



NOJOSHING

Indian word for "straight tongue"

land protrudes out into Lake Michigan like a straight tongue

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Is fairy food by any other name just as sweet?

by Anna Passante



Raise your hand if you love fairy food from Buddy Squirrel!!! My hand is up!! I love fairy food and in my opinion Buddy Squirrel makes the best. Bite into a piece and you find a lightly colored center. Many other brands have a brownish, burnt mass inside indicating it was cooked too long.

For those with little experience with fairy food, it is a crisp toffee candy made of corn syrup and sugar. Crunch into a piece and find a honeycomb center, coated in chocolate. Fairy food also goes by other names: sponge, sea foam, and angel food.

Did you know that in 2004 the owners of Quality Candy (now known as Buddy Squirrel), Joseph and Lottie Helminiak, received a federal trademark for the name fairy food? But hold on! Back in 1914, the George Ziegler Company, formerly located on Florida St. in Walker's Point, had applied for a patent for fairy food. On its application, the company claimed it had been using the name since 1912. Being that Quality Candy was able to get the trademark in 2004, Ziegler's patent must have gone nowhere.

In 2011, the new owners of Buddy Squirrel decided to go after a number of fairy food trademark infringers, including Kehr's Candy at 3533 W. Lisbon Avenue and Freese's Candy at 7312 W. Greenfield Avenue. Kehr's was founded in 1930 and Freese's in 1928.

Kehr's Candy owner Paul Martinka, said in a *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article (December 23, 2011), "Decades and decades, going way back...the sign that says fairy food in my store was painted by a hand painter in the '50s." Martinka did finally acknowledge Buddy Squirrel's trademark rights and changed the candy's name to "ferry food." Today, at Kehr's online order site, the candy is now called angel food.

Freese's Candy, however decided to fight and hired a lawyer. The company claimed their candy was called fairy food as long as Buddy Squirrel/Quality Candy, at least since 1950. Freese's Candy actually took affidavits from longtime customers. One 77-year-old woman distinctly remembered buying candy named fairy food at the shop in the early 1940s. Buddy Squirrel, however, claimed their company had been making fairy food since the founding in 1916. It appears that Quality Candy didn't win the fight or just gave up, because Freese's Candy is still calling their toffee candy fairy food. In the 2011 *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article, a spokesman for Buddy Squirrel said, "It isn't something I want to make a major issue out of. It's just that we understand that the fairy food brand is important. What I want to be able to do is lay out the real facts that go back and say, 'Look folks, its ours.'"

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Buddy Squirrel defends use of the squirrel logo

Speaking of court cases, Buddy Squirrel Nut Shop was sued for using a squirrel image as a logo on their packaging. A 1947 *Milwaukee Journal* article tells the story of a court battle between Squirrel Brand Co. of Cambridge, Massachusetts and Buddy Squirrel Nut Shops of Milwaukee. The Cambridge company, founded in 1894, claimed that the squirrel used as a Buddy Squirrel logo is their squirrel and that Buddy Squirrel needed to remove it from their advertising. Also, the company wanted Buddy Squirrel to pay their company all the profits derived from the use of the squirrel logo.

Buddy Squirrel Nut Shop insisted that a squirrel was a common animal so it couldn't be exclusively used by any one firm. The case went to trial but the outcome was not reported in the newspapers.

However, since Buddy Squirrel continued to use the squirrel logo, one can assume that Buddy Squirrel won the suit.

So what is the answer to the question "Is fairy food by any other name just as sweet?" Probably. Just as "a rose by any other name will smell just as sweet."



Top: Logo of Squirrel Brand Company
Below: Buddy Squirrel logo



Thanks to all who included a donation in their membership renewal

These donations arrived after the March newsletter was printed.

Debbie Fliss

John Janiszewski

Tom & Betty Javorek

Richard & Joan Wier

Ann Buck

Diane Piedt

Dennis & Carol Wojtecki

What's New?

Are you interested in serving on the Education, Program/Publicity, or Hospitality committees?

If so, give us a call at 414-316-4391 or email st.francishistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Barbara Janiszewski Memorial Bench

The outdoor memorial bench will be placed in the park/ children's area next to the library (4230 S. Nicholson Ave.). The dedication will take place at 11:00 am on June 4, with June 18 as a rain date. Refreshments will be served, including Barbara's favorites: peach pie, carrot cake, and ice cream. A special thanks goes out to those who sent a donation in Barbara's name. All donations went towards the cost of the bench.

We are seeking writers for the newsletter.

Please think about submitting an article for publication. Do you have memories of growing up in St. Francis? Do you have some historical news clippings that may be of interest to our members?

Photo Collection on the Website

Have you visited our webpage lately?

<http://stfranciswihistoricalsociety.org>

Take a look at our photo collection. The photos are arranged by category. Take a look and view our wonderful photos.

If you have historical photos of Town of Lake/St. Francis to donate (or that we could scan), please contact us at 414-316-4391 or st.francishistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

Mark your calendars

September 15, 2022

John Gurda will present "Smokestacks on the lake front: a history of Milwaukee's south shore---the story of the industrial corridor from Bay View to Oak Creek."

October 6, 2022

Jessica Michna, an impressionist of historical notable women, will do a presentation for us. The woman she will portray is Helen Keller.

Both presentations will be held at the Civic Center (3400 E. Howard Ave.) and begin at 6:30 p.m. with light refreshment at 6:00 p.m.

All historical society members will receive a flyer through the mail.

Of Rocks and Fossils

By Karen Gersonde

Summer time always reminds me of playing in the St. Francis Seminary Woods in the 1960s and 1970s. The woods is directly behind my childhood home. Deer Creek ran right adjacent to our house, although at that time I had no idea what the name of that creek was. It wasn't until many years later that I had learned it was called Deer Creek.

During the hot, drawn-out days of summer, it was nice to go into the woods and play. The trees provided ample shade, and the temperature was always so much cooler because of this. No one in our gang had a swimming pool or air conditioning, so trying to cool off was always an adventure. I'm sure the woods was loaded with mosquitos, but they didn't seem to bother us during the daytime. Nighttime was a different story. Anyway, one of my favorite things to do in the woods, right behind our house, actually, was to search the creek for rocks, especially fossils. Yes, fossils!

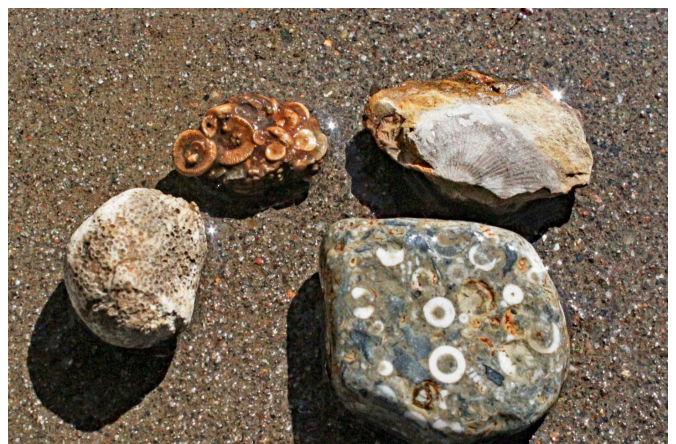
Right near the entrance to the woods off of Crawford Avenue, right beyond the fence, was a large sandbar. The creek curved around the sandbar at that time, as it was a free-flowing natural creek. The water was crystal clear, and that particular area was full of different colored rocks and many, many fossils. My brother Glenn and I would spend many hours on this sandbar, playing in the cool water and picking out as many fossils as we could find.

Fossils are the preserved remains, or traces of remains, of ancient organisms. Fossils are not the remains of the organism itself! They are rocks. A fossil can preserve an entire organism or just part of one. Bones, shells, feathers, and leaves can all become fossils.

The fossils are from a past geological period. These fossils were most likely from the Paleozoic Era of the Geological Time scale. The era also includes the Cambrian, Ordovician, Silurian, and Devonian Periods in Wisconsin. These rocks cover a time frame from 501 to 359 million years before the present. Rock types from these periods include limestone, dolomites, shale, and siltstones that were deposited in warm, shallow seas that covered this region during part of the Paleozoic Era.



The creekbed in St. Francis Seminary Woods



Due to several periods of glaciation, it is uncertain if these rocks are from Wisconsin or from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, which has similar rock units. The fossils from Deer Creek are dominated by brachiopods and crinoid stems. Brachiopods are marine animals with bivalve shells. The round hollow fossils are stem pieces of crinoids, which are marine animals such as sea urchins, sea lilies, and starfish. These were very common in the Paleozoic era.



An interesting note is that the official state fossil of Wisconsin is the Trilobite. We did not find any of those fossils in Deer Creek. I think it is amazing that these fossils were found right by our house. It is so fascinating to think that they formed millions of years ago, and still existed for us to find them.

My brother Glenn still has an old coffee can filled with fossils that we discovered while growing up on Crawford Ave back in the day. A lot of them have crumbled apart, but some are still very much intact. Some of these fossils are shown in the photos in this article.



Because of our love of nature, rocks, and fossils, my brother Glenn actually became a geologist. Our early years growing up in St. Francis influenced him and inspired him to pursue his passion of studying what the earth had to offer, in the form of rocks and fossils! He still pursues his passion to this day out in Nevada. But now, he searches for gold, silver, or minerals.

As for the creek, the sandbar is mostly covered by silt, leaves, and mud. The creek is no longer a natural flowing creek. Because of this, only a small portion of the sandbar still exists. The years have not been kind to the creek bed, and much sediment and debris covers our spot where the fossils used to be found. Time has a funny way of covering up the past in nature. I still like to visit this spot. I still feel the cool shade in the summer, and I reminisce of how clear and cold the water used to be. I see my brother and me standing on the sandbar, collecting rocks and fossils!

(Note: The definition of a fossil was found on Google. Glenn Gierzycki provided the scientific information regarding the fossils, as well as the photos of the fossils for this article. Glenn has a master's degree in Geology.)



History of Quality Candy/Buddy Squirrel

by Anna Passante

If you crave quality candy and gourmet nuts, then Buddy Squirrel Kitchen Store at 1801 E. Bolivar Avenue in St. Francis is for you. Joseph and Lottie Helminiak founded the company as Quality Candy in 1916. Both Joseph and Lottie were born in Warsaw, Poland. They immigrated to America in 1908 and then married in 1913. Their first business was a grocery store.

By the 1930s, the family had a candy shop at 629 W. Mitchell Street. It was a great location in one of Milwaukee's most popular, busy shopping areas. The chocolate candy was hand-dipped. The store was open seven days a week, daytime and evenings, and it was said Joseph never missed a day of work. The couples' four children, Alice, Leonard, Raymond, and Ed, helped after school.

During WWII, candy companies changed their formulas due to limited supplies of ingredients. The Helminiaks continued to follow the original formulas. Once they no longer could obtain the proper ingredients, they just shut down the kitchen. After the war, the demand for quality candy increased so expansion was in order.

In 1952, the store moved their candy production to 2494 S. 5th Street. The new location had larger kitchens and more storage space.

Joseph retired in 1957, and sons Ed, Leonard, and Ray took over the business. According to a 1966 newspaper article, some of the candies were made the same way for 50 years, such as the butter toffee, peanut brittle, and fairy food. That year the candy newcomer was peanut tads. Ed Helminiak bragged that Quality Candy was the only Milwaukee candy company to make all-butter toffee. Ingredients were sugar, butter, and almonds. Proportionately, it was one pound sugar to one pound butter.

In 1960, Quality Candy acquired Buddy Squirrel, a nut roasting and popcorn business. The two companies operated at separate locations. In 1985, Quality Candy and Buddy Squirrel moved production to the 1801 E. Bolivar Avenue location.

In 1995, Quality Candy Shops was a recipient of the St. Francis Industry and Commerce Award. Unfortunately, Quality Candy Shoppes/Buddy Squirrel of Wisconsin, Inc. filed for bankruptcy in January 2010 with debts of \$3.4 million. At the time, Margaret Gile, Joseph and Lottie's granddaughter, was the owner of the company. Investors Richard Koenigs and Trevor D'Souza purchased the company for \$2.2 million. The new company closed eight of the eleven retail stores.

In early 2020, the company was sold to Good Source Foods. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the last of the stores, the Brookfield Square and Southridge mall locations, were closed permanently.

Good Source Foods now focuses on e-commerce and internet sales. However, Buddy Squirrel candy can still be purchased at local stores: Sendik's, Sentry Food, Half Nuts, and Layton Fruit Market.

Of course, you can still find your favorite chocolate and nuts at Buddy Squirrel's remaining store, the Kitchen Store at 1801 East Bolivar Avenue.



Joseph and Lottie Helminiak
Image downloaded from BuddySquirrel.com



The Buddy Squirrel Kitchen Store at 1801 E. Bolivar Avenue



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

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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.

June 18, 2022

July 16, 2022

August 20, 2022

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

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