

HISTORY KEEPERS

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www.westbywihistory.com
westbywihistory@gmail.com

PO Box 42
Westby, WI 54667
608.634.4478

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members and Friends of WAHS,

It is my pleasure to announce that our 9th Annual Sweet Rides & Sweet Pies event was another success! The variety of vehicles, our group of volunteers, and the number of Westby community spectators who come to support our family-oriented event continue to grow!

The purpose of this annual event is to raise awareness of WAHS, our Thoreson House Museum & Genealogy Center, and at the same time promote our beautiful city and all its unique businesses. Combining our popular Pie & Ice Cream Social with a car show was the idea of our former board member,

Madeline Anderson, who passed away in 2017. Her vision, together with WAHS member Garland McGarvey's leadership, has made this event the most visited and financially successful of all WAHS fundraisers.

Behind every successful fundraiser, there is an extraordinary volunteer team. I give my heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who worked with us to plan the event; set up the business park; register cars; publicize the event near and far; park cars; make, bake, cut and serve 65 homemade pies; serve food; and the "ever-popular" clean up after the event. Some volunteers spent 1-2 hours and others spent literally hundreds. Every person who helped had a part that contributed to our success. We could not have done this without each and every one of you!

Each year we reach out to individuals and businesses to sponsor trophies and raffle prizes. Our sponsors are an important part of this event and I thank you for your continued support. Mega Parts has been supporting us from the beginning and I appreciate all they have done to build this event. I also want to recognize and thank WCCU and their employees, Kickapoo Counseling and their employees, George's Garage, Auto Value, O'Reilly's, and Vossateig Funeral & Crematory as this year's major Sweet Rides & Sweet Pies sponsors.

We were delighted that during this year's show, we had over 160 classic vehicles on display. Westby's mayor, city council, and employees "motored" with us through the obstacles of road construction and the change of location to the business park and I want to thank them! Next year, our tenth annual event will bring bigger crowds and our efforts will be multiplied to let our community know that we are here to promote Westby and deliver a cost-conscious, entertaining day for the entire family. I appreciate the city's support!

Thank you to everyone who came out to show their support for our organization and we will see you all again next year.

— Blaine Hedberg, WAHS President

FOTEFAR TEMAREISER GROUP AT WAHS

Rasmus Sundland has been bringing tour groups from Norway to the US for many years. As a friend of WAHS President Blaine for more than 30 years, WAHS has become one of his regular stops. The group plans their travels so our Thoreson Museum & Genealogy Center can be a middle-of-the-day respite. Lunch, relaxing on the porch for a short break from traveling, and a tour of the museum are just what these travelers enjoyed on July 22 when they stopped at WAHS before shopping at Dregne's and the Westby Creamery Cheese Store. We even got a few corrections to our "Rules on How to Wear a Bunad" while they were here — just what we need for our Syttende Mai school presentations for next year!

Photo below: Welcome to Westby! Front L & R: WAHS President Blaine and tour guide Rasmus.



Photos below and more on Page 3 from
Sweet Rides & Sweet Pies 2024!





Shining a Light on the Past

As they say, the more things change, the more they stay the same. This article, published in The Westby Times on August 20, 1924, tells us that our community used Davidson Park as a gathering place for live music just as we do now

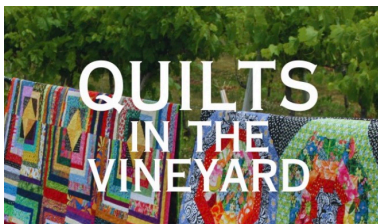
for Burgers in the Park. But 100 years ago, they started at 8:00 p.m. while today many of us want to be in our jammies by then!

**Westby Band to Hold Concert
At Davidson Park, Aug. 22,
Beginning at 8 O'clock.**

PROGRAM

1. National Reserves - -----March
2. The Rippling Ruby Overture
3. The Dreamer Waltz
4. The Sweetest Story Ever Told—
Trombone Solo Asmund Elverum
5. "Aase's Death"—From the Peer
Gynt Suite
6. Trombone Novelty
7. Gems from the Operas
8. Two Norwegian Melodies—
(a) Sønner av Norge
(b) Ja Vi Elsker Dette Landet
9. "On Wisconsin"

Thank you, Branches Winery, for inviting us to participate in your event on July 13!



WAHS was delighted to hear from Therese Bergholz, owner of Branches Winery, when she asked if we would participate in the winery's quilting event on July 13. Having an "autograph quilt" in our collection, we were excited to show it off to hobbyists and professional quilters. There are 16 names embroidered in each circle with a name or date in the middle for a total of 712 names on the quilt. Sewn in 1912, this quilt was used as a fundraiser after the Coon Prairie Church burned on Easter Sunday in 1909. The women of the Ladies' Aid used the money to replace the altar clothes, candles, and other items that beautified the church and were lost in the fire. Mrs. Amanda (Martin) Bekkedal either had the highest auction bid or won the quilt top in a raffle. It was donated to WAHS by her great-granddaughter, Kris Polsfut, in 2007.

What's up at WAHS for the rest of the year?

"Green means go" to the following list of events WAHS has planned for the rest of the year. We hope you can join us for one or more of them!

Tuesday, August 13: Party on the Porch at 5 pm – ???

Sunday, August 18: Museum Open House from 11 am – 2 pm

Saturday, August 24: Coon Valley 175th Anniversary.

We will be selling lelse/pølse from 11 am until sold out

Sunday, August 25: Museum Open House from 11 am – 2 pm

Sunday, September 1: WAHS' 35th-anniversary party, 11 am – 2 pm
Cake and ice cream, special guests, and live music.

Join us for a very special celebration at the museum!

Tuesday, September 3: Monthly member meeting at 1 pm

Saturday, September 28: Cemetery Stone Cleaning Workshop at 10 am
Country Coon Prairie Church Cemetery

Tuesday, October 1: Monthly member meeting at 1 pm

Tuesday, November 12: Monthly member meeting at 1 pm

Rescheduled not to conflict with Election Day

Presentation of Volunteer of the Year Award

Tuesday, December 10: Annual Meeting at Logan Mill Lodge

Election of Board Members

Raffle drawing for rosemaled bowls



This beautiful rosemaled bowl is 9" tall and comes to us all the way from Norway. Thank you, Siv & Kenny Volden, for your continued generosity in donating it and another 6" tall covered bowl painted in the same pattern. These bowls will be used by WAHS as a fundraiser. The drawing will be held at our Annual Meeting on December 10. Either bowl would make a wonderful Christmas gift! Tickets are now on sale and are available from WAHS board members, call the museum, email us, or send a Facebook message. Second and third-place prizes of the smaller but identical bowl and \$50 will also be given. Suggested donation: \$5/ticket; \$20/5 tickets.

Bekkedals Visit WAHS Museum

The granddaughter, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren of Amanda and Martin H. Bekkedal recently visited Westby for the funeral of Martin "Buzz" Bekkedal. WAHS hosted Buzz's wife, his sister, and their families at the Thoreson House to see the tobacco display and review some of their family photos recently donated by one of their cousins. WAHS members had a great time listening as they told family stories about Amanda and MH while looking at the photos. The family stayed at The Westby House when they were in town. Amanda and MH were the second owners of that home, did extensive remodeling to the building, and raised their family there. We thank the family for the generosity of their time and the donations they have given to WAHS. The family came from as far as the states of Florida and Washington so we appreciate they made time to see our museum displays about tobacco and their family!

2024 Sweet Rides & Sweet Pies in pictures!

Sweet Rides was a bit of a challenge this year because road construction and detours made our usual location on Bekkedal Avenue in front of the Thoreson House Museum & Genealogy Center impossible. We planned to be at the Westby Veterans Memorial Ballpark but only 10 days before the event decided to move to the Westby Business Park on the north side of the city. It was a wonderful decision and made for a great location!



9th Annual SR&SP at the Westby Business Park.



Jim Sweet's 1974 Chevy Nova was the People's Choice winner.



Jamie Stephan, from big trophy sponsor Mega Parts, congratulates Jim.



Opening Ceremony: SRSP Chairman Garland, WAHS Pres. Blaine, MC Brian Rude, ED of Westby Chamber Stef Schroeder, Mayor Danny Helgerson, and MC Phil Strand.



The best pie ladies anywhere!



Connor won the Berg Buddy go-kart and Rep. Loren Oldenburg won the first pie auction.



The firetruck was a fun thing for kids to see.



Cars, cars, and more cars! They were kept in line by Randy Dahlen, Randy Lunde & Todd Holen.





"Political history is not the only way to approach historical figures."

— Fred Kaplan,
American author and journalist



Here's a good Summer Snapshot Stumper for you! Do you recognize this church?

Remember, we are the Westby AREA Historical Society!

Only if it's time for you to renew your membership, will you find a separate invoice and envelope with your "History Keepers" newsletter.

Dues are just \$20/person and help us to defray most of the cost of the newsletters! We appreciate your renewal!



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103 N. Main St.
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(608)634-3136

Thank You!
to our sponsors
for their support!
It helps our
general operations
budget, our
members, our
newsletter, and
our events!



Thank you to all who made our 2024 event a success!



to new members: Jansen VanLin,
Therese Bergholz and Mark Maxim

Please leave a message at 608-634-4478, find us on Facebook or email us at westbywihistory@gmail.com. Your ideas, opinions, and suggestions matter! We want to hear from you!

2024 Officers and Board of Directors

President and Curator — Blaine Hedberg (2024)
Vice President — John Erlandson (2024)
Sec't/Treas & Newsletter — Kathy Anderson (2026)
Board Member — Dorothy Skaaland La Due (2025)
Board Member — Carol Erlandson Navrestad (2025)
Board Member — Marlo Volden (2026)

* Officers are elected at the Annual Meeting



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Please share our newsletter with your friends, and encourage them to join WAHS by filling out and mailing this membership form!

Westby Area Historical Society

P. O. Box 42; Westby, WI 54667

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\$20.00 for Annual Dues from each of our WAHS members supports our education efforts, our quarterly newsletter and the Thoreson House Museum building.

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