



# NOJOSHING

Indian word for "straight tongue"

land protrudes out into Lake Michigan like a straight tongue

Newsletter published quarterly

Non-Profit Organization 501c3

## December 2021 **Happy Holidays!!**

Jan Pientok, a board member of the St. Francis Historical Society, found some great information in an old 1941 Town of Lake City Directory.

### Old Storefronts

#### **Penn Avenue Food Market 3835 S. Pennsylvania Avenue**

Anthony "Tony" and Josephine Schittone ran a grocery store on Pennsylvania Avenue. The store is listed in the 1941 Town of Lake directory as Schittone Groceries and as Penn Avenue Foods in the 1966 St. Francis directory. It is now a residence. Some former customers referred to the store as "Tony's." One customer remembers Tony as a "jolly, chubby guy" and going there when Josephine was cooking some great smelling food. Tony was born in Italy in 1894, immigrated in 1913, and became a naturalized citizen in 1936. The couple had three children: Angeline (born 1920), Francis (1923), and Victor (1928). Tony died in 1981. It is not clear when the store closed, but one former customer thought it was still open in the early 1970s.

#### **St. Francis Upholstery 3563 S. Kinnickinnic Avenue**

The 1941 Town of Lake directory lists the owner of the shop as Frances Hartmann. The building is now occupied by The Cake Lady.



3825 S. Pennsylvania Ave.



3563 S. Kinnickinnic Ave.

## Rutland Grocery & Market 3651 S. Rutland Avenue

According to the 1946 city directory, Rutland Grocery and Market at 3651 S. Rutland Avenue was owned by Roman Kopydlowski and his wife, Ann Elizabeth. The couple sold fresh meat as well as groceries. The couple married in 1934 and were living in St. Francis that year. Roman's occupation was listed as a butcher, so he probably had the store on Rutland Avenue at that time. They had two daughters, Carol and Edith, and a son, Thomas. A 1937 newspaper article reported that Thomas drowned in a rain barrel at age two. Thomas was missing only 15 minutes. The barrel was set in the yard flush with the ground. The accident probably happened on the Rutland property. Ann died in 1966. Roman died in 1970, so the store may have closed around that time.



3651 S. Rutland Ave.  
former Rutland Grocery & Market

### What's New?

There will be no Christmas dinner event this year due to Covid-19.

#### January 15, 2022 meeting

9:30 A.M. Board of Directors elections

Dedication of the memorial bench for Barbara will take place in late spring or early summer 2022.

Dedication of the new Lake Protestant Cemetery information signs will take place early summer 2022.

### What's This From the Past?

By Karen Gersonde

Well we finally did it! What a busy summer and fall it has been, but my old homestead has finally been sold. My brother sold our childhood house on East Crawford Avenue. It had been in our family for 70 years. That's right, 70 years! That's a long time. It was a tough decision to make, but it was time. It was my brother Glenn's second house, as he lives in Reno, Nevada. The house needed a lot of repairs and updating, and well, it was time to turn it over to a new owner who could give it the love and attention that it needed. So with the swipe of a pen, it was gone. It was on to start a new life.

Cleaning out the house proved to be the toughest chore. Our parents had kept everything since the house was purchased by them in 1951. Yes, the same year the City of St. Francis became a city. It was to be a starter house for them, but as it turned out, it became their permanent forever home until they passed away. It was a small 2-bedroom Cape Cod house, typical of the 1940s and 1950s. But despite being small, they still found room to save everything from the start of their life together, until the end. Every bill of sale, tax returns, bank statements, our report cards from grade school on up, and the list goes on and on. Paperwork in every nook and cranny of the house! We could have just thrown everything out, sight unseen, but there was one problem. The house was burglarized either in the 1960s or 1970s. Mostly money was taken, if I remember. After that, my dad swore they would never get his money again, so he hid the money all over the house. Oh sure, they had bank accounts. But back then, they did not have credit cards, hence, you kept money in the house. So, my brother and I



had to thoroughly go through everything in the house, room-by-room, piece by piece. Long story short, yes we did find some money. It was hidden in the basement, where a burglar wouldn't go.

However, that was not the point of this story. But it led me to this find: In our kitchen, behind our kitchen door, we had a milk chute. They were also called milk cubbies or milk boxes. I always knew it was there but I guess I didn't pay much attention to it. The house had aluminum siding put on and this covered up the milk chute on the outside of the house. However, the milk chute was not covered up on the inside of the house.

I did a little research and learned that centuries ago, most people lived on farms and usually had one or two cows to obtain milk from. If their milk was plentiful, they would put the milk in metal barrels and place the barrels on wagons. They would then travel about their countryside selling milk to the locals. The locals would put the milk into whatever containers they had, usually jugs or jars, and pay the milkman for it. As dairy farming became popular, milk was eventually sold in glass bottles. Many versions of the bottle soon came to be and by the 1920s, advertisements and logos were etched into the bottles, signifying which dairy the milk came from. Homes did not have refrigeration back then, so daily milk delivery was necessary to have fresh milk.

Some homes had an insulated box sitting on the porch to place the milk in, while other homes had cubbies or milk boxes or chutes that were built into the side of the house. These chutes had a door on the outside of the home and a door inside of the home. A milkman could place maybe two half-gallon jars or maybe 4 pints of milk into the chute. The person inside of the home could just reach into the chute to retrieve the milk, and place their payment inside the chute at the same time. Also, the empty bottles were placed in the chute so the milkman could collect them daily. Hence, you never had to go outside to get your milk. Many homes in the Milwaukee area had such milk chutes built into them, if the homes were built in the 1940s or earlier.

By the 1930s and 1940s, most homes had their own refrigerators, allowing cold milk to be kept in the house. Pasteurization of milk also increased the shelf life of milk, eliminating the need for milkmen to deliver fresh milk daily. Grocery stores also began stocking milk in their stores, and hence, the era of the home delivery milkman faded away. Glass milk bottles also faded away, being replaced by wax paper cartons and eventually plastic.

I have vague memories of the milkman coming to our house on East Crawford Avenue in the late 1950s. We had Sealtest Milk delivered to our house and the milkman would use the milk chute to place the milk in. He came in a truck, and stopped by our driveway. I would then hear the clanking of the glass bottles against his metal bottle-carrying container. I would usually run into our house and tell mom that the milkman was coming. She would then pay him, collect the milk, and maybe on occasion order some whole cream in a bottle to make desserts with. I am not sure when our delivery stopped. It was always a treat to see the milkman. I loved ice cold milk, especially with the cookies my mom used to make. Those were delicious memories!

Anyway, the accompanying photos are of our milk chute and one very old Sealtest milk bottle I found in our basement. It was nice to see the milk chute still worked, even if from the inside of our house!

(Some of the information contained in this article came from on line from an article titled: The Day the Milkman Went Away: A History of Home Milk Delivery. Author unknown, not stated)



An example of a metal milk carrier



St. Francis Historical Society  
3400 E. Howard Ave.  
St. Francis, WI 53235

### **2021 Officers**

President..... Anna Passante  
Vice-President..... Sister Ceil Struck  
Secretary.....Bill Drehfal  
Treasurer.....Stephanie Maxwell

### **Board of Directors**

George Ramponi  
Jan Pientok  
Mary Drehfal  
Jay Wesner  
Nancy Goltz

### **Honorary**

Ralph Voltner  
Marge Tessmer  
Kathy Matthew  
Terry Duffey  
Carol Wojtecki

### **Newsletter**

Anna Passante

### ***Mark Your Calendar***

**Meetings at the St. Francis Civic Center at 3400 E. Howard Ave.:**

**The monthly board meetings are the 3rd Saturday of the month at 9:30 a.m. Visitors welcomed.**

December 18, 2021 no meeting

January 15, 2022

February 19, 2022

**Upcoming events** (see “What’s New” column for details)

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