



Middleton Area Historical Society Newsletter

June 2018

Number 173

Middleton, Wisconsin

OUR MISSION: TO PRESERVE AND PUBLICIZE THE HISTORY OF THE MIDDLETON AREA.



2018 MARKS THE 150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BUILDING OF THE ROWLEY HOUSE.

The Rowley House Museum, at 7410 Hubbard Avenue, was built in 1868. It is owned and operated by the Middleton Area Historical Society. To celebrate this anniversary, the Middleton Area Historical Society will be sponsoring a number of events—many of them held on August 4th along with Mustard Days.

Please plan on joining us.

Just A Reminder.....

The special events that are being held to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Rowley House were briefly described in our March 2018 Newsletter. This is just a reminder.



The Rowley House Museum will be open for extended hours on August 4th from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The Capital Brewery is brewing a special beer for the occasion. It will be called Rowley House Beer. This new beer will be available between August 4th and August 26th when

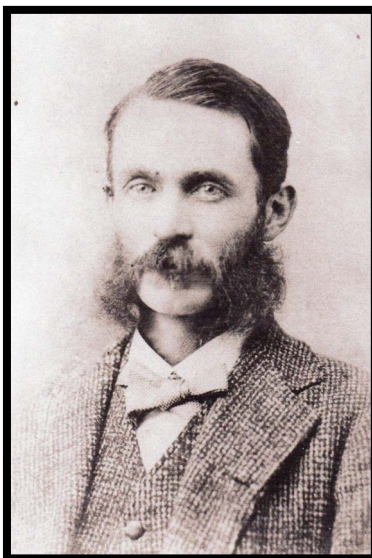
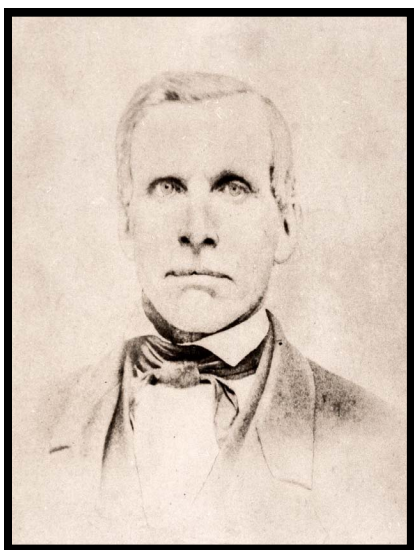
the Good Neighbor Festival is being held. This special beer will also be available at the Capital Brewery location starting at 2:00 pm on the 4th. There are plans to have musical entertainment available for the event at the brewery as well.

To provide a more permanent reminder of the Rowley House anniversary, special one pint glasses will be available for sale to commemorate this anniversary. The special anniversary glasses will be available both at the Middleton Area Historical Society's annual Pie and Ice Cream Social held on June 20th at Lakeview Park and also at the Capital Brewery event held on August 4th.

Capital Brewery is located at:

**7734 Terrace Ave.
Middleton, WI**

Capital Brewery brewed their first batch of beer, a pilsner, in the spring of 1986 and was founded to brew traditional German style lager beer in America. It has branched out to include American style ales, barrel aged beers, and several distinct IPA's.



The Rowley House and the Doctors Who Lived There

A very nice history of the early years of the Rowley House is presented in one of the fact sheets developed by the Middleton Area Historical Society, and is available on our website. The information that relates specifically to the Rowley House was outlined in the March 2018 Newsletter. The part that relates to the doctors who lived in the house is included below.

After first working as a teacher in Ohio and then a farmer in Illinois and Wisconsin, Newman C. Rowley (born in New York) received a medical diploma from the Cincinnati College of Medicine & Surgery in 1854 (the College's first graduating class). Dr. Rowley then apprenticed with a Janesville doctor before starting his own practice in Verona. After moving to Middleton Junction in 1864, Dr. Newman C. Rowley soon realized that the village (and later city) of Middleton was a growing community with people and businesses rapidly moving there, so he relocated his practice to this "busy hub" in 1866. Hanging out his sign "Surgeon and Horse Doctor, Enter Here" Dr. Rowley was soon providing medical treatment to area families and their livestock.

Dr. Newman C. Rowley's oldest son, Antinous A. was born in Ohio in 1841. After serving in the Civil War (11th Wisconsin Vol. Infantry), Antinous soon completed his medical studies at Rush College in Chicago, receiving his doctor's degree in 1867 and in 1868 moved to Middleton and joined his father's practice.

Dr. Newman C. Rowley opened a Drug Store with medical offices upstairs in the late 1860s. Located at 7452 Hubbard

Avenue the building carried the name "Rowley & Son" but was subsequently the site of many other businesses.

Unfortunately Dr. Newman C. Rowley lived in the Hubbard Avenue home only three years, dying in September, 1871. Dr. Antinous A. Rowley moved into the home following his father's passing and around 1885, built a new office building just west of the yellow-brick house. Dr. A.A. Rowley practiced medicine in Middleton for about 34 years, dying in 1902 at the age of 61.

Another Rowley, Antinous G., would eventually follow his ancestor's medical path in Middleton. Born in 1875, "A.G." Rowley graduated from Middleton High School and, like his father, received a doctor's degree from Rush Medical College in Chicago. Starting his medical career in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Dr. A.G. Rowley returned to Middleton when his father became ill and took over the aging doctor's practice. Dr. A.G. Rowley married in 1907 and soon left the old Rowley house, building a new home at 7320 Elmwood Avenue in 1909.

The third Dr. Rowley to practice in Middleton would frequently travel to numerous neighboring communities, often in very poor weather conditions, to treat patients. He was one of the first in Middleton to own an automobile, a 1905 Franklin, and as the story goes would take the motor apart and store parts in his office during the winter months. In 1903, he moved his office from the small building next door to the second floor of the new bank building farther west on Hubbard Ave. Dr. A.G. Rowley died in 1956 at the age of 81.

Early Days of the Middleton Historical Society

While the Rowley House itself has been in Middleton since 1868, the Middleton Area Historical Society, which now owns and operates Rowley House as a museum is of more recent vintage. But it too has an early history.

The first general membership meeting attended by 46 people interested in Middleton history was held in the lower level of City Hall. At first the group called themselves the Middleton Historical Society. That meeting was held on May 4, 1972. At another meeting on May 25, 1972, one of the first orders of business was to elect a temporary Chairman of an interim board of directors. A temporary Vice Chairman and a temporary Secretary were also selected. The temporary Chairman was Edward Kromrey, the temporary Vice Chairman was Nel Ferstl, and the temporary Secretary was Beatrice Ersland. At subsequent meetings of the board these titles were changed to the more customary President, Vice President, and Secretary. A Treasurer was also added. The first Treasurer was Ralph Christianson.

The complete list of members of the society's first board of directors was: **Wesley J. Burmeister, Shelley J. Cary, Ralph M. Christianson, Beatrice L. Ersland, Edith L. Ersland, Nel Ferstl, Katherine Hammon, Lillian Koberle, Edward G. Kromrey, Harriet Kubista, Florence Lemcke, and Catherine Morris.**

These pioneers put in place the administrative foundations of the society. There were numerous documents to be prepared to set the society on a firm footing for years to come. The board worked with the Office of the Secretary of State and drafted the society's first Articles of Incorporation. The bylaws governing the operation of the society were prepared by these first board members. They applied to the Internal Revenue Service for the organization's tax-exempt status as a non-profit organization. Most local historical societies are affiliated with the Wisconsin State Historical Society (WSHS). The early board worked with the state society to understand and implement the requirements upon local societies if they wanted to be affiliated with the state society. These requirements were incorporated into the bylaws of the Middleton Historical Society. The early board also adopted a committee structure, assigning a few individual board members to be on committees to examine issues, or to implement projects, that were of interest to the board at any given time. These committees were created when a particular need arose, and were subsequently dissolved when the need for which they had been created had been addressed.

In addition to establishing a firm administrative foundation for the society, several board members were large contributors of artifacts to the collection. If one looks at our records, Edward Kromrey, Nel Ferstl, and Wesley Burmeister were generous in their donations to the society. For example, with his background as a teacher, principal, and District Superintendent of Middleton Schools, it seems fitting that one of Edward Kromrey's many donations to the MAHS is a little red wooden chair that came from the original Elm Lawn Elementary School (now the district administrative center on South Avenue). This little red chair also has the distinction of being the first item ever donated to the society. This item is on display in the Children's Room in the museum and is a favorite of many of our young visitors to the museum.

Nel Ferstl made dozens of donations to the society including several articles of period clothing, jewelry, and many women's accessories. Wesley Burmeister contributed many photographs from the early 1900s that featured early sporting events, and he also contributed some early sports memorabilia.

At a board meeting on July 10, 1973 several bottles from the old Pheasant Branch Brewery were offered to the society. At that time, the society had grown to 95 members.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

When June arrives, we know it is soon time for the famous Pie and Ice Cream Social that MAHS hosts every year. Discussed at length elsewhere in this issue, I won't dwell on it here ... except to encourage you to attend and to donate a baked item for sale.

With spring and summer-like weather upon us, our gardening crew has been mighty busy cleaning up flower beds and planting lots of flowers. Volunteers, Alice & Steve Drake, Jan & Jeff Martin and David & Steve Olson, have spiffed up the front bed beneath our newly painted MAHS sign, "reclaimed" the area behind the house near the AC units, created a new bed near our storage shed, and made great strides in renovating the memorial garden at the back of the Rowley property.

The front sign at Rowley House was showing some wear and the colors were fading quite a bit, so we had it rejuvenated and repainted by the Sign Division of Hellenbrand Glass from Waunakee. The sign looks great and now matches the colors used to trim the house. The two historic signs, to be placed along the city sidewalk in front of Rowley House are nearly ready for installation hopefully we can wrap that project up fairly soon.

Board members Mel Krc and Claire Buchinger have created and installed new labels for the Carriage House artifacts. These are laminated cards that should hold up well over time and look attractive while providing the visitor with information about each item. We have also created a nice display of John Skinner photographs and some of his many poultry-related donations in the Carriage House.

Board member Carolyn Mattern has spent many hours updating display materials through-out the Rowley House this past winter and early spring. Of special note, are the new materials in the military room and the Rowley artifacts added to several display cabinets.

We enjoyed another fun school tour on May 8 when 80+

second-graders from Sunset Ridge paid a visit to the Rowley House and toured each room. Many thanks to our team of tour guides who had to repeat their 6-7 minute-stories 16 times during the two-hour visit. Organized by Jan Martin, tour guides Dave Baltes, Carol Burger, Jean Devore, Steve Drake, Dorothy Hawkins, Mike Lutz, Molly McDermott, Carolyn Mattern, and Nancy Stratman, are to be commended for their endurance!

In closing, I want to thank Mel Krc, who volunteered to write and edit this issue of the newsletter (with design help from Mary Hilgendorf). Mary, our Newsletter editor for many years, is building a new home this summer and is mighty busy with new priorities. Therefore, she is taking some "time off" from MAHS volunteering ... but hopefully, will soon return!

How 'bout Some Pie?

Wouldn't a nice piece of homemade pie taste good about now? And how about a scoop of ice cream to go along with it? You can get both at the Middleton Area Historical Society's 45th annual Pie and Ice Cream Social on June 20th at Lakeview Park. And, you can listen to some great music while you are eating.

This is a major fundraiser for the society and the money from the sales of pie and ice cream helps us continue our mission to preserve and publicize the history of Middleton. So, not only do your purchases of pie and ice cream make you feel good, but they also help us to continue to serve the Middleton community.

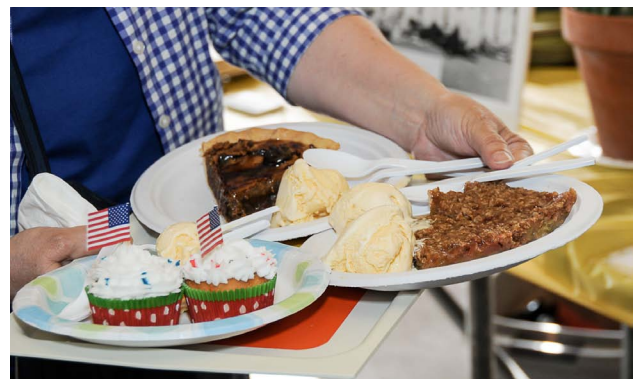
In addition to being a great opportunity to have some pie and ice cream, the social really is social. It gives you an opportunity to meet and talk to friends, who always come to the social, neighbors, board members and volunteers. And, if you aren't already a member, this is a great time to sign up. We will have membership forms available at the social.

We will have a great mix of fruit pies on hand. There will be some cakes and cookies too! The baked goods are provided by board members and their families, some local businesses, and other volunteers who like to bake. We are fortunate to have all of these "bakers" support our event. If you like baking and would like to help us out with a donation of some baked goods please feel free to do so. With the closing of some of the businesses that used to pitch in to make our event a success, we appreciate any extra help you can give us. You may bring your donated baked goods to the Lakeview Park shelter at 4:00 pm so that we can cut them up and place them on the tables. The pie serving starts at 5:00 pm and goes until 8:00 pm.

As in years past, we will again have music provided by the New Horizons band. They will begin playing at about 6:30. They have a great sound and, as always, their music will provide a festive note to our celebration.

There will also be a special item available this year in honor of the 150th anniversary of our Rowley House Museum. We will have for sale some one pint glasses with an anniversary logo imprinted on them. These will also be available in connection with other anniversary events being held on August 4th. But you can get in on the ground floor and buy your souvenir glasses early at the Pie and Ice Cream Social. (The events being held on August 4th are discussed elsewhere in this newsletter.)

While you're enjoying your pie and ice cream, listening to the music, and talking with friends and neighbors, why not plan on visiting us at the museum this summer? Bring your friends, children, or grandchildren.



Pie Cutters Extraordinaire!

Some things endure while others come and go quickly. One thing that has endured is the Middleton Area Historical Society's annual Pie and Ice Cream Social. This year it is June 20 th 2018 at the Lakeview Park Shelter. This is the 45 th year of the event. Things that come and go quickly, we hope, are the hundreds of pieces of pies, cakes, and cookies, that will be cut, arranged on tables, and available for you, and all purchased between the hours of 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm on that day.

Crucial to this event flowing smoothly is the work of the three ladies shown in the accompanying photo who cut all those pieces of baked goods. Our current pie cutters have a long history of service to the society. Edith Ersland was a member of the first board of directors and is on the board today (45 years of service).



Edith Ersland, Jan Martin, Peggy Marxen

Jan Martin has 30 years of service and Peggy Marxen has 18 years of service. We thought it would be great to ask them some questions to learn how they view this event.

The three of you have been working at the Pie and Ice Cream Social for a lot of years—almost 100 years between you. How did you get started doing this?

Edith: When Edward Kromrey asked me to be in charge that first year I did it. He was the kind of person “you had such respect for that you would try to do what he asked if it was at all possible.”

Jan: “I started in about 1988. I was interested in history and had taken a job at the Chamber of Commerce and wanted to learn about Middleton history. I began volunteering for the social at about that time as well. I believe that if you are going to be a member of an organization you should also volunteer to help with their activities.”

Peggy: “I believe that someone must have left, and someone asked me to do it, so I did.”

How did you get to be Pie Cutters?

Edith: In the early days, things were not as organized as they are now. For example, the pie cutting. “If you showed up and had a knife you cut pies.” Then when Vera Bauman got involved she bought us the current pie cutter and showed us how this

should be used. (Note: The device made a six piece outline on top of the pie, and pieces were cut along the lines left by serrated cutter when it was pushed into the pie. This is still in use today.)



Pie cutters

Jan: Jan noted that she was not always a pie cutter. “That’s a job you had to work your way up to.” I began doing whatever needed doing and then, later, became a pie cutter.

“Vera Bauman was our ‘supervisor’ or at least that’s a title we gave her. She noticed that, in the early days, the pieces of pie were not always the same size. Some were large and some were small but the price was the same for each piece. Vera thought there should be ‘equality for all’ among pie pieces. So she went to a restaurant supply house and bought the device we use now to cut pieces into 6 equal pieces. We now have two of these devices.”

Peggy: “I wasn’t a pie cutter right away either.” I didn’t realize it was an ‘esteemed position.’ You know, “that pie cutter only made an outline on the top of the pie showing where to make the cuts. You still needed to be able to cut them all the way through and get them out of the pie plate without ruining them.” When we asked Peggy how long she had been working at the social and cutting pies, she said “Oh, not as long as Edith and Jan. I suppose a few years.” We told her that records of the social showed that she had been involved since 2000, and a pie cutter since 2004, she said “Oh my goodness. I didn’t think it was that long. I must have cut a lot of pieces of pie in all those years.” Peggy noted that when you are a pie cutter “it is important for you to wear an apron.” Otherwise, after a night of pie cutting you could be a mess. “Sometimes, after cutting all those pies, I didn’t even want to eat a piece. I had seen too much of them.” Then she added “But other times, I would.”

You’ve touched on the contributions made by Vera Bauman to the social in earlier years. Were there also others who made a significant contribution?

Edith: Yes! Joanne Kelly. “In the beginning, things were pretty chaotic. Then when Joanne took over, she introduced order and “kept meticulous records” during the time she was in charge. Things ran really smoothly because Joanne did a lot of prep work in the month before the social.” Sandra Lewis was a hard-working, long time member of the board, and a former board president. She put together into book form the various documents that Joanne had used and saved from the time when she was the Pie and Ice Cream Social chairperson. Here’s what she had to say about what Joanne had put together during the time she was chairperson. “This book displays the details of the Middleton Area Historical Society’s yearly Ice Cream Social, dating from 1998 to 2011. In it you will find: pictures, newspaper articles, expenses, posters, letters and donations, along with itemized lists of starting and ending inventories...Only in 2011 did another member coordinate the people, donations, park, inventory, cash, pies, artwork, coffee, ice cream, etc.”

Joanne Kelly: We also interviewed Joanne Kelly, and she offered a very modest view of her role as chairperson. She said:

“Being in charge of the social was no big deal. We were fortunate to get reliable people who could be counted on to do their individual jobs. And they would continue to do them year after year. Because of this, it was easy for one person to do the coordinating. A big thing was getting all of the items over to the park on the day of the social. After it was over it was easy to do the follow up. There isn’t really much to do. Things kind of run themselves.” Joanne described briefly the things that were done at the close of the social: “On the evening of the event: Clean the shelter. Get a preliminary count of the money made. Send out an email to let the board know roughly how much was made. Rinse out the coffee pots to take them home for a better cleaning. Count the funds again at home to get an exact count.”

“On the day after the event: Take the funds to the Treasurer and count them again at her house. Send out Thank You notes to all the various donors and workers. Contact the band on the day after the social to sign them up again for the following year. Also, rent the Lakeview Park shelter for the third Wednesday of June for the following year. Take the coffee pots back to the museum. Update the supplies listing so that we knew how much of what was used and what would be needed for the next social. Throughout the year, look for sales on the needed supplies so they could be bought at the best price.”

You have mentioned that the New Horizons Band has played at the Pie and Ice Cream Social for a number of years now. The New Horizons Band played at the 25th social and is still performing today. Tell us about their contribution.

Jan: “The New Horizons band did a wonderful thing for us. We used to have to rent chairs for the bands to use and pay the rental fee. Now, the New Horizon band members each bring their own chair to the park so we save that cost. And they never get a fee for playing. Their only ‘compensation’ is that we try to make sure that each of the band members gets a nice piece of pie free of charge. We try to make sure that they have a nice selection of pies to choose from.”

Joanne Kelly added this. “Harry Fisker used to get the chairs from A-Z rental. Saving the cost of chair rental was a big thing for us. That rental cost, though small by today’s standards, reduced our profits from the event. Profits weren’t that much back then either. Peter Ziegler, who was the head of the New Horizons Band was a very nice man and easy to deal with when making arrangements for the band to play.”

The Pie and Ice Cream Social was held at Fireman’s Park from 1973 through 2000. Then the event was moved to Lakeview Park where it is held today. What were the differences between these two places?

Edith: There was no kitchen at Fireman’s Park like there is at Lakeview Park. So we had to get a lot of coolers and ice. But, there was a lot of room to move around there.

Jan: At Fireman’s there was a lot more room. Many folks could do kitchen chores. But at Lakeview the kitchen space is limited so only three of us can really function in that space. Also, at

Lakeview it is difficult to get a good look at all the folks who are coming and going. But it is really nice to have a kitchen with stove, sink, and freezer.”

Joanne: “At Fireman’s, we only had two electrical outlets that made it difficult to keep up with how much coffee we needed to make. Also, it did not have all the kitchen appliances that we had at Lakeview. It was great to change locations.”

In all the years you have been working at the Pie and Ice Cream Social, what stands out in your mind?

Edith: “That first year really stands out for me. There was so much to do.”

Jan: “I think what strikes me most about the social is the dedication of the members making the pies we sell. Signe Cooper made fabulous strawberry pies. They were a great favorite with people who came to the social year after year. Dolly Shveler is a long time baker of pies for the social. Even though she is now in her 90s she always brings two pumpkin pies that she has made herself. “There is also the sense of community feeling that goes along with the social. It’s just what you do if it’s the 3rd Wednesday in June.”

Peggy: “While we were at Fireman’s Park, we continued to see the same group of folks coming all the time. When we moved over to Lakeview we began to see a lot more diversity in our visitors. It was nice to see that.” Another great thing about the social is that “it is an affordable event. The whole family can attend without it costing a lot.”

Finally, are there any particularly bad memories you have of this event?

Edith: “Not really. In that first year there had been a little rain and threatening weather, but that held off for the social. In other years we had decent weather for the event.”

Peggy: “I believe a couple of times we almost ran out of pies but we made it. Other than that I don’t recall anything really bad.”

Joanne: “One year a TV station was going to come out to cover the event but it didn’t.”

Jan: “I think the saddest part about coming to the social year after year is knowing that some long time attendees have passed away.”

If you’d like to see, and, better yet, sample some examples of our pie cutters’ work, please stop by at our annual Pie and Ice Cream Social in Lakeview Park on June 20, 2018.



Our Place or Yours?

Most people learn about the Middleton Area Historical Society (MAHS) when they visit the Rowley House Museum on Hubbard Avenue. We have hundreds of visitors to the museum each year. Some people stop in by themselves. Others come in small groups. Lately, we are seeing an increase in the number of grandparents who visit the museum with their grandchildren. One of our largest groups of visitors (over 300 each year) is elementary school children from our area. We also get visits from adult groups. Recently we had a lifelong learning group from Milwaukee and earlier this year we hosted the spouses of fire fighters who were attending a convention in town. We are happy to have all of these visitors to the museum and appreciate the opportunity to guide them through the museum to explain the history of the museum, Middleton, and our various collections.

This year we are attempting to expand our outreach to the community by offering to visit your organization where you work or gather. Members of the MAHS board who know quite a bit about the history of Middleton have prepared some presentations that can be offered to you at your place. Right now we have four presentations that are ready to go, with additional items in preparation.

Rowley Chronicles ... House ... Doctors ... Families is a presentation that discusses the building of the Rowley House, the three generations of doctors and their families who lived in the house, the services they provided to the community and much more.

The Great Fire in Middleton, June 19, 1900 is a presentation that focuses on the fire in Middleton that destroyed much of the downtown business district. Where the fire started, what buildings were destroyed, and which buildings survived the fire and are still standing today are all discussed in this presentation.

Middleton ... Beginnings and Early Years is a presentation that focuses on the early history of Middleton before it became a city in its own right. The early communities that ultimately became part of what is now Middleton are each discussed.

Tales of Pheasant Branch Settlement is a presentation that discusses Pheasant Branch from its beginnings as an early settlement in Middleton Township, to its almost becoming the state capitol (losing by only two votes), to its ultimate annexation into Middleton. Many original historic buildings are still standing in Pheasant Branch including the Stamm House and the VFW post on Century Avenue which at one time was a school.

These presentations run between 20 and 25 minutes. They include very nice photos that bring alive the topics discussed, and are accompanied by a sprightly delivery that draws the audience in.

The MAHS already has scheduled two presentations to local community organizations and would like to offer them to your organization as well. Offering these presentations is part of our mission to preserve and publicize the history of the Middleton area. Also, because these presentations can be provided at any time throughout the year it is a way for us to provide information on the history of Middleton at times when the museum is not open. For further information, and to sign your group up for a great presentation of Middleton history, please send a request to our email address:

middletonhistory@gmail.com or leave a message at 608-836-7614. We look forward to hearing from you.

Our 45th Annual Pie and Ice Cream Social

Presented by the

Middleton Area Historical Society

Wednesday, June 20, 2018, 5-8 PM



Lakeview Park, (Allen Blvd. at Mendota Ave.)

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7410 Hubbard Avenue
Middleton, Wisconsin 53562-3118

For those who itemize their taxes:
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