

The Charlemagne

St. Charles History Museum
Celebrating 85 years!

VOL 39 ISSUE: 2
ST. CHARLES HISTORY MUSEUM
SUMMER 2018

SUMMER in St. Charles

*Written by David Pietryla
Board of Directors and Membership Committee Member*

Summertime is almost here. For many, this time of the year conjures up memories and daydreams of backyard BBQs, sunny picnics, and charming community festivals.



THE WATER FRONT - POTTAWATOMIE PARK - ST. CHARLES, ILLINOIS 64418

Summer is a wonderful time in St. Charles. Our community is blessed with an abundance of beautiful natural amenities, cultural attractions and, of course, a wonderful, rich history.

As the temperatures go up, go out and explore St. Charles. Take advantage of this beautiful season. Go have that picnic in one of our wonderful public parks. Walk or bike along the jewel of our town, the Fox River. Visit and dine in our fantastic downtown; while you are there, you can also stop by the Museum, grab a map, and embark on an historical downtown walking tour.

No summer season would be complete without attending one of our city's several summer festivals, especially the event that is nearest and dearest to our hearts at the Museum: The Best of St. Charles Foodie Fest! This event brings out the best of St. Charles, especially the unique dining delights of our city and the always entertaining sounds of 103.9 The Fox's Eddie Volkman.

Already in its third year, Foodie Fest has become a prominent fundraising event for the Museum. In addition to fostering wonderful community spirit, every visitor is directly supporting the Museum and its mission to preserve and promote St. Charles' rich history.



Who knows, you may also be the winner of this year's Tri-Cities Community 50/50 Raffle!

What better way to enjoy the summertime than to eat some great food, enjoy the beautiful weather, and come together to support a fantastic organization.



Mark your calendars for June 23 and buy your tickets today! We hope to see you, your family, and friends at the Best of St. Charles Foodie Fest 2018.



St. CHARLES
HISTORY MUSEUM

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Alison Costanzo
Executive Director

Amanda Wolf
Curator & Marketing Coordinator

Museum Hours

Tuesday - Saturday
11 am - 4 pm

Closed Sunday-Monday and
Major Holidays

About Us

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Letter from the President

The St. Charles History Museum is a thriving community resource and destination for people of all ages. If you haven't been to the Museum recently, I invite you to visit. You will be surprised by the redesigned and reconfigured Jack and Kathy Brens Exhibit Hall. New display units and technology offer interactive learning experiences. By rotating temporary exhibits, we are able to highlight more of our collection in a more open environment. When you come, be sure to check out the new Curious Fox Gift Shop that features local crafts and products and unique St. Charles souvenirs.

All these improvements offer opportunities for our community members to become involved in the Museum's growth. Here are some ways you can help:

- Become a Museum member or renew or upgrade your current membership. Our members help shape our future.
- Become a Volunteer. Our two staff members accomplish all they do because of our wonderful volunteers. Your special interest, talent, or skill will be put to good use, to such tasks as working in the gift shop, helping create exhibits, or taking care of the collection.
- Serve on a Museum Committee. You don't have to be on the Museum Board to serve on the Education, Fundraising, and Membership Committees. It's a great way to get to know your Museum, or decide if you would like to be a future Board member.
- Provide financial support or make a gift. Donations of all sizes and types are welcome. The City of St. Charles generously provides the building and major improvements, as well as 30% of the Museum's operating revenue. The remaining 70% comes from grants, gift shop sales, membership fees, bequests, cash donations, and gifts such as the digitization equipment donated recently by the Thornapple Questers.
- Buy your gifts, St. Charles souvenirs, and locally made honey, preserves, and salsa at the Curious Fox!
- Buy tickets to Museum programs and events, as well as for the 50/50 Raffle. By purchasing a raffle ticket, you support the Museum and the projects of the Tri-Cities Exchange Club, AND have a chance to win: last year's prize was \$10,000!
- Be a Foodie Fest sponsor or buy a ticket for this fun event on June 23 that features at least 17 popular St. Charles restaurants.

Come into the Museum today and experience everything that it has to offer!

- Diana Brown, *Board President*

THANK YOU TO OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS



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St. Charles
Public Library

A Word from the Director

Dear Friends of the Museum,

It's hard to believe that Summer has finally arrived and with the warmer weather we have been busy with tours at the museum. This March, we launched our new third grade school program called "History Detectives" in partnership with the St. Charles Public Library Youth Services Department. The new program is a three part series which includes an opportunity for students to learn about a local resident by viewing primary resources from the museum's archives, a presentation in the class room, and a tour of North Cemetery. Our hope is that this new program will become standard for all the third grade classes in District 303.

In addition to our school programs, we have hosted a number of groups at the Museum, including the Elias Kent Kane Chapter NSDAR who hosted their March meeting in our exhibit hall. Also, in partnership with the Greater St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau, the African American Convention of Tourism visited the museum. These are just two of the many groups that have held meetings or hosted group tours at the Museum over the last few months; our hope is to have many more.

Our exhibit *Serving Gas to Preserving History* closed in preparation for our new temporary exhibit which celebrates the history of Hotel Baker. The exhibit has been a real labor of love for our volunteer, Zack VerVynck, who has been developing this exhibit for the last year. The exhibit will open on May 31, and we will have a number of special guests in attendance.

We have also been hard at work preparing for the Best of St. Charles Foodie Fest. The winning pot continues to grow for the Tri-Cities Community 50/50 raffle. We have a number of new activities scheduled for Foodie Fest, and I look forward to seeing you, our members and supporters, this June 23 at our annual fundraiser. Tickets for both the raffle and Foodie Fest can be purchased at the Museum.

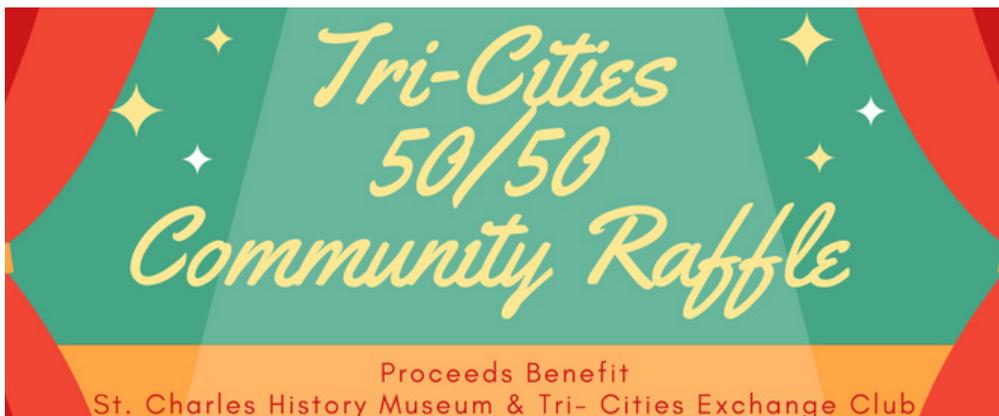
-Alison Costanzo, Executive Director



Munhall Elementary 3rd grade classes at North Cemetery for the "History Detectives" program

Help us raise the Winning Pot!

WINNING POT IN 2018 OVER \$10,000!



The St. Charles History Museum and the Tri-Cities Exchange Club are hosting the second annual Tri-Cities 50/50 Community Raffle. Half of the proceeds will go to the winner and the remainder will benefit the St. Charles History Museum and the organizations that the Tri-Cities Exchange Club supports.

This year's winner will be announced by EDDIE VOLKMAN of 103.9 The Fox at the St. Charles History Museum's Best of St. Charles Foodie Fest on June 23, 2018 at 8:30pm. The winner need not be present to win.

Ninety Years in the Making: Celebrating Local

Blue Goose: Shop Local

If you haven't lived in St. Charles all your life, you might not have known that Blue Goose has been in more locations in St. Charles than any other retail business. In 1928, Annunciata "Nancy" Lencioni opened the Blue Goose Fruit Market in the building which had been Gartner's Bakery, 201 W Main Street. She decided to name her store after an illustration of a goose painted in blue on the side of a Pooley Fruit Company packing crate. In the early years, the Blue Goose sold only fruit, vegetables, and a limited number of grocery items.

After years of successful growth, Nancy's son Vasco Lencioni and his wife Germaine took over the operation of the Blue Goose and moved in 1941 to a larger space in the building that many know today as Rocket Fizz and The Finery Restaurant at the southwest corner of 3rd and Main Streets.

In 1963, they made the leap to a brand-new custom supermarket at the corner of First Street and Illinois. Blue Goose continued to be a pacesetter in the grocery business as the first self-service store, installing scanners at the checkout counters, and utilizing refrigerated display cases.

Progress came knocking again in 2008 when Blue Goose accepted an offer from the city to move just a block south in order to open space for the First Street Development. Interestingly, the site of their newest market was once a booming railroad yard that provided commercial products and materials for customers throughout the Fox River Valley.

At their new location, greatly expanded and with more parking, Blue Goose Market continues to do business the way the Lencioni family has for the last ninety years.



Evergreen Pub & Grill: Home of Rolle Bolle

Driving west from the center of St. Charles today, it's hard to understand that for much of St. Charles' first seventy-five years 7th Street was the western boundary of the populated portion of town. Many people lived on farms and in small towns west of St. Charles. Civilization did not by any means "end" at 7th Street.

In 1928, Gus Van Glabeke bought Teddy Van Aiken's house on 14th Street, where Glabeke made and sold liquor during Prohibition. When Prohibition ended in 1933, Gus became legal: he opened Gus's Evergreen Tavern. By 1948, Gus sold the tavern to Ray Triest, who drew many patrons from the nearby "Belgium Town" – mostly employees of the Moline Malleable company along Dean Street. The Evergreen soon expanded into pigeon racing and Rolle Bolle, a sport known to many Belgians. In the late 1980's, Bernie Deutsch and his wife Patty purchased Ray's and kept things pretty much the way they were for another 20 years.

Ninety years later after Glabeke bought it, the restaurant now known simply as Evergreen Pub & Grill is still the west side's place to go for volleyball, bags and even trivia nights. With one of the best outdoor bars, even heated in the winter, it's a great four-season hangout. They have a full menu, and the new owners have been careful to preserve all the great atmosphere this place has earned over the decades. You won't be in the Evergreen long before you agree with something Bernie Deutsch once said: "If these old walls could talk ... I tell you, there'd be some stories." And if you listen enough while you're sitting at the bar, you might just hear them.

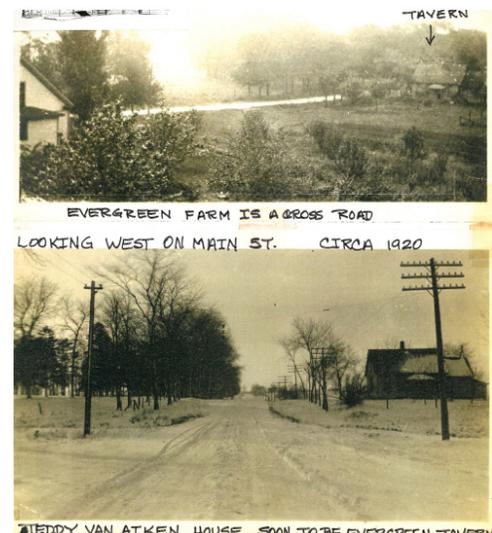


Exhibit and Collection News

Happy Birthday Hotel Baker!

St. Charles' famous Hotel Baker is celebrating 90 years. Through twists and turns and ups and downs, the Hotel Baker has been in and out of the hotel business since 1928. Placing no limit on cost, original owner Col. Baker told the architects to build their masterpiece. Col. Baker remained a farmer even after he and his niece Dellora Norris inherited the fortune of Col. Baker's brother-in-law John Gates, the founder of Texaco Oil. The Colonel and Dellora invested the money in the town of St. Charles. With every gift they gave, they gave with quiet graciousness. Col. Baker gave in abundance and ran the Hotel Baker at a yearly deficit. He was friends with people from all walks of life and



wanted people to enjoy beauty and luxury no matter where they came from.



Join the St. Charles History Museum and Lux Dance Studio on May 31st at 5pm for the first look at our new temporary exhibit *Step Inside Hotel Baker*. This exhibit tells both familiar and previously untold stories of Hotel Baker's 90 year rich history.

The exhibit will be open from May 31st to August 24th

Thornapple Questers Donates Equipment

Thornapple Questers donated an iPad, scanner, and photo-light equipment to the St. Charles History Museum with the help of a matching grant by the Illinois Questors. The Museum's plan for this equipment is to digitize and link historical documents, photos, slides, videos and artifacts.

This generous donation will allow the Museum to digitize these historical items economically rather than depending on costly outsourcing for this important task. Organizing and linking digitized information to a compatible software program will allow for more efficient and comprehensive research using our collection.

The Thornapple Questers are part of an international nonprofit organization. Questers are lovers of antiques, collectibles, and history, who encourage an appreciation for the preservation and restoration of historical landmarks and artifacts. In recent years, Thornapple Questers have contributed funds to Corron Farm, Jones Law Office, and Preservation Partners of Fox Valley.



Alison Costanzo, Director of the St. Charles History Museum, (left front) demonstrates new digitization equipment provided by Thornapple Questers. (left to right) Heide Hughes, Diane Conn, Jane Laswell, Pat Pretz, Barb Vlack, Gerda Boone, Jane Erickson, Mary Anne Rebernak and Arlene Schrock

Sponsorship Opportunities

On June 23 we will host the "Best of St. Charles Foodie Fest." featuring food tastings from St. Charles restaurants with a historical twist including activities such as the Tri-Cities 50/50 Community Raffle. As we plan this exciting event, we are looking to you, our valued community partners, to assist our efforts by becoming a sponsors or donors.

Levels available are below:

- **Gold Level - \$1,500 Benefits** – Sponsorship will be noted on the main banner for all 2018 events as well as on the Gold Level Sponsors banner. Sponsors will also be announced at the event and listed in all print materials as well as on the website. Gold Level Sponsors will receive six (6) tickets to Foodie Fest.
- **Silver Level - \$1,000 Benefits** – Sponsorship will be noted on signage at Foodie Fest, announced at the event, and listed in all print materials as well as on the website. Silver Level Sponsors will receive four (4) tickets to Foodie Fest.
- **Bronze Level - \$500 Benefits** – Sponsorship will be noted in all print material for Foodie Fest and on the museum's website. Bronze Level Sponsors will receive two (2) tickets to Foodie Fest.

SPONSORS OF \$500 OR MORE FOR "BEST OF ST. CHARLES FOODIE FEST" WILL BE FEATURED IN 100+ RADIO ADS ON 103.9 THE FOX WITH EDDIE VOLKMAN

Other ways to give:

- Become an In-Kind Donor for Foodie Fest
 - *Speak with Museum staff for this option.*
- Donate items to be sold in our Live Auction at Foodie Fest
 - We are looking for items such as: Trips, Hotel Stays, Cars, Tickets, Experiences, Memberships and More.

Visit www.stcmuseum.org or contact Amanda or Alison for more information.