sold two National Basketball Association franchises: the Milwaukee Bucks and Golden State Warriors.

Fitzgerald expressed a "special warm spot" for the Boys & Girls Club because he had seen it help children with homework and recreation when the kids' parents had to work to make ends meet.

Work began in June 1998.

The old Y building—whose address changed from Franklin to the intersecting Dodge Street—was expanded by 48,000 square feet, 15,000 square feet of which was operated independently by the Boys & Girls Club. The club refurbished its old clubhouse as a teen center.

The expansion's prime additions were a double gym for the Y, small gym for the Boys & Girls Club, lobby and reception areas for both, and new adult locker rooms for the Y.

The Boys & Girls Club has rooms for arts and crafts, study and computer use and activities for children.

The YMCA expanded the area for its licensed day-care center and added a climbing wall.

Both organizations have more office and storage areas, and parking was added.

Angus-Young Associates, Janesville, was the architect.





**Running back Ron Dayne piled up the yardage and the awards while carrying the ball for the Wisconsin Badgers. Dayne ran for 1,834 yards in 1999 and finished his collegiate career with a Division I-A record 6,397 yards. Dayne won the 1999 Heisman Trophy, given to the nation's best college football player, while leading the Badgers to the Rose Bowl and another post-season victory.**

Department of Education and National Association of Elementary School Principals.

In the spring, Vierk was named National

Distinguished Lutheran Principal for 1999, and in 1992, President Clinton presented Vierk with a Blue Ribbon Award for Excellence on St. Paul's behalf.

■ **Oct. 20:** The fourth time's the charm for the Clinton school referendum. Voters accept, 1,269 to 1,135, a proposal to borrow \$15.9 million to build a new high school, convert the existing high school to a middle school and improve the elementary school.

■ **Oct. 26:** The Janesville City Council OKs a new, limited access road on the south side of the city that will take trucks directly to GM from I-90.

The road's cost is pegged at more than \$12 million.

GM wants a route with dependable traffic time so its just-in-time inventory flow is not disrupted. A consultant says trains on the south side of Janesville can tangle traffic for up to 13 minutes.

Traffic will be directed down Beloit Avenue. The new road will begin at Kellogg Avenue and will go under the Jackson Street railroad tracks.

■ **Nov. 17:** Vulcan Materials Co., a crushed-stone producer based in Birmingham, Ala., proposes building a 320-acre limestone quarry in La Prairie Township.

Despite reassurances from company representatives that noise, dust and vibration from the quarry operations would be kept to a minimum, area farmers staunchly oppose the project.

More than 300 names are collected on an anti-quarry petition.

At a meeting Nov. 30, La Prairie Township farmer Robert Arndt tells the town's planning and

zoning committee: "My father told me over and over again that we are the stewards of the soil. If that land becomes a quarry, it will never, ever produce anything again."

Citing La Prairie's long commitment to agriculture and its desire to preserve "the quiet enjoyment of family life," the planning and zoning committee denies Vulcan's request. The town board concurs at a meeting Dec. 7.

■ **Nov. 22:** After years of planning and training, GM employees in Janesville start building the automaker's new line of full-size sport utility vehicles.

Technically dubbed the GMT 800 series, the Chevrolet Suburbans and Tahoes and GMC Yukon XLs and Yukons are expected to be big sellers for General Motors, which has profited handsomely from its previous line of sport-utes.

Daily production increases slowly toward a targeted daily quota of 1,160 trucks from two 10-hour shifts.

Although production of the new model is expected to last into 2005, a replacement product for the Janesville plant has not been announced.

■ **Dec. 11:** Wisconsin running back Ron Dayne makes a clean sweep of the 1999 college football awards, winning the Heisman Trophy at the Downtown Athletic Club in New York.

Dayne, who also won the Walter Camp, Doak Walker and Maxwell trophies, led the Badgers to an undisputed Big Ten title and their second straight trip to the Rose Bowl.

In the process, Dayne rushed for 1,834 yards to break the NCAA all-time Division I-A career rushing record set the year before by Texas' Ricky Williams. Dayne finished the season with 6,397 career yards. Including bowl games, his total swells to 6,925.

Dayne's record-shattering Nov. 13 at Camp Randall Stadium electrified a crowd of nearly 80,000 fans. Wisconsin's 41-3 win over Iowa sewed up the Big Ten title.

■ **Sometime in 1999:** Holly Nehs triumphs in the Janesville women's golf tournament for the 11th time.



**The replacement for Marshall Middle School opened Jan. 2, 1997, with a half day of orientation for eighth graders. Construction on the \$13.7 million school started in October 1995. The 168,095-square-foot school was designed to accommodate 1,050 students. The new Marshall on Pontiac Drive sits on 28 acres, 12 of which are used for playing fields. The middle school has 265 rooms including closets and storage areas. Of those, 75 are classrooms, including the gym, pool and rooms for computer study, music and other special purposes. The building has 167 windows and 314,000 bricks.**













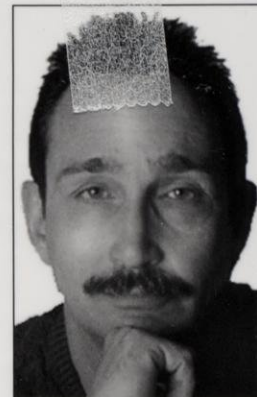






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Mike DuPre' has 25 years of experience in journalism, starting as a proofreader working his way through college and encompassing every aspect of the newsroom from reporting and writing to editing, photography and page design.

DuPre' worked 21 of those years for The Janesville Gazette.

Raised in Northbrook, Ill., DuPre' graduated in 1975 from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. There, he majored in creative writing, minored in journalism and helped the student newspaper, The Daily Egyptian, win an award as the best college paper in the nation in 1975.

The Wisconsin Newspaper Association has honored DuPre' many times for his reporting and writing.

DuPre' lives in rural Clinton with his companion of many years, Anna Lee Moss. His pastimes include appreciating all kinds of music and playing softball, football and the guitar.



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