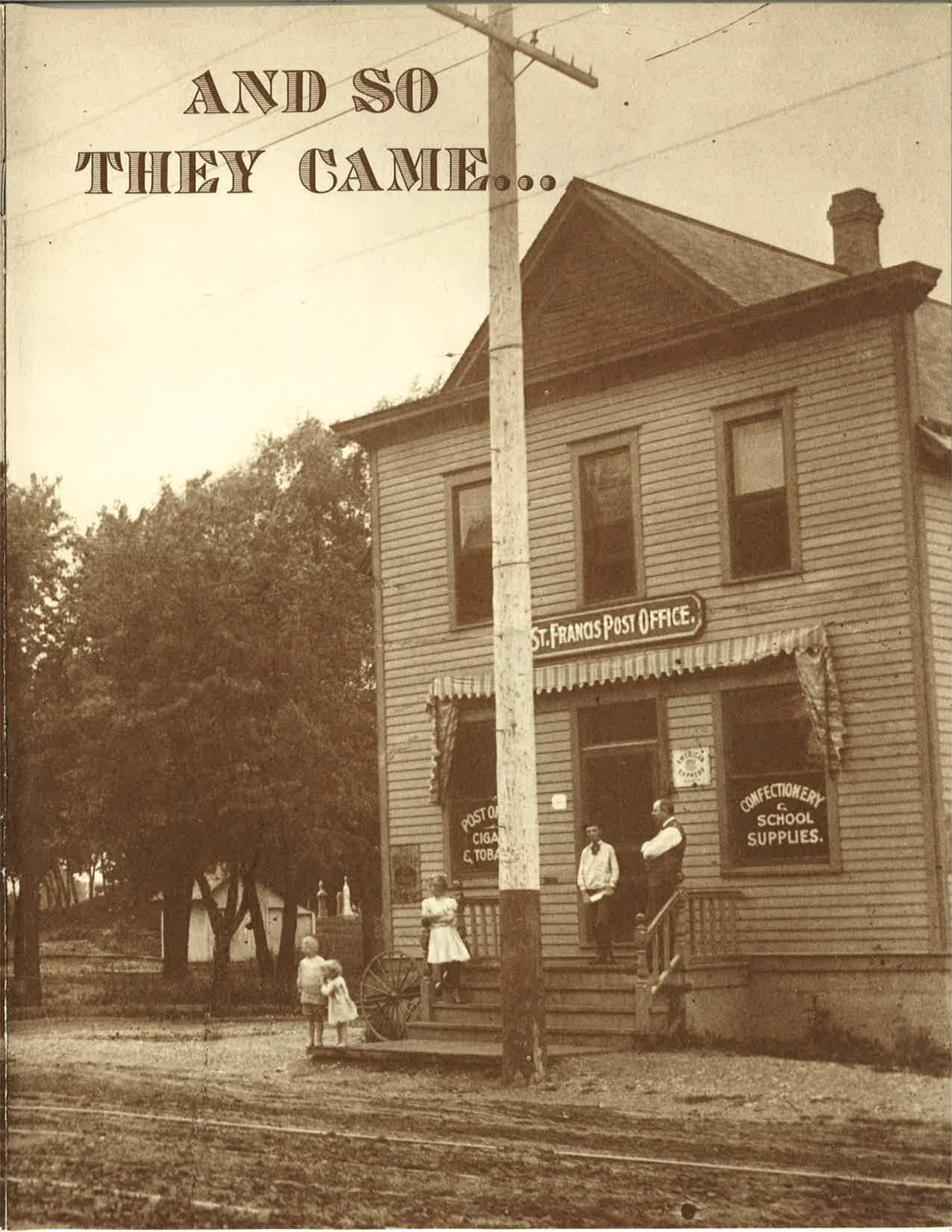
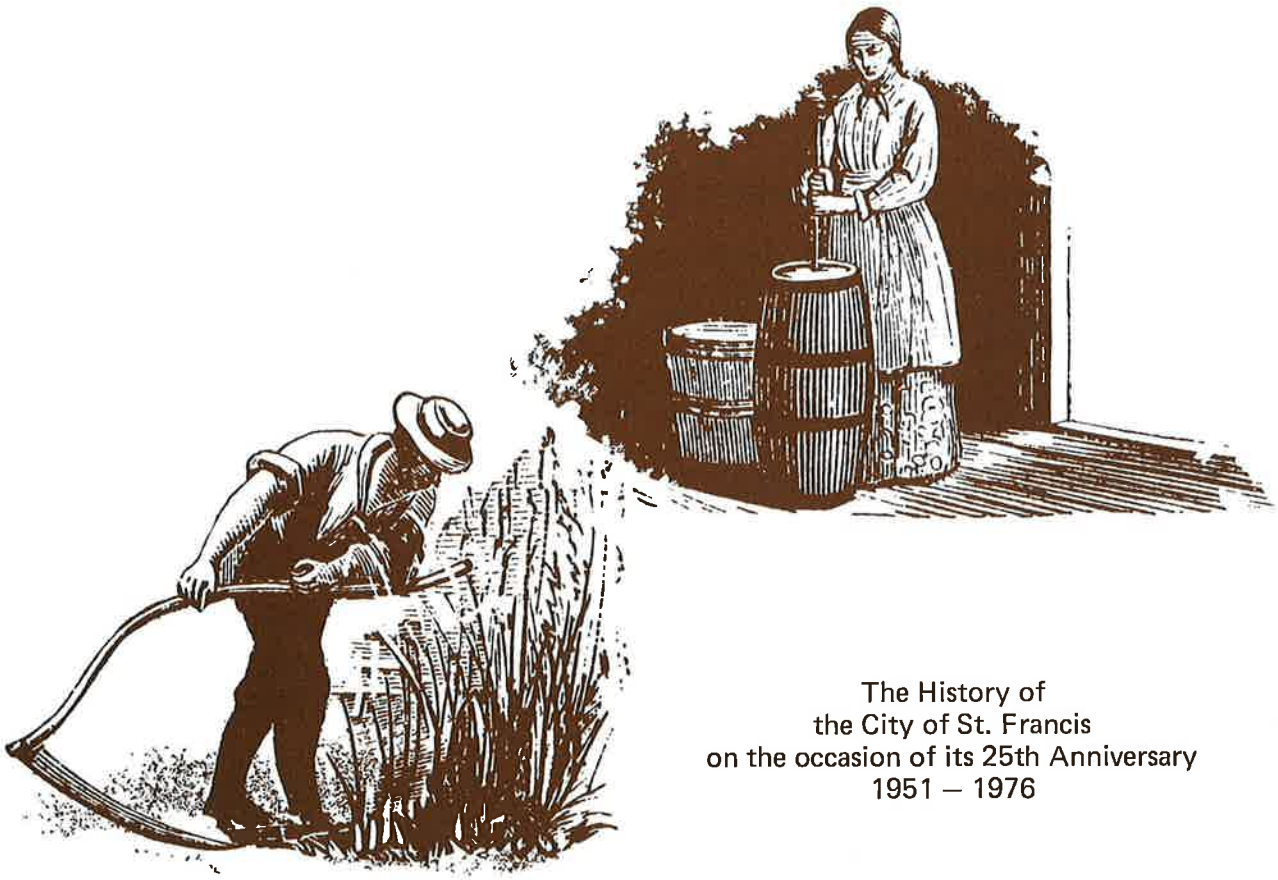
AND SO THEY CAME...



AND SO THEY CAME...

by

Larry Van Goethem



The History of
the City of St. Francis
on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary
1951 – 1976

EARLY DAYS, EARLY WAYS

Each of us is all the sums we have not counted.

Thomas Wolfe

The Indians called it "Nojoshing", meaning "land that extends into the water". It was a high point, higher than what is now downtown Milwaukee or the harbor district so it was desirable land. It was drained by the sluggish Kinnickinnic River, whose wetlands were rich with wild rice as were many of the low lands of the settlement. White visitors called it, as they heard it from the Indians, Milacky or Miskouakimina.

It became, with state government, the Town of Lake. Out of the township gradually evolved Bay View, Cudahy, St. Francis and Milwaukee's southwest side. The main link between the south shore suburbs and downtown Milwaukee is S. Kinnickinnic Ave., a roadway rich in diversity and history. Driving south on Kinnickinnic, one notices that the only indication of the existence of St. Francis is a highway population sign and the presence of two large religious institutions.

This is no accident of location. St. Francis was first settled by Germans or Bavarians. The religious institutions, which make up a third of the three square miles of St. Francis, were a vital bridge between the old and new worlds for those early settlers. Thus, from the beginning St. Francis, the neighborhood and then the city, have been a cradle of Catholic learning and training.

To those outside of its boundaries the city is just another suburb, and a nondescript one at that. It has no post office; it doesn't even have a zip code.

But if it is true that most of our search for heritage is a yearning for identity, then St. Francis is rich in the character that delineates communities. Even many of its residents do not realize that although the city's municipal charter is only 25 years old this year, its roots sink deep into Wisconsin history.

Because it was first a part of the vast North American French territory and because French fur traders and priests pressed boldly into the wilderness midlands, many Great Lakes settlements pre-date most Atlantic Coast colonies. In 1634, when Jean Nicolet landed at Red Banks on Green Bay seeking the fabled Northwest Passage to India, tribes of the great Algonquin Nation occupied the eastern shores of Lake Michigan.

The Potawatomi Tribe occupied land south of the Milwaukee River. The Menominees claimed all lands as late as 1825 north of Milwaukee, west to the Black River and northwest to Chippewa territory.

Milwaukee, the confluence of the Kinnickinnic, Milwaukee and Menomonee Rivers, was an important settlement - first to the Indians because of the rich soil for their rice crop and then to white settlers because of the harbor.

The harvesting of wild rice is an activity confined to a few lakes in Wisconsin these days, but wild rice was vital to the Great Lakes Indians. Rice was a staple in their diet as important as it is to Orientals. It was the only food that

could be kept, like any grain, and used all winter. When the Hunger Moon rose in February and famine decimated many tribes because stored food was gone and game was scarce, rice was generally left to eat in the lodges. The wetlands of the rivers, the muck underlying shallow waters, provided the wild rice.

Such an area was certain to attract early whites and in the beginning, writes Mrs. Olive Roberts, a retired principal of Thompson School, *"the vagrant fur trader was the only one who could likely say that this was his place of habitation."*

A history by Mrs. Roberts recounts:

"Although documents preserved at Montreal, Canada, and Paris, France, show that the French fur traders visited the mouth of the Milwaukee River in the late 1600's, no settlements were made in this community until 1833 or 1834."

It overpowers the imagination to reflect that while the United States is observing its Bicentennial this year, almost two centuries had elapsed from the first visits of French explorers and fur traders to Wisconsin and the settlement of what is now St. Francis in the mid 1800's.

Some perspective on the beginnings of this nation is seen in the fact that the journey of exploration via Wisconsin and down the Mississippi River by Marquette and Joliet began at St. Ignace, Mich. in 1673 from an established mission - and that was 103 years before 1776.

Going back in time is like entering a cave. There is light at the entrance, but it quickly fades and finally it is dark. Those early years retain few patches of light. Joliet's journal was lost on his return to Canada. Records show that in October of 1699 Father Cosme, a Jesuit, and a companion stopped in Milwaukee, remaining two days because of a storm.

The Indians generally welcomed the early white visitors. One French historian wrote that *"the behavior of these people is very affable and cordial."*

"And they make great efforts to hold the good opinions of persons who come among them," wrote Bacqueville de la Potherie in a book published in Paris in 1722 and again in 1953, *"They are very intelligent. They have an inclination for raillery, their physical appearance is good and they are great talkers."*

The French have a saying for it: The more things change the more they stay the same. De la Potherie might as well have been writing about the present residents of St. Francis, or any American city.

Early settlers have recounted how difficult it was to open up the vast midlands of America. It was difficult enough to travel the prairies, but the northern Great Lakes states were covered with pine and hardwood forests that literally blocked the sunlight to the forest floor. Passage through such areas was forbidding. Even Indians tended to follow known paths and areas. They feared the unknown. If a brave died in a river, they said the river monster had swallowed him up.

The easiest way to travel was by water. That is why the canoe was so important.

Great Lakes canoes were big crafts with high prows to breast the waves and enough draft to carry men and supplies. Most travel was along the shores, which is why places such as Milwaukee were obvious put-in points, ancient harbors of refuge.

Milwaukee was a watery crossroads and the early canoes, pulled up on the banks of the rivers and filled with furs and produce, were forerunners of the great ships from round the world that now berth in the port of Milwaukee.

In 1776, the year of American Independence, Wisconsin was still a wilderness. By 1785 Alexander Le Frambois had opened a fur trading post at the mouth of the Milwaukee River. By that time Wisconsin was part of the United States, then in the Virginia Territory, under the Treaty of 1783 that ended the Revolutionary War.

Another early settler was Jean Baptist Mirandeau, who arrived in 1795, married a Chippewa woman and opened a blacksmith shop, which provided knives and spears for the Indians.

Eventually Wisconsin became part of the Michigan Territory. Early accounts state that Wisconsin was then divided into two counties, Brown and Crawford. In 1834 Milwaukee County was created from Brown County. Waukesha County split off in 1846. That left Milwaukee County as it is today.

In March of 1839 an act of the Second Territorial Legislative Assembly created the Town of Kinnickinnic. This was later split into the Towns of Oak Creek and Franklin. The Town of Lake was created from the Town of Oak Creek on August 13, 1840, becoming the smallest town in the county.

Those were the settlement years. Mirandeau's daughter, Victoria, recalled years afterward that roads into the area were Indian trails until 1800. Most of the trails were two feet wide and packed deeply by travel. Wide enough for a man or horse, they wouldn't accommodate a wagon, so when settlers began arriving, the trails quickly became

the first rutted roads. Some of these became plank roads. Many were constructed as toll roads and operated as businesses.

The genesis of canoes to ships and Indian paths to freeways may seem evident enough, but it was not easy. The Indians did not lightly retreat from tribal claims. They fought each other over these tribal claims, so why not whites?

Author Mari Sandoz, a chronicler of the Plains Indians, has noted that Canada avoided war with its Indians by the "simple expediency" of honoring its treaties. The United States had its wars because none of its treaties were honored.

The nation was in the grips of the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, that the domination of the continent was almost a right of conquest by the righteous.

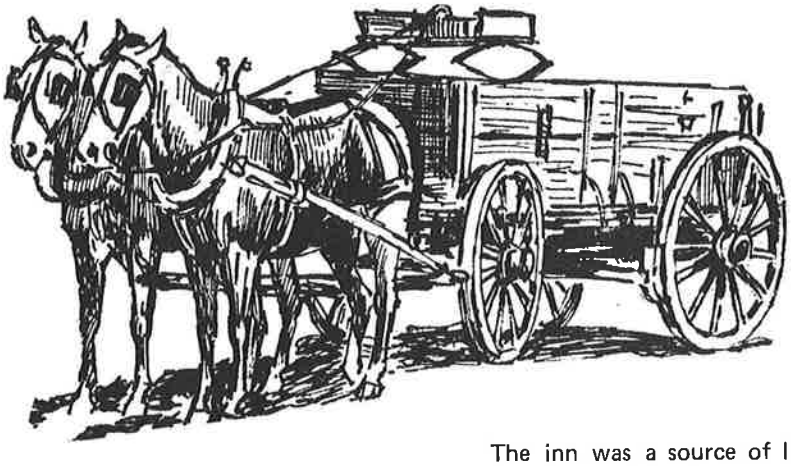
Influxes of whites led to retreat after retreat by Indians. The clash of cultures was inevitable, given the nature of those cultures, and the transition of Nojoshing to St. Francis would become complete with the land grants.

Land grants were not sold until 1838. The Potawatomis, having ceded their lands in 1833, were bitter at white intrusions. As for earlier settlers, they were like the Indians in that they occupied the land.

The history of many properties can be read in abstracts in banks. Some go back to descriptions given by Indians, land paced off by farmers, lost survey marks and old deed records.

A typical resident of an apartment building in St. Francis may not only be unaware of the history of the plot of ground upon which his apartment building is located; he probably doesn't care. The lodge poles are beyond memory. Yet, after all, they are planted firmly in our heritage.

LEGEND OF THE LAND



"What do you think has become of the young and the old men? And what do you think has become of the women and children? They are alive and well somewhere. . ."

Walt Whitman

Those first settlers, the pioneers, were not aware that they were making history. They were too busy working very hard. We are not aware today that we are making history, but we are. Still, certain eras ring with bell tones, and the names of those early settlers come down to us:

Joel S. Wilcox, Alexander Stewart, Enoch Chase, Hezekiah Brennon, William Bunnell, John Ogden, James McPadden, Jacob Mahany, George H. Wentworth, H. Bigelow, John Davis, Andrew Douglass, Israel Porter and, of course, Estes.

Many purchased land in 1839. Others followed. Some farmed while others opened businesses. In 1839, Martin Walker, who was granted the land by the government, opened what probably is the oldest continuously operated business in St. Francis. The Trac Inn at 2227 E. St. Francis Ave., began as a way station for travelers between Kenosha and Milwaukee. A Chicago and Northwestern Railway depot, since razed, stood near the inn. The depot was a busy place, as was the inn, because St. Francis began as a community of settlers from Bavaria in 1849.

The inn was a source of liquor during prohibition, with one room sealed off from revenue agents. The present owner is Joseph Pszybylski, who took it over from his father, John Pszybylski.

In pursuit of heritage most of us bridge the gap between past and present with flowers at graveyards and flying flags on holidays. We fawn upon European royalty and seldom, like most other cultures, look back with honor upon our ancesters. It was even fashionable for decades, especially among Europeans, to refer to the United States as a nation of mongrels. The truth is just the opposite. We are the ancestors of a cultural, not a social, elite. It took strong men and women, with a drive for freedom, a spirit of independence and great courage, to cross heaving seas and primitive continents to settle this land. America did not attract the effete. We got the best and we are their children.

Those pioneering qualities have been handed down from generations past. They are a staple in the character of Americans in the Bicentennial. Who were these men? What were they like? The history of one man and his origin tells a great deal about St. Francis and the nation.

Elijah Estes, his wife, Zebiah Wentworth Estes, and three of their children are buried in Thompson Cemetery. The origin of the family, in a sense, is the origin of St. Francis. The story is told by Daisy Estes Tucker, a great granddaughter of Estes, in the book "So You Will Know", which was compiled by Erwin F. Zillman, a Bay View civic leader.

"Elijah Estes was born January 30, 1814 in Morgantown, North Carolina. By the time he had reached the age of 20 he had decided to leave his father's prosperous plantation. A handsome, strong-willed lad with the curly black hair and blue eyes of his Irish ancestors, Elijah abhorred slavery and wanted to seek his fortune in the North. There the soil was rich and the people were free. There hardy men worked their own land. With his belongings packed in a hair trunk strapped to his shoulders, he left Morgantown in the spring of 1834. Now and then he got a lift from a prairie schooner, but he covered most of the 2,000 miles to Chicago on his own. When he finally reached Fort Dearborn, in what was called the "Village of Chicago", he had to spend his last cent. His feet were swollen and bleeding and he was forced to remain there to earn money for supplies.

"People he had met on the way had described the rolling green countryside of the bordering state of Wisconsin and Elijah knew that the end of his journey was near. While he was at Fort Dearborn, something unexpected happened. Elijah fell in love. She was dark-haired, brown-eyed Zebiah Wentworth, whose father ran the hotel in the village where Elijah was staying. She was the cousin of Long John Wentworth who later became mayor of Chicago. Before long they were betrothed, and Zebiah shared in all of Elijah's dreams for the future.

"Early one March morning in 1835, Elijah said goodbye to his beloved, promising that as soon as he had staked his claim, he would build a cabin, and then return for her. It took him three days to walk to Milwaukee. He arrived at the mouth of the Milwaukee River weary and discouraged. The Indians had crept into his camp one night and had stolen all of his precious supplies and money. He knocked at the door of the first house he came to and was warmly welcomed by Dr. Enoch Chase. Dr. Chase urged Elijah to stay with him until he could borrow money.

"Every day Elijah searched the countryside for the ideal location for his farm. Most of the time his feet carried him to the high bluffs on the south shore of Lake Michigan. There, one evening at sunset, he realized that this was the land he had dreamed of many miles away on that hot plantation. The breeze from the white-capped bay cooled his tanned cheeks. He stooped down and dug deep into the earth with his strong hands. The soil was rich and black. His thoughts skipped ahead to the large brick plantation home he wanted to build for Zebiah. Eagerly he paced off a half mile along the shore and put in his claim. His land grant amounted to 150 acres whose present boundaries would be the lake to the east, Nock St. to the north, St. Francis Seminary to the south and the Chicago and Northwestern tracks to the west.

"One morning after leaving Chase's home, Elijah crossed the Milwaukee River at Walker's Point to a narrow slice of dry land. Surrounding this island was a sea of mud and weeds. A surveyor by the name of Edgerton was setting corner stakes in this muckland that was a playground for muskrats. Watching the surveyor was Solomon Juneau. Elijah introduced himself and asked about their project. The surveyor was skeptical. No humans would be foolish enough to build on a marsh. But Juneau was optimistic. So was Elijah. He was a man with a vision. Convinced that this would become a great community some day, he returned to Chase's home and wrote this letter to Zebiah:

MINE OWN & BELOVED

" 'Mine own and beloved:

" 'Your last prayer has kept ringing in my ears like music of comfort and my gloomy way was made bright. Three nights I had to fret away in sleep before I came to the marshes of Milwaky . . . It has rained all the time, cold and drizzling, but when I think of you the sunshine comes, and I forget I am chilled and hungry. Everything is all right now. I have just bought an ax, a blanket, some ground corn and bacon, of course on credit . . .

" 'I will stay here until I get the cabin all ready for you. I will build it large with head space above and a trap door so that when I am working you need have no fear of the Indians . . . The soil on the lake side is very good and I think the new kinds of vegetables ought to thrive there. But we will have no truck garden before the home, nothing but flowers, tall flowers — zinnias, hollyhocks and dahlias.

" 'I am fearful that it might be hard for you at first, the change from comfort to almost Indian life, but I know that your love for me will bear you through. Fortune always smiles on those who love, and who loves more dearly than we do? I am thinking all the time of what you told me when you said farewell and I am going to make the chips fly from this new ax to finish the cabin and come back to you . . .

" 'If it had not been for you I would have gone back home to North Carolina as soon as I set foot in Chicago, although lame from my thousand mile walk. But when we met I knew my fate was sealed and happily to labor for you in your northern land . . .

" 'The days are lonely without you but I am coming for you soon.

" 'Tenderly and affectionately
Elijah'

"When Elijah finished the cabin in September of 1836, he returned to Fort Dearborn, married Zebiah and brought her to Milwaukee. As their farm prospered and their family grew, Elijah drew up the plans for their dream home. It would be a fifteen room brick mansion, the bricks being hauled from Chicago by ox team. It took ten years of waiting for the building materials and skilled workmen. And as there was little cash on hand, a span of horses was traded for the stone sills, acres of land were deeded for lumber and fixtures. Finally, in the forties, the Mrs. Z. W. Estes subdivision was formed. Abstracts of title of all the houses built in this subdivision bear the Estes names and provide that 'no intoxicating liquors shall be sold on the property'.

"In the completed mansion were four fireplaces, many bedrooms, several high-ceiling parlors, an expansive dining room, and a big country kitchen. On the second floor in one of the drawing rooms was a large window facing the lake. One day, Zebiah, while entertaining neighbors in this room, pointed to the sparkling blue water below and remarked about the lovely view of the bay. She suggested that they name their new village Bay View. The women were delighted and the community was christened."

While the mansion is gone, the cemetery remains and old burial grounds provide stone legends of their times. They bespeak, until the granite crumbles, the lives of men and women and their children. If you study the stones at Thompson Cemetery you conclude that the people who lived here had faith, the faith of their fathers, in the land, or origins and the redemption beyond the grave.

They lived harsh lives on the outback of the nation and they labored seven days a week, with time off for Sunday worship, to survive in a land whose largesse they sought to give them sustenance beyond the grave. They are remembered for what little they left – old mansions long since torn down, landmarks preserved and street names. But they live. The memory of them lies on the grave markers and in land records at courthouses. Whatever their faults, they remain a legacy.

Buried with Estes was Thompson. A native of Connecticut, Thompson came to Milwaukee in 1837. He opened a tin store on E. Water St. and became a prominent man in business, church and civic affairs. Like many well-to-do Milwaukee men of the time, he purchased land in the Town of Lake, which was more desirable because it was higher land.

Thompson was a member of the county Board of Supervisors, a justice of the peace and a Methodist minister. He died in 1890, giving his name to the cemetery on land he had provided.

Dr. Chase was superintendent of schools, was elected to the county board five times and was once chairman of the board. His brother, Horace, was one of the area's first settlers, arriving in 1834.

James Bonniwell arrived in 1839, first living on a large section of land known as the Bonniwell neighborhood. In 1866 he settled in the Town of Lake on what is now the site of the Lakeside Power Plant in St. Francis. Appointed a justice of the peace by Governor Doty, he also served as a county supervisor. A Mequon street is named after him.

James Howard occupied a claim in the Town of Lake that was sold to his father-in-law by Israel Burdick for a rifle. Arriving in 1836, Howard served for a time as clerk of the township. He also is remembered in a street name.

Sleek jets scream into Gen. Billy Mitchell Field day and night and it is difficult to imagine anything there but cement runways and flashing lights, but the land was once the fertile land and bucolic pastures of Louis Diedrich, an early farmer.

A native of Lexington, Kentucky, George H. Wentworth left home at the age of 15 to mine lead at Mineral Point. He came to Milwaukee in 1835 and purchased 160 acres in Lake township. He built the land into a half section, then sold it and moved to Milwaukee. Wentworth's wife, Sylvia Packard Wentworth, came to a land grant in the township with her father from Bennington, Vermont. Married August 29, 1936, the couple had seven children.

Victor Schulte came from Westphalia, Germany. He first settled in Pennsylvania, where he learned the carpentry trade. In Milwaukee he became a contractor and architect with offices on Water St. Schulte built St. John's Cathedral and many other Catholic churches. He also built the first swinging bridge over the Milwaukee River. Schulte settled on 100 acres of land in the township in 1860. He died in 1890, leaving the gracious Schulte mansion on the northwest corner of E. Norwich St. and S. Pennsylvania Ave. Attempts to have the building restored failed and the home was recently torn down.

Nobody seems to own the Thompson Cemetery. It is occasionally cleaned by a service club. The church under which it began disbanded. Jared Thompson for whom it is named is buried there. A walk through the cemetery is a journey back into twilight times. Many of the stone markers have been vandalized. Carved in the stone is the name, ESTES.

The names are a kind of roll call, with empty places in the ranks, of early settlers on the land. Some of the inscriptions:

Mary Susan, wife of Horace Rising and daugher of Estes.

Cynthia, wife of Daniel Packard, died at the age of 76 in 1895.

John P. Packard, son of Zebedee and Nancy Packard, died August 1, 1846, at the age of two years.

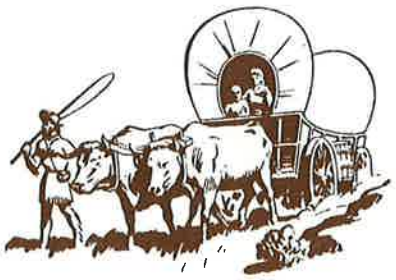
Jared Thompson's wife, Frances, died 1860.

Mary Thompson, 1830 - 1868.

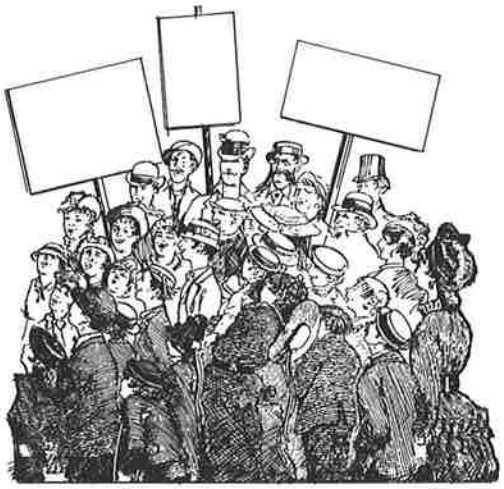
Zebedee Packard, 1789 - 1855.

The names bear witness. They lie like legends on the land. You say the stones are silent, that you can hear the sound of squirrels cracking hickory nuts? If you listen hard you may hear voices.

The times speak to us, but we will not hear if we do not listen.



A SEARCH FOR IDENTITY



"Political, economic and racial forces have developed which we have not yet learned to understand or control. If we are ever to master these forces, make certain that the goverment will belong to the people, not people to the government, and provide for a future better than the past, we must somehow learn from the experiences of the past."

Bernard Baruch

Researchers have learned over the years that early records are often unreliable, confusing or conflicting. Great gaps exist in our knowledge of other times. Still, certain facts stand out and when viewed in the context of our time they acquire a certain flesh and blood reality. About the time that the first Town of Lake meeting of record was held at the house of William Bunnell in April of 1842, rough lumber, cut in the mill, was selling for $75 per thousand. Eggs were 6 shillings per dozen, butter was six shillings a pound and corn meal poured loosely into the measure was $2.50 a bushel. A shilling was a British coin, worth about 12 cents, and used in the colonies.

What is amazing is that the price of staples such as eggs and butter have increased so little over the past century. Farm technology has kept the prices down in spite of the demand from a greater population.

Taxpayers at that first meeting were as stingy as they are today. Voters rejected a levy of one-fourth of one per cent to support the local schools.

The moderator for the first meeting was Solon Johnson while James C. Howard was clerk. The decision was made to elect three assessors and three constables, and to pay supervisors 75 cents a day for doing township business. In addition, the clerk was to receive 6 cents per record folio and the same sum for administering an oath or filing a paper. The town treasurer was to get one per cent of all monies received or paid out as his fee.

Jared Thompson was elected town chairman and Samuel Dexter and Spencer Burlingame board members. Assessors were John Douglass. Joseph Williams and Daniel W. Patterson, who also was treasurer. Lucius Packard was named collector and Jacob Mahany and Sylvester Brown were constables. Highway commissioners were John Ogden, George McCready and Samuel Dexter.

Obviously, nobody was feeding at the public trough. At a meeting later in the year the town's expenses were totaled at $55.40, the sum to be raised by taxation. In 1844, we are told, the tax collector had earned the sum of $2.23 for his duties and the treasurer had fattened his wallet with another 89 cents.

Town of Lake voters did not favor statehood. In fact township voters rejected statehood in a general election held September 26, 1842, with 33 tallies against and only 10 for joining the Union. Wisconsin was not admitted as a state until May 29, 1848.

One wonders about those early town elections and meetings, and whether they differ from today or from town meetings in rural areas of Wisconsin this year.

Did a coterie of men stand in the back of the room whispering and making jokes — eager to gossip or disparage but afraid to speak up, to take part? Did women wear new bonnets and have to cross mud puddles and pick their way around horse dung? And did they bring a dish to pass cakes and pies? Was ale served afterward and some corn liquor? Was there a sense of destiny among the people? Did they know that they were engaged in the historic task of cracking a new frontier and laying the blocks of a mighty city later to become a world port and industrial center?

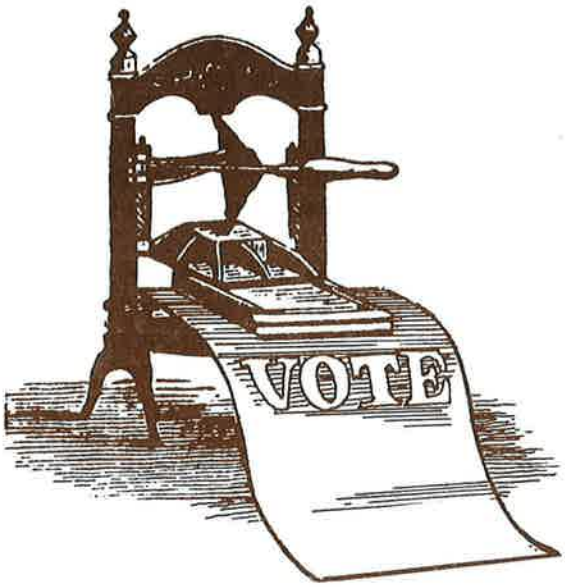
Perhaps they did wonder about the future, just as we do. But how many of them heard background music swell as they worked a broad field and cut the forests? How many of them told us about themselves? The record is scant.

We do learn from bits and pieces that those early settlers, be they the first English from the East or the later waves of Germans and Eastern Europeans, were basically conservative people. They did not build guillotines but plows. Civil libertarians in the sense that they craved the right of a person to succeed or fail without hindrance from a prince of state or bureaucracy, they nevertheless also sought stability. They wanted law and order and they knew this grew out of government, but they wanted as little government as was necessary to exist without chaos.

So they followed procedures worked out from ancient times, assessing taxes and marking lands, with as little formalistic structure as possible. Township government in Wisconsin, as around the nation, was always as simple and undemanding as possible without making it totally inadequate.

The people who operate the present St. Francis government are spiritual, sometimes lineal, descendants of those settlers. They seek the same standard — the one that has always proven so elusive for governments, a dollar of service for a dollar of taxes.

Suburban cities such as St. Francis are extensions of old neighborhoods - expressions of ethnic heritage. The character of the little community is so clear it might as well exist apart on the prairie.



MAKING A CITY

"Let us not be blind to our differences, but let us also direct attention to our common interests and the means by which these differences can be resolved. And if we cannot end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity."

John F. Kennedy

Civic leaders in the Town of Lake had been watching Milwaukee nibbling off bits and pieces of the township for years and they were alarmed. They did not dislike their giant neighbor so much as they sought a voice in their own affairs. Efforts to incorporate as St. Francis had failed in 1928 and 1948.

A sense of community led to incorporation for St. Francis in 1951. Working secretly to avoid counter-petitioning by Milwaukee for annexation, Fred J. Schoendorf and Henry Rajchel, Town of Lake treasurer and clerk respectively, and other interested citizens got enough petitions on incorporation papers to put the issue before the voters. On July 24, 1951, a total of 1,069 people voted for incorporation with 329 opposed. The city was chartered in Madison the next day.

Property taxes were a major factor in the vote. Every time Milwaukee annexed a piece of the township the tax base was reduced and taxes rose.

"In the area around the Mueller Furnace Co. on E. Oklahoma Ave., the school taxes were $5.50 a thousand," Schoendorf recalled. *"When this street was annexed, they went to $15.50 a thousand."*

City residents found after 1951 that just being a city did not solve problems.

The first Common Council meetings were in rented city offices at the Town of Lake American Legion Post. Then they were moved to the former nuns' quarters at Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

The first officers of the city were Mayor Paul Rainer, City Clerk Thelma Seely and Assessor John Koenig. Cornelius Schneider was city attorney and Schoendorf was treasurer. Aldermen were Alex Schoofs, Herbert C. Kiehl, Milton Ollman, Irving J. Murphy, Harold Newcomb and Frank Hilton.

In those early years the taxpayers learned that starting a city from scratch was like opening a business. You had to have the money to pay the bills.

Bankers had no faith in the municipality so they wouldn't float municipal bonds. Finally, the Bank of Commerce advanced the city $75,000 to keep it going until tax revenue and state aids came in.

Municipal services evolved gradually. A registered nurse, Mrs. Irene Brooks, came to the city from the Town of Lake. Dr. Alfred Rodenbeck became health commissioner in 1954. The Fire Department was organized in 1954. The first fire and police chief was Clarence Burnhouse, which

PICNIC TO CELEBRATE THE INCORPORATION ON JULY 25, 1951
Left to Right — Anton Grabske, Sec'y of State Fred Zimmerman, Henry Rajchel, John Grabske

must have provoked some jokes. Frank Frederick was the first fire chief.

Although Bernard Feinberg was appointed head of the Fire and Police Commission, the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department patrolled the city on a lease basis until 1961, when the police department was organized. Ralph Schuster was the first police chief. One week later, Louis Frank became chief.

A city hall shake-up the following year saw Robert Sommerfeld elected mayor, only to be replaced by Rainer two months later when a recount overturned his election.

But Sommerfeld won in 1956, only to be replaced, again by Rainer, in 1958.

Herbert Kiehl was elected mayor in 1960 and served until 1974.

The Town of Lake did road work for the city for two years, but costs were high so the city in 1954 leased a building at 3476 E. Howard Ave. for a garage and fire department. The quarters were later purchased.

Annexation by Milwaukee of the remaining portion of the township still unincorporated was a blow to the fledgling city which had hoped to extend its boundaries westward.

A legal battle that ensued over the division of assets saw Milwaukee take over the debt for water mains in St. Francis and agree to supply water to the suburb, billing individuals. St. Francis got some of the town's highway equipment and voting machines. That completed the extinction of the township as a governing unit.

The first decades saw the city's population swell from 6,065 to almost 10,000 people. Subdivisions were built and water and sewer lines extended.

By 1959, however, St. Francis still wasn't on solid ground. The crisis came when 1,300 residents signed a petition for consolidation with Cudahy. Cudahy and Milwaukee had been admitting St. Francis students to their high schools but Cudahy was closing its doors because of overcrowding.

Outside consultants produced a report that promised no great tax benefits. The report was presented at a public meeting February 13, 1961 at which citizens decided to continue as a city.

Cudahy rejected proposals to consolidate primarily because it would have been forced to take over the water main debt for St. Francis from Milwaukee, which was then about one million dollars.

PAUL RAINER
FIRST MAYOR - 1952 - 1955

FRED J. SCHOENDORF
CITY CLERK & TREAS.
1966 - 1973

HERBERT C. KIEHL
MAYOR — 1960 - 1974

ROBERT SOMMERFELD
MAYOR — 1956 - 1957

But St. Francis was picking up the pieces and the city was building some momentum. Shoehorned into a slot between the Lake, Cudahy, Milwaukee and the airport, St. Francis was making the best of a tight squeeze.

In 1962, the city built a new city hall for $250,000 at 4235 S. Nicholson Ave.

The new St. Francis High School was opened the following year on land obtained from the Wisconsin Electric Power Co. at 4225 S. Lake Drive. The same year the consulting engineering firm of Mead & Hunt, Inc. delivered to the city a complete master plan partially funded by a federal grant. This functional plan is still in use.

The need for storm sewers, always an expensive city program, was a pressing matter. Voters in 1964 defeated a bond issue referendum to construct additional storm sewers. The residential charge would have been four (4) cents a foot or $1,700 an acre.

In 1972 the city got a $850,000 federal grant, which was combined with local matching funds, to help the city bring its storm sewers up to needs.

The first St. Francis Days was held in 1964 before Labor Day with a parade and community festival that has become an annual tradition.

The jurisdiction of the Municipal Court, established with incorporation, was expanded in 1971 to include a number of cases formerly handled in county courts.

In 1973 Schoendorf retired and Henry A. Scholz, former assistant administrator of Bayside, was appointed administrator the same year.

The city finally sold a $1.5 million bond issued in 1975 to complete its storm sewer system, an environmental necessity and a problem that still plaques Milwaukee.

A $200,000 municipal garage was built in 1975. The former garage on E. Howard Avenue was to have been developed as a community center by the St. Francis Lions Club, but it proved unsuitable for renovation, so the club is building a new $120,000 structure.

A 4.5 acre site was sold to the city for a token amount of $1.00 by the Board of Education and is being developed as a city park and a site for the St. Francis Days celebration.

Progress eats away at St. Francis like battery acid. Two Milwaukee county developments on the drawing boards, threaten to reduce the city tax base. Construction of a new airport runway could eliminate 67 homes for a clear zone. A difference of opinion has been debated be-

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS — ST. FRANCIS 1976
Left to Right - Upper - Ralph Vottner, John Kroll, Audrey Szymkowski, Harriet Schwalbe, Milton Vretenar, Harwood Staats, Henry Scholz, Ronald Drezden, Stanley Raclaw, James McManus
Foreground - Robert Schwingle, Gerald Barrett, Richard Neubauer, Henry Kulinski

tween the city and county for many years over hazardous driving conditions, excessive noise and air pollution caused by air traffic at Mitchell Field. The county offer to purchase the homes has thus far resulted in only one purchase because of lack of funding and city resistance to loss of tax base.

The southerly extension of the Lake Freeway from the Harbor Bridge through the city would improve some traffic patterns and ease the access to downtown Milwaukee but it would also eliminate a substantial number of homes.

The location of Lakeside Power Plant in St. Francis was a plum at one time but new state legislation distributes utility revenues throughout the state. The utility taxes now received are less than one-half of the revenues that would be produced if the 246 acre utility exempt lands could be placed on the tax rolls for land value only.

The problem of expanding the city tax base is further compounded by another 120 acres of vacant land owned by the Wisconsin Electric Power Co., a 190 acre exemption to the Milwaukee Archdiocese and 33 acres of vacant exempt land being held by Milwaukee County for clear zone.

St. Francis lost its post office during World War II when the building at the corner of St. Francis Ave. and South Kinnickinnic was shut down and service continued from Milwaukee.

Arthur Stern recalls serving as postmaster from 1937 to 1942 when he went into the Army. The post office closed about a year later, he said.

St. Francis in 1975 was designated as an official Bicentennial Community, meaning it would observe the anniversary along guidelines set by the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission.

The city's population this year is abot 9,900, which is 3,835 more than the 1951 total, but down somewhat from the 1970 census.

Its property valuation is $104,641,400, about equal in value with some of the poorer counties in the state, although low by metropolitan standards.

The problems of the city are typical of the nation in this century. Technology raises specters of pollution and environmental degradation.

The budget of the city seems light years away from those early days when the Town of Lake's total annual expenses were $55.50.

But the spirit of those early years still is expressed in a propelling drive to mesh the needs of people with the most proper role of government, a desire to control affairs as close to home as possible.

This is perhaps the ultimate problem of the city and the Republic, a theme suitable for a Bicentennial debate. Whatever else happens to Americans, it probably shall remain as the last problem.

In an era when everybody has numbers, St. Francis doesn't even have a Zip Code. Therefore, the Common Council is trying to get one designated for the city by the Post Office Department.

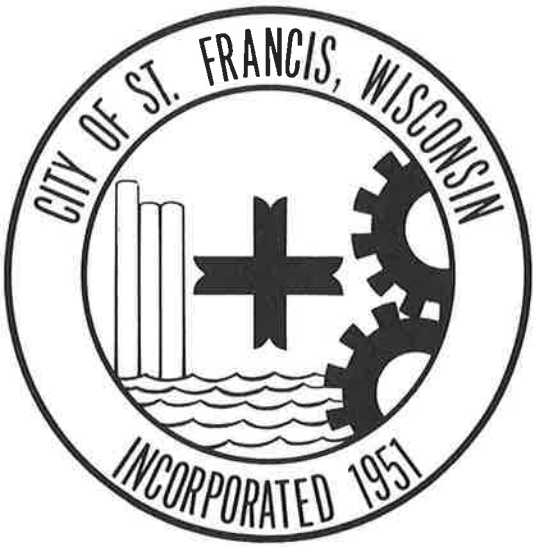
A temporary moratorium was imposed by the Common Council on the construction of apartments pending a study of their impact upon the city's financial status and quality of life. A total of 1,106 of the city's 3,386 dwelling units are apartments while another 212 are duplexes.

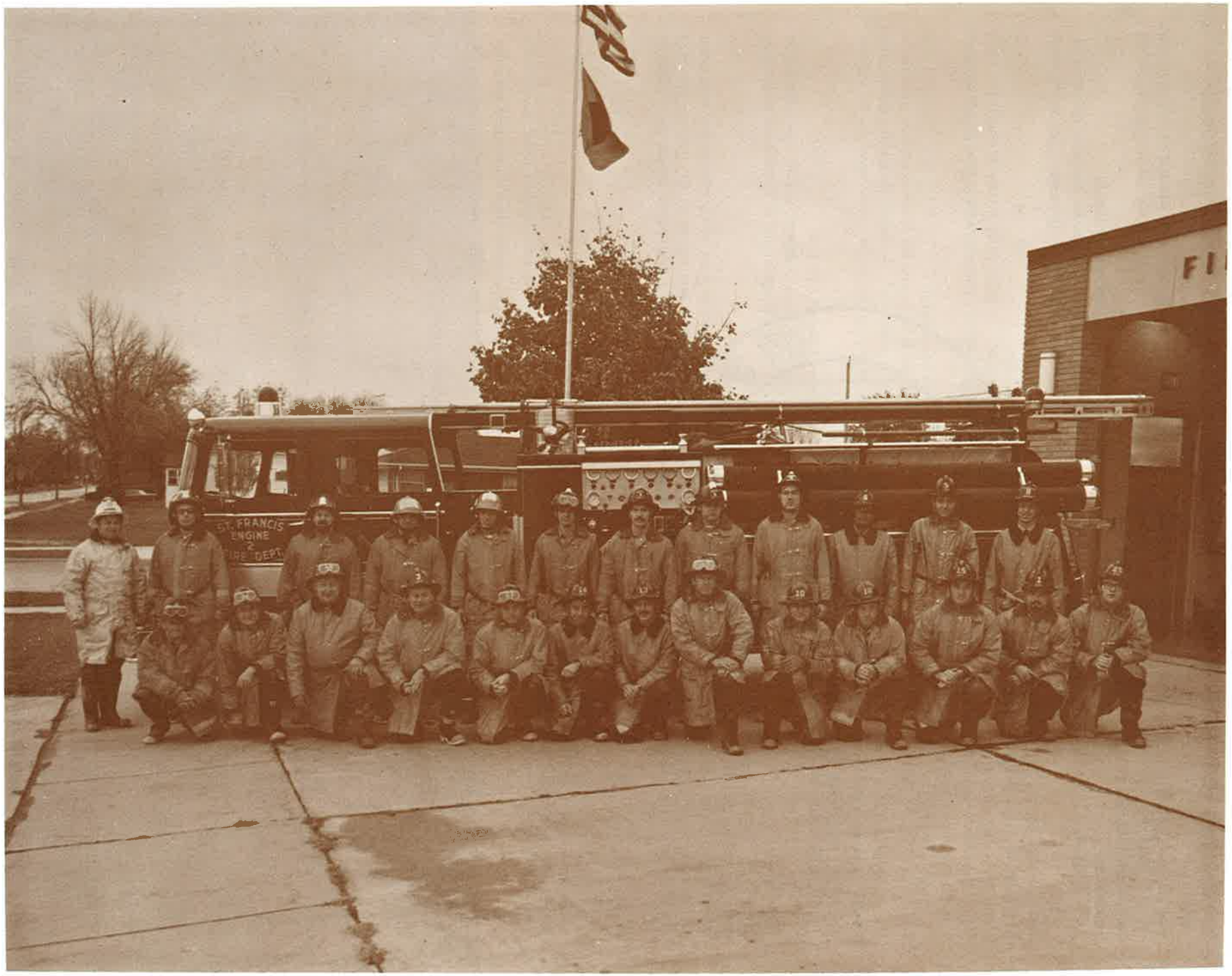
Quality of life is equated with money in the United States. By that standard St. Francis has a high level of life. The underpinnings of some of that financial security are provided by the city's only financial institution, St. Francis Savings and Loan Association, 3545 S. Kinnickinnic.

The largest single-office savings and loan association in Wisconsin, it was started in 1923. It has outgrown three buildings and has 55 employees. Current assets are more than $109 million.

World War II saw one St. Francis family lose two of three sons. Mr. and Mrs. Percy Barnes lost sons: Herbert, 22 years old, in an Air Force training accident, and Donald, 19 years old, in combat with the Marines in the Pacific. A third son, Richard, served during the war with the U.S. Merchant Marines.

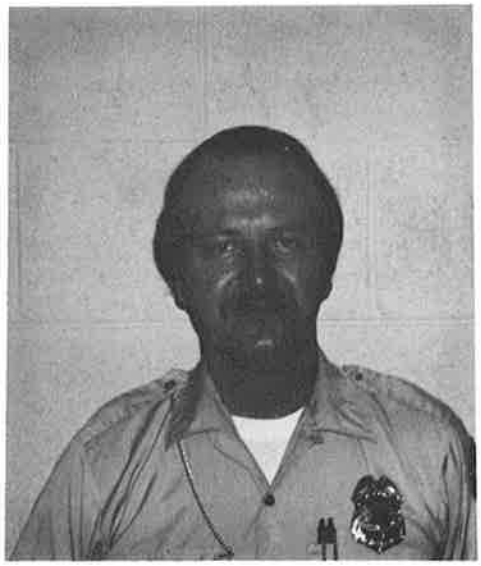
Two St. Francis men died in the Vietnam War. Marine Cpl. Charles Treweek, 3662A S. Ahmedi Ave., and Marine Pfc. Donald Voltner, 4004 S. Lipton Ave., both died in action in Vietnam.





ST. FRANCIS FIRE DEPARTMENT

ST. FRANCIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

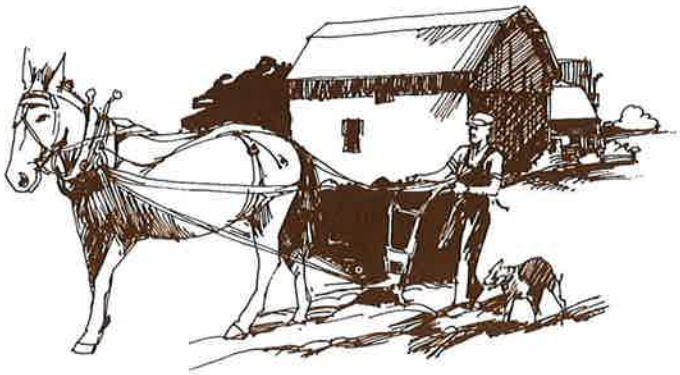


ST. FRANCIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

CITY HALL OFFICE WORKERS, CITY NURSE, SENIOR ENGINEER — Diane Dermody, Jack Schultz, Marian Ciesielski, Diane Beaumont Diane Johnston and Jo Konielzka

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES IN FRONT OF NEW CITY GARAGE — Foreman Dick Hart is missing

CITY OFFICIALS — Left to Right — Herbert C. Kiehl, James Mallas, Paul Rainer, Harold Newcomb, James Conlon
House donated for skaters



THE INSTITUTIONS

"For God is my king of old, working salvation for me in the midst of the land."

Psalms

"You are the salt of earth."

Jesus Christ to the Multitudes

The first thing early settlers did when they came to Wisconsin was to build a shelter for the family. The next thing was to erect crude outbuildings for livestock and crop storage. They set about the business of taming the land, to bring it to account. Settlers most often arrived in the spring or summer and they were forewarned with stories about how early trappers and explorers had endured extreme hardships during the bitter Great Lakes winters.

But something else always occupied these men and women, something that was done almost as quickly as house and barns were raised — they established places of worship. The French in the 17th Century brought the Jesuits, the First Legion. The English and Germans came with their bibles and ministers. Sunday services were usually held at first in homes, much as the present day Old Order Amish worship in their homes, but that was temporary.

In time they built churches and these churches and the institutions that developed with them became a vital force in softening the harsh life most settlers led. The tradition of service remains to this day. Milwaukee County is rich in churches, schools and universities of all faiths. St. Francis, in particular, has become a cradle of Christian leadership. Generations of priests have gone into the world to preach, teach and serve from St. Francis Seminary at 3257 S. Lake Dr. Its thousands of graduates make up 95 per cent of the priests in Wisconsin.

The seminary was dedicated on January 29, 1856 but its inspiration really came in 1846 when Bishop John Martin Henni, first Bishop of Milwaukee, visited Annecy, France, the birthplace of St. Francis de Sales. Bishop Henni resolved that he would dedicate a seminary to train priests in Milwaukee for the midwest if St. Francis would help him.

Because God most often helps those who help themselves, the seminary was built with much labor, and the town once called "Nojoshing" took its name from the seminary many years later. The seminary was built on 34 acres of land purchased from the Convent of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi.

Originally the seminary included high school, college and theological training. It is now a four-year professional pastoral graduate school.

Like the convent, which was founded May 28, 1849, the seminary provided German immigrants with a bridge from the old country to the new world. Opening with 25 students, the seminary has ordained about that many priests each summer ever since. It has grown over the decades. Its chapel was dedicated June 30, 1861. The library building was opened February 1, 1909. The Miller

Gymnasium was completed in 1927. The high school became a separate department of the institution in 1920.

A prominent leader who graduated from St. Francis was Msgr. Albert G. Meyer, once its rector, who became Cardinal Meyer of Chicago.

The Rev. Richard Sklba is the present rector of the seminary, which is an accredited graduate school of theology.

Bishop Henni's name came up often in the early history of institutions in Milwaukee. He was an aggressive force in the Catholic Church of the era. The men in charge of establishing St. Francis, however, were the Rev. Dr. Joseph Salzmann and the Rev. Michael Heiss.

Rev. John Twomey is President of St. Francis De Sales College. Rev. Richard Cerpich is Principal of De Sales Preparatory High School. Both schools provide classical education to young men entering the priesthood.

The two institutions grew out of the St. Francis Minor Seminary, which was established when the former Pio Nono High School was remodeled in 1941 to house four years of high school and two years of college. On May 20, 1963, Archbishop William E. Cousins laid the cornerstone for a new $5 million complex of buildings to house both the high school and a college for the seminary — thus De Sales.

Much of the inspiration for the development of the schools was provided by Msgr. Louis E. Riedel, who was principal from 1954 to 1975. Msgr. Riedel led the building program and the schools to high academic status which resulted in accreditation in 1965 by North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

Msgr. Riedel spent his life in educating young men, with a special vocation in preparing them for the priesthood. About 90 per cent of all priests in Milwaukee in recent years are graduates of De Sales.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi Convent have prepared nuns from the early decades of St. Francis. Intended to serve German immigrants, the convent began with only six nuns in 1849. It has 600 nuns this year.

Its early founders were Mrs. Ottilia Duerr Zahler, Miss Crescentia Eberle, Miss Margaret Saumweber, Miss Anna Ritter, Miss Teresa Moser and Miss Maria Eisenschmied.

The sisters operate several schools, including the nationally famous St. Coletta's School for Retarded Children at Jefferson. Other schools are St. Mary's Academy in St. Francis, Sacred Heart of Jesus School in St. Francis, St. John's School for the Deaf and Cardinal Stritch College in Milwaukee.

The sisters have excelled in teaching poor and disabled children. "Dedicated to live a life of Penance and Charity," they have promoted schools for the retarded in several states. They staff the Hanna School for Boys at Sonoma, California. The latter is devoted to emotionally disturbed youths. A prime early catalyst in this movement was Mother Bartholomew Frederick, who pressed hard for the training of the deaf, poor, retarded and mentally ill. Its present director is Sister Leandra Eckelkamp.

St. John's School for the Deaf at 3680 S. Kinnickinnic Ave. was founded May 10, 1876 by the Rev. Theodore Bruener, with the first building completed in 1879. The school educates the deaf from nursery age to high school level. Its present director is the Rev. Donald Zerkel.

St. Mary's Academy at 3195 S. Superior St., was founded November 21, 1904 by Mother Thecla to educate Catholic girls. In the first class of 1904, only three students out of 60 graduated. Over the past 71 years, the school has graduated more than 3,000 girls. Its present enrollment is 720.

Accredited by North Central, the school has excelled in English and Journalism. More than 100 of St. Mary's graduates have entered the convent.

The roots of Thomas More High School are in two extinct institutions. Catholic Normal School and Pio Nono High School and College for men were founded January 2, 1871 by the Rev. Joseph Salzmann with a grant of three thousand gulden from King Leopold of Bavaria, Dr. Salzmann saw a need for a school to train teachers and in 1871 Bishop Henni persuaded him to establish a college for those seeking teacher's training under Catholic auspices. Starting with 90 students, the college had trained about 2,400 young men by 1920.

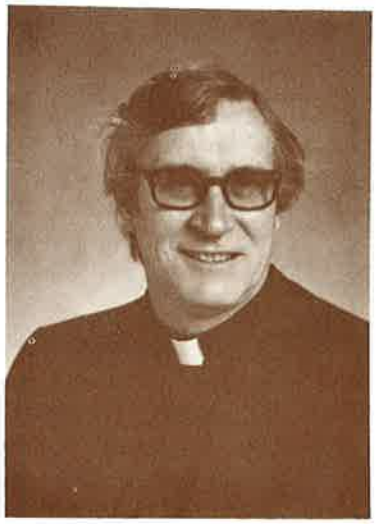
The American Cecilian Society, intended to cultivate ecclesiastical music, was founded at the Normal School by Professor Chevalier John Singenberger, who became an authorrity on church music and the composer of hundreds of pieces of music. By 1920, the golden jubilee of the school, the Normal School had become a high school known as Pio Nono. In 1941 Pio Nono became St. Francis Minor Seminary, enrolling boys for the priesthood and church education. In 1963, the Minor Seminary became De Sales. Later, the old buildings were again occupied as a high school — Pio Nono.

In the fall of 1971, Don Bosco High School merged

with Pio Nono and became Thomas More. With an enrollment of 750 students, Thomas More is led by Brother Joseph Grieshaber, its present principal.

The first principal was Brother Daniel Sharpe. The school is administered by the Brothers of Mary.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Church at 3641 S. Kinnickinnic Ave. was founded in 1868, with a modest frame church built on three acres of land purchased by the seminary. The parish has grown from a few German catholic families to about 1,100 families, or about 4,000 members, more than a third of the population of St. Francis.



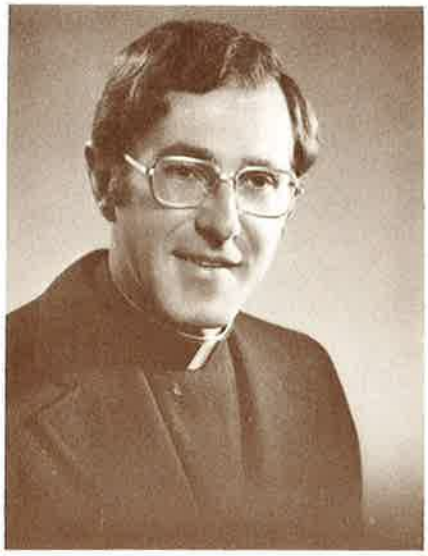
REV. THOMAS HICKEY, Pastor
Sacred Heart Church, St. Francis, Wisconsin

The Sisters of St. Francis have taught an eight-grade school at the church since 1890. The school today has an enrollment of 270 pupils, with 11 nuns and 6 lay teachers on the staff. Its pastor is the Rev. Thomas D. Hickey. The first pastor was the Rev. Peter Frieden.

St. Aemilian's Orphan Asylum is located in Milwaukee now, but its roots were in St. Francis. Founded by those energetic builders, Bishop Henni and Father Salzmann, the orphanage was largely financed by Germans of the archdiocese. It provided a home for orphans of all national origins, however.

Founded in 1850, one of its early leaders was Mother Mary Aemiliana, who was a tireless worker for homeless children.

The orphanage was started after the cholera epidemic of 1849 and left many children without parents or homes. The orphanage was destroyed by fire on May 22, 1930. All the children were saved.



REV. RICHARD J. SKLBA, Rector
St. Francis Seminary - School of Pastoral Ministry

After the fire a leading Catholic spokesman for charities commented that, *"St. Aemilian's should be placed before the bishops and sisterhoods as a living standard of Catholic child care institutions."*

There is no real accounting of the ultimate value of these institutions. They have a monetary value, but this pales beside the services they have provided over the decades. Going back, in most cases, to the influx of the first Germans to Wisconsin, the churches, convents and schools filled a need not provided by government.

REV. RICHARD J. CERPICH, Principal
DeSales Seminary High School

THE SCHOOLS

"Education starts with 10 numbers and an alphabet of 26 letters. With these 36 tools we can put men on the moon and plumb the vastness of the universe."

Classroom teacher

The foundation of local government is usually the public schools because their construction and administration forces the levy of taxes and the rudiments of government to administer them.

But the schools of the new world were something special. In the United States for the first time was launched the tradition of public education for all children regardless of their wealth. In that concept is embedded the seeds of municipal bonded indebtedness that plagues many communities.

A minister is believed to have founded the first school in the Milwaukee area. The Rev. Enoch G. Underwood, a Virginia native, settled on a Wauwatosa farm in 1835 and formed a school soon afterward, teaching for several winters. Another school was started by William Johnson of Massachusetts in the Town of Greenfield in 1842.

But those were private enterprise schools and many were taught by itinerant educators. Having achieved statehood in 1848, Wisconsin's new state government took a look at education. A report made a year later said the Town of Lake had 608 children. The state allocated 72 cents of aid per child.

Before 1861 each township provided its own school superintendent, but the Legislature created the post of County Superintendents. Milwaukee County was split into two parts, with William Lawler named the first superintendent. As the area grew more divisions followed.

The urge for local, neighborhood schools, hence local school districts, was powerful. It was also a factor in the creation of suburbs around the metropolitan areas of the nation.

The history of education in St. Francis is essentially the history of the Thompson School. Thompson deeded the land and a building, which had been used as a church, to the school district of the Town of Lake in 1865. The many changes undergone by this school underscore the development of School District No. 6 of St. Francis.

The first teacher at Thompson was R. R. Wentworth, who, if story has it right, must have had a cold time of it. Wentworth was paid $50 a month to teach from November 18, 1867 to March 13, 1868. A summer contract was awarded to Mrs. E. Ophelia Thompson for $20 a month.

Those early school years appear to have been influenced by the rural societies in which they were established. Farmers usually wanted their children to work on the farms well into autumn and early in the spring.

But the school year was gradually lengthened until a 10-month term was approved in 1910 by the school board.

EARLY SCHOOLS OF ST. FRANCIS

ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL — SCHOOL BOARD AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR - George Berzowski, Norman Easey, Charles Lacke, Rudolph Hoppe, James Markwardt, Raymond Calteux

The salaries of teachers didn't increase much though. Mrs. Mary Emerson got $30 a month for eight months in 1882.

By 1910 Thompson was still a one-room school with 30 pupils and one teacher, Miss Mary Kelly. But in 1914, the State Inspector said another teacher was needed. So the room was partitioned and Miss Lorene Conway was hired to teach the lower grades.

Those early days were recalled in an article in the district's newsletter, Compass, by George Ponto of Cudahy. Ponto recalled that he had attended the school from 1892 to 1895. The school was poorly constructed, he said, and the old pot-bellied stove didn't heat it adequately in the winter months so the children had to wear warm clothing. The children were asked to bring newspapers from home to burn and they had to haul firewood. The first one to arrive in the morning had to build a fire.

An outside well with a hand pump had to be thawed out in winter before it could be used. The school wasn't locked and on dark days a kerosene lamp provided the only light.

Ponto said he walked more than a mile to school. There were no pencils or erasers or paper. Slates and slate pencils were used. The text was the famous McGuffey reader.

Decades after that saw relatively stable growth in the township until modern times. But World War II and the subsequent baby boom drove communities around the country to rush new schools to completion to cope with rising enrollments in the 1950's and 1960's.

As enrollments grew two classrooms were added to Thompson in 1953. Nine more were added in 1958 and in 1968 four more classrooms, a library and a large multi-purpose room were added.

The total alumni of the 109-year-old school is estimated to equal one third of the present population of St. Francis, or more than 3,000 pupils.

Those early years saw the final days of the Civil War and the shooting of President Abraham Lincoln.

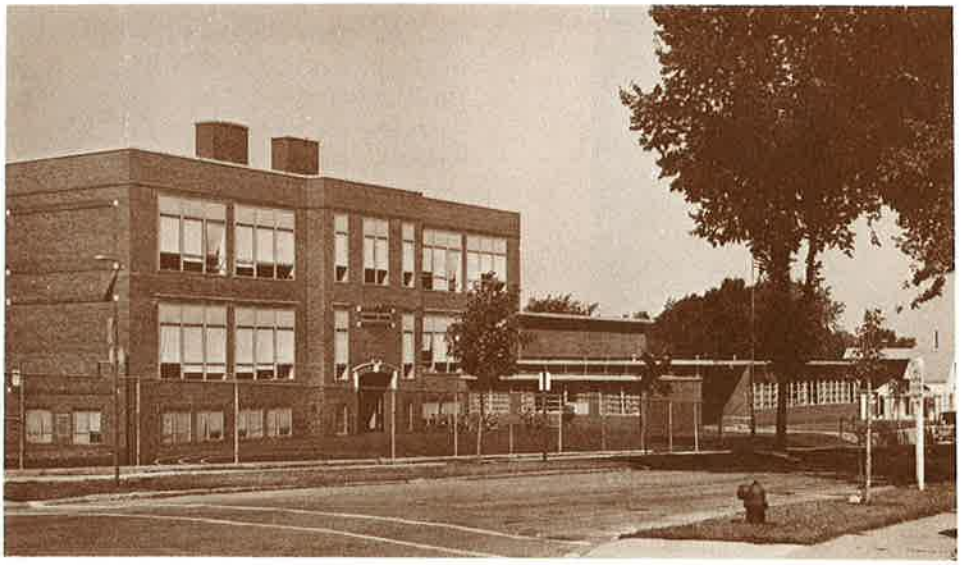
The administrator of the school is Dr. William A. Parks, a 28 year veteran, 14 years at Thompson School.

Urban experts have observed how compellingly immediate are the needs of urban areas. Clean water must flow or people may die. Sewer plants must function or sewer lines back up. And, of course, children must be educated.

Upon incorporation St. Francis had only two public schools; Thompson and St. Francis Heights (now Faircrest).

THOMPSON SCHOOL

WILLOW GLEN SCHOOL



FAIRCREST SCHOOL

Principal Alan Wilson
Willow Glen School

Principal Dr. Wm. A. Parks
Thompson School

District Administrator - Charles J. Lacke

Principal Melroy Behnke - St. Francis High School

Principal Kenneth Knoll - Faircrest School

But the post-war years were seeing a baby boom and a rise in population so in 1954 voters approved a $250,000 bond issue to build Willow Glen School on E. Bolivar Ave. The nine-room school was dedicated November 18, 1955, but that wasn't the end. In 1968 another building program saw the addition of five more classrooms and a kindergarten along with two temporary classrooms. Enrollment then was 275 students. Mr. Alan T. Wilson is the present principal.

The first major problem of St. Francis after incorporation was finding a high school. Turning from Cudahy and Milwaukee, a study committee began to consider building a high school. Taxpayers appeared to favor the move so a high school district was formed. Voters approved a $1 million bond issue for the school on June 8, 1961. The school was dedicated November 10, 1963. Mr. Melroy Behnke is now its principal and Mr. Charles Lacke is district administrator.

Now that the baby boom is ended and the American population stabilizing, it appears unlikely that cities of the nation will have to undertake such major building programs, except to replace obsolete structures in the future.

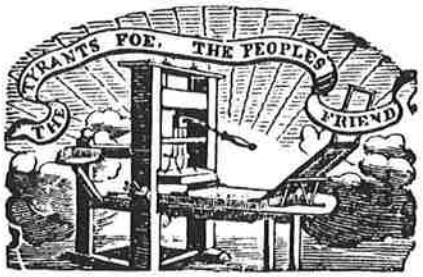
What is striking about the construction of the schools is that they were financed by so few taxpayers in such a short period of time. It is a story of concerned parents and educators working out problems, an example of the American genius for recognizing a social problem, analyzing it and then solving it. Some are prone to criticize this faculty, pointing out that some problems may be insoluble.

The Europeans and Orientals who have seen empires rise and fall and monuments totter and crash, are more fatalistic. But fatalism did not build the schools of St. Francis, nor the religious institutions. The American spirit did.

Spirit permeated student bodies too, and it may have been a factor when St. Francis High School won the 1976 Wisconsin Class B state championships in Track, Cross Country and basketball. A few weeks after the basketball championship was won Coach Harold "Butch" McKeon died of a heart attack.

St. Francis Heights School was constructed in 1918 west of the railroad tracks at 3819 S. Iowa Ave. despite repeated rejections by voters. But Thompson was overcrowded so the new school was a modest two-room building to accommodate the older school's overflow.

In 1931 a basement room was completed, including heat for the winter months, and desks and seats were added. A PTA was formed for both schools in 1935. By 1953 the school had become so obsolete that the voters authorized an addition to St. Francis Heights to replace the substandard basement rooms, relocate toilets and provide an office for the principal and nurse. An all-purpose room was to be used as a gym and meeting room. The name was changed to Faircrest in 1963. In 1967 three classrooms, a storage room and showers and a locker room were added. The present principal is Mr. Kenneth Knoll.



THE THRESHOLD

What does all of this mean? It means that the sons and daughters of Polish peasants whose parents came to the United States crowded in the steerage of ships are attending the University of Wisconsin at campuses across the state.

It means that the great grandchildren of German immigrants are driving $6,000 automobiles and living in $45,000 homes.

It means that this is a Christian nation and the Ten Commandments still fall like hammers upon us.

It means that public education is a great bargain because we get creative administrators and teachers, gleaming schools and hot shot sports teams — not to mention culture and education — for less taxes than most of us put into beer and booze every year.

It means that children, in this of all nations, always aspire to be something different or better than their parents.

It means that you can kick your neighbor's car tire if you're mad at him, even if the local political party just named him ward chairman, but if you damage his fender he can get you for a misdemeanor.

It means that all of us have a chance because so many who preceded us kept the faith.

It means that you can insult the local banker, if you're of a mind to, and he can't do a thing about it unless you miss a payment on your bungalow, which is a longer step forward than landing a man on the moon. Factory workers had to doff their hats to their bosses in Europe.

It means that we all owe a debt to those who passed before us. They bear witness and so do we. The stones at Thompson Cemetery record lives for which each marker is a tiny punctuation mark — shall we call it a comma or a period? — amid the centuries.

If you listen hard to the wind you may hear a silent granite murmur.

Two centuries and it is time to stand down to give testimony.

This is our town, our city. This is our heritage. The times speak to us. They say that for each generation it was always thus: That we stand before our future on the threshold of renewed hope and the portal of pain.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Heritage Committee of St. Francis salutes the St. Francis Savings and Loan Association, which provided the money to finance the writing and printing of this history. The directors were gracious in agreeing to pay for the book and in providing, in some cases, guidance in its preparation. Particularly helpful was E. T. Van Handel, who helped provide guidance on graphics.

The paper for this book was donated by Leslie Paper Co., Inc. H. Lee Kabrich.

The committee members also wish to recognize the work of Joan Wynn, who died before the book was even written, but who helped research some of its material.

Virtually all of the material in this book was provided by members of the committee, working for nothing and on their own time as a civic project.

The committee members are: Lois Neubauer, chairman, Barbara Canapa, Maxine Parks, Diane Beaumont, Joyce Kuehl, Kathy Schwingle, Mary Becker, William Drehfal, the Rev. Thomas Hickey, the Rev. Raymond A. Fetterer and Jean Kiehl.

Larry Van Goethem

ELECTED OFFICIALS

MAYORS

1952 – 1955	Paul Rainer
1956 – 1957	Robert Sommerfeld
1958 – 1959	Paul Rainer
1960 – 1973	Herbert C. Kiehl
1974 – 1976	Milton Vretenar

ALDERMEN – First District

1952 – 1953	Herbert C. Kiehl	Alex G. Schoofs
1954 – 1957	Herbert C. Kiehl	Lyndon W. McFaul
1958 – 1959	Herbert C. Kiehl	Joseph P. Burazin
1960 – 1961	Bernard M. Glowinski	Joseph P. Burazin
1962 – 1965	Bernard M. Glowinski	Donald M. Howard
1966 – 1975	Bernard M. Glowinski	James G. McManus
1976	Audrey Szymkowski	James G. McManus

ALDERMEN – Second District

1952 – 1953	Milton A. Ollmann	Irving J. Murphy
1954 – 1955	Herman H. Jenny	Terry O'Brien
1956 – 1957	Herman H. Jenny	Milton A. Ollmann
1958 – 1959	James C. Conlon	James S. Mallas
1960 – 1961	Herman H. Jenny	James S. Mallas
1962 – 1969	Gilbert Loferski	James S. Mallas
1970 – 1971	Gilbert Loferski	H. Lee Kabrich
1972 – 1973	Carol F. Pfeifer	H. Lee Kabrich
1974 – 1975	Carol F. Pfeifer	John J. Kroll
1976	Stanley J. Raclaw, Jr.	John J. Kroll

ALDERMAN – Third District

1952 – 1953	Frank J. Hilton	Harold Newcomb
1954 – 1955	Frank J. Hilton	Fred J. Schoendorf
1956 – 1957	Thomas Gelinsky	Harold Newcomb
1958 – 1959	Alfred C. Richards	Harold Newcomb
1960 – 1961	Alfred C. Richards	Richard Neubauer
1962 – 1963	Ray Klug	Richard Neubauer
1964 – 1971	Ray Klug	Francis J. Schuster
1972 – 1973	Ray Klug	Milton Vretenar
1974	Ralph Voltner, Jr.	Milton Vretenar
1975 – 1976	Ralph Voltner, Jr.	Ronald L. Drezdon

CITY CLERK

1952 – 1953	Thelma V. Seely
1954 – 1955	Warren Zickuhr
1956 – 1965	Fred J. Schoendorf

CITY TREASURER

1952 – 1953	Fred J. Schoendorf
1954 – 1957	Henry A. Rajchel
1958 – 1965	James G. McManus (combined position)

CITY CLERK - TREASURER

1966 – 1973	Fred J. Schoendorf
1974 – 1976	Harriet Schwalbe

CITY ATTORNEY

1952 – 1953	Cornelius A. Schneider
1954	William Bowman
1955	Bernard J. Luettgen
1956 – 1976	Harwood H. Staats

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

1952 – 1959	Wilbur O. Scott
1960 – 1961	Ray Klug
1962 – 1963	John Makurat
1964 – 1967	Roland Kloth
(position eliminated)	

MUNICIPAL JUSTICE

1956 – 1957	Thomas Weinhold
1958 – 1961	Morton J. Schmidt
1962 – 1965	Carl Seitz
1966 – 1967	Louise M. Tesmer
1968 – 1973	John Kafkas
1974 – 1976	George Berzowski

BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

We salute the many dedicated citizens who have served and are serving on the many boards, commissions and committees which have added to the planning, development and growth of our city.

Due to lack of space and fear of omission, we have omitted these names.

The Committee

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERSHIP

YEAR					
1951	Wm. Wichgers	Eugene Gavin	Frank Hilton		
1953	Glenn Fisher	Gordon Lowe	John Schmidt		
1954	Herman Hansen	Gordon Lowe	John Schmidt		
1955	Arnold Bauer	Gordon Lowe	John Schmidt		
1956	Arnold Bauer	Gordon Lowe	Robert Kuhne	John Schmidt	Morton Schmidt
1957	Arnold Bauer	Gordon Lowe	Robert Kuhne	John Schmidt	Morton Schmidt
1958	Arnold Bauer	Gordon Lowe	Robert Kuhne	John Schmidt	Morton Schmidt
1959	Ralph Wichgers	John Schmidt	Francis Schuster	Robert Long	Howard Beutler
1960	Ralph Wichgers	Lorraine Howard	Francis Schuster	Robert Long	Howard Beutler
1961	Ralph Wichgers	Lorraine Howard	Francis Schuster	Robert Long	Howard Beutler
1962	Ralph Wichgers	Lorraine Howard	Francis Schuster	Robert Long	Joseph Smukowski
1963	Ralph Wichgers	Raymond Calteux	Francis Schuster	Robert Long	George Berzowski
1964	Ralph Wichgers	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	Robert Long	George Berzowski
1965	Ralph Wichgers	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	Joan Prochnow	George Berzowski
1966	Ralph Wichgers	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	Joan Prochnow	George Berzowski
1967	Ralph Wichgers	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	Joan Prochnow Resigned 12/68	George Berzowski
1968	Ralph Wichgers	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1969	Ralph Wichgers	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1970	Geo. Markwardt	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1971	Geo. Markwardt	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1972	Geo. Markwardt	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1973	Katie Kabrich	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1974	Katie Kabrich Resigned 6/75	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1975	Geo. Markwardt Appt. 8/14/75	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey
1976	Geo. Markwardt	Raymond Calteux	Rudolph Hoppe	George Berzowski	Norman Easey

ST. FRANCIS ORGANIZATIONS

St. Francis Association of Commerce
St. Francis Lions Club
St. Francis Fire Dept. Sunshine Club
St. Francis Jaycees
St. Francis Jaycettes
Jaycee Jr. Rocket Club
Jolly Sportsman's Club
V.F.W. Post 9351
V.F.W. Post 9351 Auxiliary
P.L.A.V. Post 172
Chapter 172 Ladies Auxiliary
Cardinal Stritch Council 4614 K.C.'s Booster Club
Sacred Heart Athletic Association
Sacred Heart Girl Scout Troop 324
Sacred Heart Youth Club
Happy Day Club (Senior Citizens)
St. Joseph Ben. Society

Willow Glen
- P.T.O.
- Student Council
- Boy Scout Troop 302
- Cub Pack 302
- Brownies 185

Faircrest
- P.T.A.
- Student Council
- Girl Scouts
- Boy Scout Troop 301
- Cub Pack 301
- Cadette Girl Scouts
- Jr. Girl Scouts
- Brownies

Thompson
- P.T.A.
- Student Council
- Cadet Group
- Judo Club
- Band Boosters
- 4-H Club
- Boy Scout Troop 305
- Cub Pack 305
- Brownies
- Jr. Girl Scouts

St. Francis High School
- Cheerleaders
- Student Council
- A.F.S.
- G.A.A.
- German Club
- Spanish Club
- Marinettes
- Varsity Club
- Athletic Club
- Ski Club
- Stage Crew Club

JOBBING, LIGHT MANUFACTURING & INDUSTRIAL SERVICE

Advance Screw Products, Inc.	3767 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	483-6200
Apollo Machine Co.	2700 E. Norwich Ave.	483-4170
Becker Boiler Co., Inc.	1785 E. Bolivar Ave.	482-2840
Dittmore-Freimuth Corp.	2517 E. Norwich Ave.	483-5100
Easterday Paint & Chemical Co.	1306 E. Bolivar Ave.	483-8177
E-Z Paintr Corp.	4051 S. Iowa Ave.	481-4500
Kitzinger Cooperage Corp.	2529 E. Norwich Ave.	483-8800
Lakeside Centerless Grinding Co.	3559 E. Sivyer Ave.	482-4411
Lenard Tool & Machine, Inc.	3125 E. Allerton Ave.	483-7620
L & W Machine Products, Inc.	1780 E. Bolivar Ave.	481-4880
Masterset Brushes	2025 E. Norwich Ave.	482-3710
Mathson Tool & Die Corp.	4188 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	481-4270
Precision Tool Co.	1775 E. Bolivar Ave.	483-3130
Selkie Manufacturing Co.	3770 S. Pennsylvania Ave.	744-9700
Seidler Tool Co.	4060 S. Pennsylvania Ave.	481-0525
Utility Tool & Machine Co., Inc.	3630 S. Arctic Ave.	481-2160
Wire & Metal Specialties, Inc.	4021 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	483-5660
Wisconsin Electric Power Co.	Lakeside Plant	273-1234

FOOD & BEVERAGES MANUFACTURING

Black Bear Beverages, Inc.	4264 S. Packard Ave.	744-7570
Wixon Milwaukee Spice Corp.	1390 E. Bolivar Ave.	481-8900

FACTORY REPRESENTATIVES

Ace Carbonic Gas Co.	4040 S. Clement Ave.	483-8885
Yertwart Hamparian (Dealer in Industrial Equipment)	2525 E. Crawford Ave.	483-2525

REAL ESTATE BROKERS

Rosen Realty	3950 S. Clement Ave.	481-7050
Waxman Investment, Inc.	4051 S. Packard Ave.	481-6801

HAULING

Briggs Trucking	1570 E. Bolivar Ave.	
Motor Express Inc. of Indiana	1404 E. Bolivar Ave.	744-9370
Trans American Freight	3775 S. Packard Ave.	483-6780

BUILDING MATERIALS

Badger Lumber Co. (Interior Woodwork)	2040 E. St. Francis Ave.	482-4220
Capitol Lumber & Home Supplies	1700 E. Bolivar Ave.	482-1340
Interstate Aluminum	4375 S. Kansas Ave.	744-7900

GRADING & EXCAVATING

Midwest Grading Co., Inc. . . . . 4168 S. Packard Ave. 744-7703

MASONRY & GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Burazin Construction . . . . . 1841 E. St. Francis Ave. 483-0673
Vretenar Construction. . . . . 4216 S. Packard Ave. 744-0142

CARPENTRY & GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

Hatzenbeller Contracting. . . . . 4051 S. Alexander Ave.. 744-9847
Marino Construction Co.. . . . . 2755 E. Crawford Ave. 744-4386
Ted Simons & Sons, Inc. . . . . 2043 E. St. Francis Ave. 744-3238

PLUMBING

Robert Dombeck. . . . . 2614 E. Denton Ave.. 481-1793
Schoofs Plumbing Co., Inc. . . . . 3753 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.. 481-9040

HEATING & SHEET METAL

Keith & Williams Boiler Co.. . . . . 2220 E. Cora Ave. 481-4990
Stegeman, Inc.. . . . . 3560 S. Iowa Ave. 482-2780
Rudy Uttke & Sons. . . . . 2704 E. Norwich Ave. 483-2159

ELECTRIC

Haissig Inc. Elevator Service . . . . . 3110 E. Allerton Ave. 481-3280
C & S Electrical Controls. . . . . 2525 E. Crawford Ave. 482-2780

ROOFING

Cudahy Roofing & Supply, Inc. . . . . 2710 E. Norwich Ave. 481-1985
Fischer Construction Co.. . . . . 3205 E. Waterford Ave.. 483-3920

LAMINATES

Lee's Plastics . . . . . 3934 S. Pennsylvania Ave.. 481-0124
Setum Plastics . . . . . 3125 E. Allerton Ave. 483-3430

RESTORATION

C. J. Koenig Co. . . . . 3550 S. Iowa Ave.. 744-5772

PERSONAL SERVICES

Joan's Beauty Parlor . . . . . 4251 S. Packard Ave. 744-2090
Eveline Maierle Beauty Salon . . . . . 3062 E. Layton Ave.. . . . . .
Margaret's Beauty Salon . . . . . 1834 E. St. Francis Ave. 744-2700
D. Ramanowski's Beauty Parlor . . . . . 3946 S. Iowa Ave.. 483-8630
Pinter's Barber Shop . . . . . 4245 S. Packard Ave. 481-4280
Sidetrack Barber Shop. . . . . 2232 E. St. Francis Ave. 481-7030

American Family Insurance	4247 S. Packard Ave.	744-8182
Czarnecki T V Repair	3134 E. Koenig Ave.	483-2173
Jepco Corporation	2914 E. Layton Ave.	
K K. Coin Cleaners	3809 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	747-9028
Kujawa Landscaping	3951 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-7646
Liebel Landscaping	1650 E. Bolivar Ave.	744-9066
Peoples General Insurance	3561 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-9930
Rembowski Funeral Home	2408 E. St. Francis Ave.	744-4447
Richard's TV & Radio Service	3784 S. Bombay Ave.	483-6257
St. Francis Laundromat	2520 E. Norwich Ave.	744-9020
St. Francis Savings & Loan Assoc.	3545 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-8600
Southernaire Nursing Home, Inc.	1915 E. Tripoli Ave.	483-7848
Dr. Thebert Animal Hospital	3805 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-2240
Tracy Scanlon Dental Clinic	3555 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-0634
Wolf's Cleaners & Launderers	3825 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-8280

RETAIL STORES

A & P Food Stores (A Mart)	3100 E. Layton Ave.	747-9088
Boy Blue Stores, Inc.	4267 S. Packard Ave.	483-1010
Weinhold Enterprises	4009 S. Packard Ave.	481-3766
Papa's Food Market	1821 E. St. Francis Ave.	744-2279
Stein Pharmacies, Inc.	3090 E. Layton Ave.	481-8200
Wolf's Rexall	3553 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	483-5841

Bay View Bike Shop	2248 E. St. Francis Ave.	483-2310
Black Bear Liquor Sales	4264 S. Packard Ave.	744-7570
John's House of Liquor	4048 S. Packard Ave.	481-7070
Maytag Sales & Service	1840 E. St. Francis Ave.	744-0286
Nowicki's True Value	3074 E. Layton Ave.	483-5550
St. Francis Liquor Store	2306 E. St. Francis Ave.	744-3868
Stelloh Sound Ltd.	2301 E. St. Francis Ave.	482-3838
Suburban Tire Wholesalers	2918 E. Layton Ave.	744-3770
Teleview Electronics, Inc.	4200 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	481-7030
Thrifty Liquors, Inc.	3080 E. Layton Ave.	481-3090
Videosonics, Inc.	2820 E. Layton Ave.	481-2710

SERVICE STATIONS

Busse's Service	4004 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	483-2583
Julian's Standard Service	4230 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-5656
Kern's Self Service	4045 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	747-9277
Kickapoo Oil Co.	1910 E. Layton Ave.	482-3777
Tiny's Lakeview Service	3901 S. Lake Drive	744-4344
Wally's Whitnall Service	2203 E. St. Francis Ave.	483-2830

AUTO REPAIRS, PARTS & TOWING

Automotive Specialties Co.	3125 E. Allerton Ave.	769-6400
Don Billo Towing	2502 E. Crawford Ave.	483-2300
Cudahy Trailer Sales	4186 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	483-6800
B & H Automotive	3801 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	747-9516
St. Francis Auto Salvage	4015 S. Pennsylvania Ave.	481-4540
Truck Power	1790 E. Bolivar Ave.	482-0890

RESTAURANTS & COCKTAIL LOUNGES

Dobie's Cocktail Lounge & Restaurant	4136 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-9064
Hewitt's Tavern & Restaurant	2247 E. St. Francis Ave.	481-2924
Jerry's Pheasant Bar & Restaurant	4016 S. Packard Ave.	481-4611

TAVERNS

Al & Angie's Tap	2000 E. Cora Ave.	481-7742
American Legion Post 129	3877 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	481-2860
Butch's Tavern	3907 S. Lake Drive	744-3722
Bucholz Tap	4607 S. Whitnall Ave.	481-9800
Cozy Nook	1813 E. St. Francis Ave.	481-9670
Dutch's Tap	4163 S. Nicholson Ave.	747-9405
Eddie's Airport Tap	2234 E. Layton Ave.	747-9178
Gallery Lounge	4160 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	747-9027
Glowinski's Tap	3701 S. Iowa Ave.	482-3419
Izzy's Tap	3783 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	481-1371
Kansas Bar	3672 S. Kansas Ave.	481-3092
Mike & Carol's	4102 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	744-3957
Royal Tap	2222 E. St. Francis Ave.	744-9830
Sal's Tap	3724 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	747-9169
Trac Inn	2227 E. St. Francis Ave.	481-8460
Windmill - Rybacks	3852 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.	481-5530

MISCELLANEOUS

A & W Root Beer	3701 S. Packard Ave.	481-6610
Baewer's Greenhouse	3018 E. Norwich Ave.	744-0887
Chas. Wynn Picture Framing	2503 E. Whittaker Ave.	481-7343
Harold Larson Printing	3444 E. Tesch Ave.	481-1901
L.A.D. Vending	2730 E. Allerton Ave.	481-1945
Lazaris (Popcorn)	4027 S. Packard Ave.	482-1894
Zenker's Greenhouse	2314 E. St. Francis Ave.	744-3393

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ST. FRANCIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

Lois Neubauer - President
Kathy Schwingle - Vice President
Diane Beaumont - Secretary
Margaret Szymkowski - Treasurer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jean Kiehl
The Rev. Raymond A. Fetterer
The Rev. Thomas D. Hickey
Maxine Parks
Bettie Vretenar

BUSINESS CHARTER MEMBERSHIP

Advance Screw Products, Inc.
Becker Boiler Co., Inc.
Cudahy Trailer Sales
Dittmore-Freimuth Corp.
E-Z Painter Corp.
Franklin Press, Inc.
Kitzinger Cooperage Corp.
Lakeside Centerless Grinding Co.
Ola's Super Market
St. Francis Savings & Loan Assn.
St. Francis State Bank
Cudahy Marine
Assoc. of Commerce
First National Bank of Cudahy
Nowicki Hardware

CHARTER MEMBERS

Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Baewer
Gerald G. Barrett Family
Ron & Diane Beaumont
Mary Becker
Irene L. Brooks
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Calteux
Ted & Barbara Canapa
Marian Ciesielski
Marie Cline
Mr. & Mrs. Sigmund Czerhorski
Gene & Penny Czerniak
Mr. & Mrs. DeWayne Doberstein
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Wilbur & Judith Ebel
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Richard & Esther Graybar
Margaret Grubis
Sister Jeanine Gruesser, O.S.F.
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Anthony Helminiak Family
Rev. Thomas D. Hickey
Rudy Hoppe
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J. Henry & Pearl Kulinski
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Mr. & Mrs. Jerome Kupec
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Mr. & Mrs. Tim Lockwood
Elmer R. Luce Family
Mat & Barbara Matusinec
Bruce & Cindy McGregor
Mr. & Mrs. James G. McManus
Mrs. Frances Neubauer
Lois & Richard Neubauer
Richard Nuszbaum
Dr. William A. Parks Family
Kenneth Pelkey
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Raclaw Family
Olive Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. C. J. Schermer
Henry & Nancy Scholz
Curtis Schulz Family
James B. Schultz Family
Harriet Schwalbe
Agnes Schwingle
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schwingle
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Gary & Maureen Shebesta
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Milt & Bettie Vretenar
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Wagner
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K. C. Weinhold & Family
Mary Wentland
Carol & Dennis Wojtecki
Michael A. Wozney
Merv & Belva Yeske
Rhody & Michele Zynda

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