

THE WAPSIPINICON

A newsletter published quarterly by the

TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

* 2010 Volunteer Institution of the Year, Illinois Association of Museums

*2020 Project Winner of Illinois Governor's Hometown Award, representing the Volunteers of the Tiskilwa Community

VOLUME 18

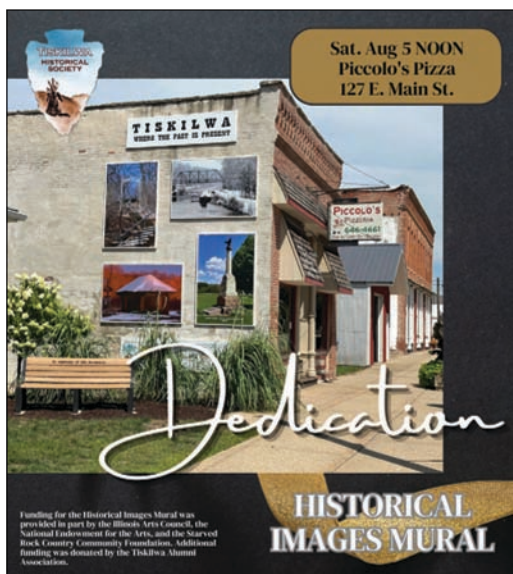
SEPTEMBER 2023

NUMBER 3

AN AUGUST OF CELEBRATIONS: THE MURAL, THE MAN, THE DONORS

MUSEUM ON MAIN AND GALLERY ON GALENA

More than 16,500 artifacts in our museums preserve and interpret local history. The **MoM** is housed in the former Methodist Church, an 1855 Illinois Historic Landmark Building at 110 East Main Street. The **GoG** is in the former Legion Hall, 550 North Galena, just south of the tracks.



Bubbles in Rain at Mural Dedication

A group of about thirty people gathered in the sprinkles at the Tiskilwa Library garden and began blowing celebratory bubbles at the conclusion of the dedication of Tiskilwa's new mural. The photographic artwork was designed by historical society members and "Dedicated to the people of Tiskilwa, past and present, for their contributions to the quality of life in our community."

Promising to be brief, our museum director **Cecille Gerber** hosted a 12-minute rain-delayed ceremony, thanking the numerous people who made this mural happen. The images, printed on metal by **Tree Town Graphics** of Elmhurst, are photography by **Cele, Dave Horst, and Nancy Harmon**. We were able to share the cost in approximate thirds with a most generous \$1,250 donation from the **Tiskilwa Alumni Association** – derived in part from Chief Tiskilwa keychain sales. Additional funding came from a \$1,000 grant from the

MUSEUM HOURS: SATURDAY: 10:00-1:00

GALLERY HOURS: FIRST SATURDAYS: 10-1

Illinois Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Starved Rock Country Community Foundation. Thanks to **Ralph Piccolo** for offering the wall of his historic 1887 building. This year, one of our newest members, **Sara Phalen**, has been using her creative and technical skills to design promotional visuals for posting on our website and Facebook – all to great acclaim! We wanted to share the above image with our *Wapsi* readers as a sample of her designing skills. You can see why we are so enthusiastic about Sara's work.

Ed Waca Named 2023 Citizen of the Year

The Village Board of Tiskilwa has named T-H-S President, **Ed Waca** (THS '66) "Citizen of the Year" for 2023. YAY! Anyone who knows Ed can confirm that neither rain, nor snow, nor pain of knees stops Ed from his self-appointed rounds – in helping out friends, family, neighbors, organizations, the village, and wayfaring strangers. Ed is an "undercover do-gooder" with years of generosity and outstanding commitment to benefit our village and its people. Ed is always making things work, moving or setting up something for Tiskilwa's residents and community activities. He's well known for his wry saying, "If it's complicated, it might take a while. If it's impossible, it'll take a little longer." We commend the village board for recognition of this hard-working volunteer who combines a big smile with his many acts of kindness.



We invite everyone to stop by the Museum on Main to see our handsome "Donors Board," displayed permanently above the Lincoln Legacy showcase. It recognizes contributors to our one-year campaign to raise enough funds to carry on our society's mission for the next 20 years. In addition, there is a special section in the center with names of individuals, THS classes, and families memorialized by the donors. T-H-S board members created the design with artistic assistance of Paula Neahrng of Princeton Graphics. It's a beauty!

Admission is free, and our volunteers will show you around. For an appointment, call Ed Waca at 815.646.4016.

Board of Directors 2023

- Ed Waca, President
- Charlie Waca, VP
- Julie Sampson, Sec.
- Judy Wright, Treas.
- Cecille Gerber, Dir.
- Larry Magnuson
- Randy Senneff
- Bill Wendle
- Margaret Wendle

*Thank you to those listed here who recently joined or renewed!
Happy to report that we're heading into the final stretch of 2023
with a record number of 366 members.
(Members are from Tiskilwa unless otherwise noted.)*

NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS

◆ INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES ◆

- Joe & Dee Bryja (Wheaton)
- Ilene W. Devlin (San Antonio, TX)
- Joni Garcia & Bob Fischetti (Willow Springs)
- Tom & Sally Trumpinski (Sublette)

SPONSORS

◆ FRIENDS ◆

- Ashley DePauw and Family
- Curt Dugosh of Dugosh Farms
- Aspen Eagan
- Lawrence Faletti
- Janet Frazee (Pawnee)
- Barb Grebner (Wyanet)
- Pat Marquis (Princeton)
- Margaret Maupin
- Susan Brokaw Morris (Bowling Green, KY)
- Jayne Barnes & John Sims

◆ PROMOTERS ◆

- Roger Fredenhagen (Champaign)
- Alice Malloy (Shorewood)

Rain-delayed Parade Creates Smiles and Fun

For the first time in years (if ever??), Mother Nature rained on our parade. Undaunted, TCA organizers pushed the step-off time forward by an hour and only a light drizzle dampened the rest of the day.



(Photos courtesy of **Kathy Schultz Bauer** (THS '75))



Clockwise from upper left:

- * **1903 Olds Roadster:** Our T-H-S vice president **Charlie Waca** (THS '64) steers.
- * **Camels on prairie:** **Esther Graham** is riding Casper, leading young'un Kipo.
- * **Fire Truck:** Vol firefighter driver **Matthew Gardner** with his daughter **Stella**
- * **THS Class of '78** members showed their high school and patriotic colors.
- * **Valerie Jensen** on the beautiful **Bella** did a grand job of bringing up the rear!
- * **Curt Albrecht's Tractors:** They putt-putted along in the parade, thanks to family members, including **Matthew Voss** (above). His tractors were later on display on the museum lawn in T-H-S's annual "Classic Rides."

Financial Summary for 2022-23 Fiscal Year

Your memberships and donations provided strong financial support to your Tiskilwa Historical Society this past year! With no out-of-the-ordinary expenditures, we began this fiscal year in a solid financial position. Amazingly, the campaign for our "20-year Fund," which is held in a separate account, exceeded our goal. The audited financial report will soon be available for members' review, upon request. Thank you for your continued commitment to Tiskilwa Historical Society.
Submitted by **Judy Wright**, Treasurer

Spirited Crowd of 135 Rocks THS Alumni Banquet

From the opening invocation by **Dennis Davis** (THS '73) to the final "Cha-he, cha-ha, cha-ha-ha-ha!" led by former music teachers **Mrs. Doris Hamilton** and **Mr. Jim Jones** along with THS cheerleaders of yesteryear, August 5 was a great evening for recalling glory days. The festively decorated banquet hall at Hundred Acres Orchard and delicious dinner catered by Park Tavern made the evening all the more enjoyable for the full house of attendees. Special recognition was given to THS nonagenarian alumni from seventy-plus (!) years ago: **Agnes McCauley Ross** ('48), **Melvina Underwood Lewis** ('48), **Elaine Burress Bowers** ('44), **Doris Travis Hamilton** ('50), **Don Lawson** ('50), and **Alton Hughes** ('51).



Lynda Kunkel-Abbey (THS '73) and **Elaine Bowers** (THS '44) were thrilled to greet each other after many years. To Elaine's right is **Alton Hughes** (THS '51) and his wife, **Emelie**. At far left, **Mrs. Hamilton** and **Mr. Jones** lead Loyalty.

Smiles spread around the hall as old friends regaled each other with happy-days stories. The group gave a huge round of applause to the planning committee: **Sondra Compton Owens** (THS '84), **Randy Senneff** (THS '73), **Christy Wagner Senneff** (THS '81) **Suzanne Ary** (THS '84), **Margaret Ioder Wendle** (THS '70), **Jan Pruitt Lohaus** ('73), **Nancy Senneff Ketay** ('90), and **Gina Colby Nelson** ('90).

The **Alumni Banquet Committee** is always looking for alums to pitch in and carry on the 144-year-old tradition in style. Please get in touch with anyone on the committee if you can step up for next year, especially if you're a member of the Class of '74. Planning starts soon!

50th Reunion Events Delight Class of '73 Celebrants

An outstanding reunion committee for the THS Class of '73 filled the weekend with lively festivities from Friday through Sunday. Before their Friday dinner at the Tiskilwa Inn, 30+ classmates and spouses gathered at the Museum on Main for a social hour. On Saturday, their enthusiastic part in the parade was followed by socializing and snacking at the Tiskilwa Library's Community Room. Everyone at the Alumni Banquet enjoyed their lively presence, and Clark Thompson's reminiscences of Tiskilwa during their youthful days delighted all. In a touching activity on Sunday, several of the group visited the graves of deceased classmates at Mt. Bloom and St. Mary's Cemeteries.



Left: Great snacks and good times in the galleries of Museum on Main

Photo Op on the MoM Steps: 1stRow: Glen Walters, Pete Kaufmann, Ann Longman Serrato, Roger House, Doug Albrecht; 2ndrow: Jan Pruitt Lohaus, Dennis Davis, Dale Dugosh, Barb Fisher O'Neill, Lucy Williams; 3rdRow: Pam Sterling Menery, Kathy Snow, Janice Moreland Magnuson; 4thRow: Jason Engel, Debra Sapp Magnuson, Linda Kunkel-Abbey, Cathy Burress Henkins, Debra Johnson Abston; 5thRow: Steve Gibbs, Denny Hale, Roger Fredenhagen, Randy Senneff, Sylvia Albrecht Aschliman.

THE WAPSIPINICON, SEPTEMBER 2023

Thomas Michael Lutz, 75, of Tiskilwa passed away Wednesday, June 20, 2023, at St. Anthony Medical Center, Rockford. He was born June 28, 1947, to Anna Genevieve McCarthy Lutz and Richard Lutz, who both preceded him in death.

Rest in Peace, Tommy: It Took Our Village

Editor's note: When Tiskilwa residents learned of the death of longtime resident Tom Lutz, a sweet sadness wafted through the village.

At our request, **Deacon John Murphy** (THS '66) sent us notes from his remarks at Tom's funeral on June 30, St. Mary's Church, Tiskilwa. As he spoke that day, John embellished his notes with several more memories, but we've recorded the essence of John's touching words.

Deacon John Murphy: We will miss Tom! He had a good life because of the people of Tiskilwa! God bless you all.

Tom experienced life in many different ways. With his autism, Tom faced challenges with day-to-day activities. But after his mother Genevieve's death, he was able to function in his home because of the help of so many good people. Most everyone in town knew Tom and helped him whenever they could. In fact, it seems that the whole town joined together to support Tom.

Although Tom had a hard time understanding or doing some things, in other ways, he was brilliant. Tom never forgot numbers, dates, or birthdays. Many things intrigued him. He read every newspaper and magazine that he could get his hands on. When he was still able to walk to the recycle building, he'd take along his gym bag and come home with magazines that people had stacked to the side of the bins.

His faith was important to him and so was this little church. He had certain prayers he read each day, and his small black prayerbook was worn thin. That book was the one thing he asked me to bring to him at Heartland Care after he fell at home and needed nursing care in the last few months of his life.

It was amazing how Tom seemed to know everything happening in Tiskilwa. He loved to go to any social gathering in town, just to see people or eat a meal with them. Everyone who cared for him loved him.

Cecille Gerber: On December 30, 2022, before taking chicken soup to Tommy, I called him to ask if he'd like to ride around town to see Christmas decorations. He said, "OK," and when I stopped down, he was all bundled up and waiting by the door. It was hard for Tom to look people "in the eyes" but when I asked him to pose for this photo, I could tell that he was enjoying that ride! At the news of Tommy's death, I began to think of the numerous people who helped and befriended him over his seven decades in Tiskilwa. I jotted a list of those I knew who made meals for him, gave him rides,



stopped by to visit or check up on him, assured that he got to church, took him to village events and out for his birthday. Within a few minutes, I'd listed more than two dozen names, and that was just a start. Of course, John and Ginger Murphy were his main support, but I've long thought that it took the entire village to help him enjoy life. Tommy brought out the best in people.

Editor's note. [Yeah, another one.] When **Ginger Murphy** (THS '68) posted on the Facebook page "Remember Tiskilwa" that Tommy had passed away, almost 100 people responded with compassion. We've chosen a few comments to share. Numerous people mentioned how much the Murphys did for him, becoming his go-to "family" after his mother died more than twenty

years earlier. We've printed Beth's note below to represent all those appreciative comments directed to Ginger and John.

Beth Saal: Tom is at peace and enjoying his new life to the fullest. Thank you so much to John and Ginger for EVERYTHING you both did for him. The patience and compassion you showed to him was amazing.

Angie Johnson Burden: A huge thank you to Mickey Nelson for looking after Tommy and doing his laundry for many years.

Cheryl Yepsen Pagoria: Tom is at peace. To think of how many lives he touched over the years is amazing – because so many people cared for him in one way or another. Even my dad would stop what he was doing when he saw Tommy walking . . . and get into his car to take him where he needed to go – or sometimes talk him into going back home. He was everyone's "buddy" and folks felt it was their "job" to keep an eye on him. In his way, Tommy was an important citizen of our community. Tommy was a lucky fellow to live his life in Tiskilwa, where everyone cared for him like family.

Brett Klinefelter: Sorry to hear this. I enjoyed going down the street to see Tom. My neighbor, Diana Znavor, often visited him and took him meals, being sure to include the snacky treats he liked. He was always appreciative of us visiting with him. As a kid, I'd see him out walking, and my family members would pick him up to give him a ride anywhere he wanted to go. Tom was a longtime part of this village, and he'll truly be missed!!

Ashley DePauw: When I was growing up, Tommy would walk down to my Grandpa Ralph Wagner's shop if he saw his truck down there so he could get a ride in the dump truck or his other truck. Tommy really enjoyed those rides with my grandpa and me.

Susan Lund: Tom was amazing with numbers. He would jump into my dad's truck (Byrtle Nevitt) and ride along wherever he went. He could tell Dad how much grain he hauled, what year, and what happened on a particular day.

Randy Senneff: I remember Tom as far back as 1967 when we moved here. In recent years, Tisk Hist Society members made sure he got to our monthly programs and home again, taking a bag full of homemade treats with him.

Pat Hassler: Tommy always loved talking to my Dad about trains and knew a lot about them himself. If a train came through while he was walking, he always stopped to count the cars. Thanks to everyone who looked after him, gave him a smile, listened to him even if it was a story you had heard before. I think he would've been 76 on his birthday on June 28. Now he can have a wonderful heavenly birthday.

Jim Jones: So sad to hear of Tommy's passing. From my earliest years teaching in Tiskilwa, Tommy was always at every school event I went to. I believe Tommy enjoyed all things Tiskilwa. He was at church events, parades, and above all, school events. It is my guess he never missed a concert or a ball game in the 23 years I taught at Tiskilwa. When our schools were annexed, I felt sad for myself and my family in some ways, but I really felt it for Tommy. A major part of his social life was gone. He was a true fan of the Village and of the school.

Editor's Note: And finally, Sarah's note to sum up everything so nicely:

Sarah Sims Fritz: I am so sorry to hear this. Thank you to everyone who had a part in caring for Tom. God knew exactly what He was doing when He made Tiskilwa Tom's home.

A Country Boy's Memory of Visits to the "Big City" by Steve Borge (THS '66)

Every once in a while, when I was in grade school, Aunt Marcella would invite me to stay overnight. I always thought that was so cool. I could pretend I was one of the "city kids" and walk to school.

But I remember trying to fall asleep and hearing cars go up and down the road outside. I was not used to hearing traffic when trying to sleep. I also remember riding Mardell's bike (I think it was a 3-speed!) around town with a guy by the name of Ed Waca, as he did his paper route.

The Peoria Journal Star, if I remember correctly.

Coming soon to a museum near you!

PROGRAMS FOR THE FALL – MUSIC and TRAINS and QUILTS

SUNDAY, September 24, 4:00 p.m. Come to our annual Concert on the Lawn with **Chris Vallillo**, musician and storyteller, in his one-man show about the part of Illinois he lovingly calls “Forgottonia.” Our 8-minute annual meeting, as prescribed by our constitution, will precede the concert. We’ll elect board members, vote on changes to the constitution, and hear a brief summary of the financial report.

MONDAY, October 9, 7:00 p.m. Illinois Humanities Road Scholar **Mike Matejka** will present “What’s Comin’ Down the Line? The Railroad in the American Mind.” With PowerPoint visuals and stories, Mike will tell how the railroad, its workers, and the industry itself became a cultural American icon in movies, toys, and music.

MONDAY, November 13, 7:00 p.m. For our annual **Salute to Veterans**, members of the **Illinois Valley Quilts of Valor** will present a program explaining the purpose and origins of their unique way of honoring America’s veterans with personal quilts.

Pow Wow Days Spark Reunions for THS Classes

This year, more than ever it seemed, classmates of the past focused on PWD weekend to stage get-togethers around the town to revel in days of past glories and misadventures.



1983 Gang under TGS sycamore Some of '60 & '61 group at Kelly's Place

The available space in this crowded issue doesn't allow for I.D. of everyone. This will need to be September's second “History Mystery.” Photos represent a sampling of the numerous reunions that took place.

Taking a cue from last year's donations to Tiskilwa non-profits by the Class of '62, some of this year's groups followed suit. For instance, the Class of '63 collected \$300 to donate to **Garden Friends** whose work keeps the Flower Triangle by the West Park looking lovely year-round. The Class of '73 is planning to make **locator signs for plots in Mt. Bloom and St. Mary's Cemeteries** from contributions by their classmates.



1963, hosted by Jerry & Helen Murphy Flower Triangle by West Park

Wapsipinicon Editors:

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Jane Jones, jjones215@gmail.com

A WEEKEND FILLED WITH FUN FOR “KIDS” OF ALL AGES

Hats off to **Tiskilwa Community Association** for once again organizing a **Pow Wow Days** weekend that we could all rally 'round: for their months of planning, their work on sprucing up the village before the event, and their dedication during the weekend to assure all went smoothly despite the rainy surprise. Did you know that, among countless other volunteer efforts, they cleaned Main Street to re-stripe it and rebuilt the East Park picnic shelter after a roof collapse? Many of their good works go unrecognized but not unnoticed. TCA is a huge blessing to our entire community. Someday, we'd like to print a list of all the community projects they've accomplished over the years.



East Park Picnic Shelter in Progress



TCA Clean-up on Main Street

One special addition to this year's PWD that will linger on (from August to November) is our new display in the Timeline showcase at the Museum on Main. We did our own spin on TCA's nostalgic parade theme: “**Tiskilwa: A Great Place to Call Home.**” After director **Cele Gerber** collected, enlarged, and “framed” photos of Tiskilwa homes from old postcards and other sources, **Sally Munson** arranged them in the showcase. You'll smile to see the whimsical “Sally Touch” as she added figurines from her American Gothic collection, along with a pic of our “Tisk Gothic” snow sculptures.



Restoration of Historic 1848 Hunter Cemetery Continues

With Hunter descendants traveling to Bureau County from several states, the **Hunter Cemetery Association** organized their biennial clean-up on June 23-24 at the old cemetery, surrounded by farmland in Section 18 of Wheatland Township. More than twenty-three years ago, Mikki Judge located graves of her great-great grandparents there, but the cemetery was completely neglected. Ever since that date, many volunteers have maintained the cemetery, raised funds to surround it with a white vinyl fence, and added an informational kiosk. To find out more or help, contact jjudge2127@aol.com.

TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual dues: Jan. 1 to Dec. 31

MEMBERSHIP: Individual \$15; Family \$20

SPONSORSHIP: (Includes membership dues – and it's tax deductible!)

Friend: \$50 Promoter: \$100 Patron: \$250

Bronze Ben: \$500; Silver Ben: \$1,000; Gold Ben: \$2,500; Platinum: \$5,000+

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email _____ DATE: _____

In addition, I'm enclosing a MEMORIAL DONATION of \$ _____ in memory of _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED = \$ _____

Please make check payable to **TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY** and mail it to P.O. Box 87, Tiskilwa, IL 61368. Thank you.

TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

110 EAST MAIN STREET

P.O. Box 87

TISKILWA, IL 61368

www.tiskilwahistoricalsociety.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The River of Heaven, the Silver Stream

(Words from ancient Chinese mythology)



When **Dave Horst** (THS '74) posted this photo on Facebook in June 2023, we couldn't wait to ask him if we could share it with our *Wapsi* readers. As always, he generously agreed. Here are Dave's words:

Today I went out with Scott Mecum to scout out locations to start doing some astrophotography again. It got me looking back through some shots from previous outings. This one is from a year ago, the Milky Way over the Hennepin Canal at Lock 11 near Tiskilwa. It was taken on June 3, 2022, from the footbridge that crosses the lock.

These generous businesses help to defray postage costs.

JOHN F. HEDRICH
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Princeton, IL 61356
815-872-1010

One FERRY East
Sharing our historic home for short-term rentals, photo shoots and small events.
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Kelly's Place
222 W. Main Street • Tiskilwa
Ph: 815-646-4773

Farewell—with many thanks to Kelly and Kenny!