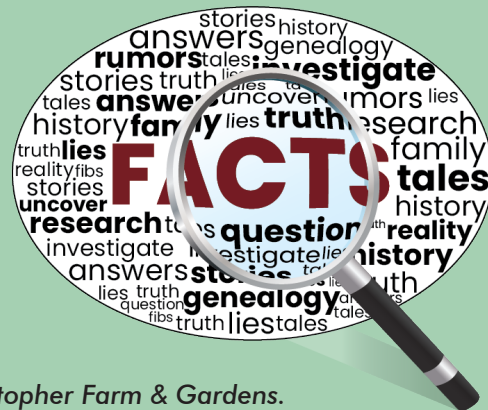


# THE RESEARCHER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
SHEBOYGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL RESEARCH CENTER

Volume XXXIII Number 4 April 2023

The Researcher is sponsored by Jay Christopher of Christopher Farm & Gardens.



## Did You Know?

Sputnik IV, a Soviet satellite, fell to earth in 1962. Most of it burned up in the atmosphere; however, a 20-pound chunk crashed to the ground in Manitowoc. The piece was returned to the Soviets, but a replica is on display at the Rahr–West Art Museum in Manitowoc. Each September celebrates Sputnik Fest.

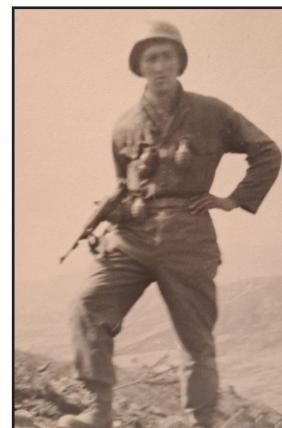


Ring marking the location of the impact in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Photo credit: Jonathunder - Own work, GFDL 1.2, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=29550630>

## Before He was “Hoss” in Hollywood, He was “Hoss” to a Wisconsinite by Richard Stoelb

An unlikely camaraderie formed between a Wisconsin farm kid and a young man from a small Texas town as they navigated Army life during the Korean War. It was a friendship that lasted a lifetime, and one part of it began right here in Sheboygan County.

Norbert Dale Lohuis, born on August 10, 1928, was the third of four children born to Elmer and Lizzie TerMaat Lohuis. After completing the 8th grade, he left school to help his dad work the family farm purchased in 1864 for \$500. Located in Section 2 of the Town of Holland, the homestead was purchased by Gerrit Lohuis, Norb's great-great-grandfather.



Norb and his carbine

The young Texan was Bobby Dan Davis Blocker. He was born on December 10, 1928, in DeKalb, Texas, to Ora “Shack” Blocker and Mary Arizona Davis Blocker. The family moved to tiny O'Donnell, Texas in 1934 where he began working in his parent's general store. In school he didn't care much for football, but when he took part in a school play, he discovered acting was kind of fun. Dan was a thoughtful and intellectual student having completed a master's degree in speech and drama in 1950.

Now, this Blocker name may sound familiar because we all watched him for years (1959-1973) on Bonanza.

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SHEBOYGAN COUNTY  
HISTORICAL  
RESEARCH  
CENTER

518 Water Street  
Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085  
Open Tuesday through Friday  
9 am to 4 pm  
(920) 467-4667  
[schrc.org](http://schrc.org) • [research@schrc.org](mailto:research@schrc.org)



The Researcher is the official newsletter of the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center, 518 Water Street, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085.

It is published six times per year in August, October, December, February, April and June.

The Research Center is the local history archive for Sheboygan County and areas surrounding the county. It is a repository for paper records of all kinds.

### **SCHRC Board of Directors**

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Katie Reilly,  
Research Team Leader

Kathy Jeske, Researcher

Richard Stoelb, Researcher



Visit  
[schrc.org](http://schrc.org)

### **Welcome New Members**

Kathleen & John Donovan, Sheboygan

Floyd Schmidt, Eagle River

Jessica Schmitt-Reynolds, Sheboygan Falls

Debbie Dekker, Sheboygan

### **Branching Out: Honoring the Payne Family Legacy**

The SCHRC hosted a special tribute evening for former Sheboygan County Administrator Adam Payne on February 25 at Amore Banquet Hall. The Center provided a comprehensive genealogical presentation on the history of the Payne family in Sheboygan County, which was attended by nearly 100 persons. The Center wishes to thank Jeff & Michele Gentine for sponsoring the event.



Adam Payne

### **Program Schedule**

#### **Genealogy Classes**

*at the Research Center, 518 Water Street, Sheboygan Falls, WI – 1 to 3 pm*

Monday, May 8 – Getting to Know the SCHRC Library/Work Day

Monday, June 5 – Genealogy Brick Walls: How to break through, jump over and go around. We'll work through your problems — bring your info!

#### **History on the Move**

*at the Generations, 1500 Douglas Drive, Plymouth, WI – 2 pm*

Tuesday, April 18 – Plymouth of the Not-So-Distant Past: 1950s – 1980s

Tuesday, May 16 – Topic TBD

#### **Second Saturdays**

*at Plymouth Arts Center, 520 East Mill Street, Plymouth, WI – 9:30 am*

Saturday, April 8 – Steven Stuckey – The Story of Cream City Brick

Saturday, May 13 – Jim Gibbons – The 1893 World's Fair

#### **Saloon Stories**

*at Chris & Sue's, W3820 County Road C, Plymouth, WI – 6:30 pm*

Thursday, February 16 – Gavin Schmitt – Murder & Mayhem in the Fox Cities

Thursday, March 16 – Joe Verdegan – Hauntings at the Green Bay Reformatory

Thursday, April 20 – Matthew Prigge – When Milwaukee Went Dry

Thursday, May 18 – Chad Lewis – Wisconsin's Most Haunted Buildings

#### **Tap Room History**

*at Amore, 18 W. Mill Street, Plymouth, WI – 6:30 pm*

Thursday, June 15 – Doug Dammann – Topic TBD

Thursday, July 20 – John Schoenknecht – The Era of Healing Springs in Waukesha

Thursday, August 17 – Dr. Michael D. Jacobs – A Subversive Society Gets its Clock Cleaned in Sheboygan County

#### **Annual Meeting**

*at Amore, 18 W. Mill Street, Plymouth, WI – 11 am to 1 pm*

Friday, October 6

# Let's Develop Our Center

The SCHRC's 40th Anniversary is gearing up for what will be an awesome celebration in 2023! I would like to take this opportunity to tell you ways in which the Center can benefit from the part you can play in perpetuating the valuable service it provides to the people of Sheboygan County. You are a key player in the Center's continued sustainability and growth. There are 5 ways you can help:

**SHARE THE VISION OF GROWTH.** Everybody associated with the Research Center is vested in its success. The Board of Directors, committee members, staff, volunteers, donors, supporters, advocates, and researchers all share a vision of what the organization is today, but especially what it has the potential to be going forward. As it acquires additional historical collections, the Center enlarges its capability to chronicle regional history by expanding into other counties. The organization's relevance lies in its ability to absorb collections that perhaps cannot be deposited elsewhere. As smaller historical societies and other organizations face the challenges of storage, funding, staffing, and preservation, the SCHRC is positioned to accept these collections, so that the histories of communities outside of Sheboygan County may also be preserved, adding to the rich history of Wisconsin.

**IMPROVE THE CENTER'S VISIBILITY.** Common comments I often hear are, "I have driven past your building for years and never knew what it was" or "What does the Research Center do?" or "What is a Research Center?" or "Can the Center help me find out more about my family history?" I was amazed by the number of people who toured our recent holiday Tremendous Celebration who told me that they always wondered what was in in the building, but had never stopped in. As an advocate of the Center, please tell people about the Research Center and how it has helped you in your own personal research journey. A personal testimonial from you can work wonders at encouraging others to discover what the SCHRC has to offer.

**MAKE A DONATION.** We just launched our Annual Campaign. It is always our largest fundraiser of the year and we count on your support to continue the great work of the SCHRC. Please consider increasing your donation this 40th anniversary year. The letter you recently received identifies specific areas where your gift can really make a difference. Also, please consider sponsoring an event or a project. I just love it when we can demonstrate to people what our members and supporters are willing to do for the organization. Please contact me if you have any questions or ideas concerning sponsorships (I am never without

ideas on how you can participate and help!).

**VOLUNTEER.** I encourage you stop by the Center and see what our volunteers do on a daily basis. They digitize photographs, organize files, work with maps, process collections and work on specific projects. All of the work performed by our volunteers is crucial to the Center's ability to manage and care for the collections, while organizing it in such a manner that researchers are able to easily access it. Their work lies at the heart of the organization's mission which is to collect county history and share it. Would you consider giving a few hours of your time to help the Center? I hope you will!

**ATTEND SCHRC EVENTS.** We have 4 great programs scheduled for this month. On Saturday, April 8, Steve Stuckey from the West Bend Historical Society will speak to our Second Saturdays audience

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These two young men, from very different backgrounds, first met at Camp Polk, Louisiana as they were some of the first trainees of the Korean War.

Norb was likely eligible for a military deferment because of the farm. After a long conversation with his father he decided he would wait to be drafted. Elmer promptly stood up, called the auctioneer and put the farm machinery and equipment up for sale. That draft notice arrived in January 1951. He was sent to Fort Sheridan, Illinois for induction and then shipped to Camp Polk, later named Fort Polk, Louisiana to receive basic combat training.

Dan Blocker was drafted in November 1950 and was told to

report to Camp Polk. Blocker, measuring in at 6-feet 4-inches tall and 300 lbs., hated being called Dan or Danny so he was given the nickname Hoss by the guys in his company.



*Dan Blocker*

Blocker's shoe size was 14 1/2 and Norb's was a size 13 so when they arrived at Camp Polk neither found Army boots that fit. So, one of the guys first field trips took them to Leesville, Louisiana, a small town near the base, to look for boots, but they weren't successful. It was many weeks before they finally received proper fitting footwear.

After basic training Norb came home on a 14-day furlough and married Esther Glander at St. John's Evangelical & Reformed Church in Random Lake on May 12, 1951. Esther would graduate from Random Lake High School at the end of the month. On June 2, Norb returned to Camp Polk, and almost immediately the division was ordered to Japan for several

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### **Sheboygan County Historical Research Center Welcomes New Administrative Assistant, Mary Parrish**

Mary Parrish is the new administrative assistant for the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center. Before devoting her work to the Center, she and her husband owned and operated Kvindlog Services, Inc., for 15 years. The business had been in Mary's family for over 86 years. It was here that Mary developed a strong work ethic and leadership skills. Mary is a strong believer in the power of positive thinking in the workplace and is looking forward to building many new relationships with the members and volunteers of SCHRC.



She holds three Associate Degrees from Lakeshore Technical College (Medical Secretary, Graphic Design/Web Development, and Marketing) as well as Technical Diplomas in Sales Fundamentals and Sales Representative. She is a talented and accomplished graphic designer and customer service representative. Mary is eager to learn and always in search of new knowledge to develop her thoughts and creative power.

Mary and her husband Jim are lifelong residents of the Village of Waldo. They have two kids, Jarret (21) and Kyleigh (18). Mary is an active member of her church, secretary/treasurer for the Waldo Fire Department Auxiliary, and a former EMT and Girl Scout Troop Leader. She also enjoys helping people save, organize, and share their memories by being a photo storage specialist. Outside of work she enjoys traveling, reading, genealogy, photography, and scrapbooking.

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months of advanced training before going to Korea.

The unit arrived in Sapporo, Japan and was officially assigned to Co. F, 2nd Battalion, 179th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division. Because of his college education and leadership qualities Blocker quickly moved up the enlisted ranks to eventually become Acting Company First Sergeant.

After completion of Advanced Training the division was ordered to Korea and on December 18, 1951, it landed at Inchon. By Christmas Day they were on the front lines taking defensive positions in the Yonchon-Chorwan area. Company F occupied a sector that was part of the Jamestown Line near Chorwon now part of North Korea. In March 1952, the 45th (AKA The Thunderbirds) was involved in heavy fighting 10 miles west of Chorwon at Outpost Eerie. The Thunderbirds would become all too familiar with places like T-Bone, Hill 200, Outpost Eerie, Alligator Jaws, Old Baldy, Heartbreak Ridge, Luke's Castle, and Pork Chop Hill.



*Blocker and Lohuis in Barracks*

One night on patrol Norb was near the end of the line. The soldier behind him became ill and could not go on. Norb went to the Lieutenant, advised him of the situation and asked for guidance. Lt. Garrison told him to take the sick soldier to the rear and then return to the patrol. When Norb returned, the company was gone. He was out there all alone. But not for long. A flare ignited revealing several silhouetted figures heading towards him. Not certain whether they saw him, Norb didn't know if they were North Korean or Chinese. Needless to say, he didn't wait around to find out. He jumped into the flooded rice paddy filled with human and animal excrement used for fertilizer and huddled against a berm. He lay perfectly still while they walked right over him.

He never did find out if they were foe or friend. After they passed Norb got up and headed out. A second flare went off. Norb heard some movement then a voice. The voice was Lt. Garrison's calling in a fire mission (artillery strike). He went towards the voice, and covered with fertilizer reunited with his company, stinky but alive.

On May 7, 1952, the unit was trying to advance up Hill 200 in the vicinity of Pork Chop Hill and Old Baldy to push the Chinese soldiers off the top. However, they were stalled at the bottom because the Chinese were throwing concussion grenades at them that Norb described as "coming down like rain".



*Hoss and Norb*

One of those grenades exploded just above the ground near Norb. Two pieces of shrapnel hit him in the chest, but he was protected by his flak jacket. However, some shrapnel hit him on the left side of his face. It broke his jaw, taking out three teeth and part of the gum. When he regained consciousness, he found himself on a stretcher under a blown out tank. Both medics had been killed during the battle. A soldier from an incoming unit (Jerry Verhage from Sheboygan Falls) took a medical bag and did what he could for the wounded by administering first aid and morphine. Norb would be awarded the Purple Heart for his wounds.

Norb was stabilized and loaded on a helicopter for evacuation to a MASH unit. He was then transported to hospitals in Seoul and Tokyo. Being a married man, he was not sent back to the war. He was sent home. From the Tokyo hospital he was transported to Fort Lewis, Washington on the U.S.N.S. General A. W. Brewster. From Fort Lewis he was sent to Camp (Fort) McCoy, Wisconsin and then

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Sparta. From there he hitchhiked to Saukville. Once in Saukville, a police officer gave him a ride to his in-law's home in rural Random Lake.

Esther was living with her parents while Norb was away. However, when Norb arrived at his in-laws no one was there except the small family dog that refused to let him into the house. It was a Sunday, and everyone was in church. After some trickery and ingenuity with a fishing pole, Norb confined the dog to the porch, went into the house and turned on the radio. He listened to polka music using the time to relax a bit while he waited for the family. When the family finally came home Norb heard his father-in-law bellow "Who the hell left the radio on?" Norb appeared and the surprise was followed by happiness .....Norb was home!

Norb and Esther worked hard and raised three daughters and celebrated 62 years of marriage before Esther's death on August 3, 2013.

Despite his accomplishments, Norb regretted not finishing high school and receiving his diploma. On June 4, 2021, with the help of the staff at the Pine Haven Oostburg Campus and Oostburg High School, he got his diploma and graduated with

the Oostburg High School Class of 2021! Norb currently resides at Pine Haven in Oostburg.

From June 16 to June 26, 1952, the 179th Infantry Regiment fought a series of battles at Outpost Eerie, Old Baldy and Pork Chop Hill. From June 26 and beyond Company F defended Hill 223. During one of those battles Dan Blocker was wounded while coming to the rescue of fellow soldiers. Blocker was hospitalized for his wounds and was awarded the Purple Heart. Blocker returned to the U.S., in August 1952. He married his 5-foot-3 college sweetheart, Dolphia Parker and they had four children.

Blocker was working on a Ph.D. at UCLA in 1956 when he dropped out to pursue his acting career. He found steady work in minor TV roles, including two appearances on *Gunsmoke* and a recurring role on *Cimarron City*. However, his big break came in 1959 when he was cast to play the regular role of Eric Cartwright; the middle son of a wealthy Nevada rancher Ben Cartwright played by Lorne Greene, on the television series *Bonanza*. *Bonanza* became a mega hit and was the second longest running western on U.S. network television after *Gunsmoke*. Blocker and his nickname fit the character perfectly. Eric Cartwright became Hoss Cartwright. Until the time of his death he appeared in many movies and appeared with many Hollywood notables.

Dan Blocker would play Hoss Cartwright in 415 episodes over 13 seasons.

After the war Norb and Hoss kept in contact. Norb would go and see Hoss whenever possible. He made an appearance in Plymouth at the Sheboygan County Fair. Norb could see Blocker at the end of the bleachers. Security wouldn't let Norb get too close. Suddenly, he heard "NORB!" It was Blocker's voice. He spotted Norb and pushing his way through the crowd he gave Norb a great big bear hug. "How you been? You're looking good! Do you live around here? Good to see you!". It was like that every time they met. A great big



*Norb Lohuis second from left, Dan Blocker far right*

bear hug and a genuine show of affection from the big Texan. That's the kind of guy Dan Blocker was.

On May 13, 1972, after suffering two pulmonary embolisms following gallbladder surgery, Dan Blocker died. He was 43 years old. He is buried near his hometown of DeKalb, Texas with his parents and his sister. There was no difference between Dan Blocker and Hoss Cartwright; they were one and the same. And he was Norb Lohuis's friend.

#### **Correction:**

On page 5 of the February 2023 issue of *The Researcher*, a tree sponsor from the Tremendous Celebration was misidentified. The correct tree sponsor of the glass tree was Falls Glass Service.

The Sheboygan County Historical Research Center apologizes for this error.





**Understanding DNA Seminar Part II  
with Dana Kelly  
Friday, April 21, 2023 — 9:00 to 12:30  
Held at the Plymouth Arts Center,  
520 East Mill St., Plymouth**

Dana Kelly from Norwegian American Genealogical Center and Naeseth Library in Madison will return for a short seminar and update on genetic genealogy. Dana will answer your questions and talk about:

1. X, Y, mtDNA & Chromosomes
2. Triangulation, Clusters & Confounding Factors
3. Surprises, Secrets & Ethics
4. Company & Test Comparisons

**For seating purposes, please register ahead of time  
by calling (920) 467-4667!**



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on “Cream City Brick.” A week later on April 15, the Lincoln Fellowship of Wisconsin will be hosting its annual meeting at the Plymouth Arts Center. Dr. Robert Bray from Illinois Wesleyan University will be speaking on “Shadows Make Light More Beautiful: Cordelia Harvey & Abraham Lincoln.” It is the fascinating story of how the widow of Wisconsin Governor Louis P. Harvey persuaded Lincoln to allow her to establish a hospital in Madison during the Civil War. Matthew Prigge will be discussing “When Milwaukee Went Dry” at our Saloon Stories program series on Thursday, April 20, at Chris & Sue’s Place. Finally, Dana Kelly will be presenting “DNA For Beginners”

at our annual Genealogy Seminar on Friday, April 21. All of these programs are free to the public, courtesy of individual and corporate sponsorships. So, mark your calendars and attend these educational and entertaining programs. For more details, visit our website at [www.schrc.org](http://www.schrc.org).

Already this year we have made some significant changes to our organization’s appearance and branding to celebrate four decades of success and provide a fresh look to the organization. Our business cards, letterhead, envelopes, and newsletter have been redesigned. While maintaining the Center’s historic logo, we will also be adopting some fresh patterns and colors to

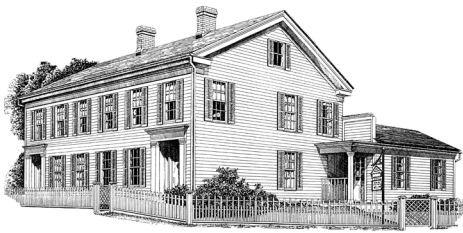
our literature and website. You will also frequently see videos throughout the year – both on our website and social media – that will highlight the Center, its staff and volunteers, artifacts from collections, events, projects, and an assortment of other things that make the Center the wonderful place that it is!

Keep checking the website and stay tuned . . .

As always, thank you for all you do to support and help develop our Research Center!

Sincerely,

Steven K. Rogstad  
Executive Director



Sheboygan County  
Historical Research Center  
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Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

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**APRIL 20**

MATTHEW PRIGGE  
"WHEN MILWAUKEE  
WENT DRY"



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GREEN BAY REFORMATORY"

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