

Highwood Historical Society

MAKING HISTORY EVERYDAY

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Remembering Pearl Harbor, cont.	2
Roosevelt's Address to the Nation	2
Welcome Home Veterans, 1946	3
Jim Baldwin, <i>58 years on North & Grove</i>	4-5
2016 Terrific Tomato Results	5

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Letter from the President

HHS is on the move — We will soon have an office!

Watch for an exciting announcement. As soon as the lease is officially signed we will finally have a beautiful space to store and display our items of historical interest.

In August the HHS Board voted to not submit a proposal for the Highwood Fire Station. It was agreed that costs to renovate this building were too prohibitive for our organization to consider on our own. However, we did receive many Highwood Fire Department items from the city that we will soon be able to put on display.

Thank you to all who renewed their membership and attended or participated in our last two exciting events: The Terrific Tomato Contest and the North Shore Line & Highwood presentation. Attendance was wonderful for both of those programs. Over 130 were at Oak Terrace School to hear the great presentation from representatives from The Illinois Railway Museum. Many former Chicago North Shore Railroad employees as well as local area residents joined us and had the opportunity to view the great exhibits that were on display.

Next on the agenda: Wednesday, December 7th Holiday Dinner at Froggy's Restaurant in Highwood. Sign up soon, as space is limited. A fun time featuring beautiful music is planned for all who attend. We are continuing our fundraiser raffle with the winners of a \$500, \$100, or \$50 Visa card to be announced at the dinner. You do not need to be present to win. All proceeds from the raffle support HHS which is especially important now that we finally have a space to organize and exhibit our materials. Thank you for your generosity and help.

Continue to communicate with us. We value your interest in preserving Highwood's history and welcome your comments. Have a great day!

Teta Minuzzo. President

Remembering Pearl Harbor

December 7, 2016 marks the 75th Anniversary of the attack on our naval fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Below are a few recollections from our files of that horrific day.

I was living in Highwood when I heard on the radio about Pearl Harbor. Ft. Sheridan really started to hop. I volunteered at the U.S.O. at the same time my future husband was living in West Virginia working in the coal mines. He was just leaving the movies when he heard about Pearl Harbor. He was drafted and stationed at Ft. Sheridan. We met at the U.S.O. Club. We dated for almost a year and then married. He was then

Cont. pg 2

Remembering Pearl Harbor, cont.

shipped off to Germany three weeks later. He was overseas one and a half years. He came home on a month leave and was going to be shipped off to the Pacific. We were visiting my husband's parents in Detroit when the news came over the radio that the war was over.

- Elda & Cardine Arcangelo



President Franklin Delano Roosevelt— Address to the Nation

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:

Yesterday, December 7th, 1941 – a date which will live in infamy -- the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its government and its emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.

Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in the American island of Oahu, the Japanese ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to our Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. And while this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or of armed attack.

It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time, the Japanese government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

Yesterday, the Japanese government also launched an attack against Malaya.

Last night, Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

Last night, Japanese forces attacked Guam.

Last night, Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

Last night, the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

And this morning, the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation.

As Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense. But always will our whole nation remember the character of the onslaught against us. No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.

Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger. With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7th, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese empire.

My parents gave a party for me on December 7th, 1941. We were all having cake and ice cream. Everyone was in a happy mood and had just sang "Happy Birthday" to me. I remember so well—it seems like just yesterday. The radio was on and the announcer said "PEARL HARBOR HAS JUST BEEN ATTACKED." All the happy people at my party grew very silent, even the children knew something was wrong. Most of us were ten or eleven years old and we understood that something awful had happened. From that moment my party became very gloomy. Even though I realized something very serious had occurred I was angry, because whatever it was had ruined my birthday party.

- Leonora Parenti Cervac

Being very young, all I remember is listening to the radio and President Roosevelt interrupted the program with the news that we were at war. The Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor. My oldest brother, 20 years old, Dick Wixom, enlisted. He was married at the time. He was sent over to Germany and served under Gen. George Patton. My brother was injured in the Battle of the Bulge and was sent back to the States. He was discharged at Ft. Sheridan. I remember the food stamps and savings bonds you could buy. Then they announced over the radio that we won the war. What a celebration all over the United States. The famous kissing couple (sailor & nurse on the street of New York City) was splashed on the front page of the papers. We were all so thankful and grateful that the boys who served were home.

- Lois Wixom

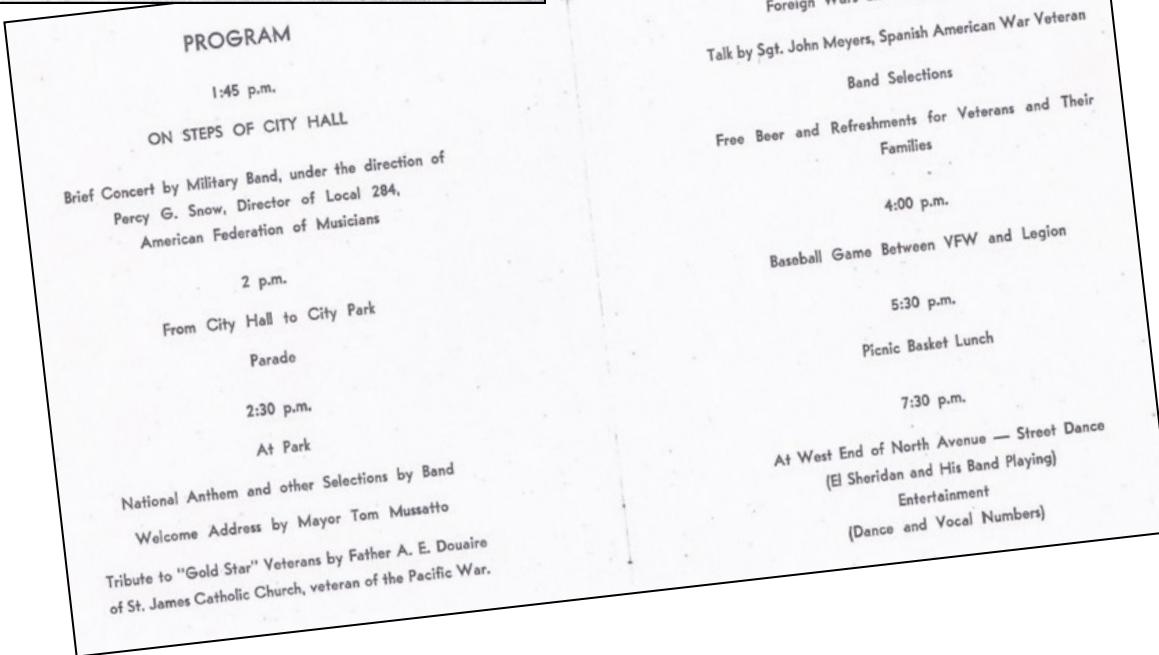
On December 7th I was cleaning house. I had the radio on and was so surprised when the program was interrupted and they announced that Pearl Harbor was attacked by bombs. Afterward, I remember buying U.S. bonds and stamps and having our food rationed. Even tires for our cars had to be rethreaded. In 1943, my husband went into the Army with the Engineers. He went to India, Burma, and China. He really had it rough in the jungles of Burma. He was supplying Petro Gas to the Flying Tigers. Sometimes he thought he wouldn't survive the trip on the Burma Road.

- Brunie Nardini Fini

I heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor at my father's drug store in Deerfield. I remember telephoning my mother to listen to the radio and her crying. I remember rationing and how there were shortages of everything. With our plenty today, it is impossible for people to realize the shortages of the war years. I did not help at the U.S.O because they would not let me in—my unit was Douglas Aircraft, making airplanes in Park Ridge. The war's conclusion was heard over the radio and the plant closed down with news that Japan surrendered. The war years bring back memories of my friends that went to war and those that did not return.

- Dr. Mark M. Hout

3,000 Highwood Citizens March In Parade Honoring Veterans



Welcome Home WWII Veterans!

The HHS recently received a donation of a souvenir program from the 1946 Highwood Veterans' Day Celebration honoring the 500 ex-servicemen of Highwood. A sincere thank you to Bob Sanders for reminding us that this past August 18th was the 70th anniversary of this city-wide tribute. City Hall was draped in red, white, and blue bunting, and city workers spent days hammering away in Memorial Park (Western Ave) setting up booths, erecting platforms, and stringing up lights. The event was financed by a \$3000.00 fund contributed by Highwood businessmen and was under the chairmanship of Carl Pasquesi and Mrs. Sam Somenzi.

The community party started with a band concert at the old City Hall on Waukegan Avenue. From there, a parade of three thousand citizens marched to Memorial Park. Leading the parade was Sgt. John Meyers, a Spanish-American War veteran, who rode in a jeep followed by every civic organization of Highwood: the Italian Women's Prosperity Club, the Modenese Society, the Marconi Society, the Cuore Arte Club, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Auxiliary, the American Legion and Auxiliary, the Mothers' Service Club, the A.F. of L. Construction Laborers' Union Local 152, the Highwood Boosters, the Boys' Club, the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts and hundreds of others.

At 4:00 the "big game" started between VFW Post No. 4741 and American Legion Post No. 501 softball teams. According to the HP Press, both posts were "busy pouring over their lists to send crack nines to the mound in competition for the grand prize of \$75."

The play by play:

The VFW team, which had been playing as a unit all season, was surprised no little bit at the talent assembled by Pat Pasquesi, Legion Athletic Officer.

The Legion grabbed a 12-4 lead going into the fifth. With two out, the VFW caught Bobby Turelli's nothing ball for four homers and the score was tied at 12 all. Then the score see-sawed, and the game went into extra innings. The VFW went into an 18-17 lead. In their half of the tenth, the Legion tallied two runs on a double by Turk Turchi after two men had collected singles. The winning pitcher was Turelli, while Ray Crovetti was the loser.

Bruno Giangiorgi provided a homer with bases loaded for the Legion while Dick Baldrin's homer for the VFW bounced off the 270 foot fence in left field. With one of the longest softball blows ever seen in Highwood. Marino Maestri umpired the classic.

Both teams donated their prize money to the City for a park lighting fund. Following the game, participants enjoyed a picnic lunch and a street dance at the west end of North Avenue. Music was provided by El Sheridan and his band. What a tribute to the veterans of Highwood!

After contacting Bobby Pasquesi for his eyewitness account, he advised that George Johnson, Sonny Lawler, Ivo Mini, Elmer Bertucci, Butch Bellei, Louie Crovetti, and Frankie Mahen would have been in the bleachers cheering. On a side note, Bobby mentioned that his brother Caesar "Pat" Pasquesi played an exhibition game against Joe DiMaggio's traveling team on the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands during the War. Seems like the Legion may have had an ace in the hole.

Jim Baldwin: 58 Years at North & Grove

I was born April 1924 in Los Angeles and when I was about 3 years old my parents moved back to Lake Forest where my dad was born and my sister Peggy was born.

During WW2 I was in the Pacific. The 21st of this month (July) in 1944 is the anniversary of our landing in Guam. I was in the Pacific for 16 months. I was 20 years old. We had to serve because I was already 18 years old. I graduated the 2nd of June from Lake Forest High School and had to report to the draft board on the 3rd of June. My parents weren't happy about this. I was in training for one year in Florida at what is now the Patrick Air Base. From there we boarded a troop ship to the Marshall Islands. We were supposed to hit Guam on June 18, three days after the Second Marine Division hit Saipan, but the fighting was so bad on Saipan that they held us up in case we had to go into Saipan. We didn't get to Guam until July 21. I was one of 14 guys that landed with our company for the Battle of Guam that wasn't killed or wounded. I kept in touch with a few of the guys. One was from Waukegan. I never wanted to go on a Freedom Flight. I had enough of war. I went for years never talking about it until I was much older. It took 19 days of fighting to take Guam. Someone once asked me if I had ever shot anyone and I said that I was shooting but I was more worried about someone shooting me. We stayed on Guam until the end of the war.

I met my wife Rena at a carnival in Highwood. It was held in an empty lot next door to the bowling alley, sometime around September of 1947. Rena was just out of high school. I used to joke with her saying that while she was still running around in grade school having fun I was running around shooting at the enemy. A friend of mine, Floyd Swarthout, was going around with a girl from Highwood and that's how I ended up at the carnival. When I met Rena I'd been out of service since the end of the war and I was working as a plasterer.

Rena's maiden name was Mattei. She came from a small family. Her parents were divorced. There was just her mother and her brother, Leo. She had a sister named Alice who died in 1933 at age 13 from an ear infection that went up to her brain. It was very sad. Her mother's brother, Gino, came to this country and lived here for 20 years, then returned to Italy after he retired.

After moving back from California my family stayed in Lake



Forest and later moved to Lake Bluff. The Baldwin family was huge. Family dinners were usually at our house or at my mother-in-law's. We'd go to Lake Forest and visit with my side of the family.

Rena was born in a garage apartment owned by the Benassi/Natalie family. My daughter Barb used to play in that apartment when she was a child with her friend Shirley. We were married at St. James Church by Father Douaire. Our reception was at the Highwood Community Center.

Because Rena's family was small, she asked me to invite my Baldwin cousins to the wedding. I said no, no. You don't know how many there are! We had a small luncheon with just the uncles and then the rest of my family came to the reception. Right after the wedding Rena and I took a train to New Orleans for our honeymoon. We went back for one of our anniversaries, going by train.

Afterwards we lived with Rena's mother for a few months until we could find an apartment. Then we moved over to Palmer Avenue across the street from Mary's store. From there we moved to Llewellyn Avenue, then we settled in the house we are still in on North avenue. The people in Highwood were always friendly to me, of course part of it was because of Rena. She and her family were long-time Highwood residents.

Rena was pregnant with our first child when I was called up during the Korean War. I wrote a letter letting them know that my wife was pregnant so they gave me a deferment until the baby was born and I then left in October, 1950 for North Carolina. I was in the 2nd Division of the 6th Marines. I served during the last few months of 1950 and got out in 1951. I was away from home the entire time and stationed in North Carolina. When I came back from North Carolina, I asked Rena where she wanted to live. I was a plasterer so we could live anywhere. She said she wanted to stay in Highwood. So we bought a house on the corner of North Avenue and Grove and we've lived there for 58 years.

Our closest friends were Floyd Swarthout and his wife, Vi. He's the one I went to the carnival with when I met Rena. Rena and I didn't hang out around town too much. Mostly we stayed at home or with her mother, we were home bodies. Rena was working at the Savings and Loan in Highland Park so she walked to work every day. I was working for the Cortesi family. William and Otto were plasterers and Hugo was a laborer. John Cortesi worked at the Blue Goose in Highland Park. I had

to be an apprentice for 4 years and I worked for Ben Ginty who lived in Knollwood during my apprenticeship and then I quit that job and went to work for the Cortesi family.

While I was in service during the Korean War, Rena learned to drive a car. She needed to get around town and she had a small child. Her brother Leo taught her to drive. He told quite a few jokes about that! After being discharged I went back to being a plasterer. I always worked for someone else but I did a lot of side jobs, on Saturday and Sundays, or days when construction work was slow. It was hard work to be a plasterer. During the slow times I also filled in at the post office, Central Tire in Highland Park (owned by the Peters family), and all kinds of odd jobs for quite some time. I did painting, working for one of the Favelli's. There were a lot of brick layers in Highwood, plasterers, laborers. I remember "Steamboat," aka Virgilio Pedrucci. He was a Highwood resident. I think he got his nickname because you could pretty much hear him even if you were a few blocks away. I met Steamboat when I was working on a job in Chicago. I thought he was the boss because I could hear him from one side of the building to the other.



The Baldwin Family: Mary, Jim, Barb, Ron, Rena and Mike

I knew Ted Benvenuti, Highwood's Chief of Police, quite well. He used to be at my house once a week because of my son, Mike, who would get into all kinds of minor kid trouble. I thought Ted was a good guy. Of course, since I saw him so often we became quite friendly. When Mike was a little guy he had a real sweet tooth and he loved a certain torta that Rena made. It was one of his favorite's. But he rarely got to eat it. This was a dessert that my wife always made for the family of someone who died. He could never understand why he couldn't eat that cake! After awhile he would see the cake and say, ok, who died now, Mom?

We lived on Llewellyn in Highwood for a while before buying the house on North Avenue. It was a little house next door to the current parking lot for St. James Church. Ted Benvenuti, lived on Funston near St. James School. The Cadamagnani's lived next door; the Nerini's lived across the street and next to them, going west, were the Natta and the Cabri families. The Volpendestas lived on our side of Llewellyn. The Goodalls lived next to them. Mrs. Wing lived next to the Goodalls. I remembered the kids would go to the Bernardoni's house that was across the street from Mrs. Wing and watch her walk upstairs carrying a candle because she didn't have electricity in her home. They would watch the candle going from room to room throughout the house wherever she went. This was in the 50's. A few years later Ted Benvenuti bought the house and put in electricity.

There were a lot of kids on our street. The kids all played outside until dark. Now, it's so different. The kids don't play outside. I put up all sorts of backyard games for the kids to play: swings, sandbox and a tether ball. One time Rena counted 27 kids in our little yard on North Avenue. And the funny thing was that the park was right down the street. Rena made everyone feel welcome. Grove Avenue was great for sliding down the hill when it snowed. I was always telling all of the kids to watch out for the cars. Back then there were no stop signs so cars drove pretty fast down the street.

I've kept my sense of humor over the years. My daughters tell me that if I don't behave they are going to place me between my wife and my mother-in-law in the condo at Ascension Cemetery. Don't want to get between those two when they're arguing. I'm doing well. Say hello to all of my friends in Highwood.

- Jim Baldwin

9th ANNUAL TERRIFIC TOMATO CONTEST RESULTS

Most Terrific Tomato 2016: Yones Lawler

Best Cherry Cluster: Betsy & Carolyn Cerf
Best Vine Cluster: Richard Fiore
Best Yellow Color: Lucille Campagni & Cristina
Best Green Color: Kathy Rafferty
Best Green Cluster: Norma Ori
Heaviest: Diane Vanderpal
Largest Overall: Diane Vanderpal
Smallest: Betsy & Carolyn Cerf

People's Choice Winner: Diane Vanderpal

Most Romantic: Yones Lawler
Most Uniform Shape: Nori Polivka
Most Uniform Color: Lucille Campagni & Cristina
Best Heirloom: Richard Fiore
Best Heirloom Cluster: Jane McCraren
Best Grape Tomatoes: Cathy Cora
Best Mixed Marriage Tomato: Betsy & Carolyn Cerf

Congratulations Yones, and to all the contestants, we'll see you next year!

HIGHWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO BOX 132
HIGHWOOD, IL 60040-0132

SUPPORT THE HHS!

Purchase Your Annual
Raffle Tickets Today

\$10.00 ea. or (3) for \$25.00

1st Prize, \$500 Visa Gift Card
2nd Prize, \$100.00, 3rd Prize, \$50.00
Prizes will be awarded at the
HHS Holiday Dinner on Dec. 7th
Winner need not be present.

Last year's Raffle proceeds enabled us
to purchase a much-needed
Portable Sound System!

Invite a friend or relative to
join the Historical Society!
Call 847-682-9039

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE
2016 "Holidays in Highwood" Dinner & Raffle

Wednesday, December 7th, 2016

6:30 pm, Froggy's Restaurant

\$50.00 per person, Cash Bar

Appetizers, Salad, Choice of Entrée, & Dessert

Please Make Checks Payable to: Highwood Historical Society
Mail to: HHS
P.O. Box 132
Highwood, IL 60040

Seating is limited. Please respond by Friday, Dec. 2nd.

Entrée Options:

Name(s) of Attendee(s)	Coq au Vin	Rainbow Trout

Total Attending: _____ Total Payment Enclosed: _____

