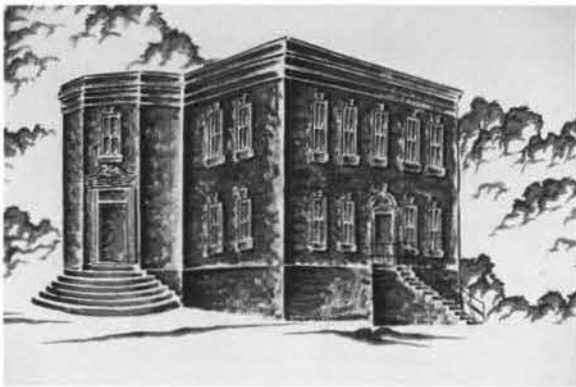
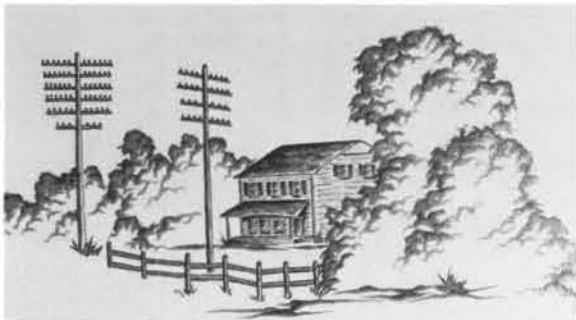
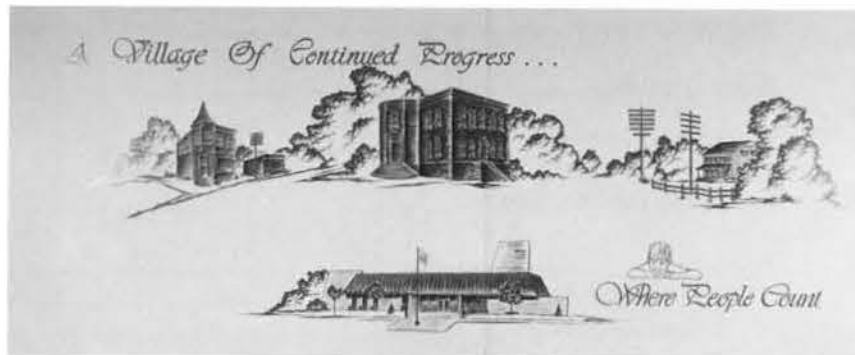


NILES CENTENNIAL HISTORY

1899-1999



Niles Centennial History

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Introduction

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Welcome

...to the history of the Village of Niles.

...to a community celebrating the youth of 100 years.

With so much in our heritage of which we may be justifiably proud, so also should our community take pride in our many historical accomplishments. Our history is the story of dreams, aspirations, and efforts of many people. As a village, we have earned well-deserved national recognition. Niles today reflects the great successes we, as a people working together, have achieved.

We invite you--our residents, industry, businesses, many friends, visitors, anyone acquainted, or who would like to be, with Niles--to share with us the magnitude of our history. As we approach the Millennium, we do so with the eagerness of a young person looking forward to the excitement of what is yet to come in our growth as a community.

Our special thanks to Joseph W. Zurawski, our historian, who has so well-documented our past and has identified with accuracy those historical trends which have produced the society in which we live today.

Our grateful appreciation also to Marilyn Brown, Marge Berles, Dorothy Kretschmer, and the entire volunteer staff at the Niles Historical Museum. They have worked so diligently over the years accumulating the historical records and artifacts of Niles, which made this writing of our history possible.

And to Dorothy Tyse, a most-deserved acknowledgment for her pioneering effort 25 years ago in writing Niles' Diamond Jubilee history.

Nicholas B. Blase
Mayor of Niles

Preface

"The cemetery," "Joker Joe's," wide-open Milwaukee Avenue, or "still farmin' there" were probably the first thoughts anyone had about Niles, Illinois, 50 years ago. For its size, Niles certainly was the most quiet, not quiet, place around.

Today, mention Golf-Mill Mall, All-America City, Leaning Tower of Pisa, the White Eagle, and anyone past their teen years will probably immediately think of Niles, Illinois.

This village, with its "shadowy past," with its current dynamic vitality, presents an interesting challenge to anyone attempting to write its history.

In the following pages the effort has been made to account for and explain the major trends, groups, and personalities that have made Niles what it is today. In the early years Niles did all it could to gain, keep, and preserve its reputation as a saloon town. In its own way, that tale, and how it influenced the village and the surrounding areas, is a fascinating story.

An even more fascinating story is the account of that same village which, by ordinance, would later forbid use of the word "saloon." Hundreds of groups and thousands of citizens would do what they could to make Niles a better place to live for themselves, their children, and their neighbors. Niles citizens lived and worked as if everyone was watching. In fact, Niles often invited others to look at and observe its village and its people. Many were impressed, and rightly so, by what they saw.

A consistent effort has been made to make this account as comprehensive and accurate as possible. Written records were consulted as the basis for the history that is presented. When such records were unavailable, the verbal statements of two independent sources, in most instances, were the measure used to determine the accuracy of a statement. The bibliographical essay following the text explains and acknowledges how and which sources were utilized that are not identified in specific chapters.

Joseph W. Zurawski

Introduction

On behalf of the Niles Historical Museum and the Niles Historical Society, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the foresight and continued support of our museum by the Village of Niles. The building, housing our collections and artifacts, is possible thanks to a long-term lease arranged by the Village of Niles. Over the years, the village has provided frequent and substantial maintenance grants, which have ensured our survival. We, our many visitors and others, who avail themselves of our collections, remain grateful.

The centennial of the Village of Niles is a milestone that will bring recognition to the people and institutions that have influenced the development of this community during the past century. Our "history" did not begin in 1899. In fact, recent discoveries thousands of feet below the location of today's Niles confirm the importance of knowing as much history as possible. Plans had to be altered in the design and construction of the Deep Tunnel project in our area due to the fact that a meteor probably impacted the entire area of Niles some 500 million years ago. Today, geologists and engineers are continuing to gather data to determine their plans for further construction.

Survivors of Indian tribes, who lived near the Niles area 200 years ago, have made recent claims to territorial rights, based on treaties made more than 100 years ago, which would prove continued "ownership" and allow them to build gambling casinos in the next few years.

Whether 500 million years ago or 200 years ago, the "history" of today's Niles is still alive.

Our focus during the centennial, of course, should and will be on the activities in this small, and now thriving, village during the past 100 years. Niles wanted to be recognized as a village and made the fact known by its incorporation in 1899. Since that time, the village mandated itself to keeping an organized government. The resulting institutions, which that government provided, determined the nature of the Niles community as it entered the 20th century.

In the collections of the Niles Historical Museum we have preserved written accounts, which explain how and why people lived in this area. We have displayed artifacts, works of art, and implements of daily work used in this area, which reflect the thoughts and beliefs of the people, as well as everyday struggles of survival. We have been able to share in the continuing discoveries of so many of our visitors as they learn who we are and what made us the way we are. Only "unchanging" history can provide answers that continue to lead to further insights about our development.

The Niles centennial history presented with this publication is the result of one person probing into the records and other accounts written about Niles from numerous perspectives. Books, pamphlets, government documents, minutes of organizations, newspapers, letters, programs, and personal memorabilia were consulted. A sense of pride and satisfaction filled our staff at the Niles Historical Museum as we saw such good use of our collections.

As this centennial history of the Village of Niles is read and studied, our purpose for establishing the Niles Historical Museum, we trust, will be better understood and appreciated by all Niles residents and all who are interested in an accurate knowledge of the past. More questions may now be asked. May such appetites for historical knowledge, accompanied by deeper motivations to find answers, continue to guide us in the important work we are doing in preserving and adding to the collections of the Niles Historical Museum.

Join us in our efforts in whatever way you can. Become a member. Attend one of our programs. Send us whatever you may have saved for more than 20 years. It's probably historically important. And always keep in mind, what you do today, next week, next year will be of interest to the historian writing the Niles bicentennial history a hundred years from now.

*Marilyn Brown, Chairperson
Niles Historical Commission*

INDIAN HERITAGE

Two million years ago no one lived in the area of today's Niles, Illinois. Geologists believe that modern-day Niles was covered by ice and snow at that time. This ice was about 2 miles thick.

Several major glaciers probably crossed present-day Illinois. These glaciers have been identified as Nebraskan, Kansan, Illinoian, and Wisconsinan. Ronald C. Flemal, geologist at Northern Illinois University, believes there may have been earlier glacial movements.

The Nebraskan glacier was here 2 million years ago and the Wisconsinan melted about 10,000 B.C. This left today's Niles, Illinois, with the contours it has had for some 12,000 years.

Glaciers did not move in a constant pattern. The extreme northwest corner of Illinois was not affected by any of the four major glaciers since 2 million B.C. As each of these glaciers melted, the water "flowed back" toward the east and then back north again. Geologists suggest this is why the "chain-of-lakes" has a north-south pattern rather than an east-west configuration.

Seven drainage areas have been identified in Illinois. Today's Niles borders the area of the Chicago plain, part of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin. Before the reversal of the Chicago River in the 1890s all of the plain's drainage was into Lake Michigan.

West of this area is the Mississippi valley drainage. It consists of the Des Plaines, Fox, Rock, and other rivers in northern Illinois flowing to the southwest. All three of these rivers, as Lake Michigan, have a north-south configuration supporting the belief that glaciers first moved east as they melted and left this area.

Since many of the areas remained swampy in northeastern Illinois for thousands of years, agriculture could not be easily pursued. After the last glacier to northern Illinois, the Wisconsinan, receded in 10,000 B.C., there is evidence that Indians began coming to the area. Archeologists dug up some artifacts, dated them as originating around 10,000 B.C., and labeled this the Paleo-Indian period.

These Indians, new to northern Illinois, probably came over on a land bridge from eastern Siberia. Later evidence was developed to indicate relationships in dialects spoken by Indian bands in Asia and also spoken in the central plains of North America.

Northern Illinois was visited by early bands of hunters. Campsites indicate they were occupied for a day or two. There is no evidence of any campsite in present-day Niles around 10,000 B.C.

The Paleo-Indians roamed northern Illinois until about 6,000 B.C. They traveled in small bands hunting big game. Dr. James Springer, a Northern Illinois University archaeologist, says that "remains from Paleo-Indians and the Archaic cultures can be found almost anywhere in northern Illinois." What most people find are spearpoints used in hunting.

The Archaic Indians were in northern Illinois between 8,000 and 1,000 B.C. Besides hunting, they learned how to fish. They also gathered food for subsistence. Remaining longer in the area than the Paleo-Indians, the Archaic Indians left behind mortars and pestles, weaving utensils,

awls, axes, and drills. Archaic Indians increased in population faster than the Paleo-Indians.

Woodland Indians came to the area around 1,000 B.C. Hopewell culture is associated with the Woodland Indians who settled near the great rivers. They had pottery, which reflected their clothing, as well as social and religious ritual. Remains of Woodland villages, campsites, and burial sites have been discovered in many areas of northern Illinois. However, none have been found near the area where Niles is located today.

After the Woodland Indian culture disappeared around 1200 A.D., the Mississippians, who were in northern Illinois since 800 A.D., became dominant. They left campsites and the massive Cahokia mounds near St. Louis. Most of the information we have today about their activities is a result of studies of the Cahokia mounds.

Exhaustive information about Indians who lived in northern Illinois since the 1600s until they ceded their land in the 1800s is found in the publications of the Indian Claims Commission.

The Indian Claims Commission was established July 13, 1946. It was to be a special tribunal that would "hear and determine" claims by Indians in an effort to settle once and for all the claims of Indians against the United States.

The commission was authorized to consider claims by any "tribe, band or identifiable groups of American Indians" that the United States harmed. Harm may have come to the Indians since the United States, in its previous dealings, was not carrying out treaty obligations, imposed treaties against the will of the Indians, had failed to pay Indians adequately, had failed to account for spending tribal funds, or had not been fair and honorable in dealing with the Indians.

The commission could render only financial claims in favor of the Indians. Land could not be awarded to Indians.

Volumes of testimony, often conflicting, contradictory and adversarial, accumulated with the commission. The testimony often included and was based on comprehensive historical accounts. Many authorities believe the publications of the commission present the single best source of information about Indians in specific areas of today's United States.

A determined effort must be made to consider the Indian point of view. "Ownership," in the sense of a legal right, was unknown to the Indians. A "legal" title to land was to be established by the "law" thousands of years after Indians roamed, hunted, or settled on the land. For one Indian tribe to hunt in a particular area during the winter while another tribe planted in or near the same area during the spring caused confusion in determining "ownership" only for the white man centuries later.

Indian title to land--which Indians never acknowledged but now had to be proven to the Indian Claims Commission--established the basis of treaties on which the United States dealt with Indians. Indians now had the opportunity to demonstrate right of possession based on an "aboriginal" title, which is "definable territory occupied exclusively" by a particular band or tribe. This concept was clear to whites but never the practice or belief of Indians.

Indian tribes lived with the belief that the tribe collectively controlled land use. No one had exclusive authority or claim on specific parcels of land. All land provided for the general economy of the entire tribe. Land ownership, something to be bought or sold, was never a consideration in the Indian mind.

John Francis Bannon writes in *The American West*: "All the lands which were cultivated as

well as those on which the tribe hunted were considered the property not of individuals but of the tribe.... The land had come down by descent from their ancestors, whose bones were preserved in its bosom, and they felt themselves obligated to hand it on to their children and their children's children for countless generations to come. To alienate the tribal title was an inconceivable idea. This absence of a well-developed concept of private ownership was long a stumbling block for a mutual understanding between Indians and whites. To allow whites to use the land was one thing: to cede to them the permanent possession of the land was quite different and to the Indians an act outside their experience."

An Indian chief, Luther Standing, expressed the Indian viewpoint on land "ownership" as not understandable to whites.

"The white man does not understand the Indian.... (The white man) is still troubled with primitive fears; he still has in his consciousness the perils of this frontier continent, some of its vastness not yet having yielded to his questing footsteps and inquiring eyes....

"In the Indian, the spirit of the land is still vested. (Indians) did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, and winding streams with tangled growth as 'wild.' Only to the white man was nature a 'wilderness.' To us it was all tame. Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery.... When the very animals of the forest began fleeing from his approach, then it was that the 'Wild, Wild West' began."

The Indians who were to be found in northern Illinois present a particularly vexing problem when attempting to establish "ownership" as is revealed in the publications of the Indian Claims Commission.

Injustices had occurred. On that whites and Indians agreed and the Indian Claims Commission was created by law to take care of the injustices.

Tracing accurately the history of the occupation of the territory that is Niles, Illinois, today presents both a challenge and an invitation. As the editor of the volume on the claims of Indians in northeastern Illinois points out, "In terms of the numbers of tribes involved in overlapping claims, the area of the upper Great Lakes and Ohio Valley is the most complicated of all Indians Claims actions."



Pottawattamie Indians - 1909

The Illinois Indians were in northern Illinois the longest and probably would have had the strongest claim. But the Illinois are no longer. The Miami, who were from the Ohio Valley area, came regularly to hunt, but were not settlers. The Potawatomi, who came from the upper Great Lakes area, were the most recent dominant tribe to have lived in northeastern Illinois.

The treaty with the Potawatomi by the United States was the major treaty that "resolved" the final cession of lands in northeast Illinois. In considering claims of others regarding this major cession, the Indian Claims Commission designated the area where Niles is located today as 148a of the Royce maps drawn to reflect areas ceded by the Potawatomi.

The Indian Claims Commission makes note, "we ...concern ourselves only in our final analysis with the question of aboriginal Indian title to that area lying east of the Fox River in Illinois. Since this latter tract has never been ceded to the United States, its cession by the United Nations in 1829 represents an alleged cession of a claim of so-called aboriginal Indian title under the terms of that treaty."

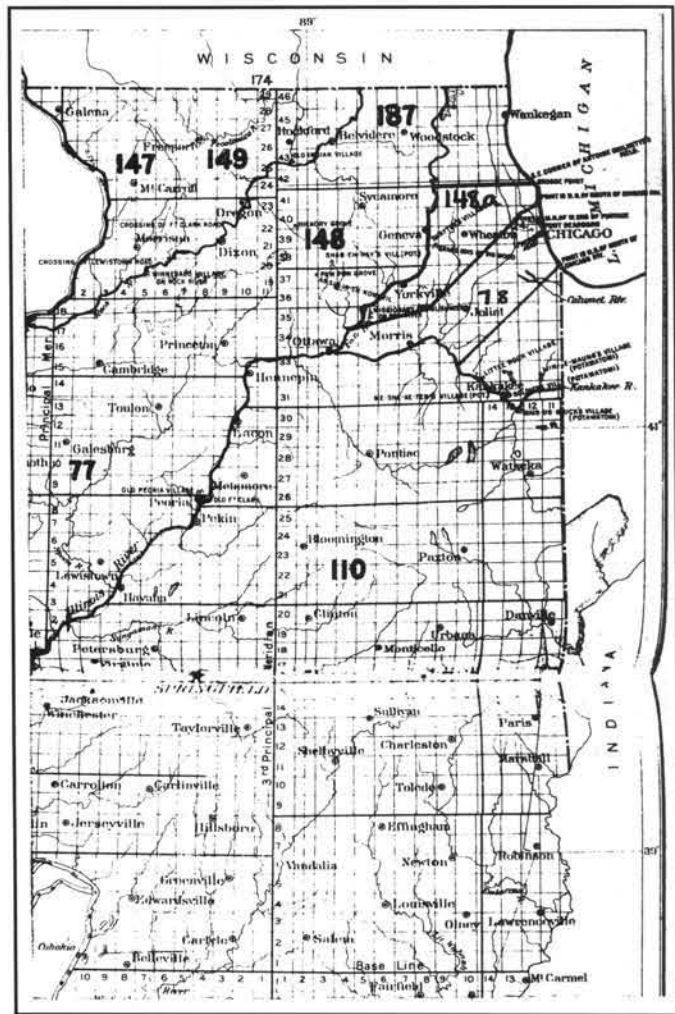
Without venturing into the legal thicket as to which Indians had a right to cede which lands in northeastern Illinois (Royce map, 148a), the commission does give a detailed historical background and analysis as to the Indians who occupied the area in the past.

The location of Niles, in the words of the commission, is in the area of Royce map 148a: "Area 148a includes within its limits the present-day Illinois towns of Evanston, Des Plaines, Wheaton, Aurora, Batavia, Naperville, and Downer's Grove. Chicago, Illinois, is about 10 miles east, and the same distance south of the eastern boundary of Area 148a."

There is general agreement that the Illinois Indians were living in area 148a when white men first arrived in the area. Oral tradition clearly identifies central Algonquin-speaking groups that include the Illinois, Fox, Miami, Potawatomi, and splinter groups of Ottawa and Chippewa as living in area 148a prior to 1829.

In 1673 French explorers Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet in traveling through 148a met "none but Illinois groups." A year later when Marquette wintered between the Chicago and the Des Plaines rivers, possibly near today's Niles, he told the Illinois he did "not wish to see them at war with the Miami."

Rene August Chouteau also explored the area of 148a. He left extensive notes, which mentioned the domain of Illinois Indians in 1675. They occupied all of 148a, which "included all the land watered by the Des Plaines River."



When Father Jean Claude Allouez visited the area of 148a, he wrote that the Illinois were returning to the area in the early 1670s. Apparently they left earlier because the Iroquois Indians from the New York area were attacking.

However, after the Iroquois left the area, the Illinois again became dominant in northeast Illinois. "Fear of the Illinois," writes Rene Robert Cavalier LaSalle, "caused the Miami to flee their old districts (148a) and live beyond the Illinois." They made peace with the Illinois and went north to live in the Green Bay, Wisconsin, area until 1679.

In 1680, the Miami joined the Iroquois to fight against the Illinois, writes M. du Chesneau, French intendant of Canada in 1680.

The decade, 1670-80, is summed up by the Indian Claims Commission, "There seems to have been tacit recognition by French explorers and missionaries that...the area west and south-west of Lake Michigan 'belonged' to the Illinois Indians."

Continual attacks by the Iroquois Indians after 1680 caused other Indians to leave northeastern Illinois (area 148a). Two forts were built by the French near 148a in an effort to build a buffer zone that would keep the Iroquois from further advance south and west of area 148a.

As LaSalle traveled to the territory of 148a in 1681-1682, he speaks of a Mascouten Indian village 20 miles northwest of Chicago in the vicinity of the Des Plaines River. Other accounts place the Mascoutens just east of present-day Niles.

The French also built Fort St. Louis at Starved Rock to protect the Illinois and the Miami Indians in 1683 from the Iroquois. The Miami, fearing the Iroquois were "coming to eat them," left for Green Bay.

Apichagan, the great chief of the Miami, who lived in a village near Green Bay, was contacted by Nicholas Perret, commandant of French territory around Green Bay, in early spring 1685. He told Apichagan that the French Governor of Canada had abandoned the Illinois to the Iroquois. Apichagan was warned that when the Miamis would go hunting, they should do so toward the Mississippi to avoid the Iroquois. The Miami frequently hunted in northeast Illinois.

In late fall 1685 two Frenchmen went to Apichagan advising the Miami chief to settle at the fort recently built at Chicago. The French, always eager to exploit fur trading, continued to take advantage of the Miami. The Miami were warned that they would be abandoned by the French Governor if they did not settle in Chicago. Some Miami did move to the Chicago area in 1685.

The French encouraged the Miami to hunt around Chicago. Once, during a hunt, the Miami were "surprised by an army of Iroquois." Some did not return to the fort. Other Miami hunters, belonging to families who had not gone to Chicago, saw a large encampment of Iroquois and fled to the fort in Chicago to inform the Miami at the fort of the force of Iroquois in the area.

The Miami immediately left Chicago for Green Bay. From Green Bay 100 Miamis, Mascoutens, Potawatomes and Fox left "hatchet in hand, with so much fury, they (slew) 100 of the enemy." After the Miami captured half their own people, they "put to rout the Iroquois." The Miami returned to Green Bay where they "very badly treated Father Allouez," who originally encouraged them to go to Chicago.

While the Miami were occupied between Green Bay and the fort in Chicago, the Iroquois attacked Fort St. Louis in 1684. In 1685 the French also learned the Miami defeated the Illinois and "it was necessary to expend some \$1,000 in presents to reconcile these two groups."

The French, upset at further Iroquois activities, convinced the Miami to join a French expedition against the Iroquois. From 1687 to 1701 the Iroquois were not able to continue their assaults in Illinois.

Jean Baptist Louis Franquelin was the official cartographer of New France. His map of 1688 shows settlements at Kilatika and Maramec, both Miami settlements, in northeastern Illinois. Historical literature of the period does not confirm the existence of these villages.

The Fox probably entered the area of present-day northeast Illinois at one time or another during the Fox War of 1712-1733. Specific references to geographic sites are not available. In 1720, the Fox carried off two Potawatomi who were hunting near Chicago. The Mascoutens and Kickapoo freed one when the Fox passed through Mascouten country.

Another account states a group of Potawatomi "conquered" Illinois River country and settled near Chicago. They probably did a lot of hunting and trapping in northeast Illinois.

In 1750 the Illinois were at war with the Potawatomi. MacTeague de Macarty, commandant of the Illinois country, wrote in 1752: "My heart weeps when I think of you. O what do you think oh Illinois, when you ally yourself with the Miami. You are small and your tribe few in number. Up to now the Frenchman has sustained you. The Foxes, Sauk, Potawatomi and many others ask to eat you up."

"Title" to Illinois country passed from France to Great Britain by the Treaty of Paris 1763. However, Britain did not take over the land until 1765 due to the uprising of Pontiac, who brought together almost all Indian tribes to destroy British garrisons on the frontier. Then, British settlements were to be wiped out. Although achieving some success, the uprising was put down and by 1765 British agents and traders were establishing friendly relations with the Indians in Illinois.

The Potawatomi continued to press into Illinois. After the Illinois Indians were defeated at Starved Rock in 1769, the Potawatomi were in control of northern Illinois.

However, in 1779, George Rogers Clark sent messages to Nanaloibi and Mach Kigio, Potawatomi chiefs in Chicago, trying to convince them the newly formed United States had more to offer the Indians than the British. Clark had "conquered" Illinois in 1778, establishing it as a colony of Virginia. As Illinois Governor John Reynolds was to write later, "Clark...almost without troops and without any support from the government conquered and retained Illinois country against the combined forces of the British and their Indian allies."

What Clark conquered were the British garrisons in Illinois and the order signed by Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia, gave Clark authority to command forces to take control of the British garrisons.

Virginia claimed Illinois as a colony as the basis of a charter granting it all land west of the territory originally settled by the English. Original charters had changed often and other states began making claims on the now non-British-controlled Illinois territory. Massachusetts claimed central Illinois; New York and Connecticut, along with Virginia, both claimed the territory of today's present location of Niles. Maps exist in the Newberry Library in Chicago that were no doubt used to support the "right" of these states to claim Illinois territory.

On September 3, 1783, the United States and British governments signed the Treaty of Paris. Illinois was now part of the United States. Britain, although recognizing U.S. control of Illinois, maintained its forts in Illinois.

Thomas Jefferson submitted the first colonial policy for the then so-called Northwest Territories. The Confederation Congress accepted it with revisions on March 22, 1784. The plan called for 14 new states. Today's Illinois would be Assenisipia, Illinoia, and Polypotamia. Had Jefferson's plan been put into effect, today's Niles would be located in Assenisipia.

In 1787 the Northwest Ordinance established procedures by which statehood would be granted in the area. Virginia relinquished its claim on Illinois.

Arthur St. Clair, Governor of the Ohio territory, was assigned to bring order to the Illinois settlements. Illinois and Indiana were divided into three counties in 1790. Present-day Niles would have been located in Knox County.

In 1800 the Indiana territory was created and Vincennes became the capital of an area that included Illinois. William Henry Harrison, Governor of the new territory, had trouble with the Illinois faction. Illinois wanted the slavery prohibition of the Northwest Ordinance repealed. An indenture law permitting de facto slavery was signed in 1803. By 1809, the Illinois territory was established. Ninian Edwards was the territory's first governor.

Actual authority or control of today's northern Illinois--which never was in the Illinois territory--during this period remained with the British and the Indians. The Treaty of Greenville in 1795 did solidify claims of the United States around Chicago, even though Chicago was not considered part of Illinois at that time.

The British maintained their forts, which controlled present-day northern Illinois well into the 19th century. They allied with the Kickapoo, Winnebago, and Potawatomi Indians to maintain their control of today's northern Illinois. The War of 1812 delayed plans the U.S. had for the colonization of Illinois. The massacre at Fort Dearborn in August 1812 kept British in control of northern Illinois.

After the War of 1812 ended, a great migration was launched into Illinois in 1816. By 1817 there was a push for Illinois statehood.

The northern boundary of Illinois, as originally set by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, was approximately 41 degrees, 37 minutes, the southern tip of Lake Michigan. Had this provision been strictly maintained, today's Niles would have become part of Wisconsin.

Nathaniel Pope, the Illinois delegate in Congress in 1818, believed Illinois needed exposure on Lake Michigan to conduct trade with the eastern seaboard. He proposed a northern boundary of 42 degrees, 30 minutes so "the State would thereby be connected with the states of Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York through the Lakes." The enabling act was approved in April 1818 and present-day Illinois was admitted to the Union upon President James Monroe's signature, December 3, 1818.■

DUTCHMAN'S POINT

The territory of northern Illinois, the newly designated state in 1818, was not prepared for statehood, as were the areas in central and southern Illinois. There were few permanent settlements of whites. Indians freely roamed the territory that was not yet the property of the United States. The garrison at Fort Dearborn waned in power as a military outpost. Probably more whites were leaving the area than remaining.

The Treaty of July 29, 1829, signed in Michigan at Prairie Du Chien between the United States and 35 chiefs and warriors of the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi nations, attempted to define the conditions for the cessation of Indian territory in today's northern Illinois to the United States. Sections of land were set aside for Billy Caldwell, an Irish Catholic half-breed educated by the Jesuits, Victoria Pothier, a Potawatomi woman, and Jane Miranda. Today's Caldwell Avenue, the Billy Caldwell Golf Course, and the adjacent Forest Preserve comprised Billy Caldwell's section in 1829. The Miranda and Pothier reservations would become the legal boundaries of Niles in 1899 when the village was incorporated.

Chief Black Hawk of the Potawatomi did not accept the "encouragement" of the United States to move west after 1829. His decision to "reclaim" the tribe's hunting grounds resulted in the Black Hawk War of 1832. Much of that war was fought in central and western Illinois and southern Wisconsin. However, it appears that an Indian advance labeled as a "foray" on a map drawn by a scholar who studied the war was aimed at the Billy Caldwell reserve, perhaps reaching today's northern boundaries of Niles.

News of the 1829 Treaty reached England and probably convinced many Englishmen there would be much land available in the areas ceded by the Indians to the United States. Treaties were also formalizing other Indian cessions in other areas of the nation.

According to A. T. Andreas, 19th century historian of Cook County, the first settler in Niles Township was Joseph Curtis. He built "a rude log house near the river." Andreas indicated the building was in Section 17 of the township, the location of today's Morton Grove. Curtis remained in the area until 1846 and returned to England in 1850.

The first building located in present-day Niles was "an exceedingly rude log shanty on the North Branch of the Chicago River." John Schadiger and Julius Perren built it in 1832 or 1833.

In 1833 William Clark and his wife arrived in Niles Township from Chicago and settled a few miles northwest of present-day Niles near the river. Clark would later buy a farm from Benjamin Lupton, the first blacksmith in the area.

With the arrival of Christian Ebinger, a permanent settlement in the area of present-day Niles was definitely under way. Anne Lunde, currently an editor for the Pioneer Press and archivist for the Norwood Park Historical Society, has extensively researched the arrival of the Ebingers in Illinois. Her numerous articles offer a very complete account of the first settlers in present-day Niles.

Christian and Barbara Ebinger were, indeed, the first pioneer citizens of Dutchman's Point, as the area came to be called by the mid-19th century.

Christian was the youngest of John and Katherine Ebinger's four children. John Ebinger was trained as an expert gardener and florist. For several years he was in charge of the floral gardens of King William of Wurtemberg, Germany.

The family decided to come to the United States in 1831 when John Ebinger was 62. They originally settled in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Christian was 19.

Later that summer the eldest son, Frederick, traveled to Chicago where he reportedly began working on the pier or at the harbor. The two other children, John Jr. and Elizabeth, moved to Chicago in 1832 and settled near Fort Dearborn. They were accompanied by John Plank, also from Germany.

While in Ann Arbor, Christian became acquainted with Barbara Reuhle, who, as Christian, had been born in Stuttgart. Barbara's mother died when Barbara was 8. Barbara came to the United States when she was 18 accompanied by her father, stepmother, and five brothers and sisters. Her father died six weeks after they arrived in Ann Arbor. She continued to live with her stepmother for almost two years.

In 1832, with the Black Hawk War well under way, many settlers streamed back to Fort Dearborn seeking protection. Since there were no hostilities in the area for several years, the garrison at Fort Dearborn had been recalled a few years earlier. Word was sent to Niles, Michigan, location of the nearest garrison, that their help was needed in the event of an attack on Fort Dearborn by Black Hawk. Soldiers and volunteers from Michigan marched to Chicago to join Illinois volunteers.

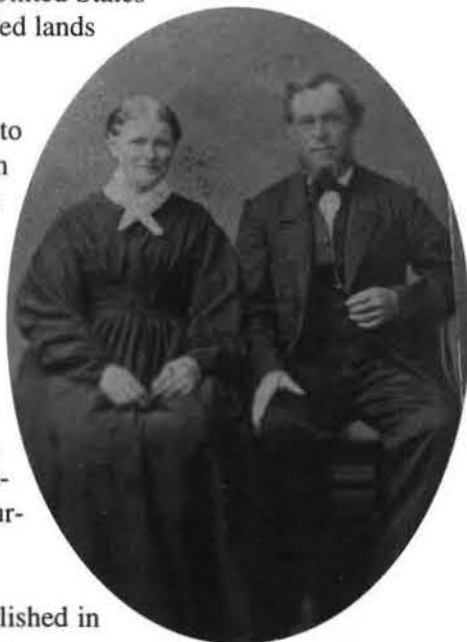
Captain D. Wilcox was the head of the new Fort Dearborn garrison. His wife's sister, Anna Dorothea, married the eldest Ebinger son, Frederick. Elizabeth Ebinger married John Plank, and her brother John Jr. married Plank's sister, Elizabeth.

The end of hostilities came in 1833. A permanent peace with the Indians was signed and control of former Indian lands in Illinois passed to the United States government. Most Indians left immediately for designated lands west of the Mississippi River.

As soldiers stationed at Fort Dearborn returned to Michigan, stories circulated about the rich farmlands in northern Illinois. John Ebinger, Sr. was convinced: northern Illinois awaited him. Before leaving with his parents, Christian Ebinger married Barbara Reuhle. The date was February 12, 1834, four days after his 22nd birthday. Barbara was six months younger.

The young couple's honeymoon was a trip to Chicago with Christian's parents. It took three weeks. A one-horse wagon, with a single seat, was used to transport their earthly goods. The newlyweds "cheerfully surrendered the single seat to the old people."

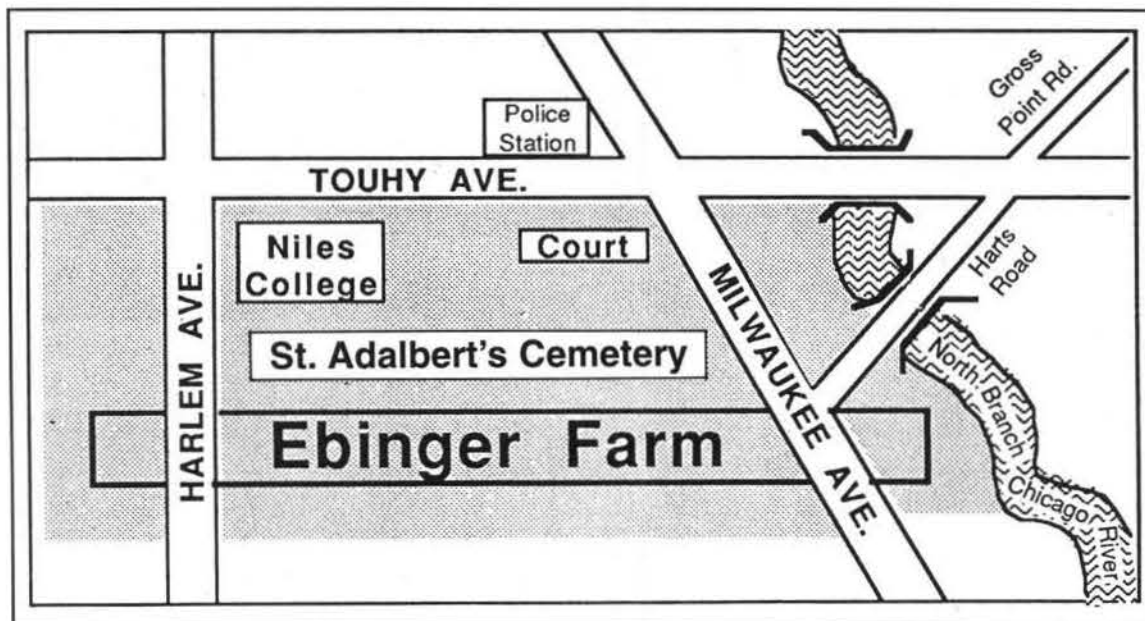
Barbara also recalled, according to an article published in 1897, "We walked every foot of the way from Ann Arbor. At night we camped around a log fire, with great pine branches for a roof. My husband and his father watched in turn for wolves or hostile Indians."



Christian and Barbara Ebinger

After arriving in Chicago, the elder Ebinger was disappointed in the swampy land that was evident everywhere. Finding an Indian trail that led northwest to Milwaukee, they pushed onward. Within a few miles, their horse, Dobbin, stepped on a rattlesnake sunning itself on the trail. The rattler bit Dobbin, who died a short time later.

A quick survey was made of the surroundings. They were just west of the North Branch of the Chicago River, near a point of timber along the river. The land looked rich, water was available, and they were near a major trail to Chicago. No one owned the land. A decision was made to settle on the spot just south of modern-day Touhy Avenue.



John Sr. filed a claim in May 1834 to pre-empt 80 acres of land. They cleaned out a few dens of rattlers, constructed a log cabin measuring about 24 feet by 14 feet, and sowed some crops.

Other members of the family soon followed: Frederick and John, Jr. settled to the south and the Planks to the north. Within a year John Plank sold his house to a Mr. Phillips, who kept the first store and was the area's first postmaster in 1836. A year later Phillips went out of business.

Life had its unexpected surprises and difficulties. Barbara had to grind wheat in a coffee grinder until a mill opened near Elgin. One day Christian got lost while cutting wood. He was found by his father and brother John after a search lasting the entire day.

The first year did not yield a large crop. In fact, the Ebingers could claim only one melon grown as a result of their efforts. And even that one melon provided some dramatics. Katherine Ebinger "detected a sulking redman in the act of stealing her cherished prize." After she "gave battle to the brave... the marauder retaliated. The Indian dealt her a severe blow on the strange ornament (on old-fashioned hair comb she was wearing at the time). Several members of the family were able to extract the comb from her head." The melon was saved.

Many other dealings with the Indians were more peaceful. One day an Indian woman bought some whiskey and bread from the Planks and buried it in a little mound on the Ebinger farm. She and other Indians chanted around the mound. Later the Ebingers discovered the mound was the gravesite of the woman's child.

Christian also permitted a son of an Indian chief to be buried on his land "with all due

ceremony." Each year, as was the custom, braves returned to worship at the grave and provide the deceased with necessities for the "Happy Hunting Ground." The Ebingers provided the bread and whiskey that was placed on the grave.

Chief Black Hawk befriended Christian Ebinger, with whom he smoked the peace pipe. Apparently the relationship began when Chief Black Hawk and some braves crossed the portage from the Des Plaines River to the North Branch of the Chicago River. They left their guns with Christian and continued on to Chicago. Six weeks later they returned around midnight shouting, "Shoot," "Shoot." They were there to reclaim their guns. After finding their guns exactly where they left them, the Indians danced joyfully around the house. From that time on, the Ebinger homestead was sacred to all passing tribesmen.

Once, when one of Ebinger's horses was suffering from a snake bite, a passing Indian pointed to food and water three times, recommending not to feed the horse. The horse was fed and died. When the Indian returned and inquired about the horse, he severely reprimanded Ebinger for not following directions.

Communicating with Indians was apparently not a great concern for the Ebingers. Chief Black Hawk was fluent in English, as were many Indians. Christian spoke English with a heavy accent but apparently was easily understood. Barbara had difficulty with English and probably spoke only German.

The Ebingers and John Plank were known for their hospitality. Although they kept no tavern, travelers were always sure of entertainment and a night's lodging. An early history of the family reported that it was only after 10 years of married life that Christian and Barbara were able to have a meal together without a visitor present.

Ebinger had "great faith in human nature and would supply seed to anyone who came, without requiring any pledge even though he didn't know the person's name." He believed he would be re-paid from the first successful crop.

Christian Jr., born November 14, 1835, was the eldest of the 10 children born to Christian and Barbara Ebinger. He was the first white child born in the area.

Another early settler in present-day Niles was John Jackson Ruland. His story is wonderfully told by Mrs. Bertha M. Rosche in a series of collected articles preserved at the Skokie Historical Society in a booklet entitled, *Setting down the record...*

Ruland boarded a ship on the eastern seaboard, perhaps Long Island, in 1834 believing he was going to Chicago. Lost in a storm, the ship landed some 10 miles north of Chicago. Ruland, writes Rosche, "slogged through wooded swamp until he struck the rise at Ridge Road." He found the way easier going to today's Crawford Avenue when he hit swamp lands again. He continued until the next ridge that is today's Cicero Avenue.

These ridges were left by successive, and probably very sudden, glacial retreats which left Lake Chicagou covering northeast Illinois as far south as Valparaiso.

Ruland pushed on to the area of today's Lincoln Avenue, which was an Indian trail at that time. By nightfall he came to a sandy bank where the Milwaukee Railroad tracks now cross Oakton Street. There he built a dugout. After he finished he took his gun out to hunt some deer. A large wolf sprang at him. Man and animal eyed each other. Ruland fired and ran back to his cave. The next day he found the wolf dead 25 feet from where he shot him.

The land that Ruland observed in the following days was most bountiful: There were plenty of deer, buffalo, prairie chickens, quail, ducks, geese, and swans. There were numerous fish in many varieties. Berries could be gathered by the bucketful, as could apples, wild pears, plums, and other fruit. Large-sized oranges were also plentiful. Fur was available from bears, panthers, fox, wildcat, otter, mink, and beaver that were observed throughout the region.

Ruland made his way to the Ebinger settlement and built his cabin where the others were already occupying the point along the North Branch of the Chicago River.

One day Ruland and Ebinger went to Chicago on an ox cart to buy some seed potatoes for \$1.25 a bushel. It took them two days to return because the roads were extremely muddy as they often were for several months a year.

Mrs. Ruland, who joined her husband with her two children within a year, spun many tales of life in early Niles. She recalled that Indians often invaded their cabin in search of food. Having their fill, they would grunt, roll over to the fireplace, and quickly fall asleep.

Mrs. Ruland had three sisters who joined the settlement. One of her sisters married Henry Boyer, who was a brewer and had a brewery in a small brick building on a farm owned by a Mr. Horter. Another sister married Henry Hortner, who owned a brickyard. Joseph Ketchum, Mrs. Ruland's brother, joined the settlement "a little later," wrote an historian of local histories in 1916.

The first school in Niles was opened in 1838 at the intersection of today's Touhy and Harlem. There were four pupils: two each from the Ebinger and Ruland households. The first teacher was a Scotsman named Ballentine. The second teacher, Miss Phillips, was paid two dollars per child, per term with the "bachelors chipping in to help maintain" the school. Mrs. Cordelia Wheaton, the third teacher, was paid \$12 a month and was provided room and board.

In 1849 John Odell provided a plot of land near Milwaukee and Harlem avenues for a new school. John Ketchum, brother of Mrs. Ruland, built the new school for \$25.

John Marshall and Benjamin Hall built the North Branch Hotel in 1837 where the first whiskey was sold over the counter. John Shriggley succeeded Benjamin Hall as tavern-keeper within a few years and then sold the hotel to a Colonel Anderson of Naperville.

A second hotel was built a few years later. The April 23, 1849, edition of the *Chicago Tribune* carried the following ad:

Valuable Farm and Tavern Stand for Sale

On the Milwaukee Road, 15 miles from Chicago, and 7 miles from Wheeling and in good settlement. The Farm contains 273 acres of land, 160 of which are fenced, 90 acres under cultivation, 71 acres of heavy timber. The improvements are a good Frame House and Barn, with two good wells of water, and an orchard of about 200 apple and peach trees just beginning to bear. It is one of the best tavern stands in the country. The plank road to Wheeling will pass by the door. The land is well situated for division into two farms.

The ad was reprinted in a special Chicago centennial edition of the *Chicago Tribune* published in 1947. The 1947 owner of the "Tavern Stand," called the White House in 1947, was quoted by the *Chicago Tribune* that the original building was built around 1831. He pointed out the 6-inch pine board flooring and the 5 layers of roofing over the original roof were still intact. Marilyn Brown of the Niles Historical Society, who has closely studied the buildings of current and past Niles, is convinced this hotel could not have been built before the North Branch Hotel was built

in 1837. Brown believes the White House may have been built around 1846-1848.

The first blacksmith in Dutchman's Point was Benjamin Lupton. He learned the blacksmith trade in Chicago after his arrival in 1831. He remained in Chicago, working for 18 months. He then moved to Half Day, stayed a year, and returned to England. In 1840, he came to Dutchman's Point with his new bride, Mary Arrowsmith, and was the settlement's blacksmith for the next 20 years.

A letter in the collections of the Niles Historical Society states that one Alexander Brown came from Scotland to Niles in 1834. In about 1840 he purchased "land in Maine and Niles and built his house in Maine just north of the Niles line on Milwaukee Avenue where he lived the rest of his life and died in 1854."

George Heinz, who owned part of a large track of land known as Grennan Heights, related how his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Heinz, became the original settlers of Grennan Heights.

Grennan Heights News

Published by Jennings & Gahagan Realty Corporation, 77 W. Washington St. Telephone Dearborn 7411

Vol. 1

CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 15, 1925

No. 3

EIGHTY YEARS AGO

A Dream Then—A Fact Now



"Indians? Yes, there were many around when my father settled on this place, now called GRENAN HEIGHTS," said Mr. George Heinz, the veteran farmer, who owned part of the large tract of land which embraces our GRENAN HEIGHTS Properties.

"Yes, these Indians came mostly from Wisconsin and followed the natural outlet, the old trail to the Lake along a pathway, now the leading artery to Chicago, named Milwaukee Avenue. The first settlers, mostly of British descent, had many skirmishes with them, although later these redskins buried their tomahawks and became peaceful, only dangerous when they got hold of firewater, which could at that time be purchased for 20 cents a gallon.

"I often heard my father relate how they built a 'look out' or watch tower near the house where our first home was located as our part of the country was the highest ridge for miles around and fire signals could be seen from there as far as the lake. Now we have nearly on the same spot the great electric sign 'GRENAN HEIGHTS'—a remarkable contrast indeed.

"The only trading place hereabouts was a mile south on Milwaukee Road called 'Dutchman's Point,' a tavern and store combined. Prairie wolves and game were in abundance, and the settlers suffered a good many hardships, but never lost courage as

they saw the population increasing and the town of Chicago growing in rapid strides toward their lonely farms.

"My paren, Jacob Heinz, came

lived all his life here and died when 92 years old, after an eventful life of hard, but successful work, leaving to his children the land he loved so well.

"And I also adore and always will love the place where I was born; the fertile soil, the clear and healthfully invigorating atmosphere; away from the smoke and turmoil of the great city, and still near enough to get all the comforts of life for the asking.

"My wife and I decided readily not to leave our beloved place where we have been so greatly contented for so many years. We will stay right here in GRENAN HEIGHTS and watch with interest and satisfaction the great improvements already made and the enormous community developments planned. My father was always dreaming of a large community settlement in our vicinity, and we now realize that my children and grandchildren, who live around me or with me, will find in the near future in GRENAN HEIGHTS thousands

of contented people, beautiful homes, churches, schools, banks, theaters and business houses, and we will see in the movies right here on the spot, pictures of the romantic scenes of pioneer life and Indian days of the past, and when we leave the show the bright lights of a great, clean and prosperous suburban addition to the greatest metropolis in the world 'Chicago.'"

A. H. REIDEL.



MR. AND MRS. JACOB HEINZ, ORIGINAL SETTLERS OF GRENAN HEIGHTS.

to the United States in 1832. He worked first with his wife in Florida, but a fiend, Erhat Beyer, told him of the great opportunities and the fertile soil of our township. They entrusted their savings to him and he 'pre-empted' our land under the homestead laws, paying 75c per acre for the very ground which is now worth millions of dollars. Father

"My Parent, Jacob Heinz, came to the United States in 1832... A friend Erhat Beyer told him of great opportunity and the fertile soil of our township. (My parents) entrusted their savings to him and he pre-empted our land under the homestead laws, paying 75 cents per acre (in 1845) for the very ground which is now worth millions of dollars." George Heinz is thus quoted in a 1925 edition of the *Grennan Heights News*, a copy of which is in the archives of the Niles Historical Museum.

Jacob Heinz died when he was 92. His son recalled in 1925, "My father was always dreaming of a large community settlement in our vicinity (an area along Oakton to Dempster from Cumberland to Merrill, states Kay Heinz, great granddaughter of Jacob Heinz), and we now realized that my children and great grandchildren who live around me or with me will find in the near future in Grennan Heights thousands of contented people, beautiful homes, churches, schools, banks, theatres, and business houses, and we will see in the movies right here on the spot, pictures of the romantic scenes of pioneer life and Indian ways of the past."

In the 1840s William White immigrated to the United States from England. He purchased a 200-acre farm for \$200 on the southeast corner of today's Waukegan and Dempster roads. White's daughter later became grandmother of John Calef, mayor of Niles from 1923 to 1931.

German preachers rode the circuit in Illinois during the 1830s. Jacob Boaz was probably the first. He came through northern Illinois in 1837. He visited the settlement at Dutchman's Point and a preaching itinerary of several congregations was formed in the Des Plaines River valley northwest of Chicago. By 1839 a traveling preacher visited Dutchman's Point on a weekday evening once every two or three weeks.

In 1840 on Pentecost Sunday, Jacob Esher held a prayer meeting at the Ebinger house. Barbara Ebinger was the first of several converts that evening. Several days later Christian and his brother John, brought up as Lutherans, were also converted and became members of the German Evangelical Church. Christian became the class leader for the local group.

In less than two decades, Dutchman's Point was quickly becoming an established settlement in northern Illinois.■

Dutchman's Point

A.T. Andreas, who wrote a history of Cook County in 1884, discussed the name of the exact location of the first settlers in present-day Niles: "As it was customary then (1830s) as well as now (1884) for Americans to improperly speak of 'Dutchmen,' this point of timber (on which the four houses of the first permanent settlers of Niles stood) and the settlement received the name 'Dutchman's Point,' by which name it is still popularly known, although the village has since grown up a little to the Northeast and is now known as Niles."

Another account written by amateur historians associated with a men's choir in the area stated: "A strip or point of timber extended from the main forest on the river along the ridge on which Plank and Ebinger lived, and the Americans, who in those days generally confounded the Germans with the Dutch, named it Dutchman's Point, by which it is known to the present day." Perhaps, confusion was added since the German word German immigrants used to describe themselves was 'Deutsch.'"

A *Chicago Tribune* article published April 25, 1929, explains "Dutchman's Point it was called in the early days when the Rohrs, and the Wolfgang Harrers, the Haupts, Huffmeyers, and Schadigers ate sauerkraut together there and clicked steins in Benjamin Hall's tavern."

In a series of articles in the *Chicago Evening Post* in 1903 the Indian settlements on the North Branch of the Chicago River are discussed. The author makes reference to a Dutch Point Trail indicating it intersects with Little Fort Trail at Bowmanville which is identified as three miles east of the (Lake Michigan) beach.

NILES TOWNSHIP

As Chicago and other areas in northeastern Illinois continued to attract permanent settlers, Cook County commissioners called for an election of officers for Niles Township. On April 2, 1850, reports T. A. Andreas in his history of Cook County, the first meeting for this purpose convened at the North Branch Hotel at Dutchman's Point. Older settlers, writes Andreas, selected the name "Niles" at a public meeting "held some time previous to this first election."

Samuel E. Ferris was chosen moderator for this meeting and then elected supervisor for the township. Although Ferris did not live, as far as is known, in any area of present-day Niles, the Niles Historical Museum has the original land grant transfer signed by President Zachary Taylor which established Ferris' homestead in Niles Township.

Numerous officials were elected for the township: supervisor, clerk, collector, overseer of the poor, three commissioners of highways, two justices of the peace, and two constables. Christian Ebinger was elected assessor and overseer of the poor. In future elections conducted annually, Ebinger would be chosen for numerous other positions.

A decision was made to establish a pound and \$150 was voted for that purpose. Andreas writes, "it was resolved that no swine should run at large."

For the year ending April 1, 1851, \$219.44 was collected; \$63.11 was set aside for road purposes and \$156.33 for use by the township. Highway improvement was the most pressing issue. Later that year at a meeting in June, a vote was taken to raise \$200 by tax for the improvement of roads.

Not all settlers had the same degree of permanency as did the Ebingers. Ray Steil, who is a direct descendant of one of the pioneer families who settled in the Niles area and still lives in Niles, is an avid collector of historical documents and memorabilia. In his possession are abstracts and examinations of titles for land bounded by today's Golf Road, Greenwood Road, Church Street, and Washington Street. This area includes the Golf-Mill shopping center.

In this area, Eben Conant was shown to be an original owner of some 160 acres purchased from the United States in 1843. He sold this parcel to William Clark in 1847 for \$200, adding to Clark's holdings of 80 acres purchased in 1844 for \$320 from the Governor of Illinois.

In 1846 William Clark sold 40 acres to Henry Holmes and William H. Mawry, the area of today's St. Isaac Jogues Church and grounds. No money was involved in this curious transaction which called for Clark "to secure payment of \$150 in good merchantable sheep and 150 lbs. of wool for five successive years." The sheep business apparently did not provide the necessary payment and Clark got the land back, before the five years passed, for a payment of \$150. No documentation was recorded as to how many sheep or how much wool Clark received in the three years before ownership was again transferred to him.

One Joshua Brookes "of the City of N.Y." purchased some 200 acres in 1858 for \$200 only to have his heirs sell it back to the original owner, John W. Wood, in 1863. Wood would sell it for \$1,500 the same year to Ludwig Geistfeld, who would resell it to Wood in 1867.

During these transactions, Wood sold, in 1865, one-half acre along Milwaukee Avenue to the school trustees and "their successors in office." The sale price was \$25.

John Steil, Ray Steil's grandfather, became a property owner in 1873 purchasing 20 acres from Herman Schwinge for \$1,200.

All the land transfers described above, although in present-day Niles, were in other municipalities at various times. As Ray Steil likes to mention, "I've had five different mailing addresses and I've lived in the same house all my life." The land on which Golf-Mill shopping center is currently located was in Park Ridge in 1875. A large detailed map of Cook County in 1875, measuring approximately 10 feet by 10 feet, can be viewed at the Northbrook Historical Society. The map, published by Van Vechten and Snyder's, shows exact boundaries of homesteads along with owners.



*Milwaukee and Waukegan
Summer 1911*

Alex Brown was shown as the owner of some 200 acres along Milwaukee Avenue in Maine Township. J. Egan owned some 120 acres.

The original settlement of Niles, at Waukegan, Milwaukee, and Touhy, is shown in detail. Going North on Waukegan from Milwaukee the homesteads were shown as Suhn, West, Hoffman, Winters, Lupton, Wood, and Mrs. Whittington with 23 acres. The largest landowners in the immediate area were Wm. Clark (98 acres), L. Hall (100 acres), J. Rutland (54 acres), and R. Day (46 acres).

The Ebinger name appears frequently in several subdivided areas and a specific subdivision is indicated with half in present-day Niles and the other half in Norwood Park. Other owners of smaller parcels are listed as H. Toms and W. Kobb.

A. J. Snell is listed for the property and hotel on today's Harlem Avenue north of Touhy. The classified ads for Niles, found alongside this large map, mention the Farmer's House (M. Mathis, proprietor) and the Niles Hotel (Joseph Toefer, proprietor) but do not indicate exact locations on the map. Other listings for Niles are: Brick Manufacturer, Thorsen, Peter; Groceries and Provi-

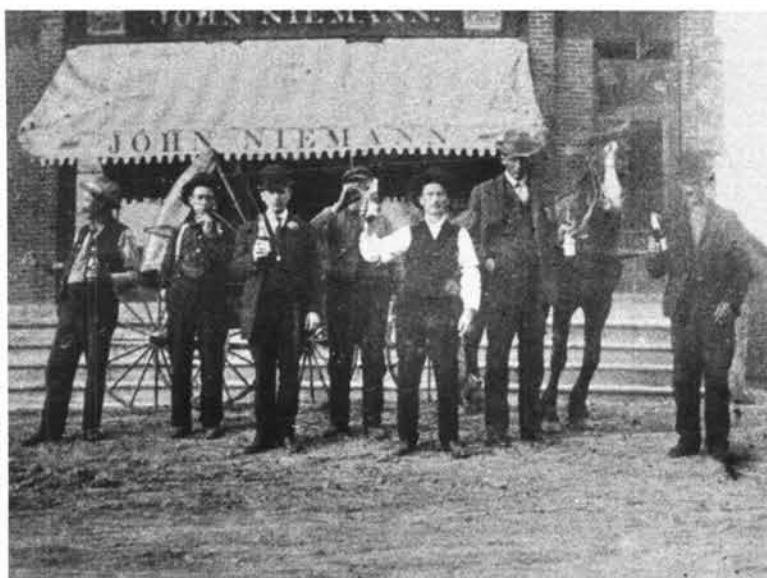
sions, Lester, Henry, also Notary Public; and Merchant, General Dealer, Segelken, F.

Fragmentary information is available on specific businessmen and professionals in Niles during the late 19th century. Theodore Hoffman, M.D., who lived on Waukegan Road as noted above, was born in Hamburg, Germany, in 1820. He was educated at Heidelberg and took post-graduate courses at Rush Medical College after his arrival in America. He regularly visited patients as far away as Elk Grove, Libertyville, Lake Forest, Wheeling, Des Plaines, and Norwood Park.

Dr. Hoffman regularly would travel on horseback. After losing his way several times, he began carrying a compass and a lantern. A story is told about the good doctor losing his way in a forest when he saw a cabin. After arousing the occupants, he was let in. Mrs. Nellie Whittington of Niles continues the story, "he threw himself on a pile of shavings in the corner, glad of a shelter. In the morning they cooked potatoes and hand bread, no butter or anything else to go with it, and gladly shared their meager store with him. Such was the pioneer spirit of the people who founded Niles."

Often he would be away for two weeks at a time. As he went greater distances, the roads became more difficult to travel. His one-horse cart could not manage the ruts, so he got another horse.

The doctor kept quite accurate records of his patients. This ledger was preserved at the Des Plaines Historical Society and was compiled for publication by Ruth Blietz. It has been called "a virtual census of the residents of the area during the Civil War years.... When he didn't know the name of a patient, he sometimes referred to them by the location of their farm, by their relationship to someone he did know, or by their physical appearance."



Niemann's

Dr. Hoffman came to the area in 1848 and settled in Niles in 1849 where he practiced medicine until 1868. He then left for Chicago. After the Chicago fire, which burned his office and four houses he owned, he returned to Niles and continued his practice until 1905 when he died in his home.

John S. Niemann arrived in Niles in 1870 from Denmark. After working in Peter Thorsen's brickyard, he purchased a store and a saloon, later to be called Niemann's Hall.

Mabel Warnke has written several books which make numerous references to the early history of Niles. Warnke described the Beto family grocery store as being the only one in Niles for many years. Built in 1874, it started out as an inn and a saloon and was called the Welcome Inn.

Xavery Wojkiewicz settled in Niles around 1896. He became a prominent florist serving the wholesale trade in Chicago. He was also the official grave decorator for St. Adalbert's Cemetery.



St. Adalbert's Cemetery

E. Palma Baudette writes in *Niles Township* that in 1884 Niles had "two stores, two hotels, one drug store, one harness shop, two blacksmith shops, three churches, two schools, one physician and 200 inhabitants."

Mary Blameuser's hand-written copy of the "History of Niles Center and Niles Township," written in 1892, writes, "Niles... the oldest village in the Township... contains three stores, two hotels, three blacksmith shops, a harness shop, a tin shop, a wagon-maker shop, a shoemaker, a brickyard, a potter and a physician. It contains 200 inhabitants."

The Prairie Farmer, an annual publication initiated at the turn of the century, accounted for landholdings of farmers and also indicated those who were tenant farmers in the area. While the areas of Maine Township which were to become present-day Niles were all being farmed, not one farmer was listed within the area on the original settlements at today's Milwaukee Avenue, Touhy Avenue, and Waukegan Road.■

Niles

There is no exact or convincingly documented reason for the selection of Niles either as Niles Township, Niles Centre - changed to Niles Center before it was again changed to Skokie - or today's Village of Niles.

Interesting speculations have been suggested. Historian A. T. Andreas wrote in the "History of Niles" (1884): "There appears to have been but little organized political action previous to 1850 when the township was organized under the general law. On April 2 of that year, the first meeting for the election of officers was held pursuant to notice by the Cook County Commissioners. No account of the selection of the name of 'Niles' appears on the records, but according to the older settlers it was chosen at a public meeting held some time to the previous election."

Some years later, the August 25, 1929, edition of the *Chicago Tribune* suggested, "Where the name came from is a matter of conjecture. There was no family by that name among the settlers. But the city of Niles in Michigan, one of eight spots in the country with the name, was christened in 1929, and its namesake was the *Niles Register*, a newspaper of widespread political influence at that time, published in Washington, D.C."

A fact that makes it seem likely the Illinois town had the same source is that William Ogden Niles was connected with the *Register* as late as 1940 and Ogden is a name with a Chicago hook-up.

Anne Lunde, who has completed considerable research on the early history of Niles, details the Niles, Michigan, connection to the area later named Niles in Illinois. Lunde points out that soldiers stationed in Niles, Michigan, came to Fort Dearborn early in the 1830s. They were sent to assist Illinois troops in defending settlers during the raids by Indians during the Black Hawk War. Upon returning to Niles, word was spread of the rich farmlands back in northern Illinois. The earliest permanent settlers in present-day Niles were very aware of the rich farmlands that awaited them and this fact probably influenced their decision to come to Illinois. Also, there were three marriages between the first settlers in Niles, Illinois, who came from Michigan and troops or relatives stationed at Fort Dearborn.

In a history of Cook County, published in 1909, Niles was frequently mentioned relating to the settlement in Chicago: "There were no mail routes, post offices, nor post roads (in northern Illinois in 1831-1832)... Every two weeks a half-breed Indian was sent to Niles, Michigan for mail...." In 1834, a stage between Chicago and Niles was established twice a week.

Milwaukee Avenue

For decades, perhaps even a century or two, Indians regularly trekked along the path where the rattlesnake was sunning himself the day Dobbin was pulling the elder lady Ebinger. Her husband and the newly wed Ebingers walked alongside. After stepping on the snake, Dobbin, legend says, was bitten by the rattlesnake. The Ebingers settled in the immediate area that would become present-day Niles. The trail on which the Ebingers arrived is today's Milwaukee Avenue.

The name Milwaukee is derived from an Indian word, "milioke," which can be translated as "good earth or country." The transformation of this Indian trail to Milwaukee Avenue, which George J. Eckhoff, in 1927, called the "highest example of modern highway construction," is a fascinating, if not incredulous, tale.

Eckhoff further predicted in 1927 that Milwaukee Avenue is "destined to carry in comfort and safety, a greater human and commercial freight than any like number of miles of street outside of the Chicago Loop."

Eckhoff's ancestors owned property along Milwaukee Avenue in and near Niles. His research was based in part on interviews with many Niles' residents during the 19th century.

Writing a few years before Eckhoff, Alfred Bull states that, "In the boom days of 1835-37 the trail had become a meandering group of parallel ruts leading from Kinzie Street through Jefferson, Niles and Northfield, toward Deerfield."

The ruts were deep and wide. Often six or eight sets were clearly visible. As each new team of horses or oxen made the trip to Chicago, they sought higher, smoother terrain. The trail widened in many areas; some estimate it became a mile wide and included today's Elston Avenue. An average round trip from Northfield to Chicago took four days in good weather and twice as long in poor weather. During spring or in heavy rain the trip was impossible.

Drainage ditches were dug sometime in the 19th century. The road began to narrow and took a more definite path.

A. T. Andreas, historian of Cook County, describes the decision to survey the road and provides several interesting anecdotes

"Silas W. Sherman, a prominent settler of Northfield, made a petition to the legislature to have the road established and surveyed. The petition was granted, and Asa F. Bradley (was) entrusted with the surveying of the road.

"The starting point was at Kinzie Street in Chicago. George N. Powell, who had then already a hotel, fearing that the road might not be located past his place of business, raised a flag and informed the surveying party that if they could strike that flag with the line of their road, a good dinner, with the best wine and whiskey, would be ready for them as soon as they arrived. There was never quicker or better work done in the history of engineering, than that between Kinzie and that flag."

Andreas does not give the exact day of the survey. It would appear to have been in the mid to late 1830s. In explaining some of the abrupt and unexpected turns of Milwaukee Avenue another source stated, "In the renovation of 1835-1837, the landlord of the Green Tree Tavern near a northern terminal, was able to influence the road's direction in his favor. As an incentive he offered

copious free potatoes to the surveyors who kept their eyes and lines snugly pointed toward his hospitable chimney pots."

Alfred Bull, after reviewing documents at the Chicago Historical Society, states the origin of Milwaukee Avenue, "its commencement being near the old Galena depot on the north side, the present site (Bull was writing in 1911) of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad."

As Chicago began to grow rapidly in the 19th century, there was increased demand for the vegetables, milk, and other products grown in Jefferson (present-day Norwood Park), Niles, Wheeling, and other farming areas further northwest.

The roadway - surveyed, crooked, drained - was not sufficient to meet Chicago's demands. The idea of a plank road began to evolve as an answer to an all-weather road between Chicago and farm areas northwest of the city. Travelers, wagons, and all they carried would be kept out of the mud once the plank roads were built.

Plank roads probably originated in Russia and were introduced into the United States after somewhat successful use in Canada. Three-inch thick oak timbers were laid across two parallel wooden rails.

In 1849 construction of the Northwestern Plank Road (Milwaukee Avenue) began. The company was headed by a man named Mitchell. A settler by the name of Gould completed the project extending the road to Dutchman's Point in 1851. Gould also installed toll gates at Elston, Irving Park, and Western.

The cost of construction of the first 23 miles of this road, according to an account in *Highways, Old and New*, was \$51,000. This included all toll houses, gates, and one bridge.

Amos J. Snell bought the Northwestern Plank Road in 1854. Snell ran the general store in Jefferson and had a contract to supply the Northwestern Railroad with wood for ties and fuel. The wood was cut along the North Branch of the Chicago River. Snell would then clear the land, build crude cabins, and sell them to new settlers in the area.

When Snell took control of the road, it was showing signs of deterioration. Snell, using a gravel surface, rebuilt the entire road and extended it to Wheeling. He added several toll gates. The toll gate for Niles was at the merger with Elston Avenue.

Many believed the original construction was poorly done. Not everyone agreed. Frank Whittington, a resident of Dutchman's Point since 1870, described excavating some of the plank and stringers when rebuilding a bridge near Hart's Road in 1883.

"The planks were still in good condition after almost forty years. The road was only eight feet wide, however, and the heaviest load had the right of way when it became necessary for one or the other to pull off the plank roadway in order to pass."

An interesting account of travel on the Northwestern Plank Road is given by Mrs. Mary Ann Calef, grandmother of a future Mayor of Niles. Eckhoff writes that Mary Ann came to Niles in 1848 from Scotland with her parents. She describes an incident in 1867:

"I had driven to Chicago early in the day and spent a considerable time at Smith's and Harvey's and Potter Palmer's stores and when I started for home my horse was eager to get there and set off at a brisk trot. We came to Fullerton and Milwaukee Avenues and I tried to rein him in to stop at the toll gate, but the harder I pulled the faster he went, and we not only did not stop to

pay toll, but took a part of the gate with us, for which my husband was required to settle later. We generally rode to Chicago in the bus driven by John Huntington. He charged a fare of thirty-five cents each way, and as a toll for one horse and buggy was twenty-five cents one way, there was not much saved by driving."

Travel to Niles, particularly on weekends, proved to be extremely popular. Records indicate that gates which normally took in \$400 on a weekday, would average over \$700 on weekends when used by picnickers and saloon guests to Niles and visitors to St. Adalbert's Cemetery.

Costs for freight passage, several authorities state, averaged about \$10 per ton for each 20 miles.

The murder of Amos Snell in 1888 proved to be quite a sensational news story. His nephew, Willie Tascott, was the prime suspect. The search led detectives to all areas of the country and then to Europe. Tascott was never apprehended.

As the case dragged on, grumbling about the excessive toll fees charged by Snell was heard more frequently. There even was some speculation that Snell's murder was a result of a disgruntled user of Snell's toll road. Many tried to avoid paying a toll by driving around a gate.

In 1890, the plight of angry toll users was dramatically illustrated. Farmers dressed as Indians raided the Fullerton Avenue toll gate. They chased away the toll keeper and set the gate and his house on fire. The *Chicago Tribune* of May 3, 1890, quoted a bystander saying the fire was started "from spontaneous indignation." Police were called but did nothing. Only one toll gate collected tolls through 1891. In 1892 the toll road system was abolished.

As more of Milwaukee Avenue was paved in the 1870s, real estate values increased substantially along the route. Even the panic (as depressions were called) of 1873 did not affect or lower prices. Lots which sold for \$750 to \$1,250 along the road were being sold for twice as much wherever paving was completed.

With paving came development of street car or cable car transportation. These proved short-lived since young boys learned "how to drop a wire through a slot and catch it on the cable," writes Eckhoff. "A block of wood, tin cans, or a bunch of rags attached to the upper end of the wire would then go speeding along the middle of the tracks, scaring horses and doing other mischief as well as producing a lot of fun for the youngsters."

The first electric cars began operating in the 1890s. After completing a line to Lawrence Avenue, an extension brought it to the Northwestern Railroad station. A makeshift temporary line was laid to the city limits for all who were visiting St. Adalbert's Cemetery, the picnic groves, and the saloons in Niles on weekends. The extension was a single track. Agreement was reached with the street car company to lay a double track as soon as underground improvements were completed. There was much discussion of whether the street should be widened to 100 or 108 feet to accommodate the double track. It was agreed that the width should be 108 feet.

A further decision was made for the car line to reach the interior of the forested area between Chicago and Niles so that traffic on Milwaukee Avenue would not be cluttered at the end of the line. The first electric car arrived at this turn-around during the 1920s.

St. Adalbert's Cemetery

One of the largest cemeteries in the Archdiocese of Chicago, St. Adalbert's, is located in Niles. It currently occupies 250 acres. Current interments average about 2,000 annually with total interments, since the cemetery was organized in 1872, approaching 300,000. In 1918, the year of the great flu epidemic, 4,000 burials took place. During the 1970s annual interments were about 2,600.

In October 1872 Father Adolph Bakanowski, C.R., pastor of the first and largest Catholic parish, St. Stanislaus Kostka, serving the newly arriving Polish immigrants to Chicago, and Father Joseph Molitor, pastor of St. Wenceslaus Bohemian Parish, joined forces in purchasing 21 acres of land for the purpose of a common cemetery in Niles, Illinois, at a cost of \$5,500. Father Bakanowski delivered a Polish sermon and Father William Czoka gave an address in the Czech language.

The total amount of acres purchased in the early years of the cemetery development was much larger than the original 21 acres. In presenting a thesis to Loyola University on St. Hedwig's Orphanage, the author mentions that "The committee next turned to the managers of the Polish-Bohemian cemeteries from whom they sought seventeen acres of land located at 72nd and Niles Road, which had just been purchased for \$7,500. The requested land was donated (in 1907) by these managers after discussing the transaction with all the pastors. A sum of \$3,000 was paid out of the cemetery's treasury to the Bohemian pastors so they could lay no further claim to the land." The intersection of 72nd and Niles Road is today's intersection of Harlem and Touhy where St. Hedwig's Orphanage was built a few years later.

The *Dziennik Chicagoski*, metropolitan daily newspaper of the Congregation of the Resurrection (C.R.), would write in 1945, "At the very outset, the Resurrectionists held the administrative posts on the Polish-Bohemian cemetery board of directors. The office of president, secretary, treasurer, and manager was (sic?) usually assumed by a Resurrectionist."

Father Bakanowski returned to Poland in 1873. His successor as pastor at St. Stanislaus Kostka was Rev. Vincent Michael Barzynski, C.R. In a biographical listing of members of the Congregation of the Resurrection, Barzynski is mentioned as a "promoter (of the) St. Adalbert Cemetery, Niles, Illinois, 1874-1899 and President, Administrative Board, Polish-Bohemian Cemeteries, Archdiocese of Chicago: ?-1896."

This same reference continues, "In grateful recognition of Father Barzynski's contribution to the development of the Polish American Community...his many friends and sympathizers, on the second anniversary of his death, erected on his grave at St. Adalbert's Cemetery, Niles, Illinois, an imposing monument consisting of the Resurrected Christ atop a 20-foot column with a bust of Father Barzynski and a dedicatory plaque at the base." A mausoleum was erected at the site and, after it was expanded in 1925, became the C.R. mausoleum for burials of members of the Congregation of the Resurrection.

Several Czech sources acknowledged that Rev. Joseph Molitor was the source for much antagonism in the Czech community in the early years of the cemetery's existence. Many in the Czech ethnic group changed planned burials at St. Adalbert's Cemetery. Two years after the cemetery opened, Rev. Molitor refused a Catholic burial to a woman, claimed Molitor, who had not fulfilled her sacramental obligation of confession. This action led to the formation of the Bohemian National Cemetery a few years after St. Adalbert's was organized.

Nevertheless, many Catholics active within the Czech community were buried at St. Adalbert's over the years. An active Czech-Polish connection was cultivated. Representatives of the Czech community were brought into the administration of the cemetery well into the 20th century. The name, Czech Polish Cemetery, current officials at St. Adalbert's state, was printed on many burial documents during the first 50 years of the cemetery's existence. George Halas, a prominent member of the Czech community and owner and coach of the Chicago Bears, was buried at St. Adalbert's.

The name of St. Adalbert was important to both the Czech and Polish communities. St. Adalbert was a Czech saint who left his homeland to evangelize the poles in the north. St. Adalbert's Church, in 1873, was one of the first churches organized in Chicago which served the Polish American community. Before coming to the Chicago area and taking over the pastorate of St. Stanislaus Kostka in 1974, Father Barzynski founded the St. Adalbert Fraternal Aid Society in San Antonio, Texas, in 1868.

In *The Dictionary of American Resurrectionists, 1865-1965*, a rather comprehensive listing of all the offices occupied by members of the Congregation of the Resurrection is provided. Several examples are cited to reflect the influence of the Congregation of the Resurrection on the development of St. Adalbert's: Rev. John Kasprzycki, C.R., was the manager of St. Adalbert's in 1903-1904; Rev. Francis Gordon, C.R., was the manager of St. Adalbert's Cemetery between 1904 and 1911. In 1909 he was selected by the archdiocese of Chicago administrative board of the Polish-Bohemian-Slovak Cemeteries to compile the bylaws regulating the use of these cemeteries. Rev. Lawrence Usdrowski, C.R., filled the position as manager in 1941. In 1946, Rev. John Grabowski, C.R., was the manager. In 1949, the manager was Rev. Jerome Klingsporn, C.R. As late as 1954, Rev. Stanislaus Duda, C.R., was listed as the manager of St. Adalbert's Cemetery. Over the years numerous members of the Congregation of the Resurrection occupied positions on the administrative board of the Polish-Bohemian-Slovak Cemeteries (St. Adalbert's, Holy Cross, and Resurrection) of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Information obtained from St. Adalbert's explains the administrative structure of the cemetery somewhat differently: "For many years, directors of the cemeteries were the pastors of the Polish, Czech and Slovak parishes of the Archdiocese and those directors appointed a board to administer the affairs of the cemetery. On this administrative board was one member who acted in the capacity of an executive director. The first such director in the early days of St. Adalbert's was Rt. Rev. Msgr. Thomas Bona, who had the longest record of association with the cemeteries of any priest in the archdiocese. He was appointed in 1912 and served continuously until his death in 1950, a period of 33 years. Msgr. John Zelezinski succeeded Msgr. Bona, and upon Zelezinski's death in 1957, Msgr. Edward E. Plawinski was appointed. In 1965, at the time of coordination of the Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese, Msgr. Plawinski became one of the four priest directors."

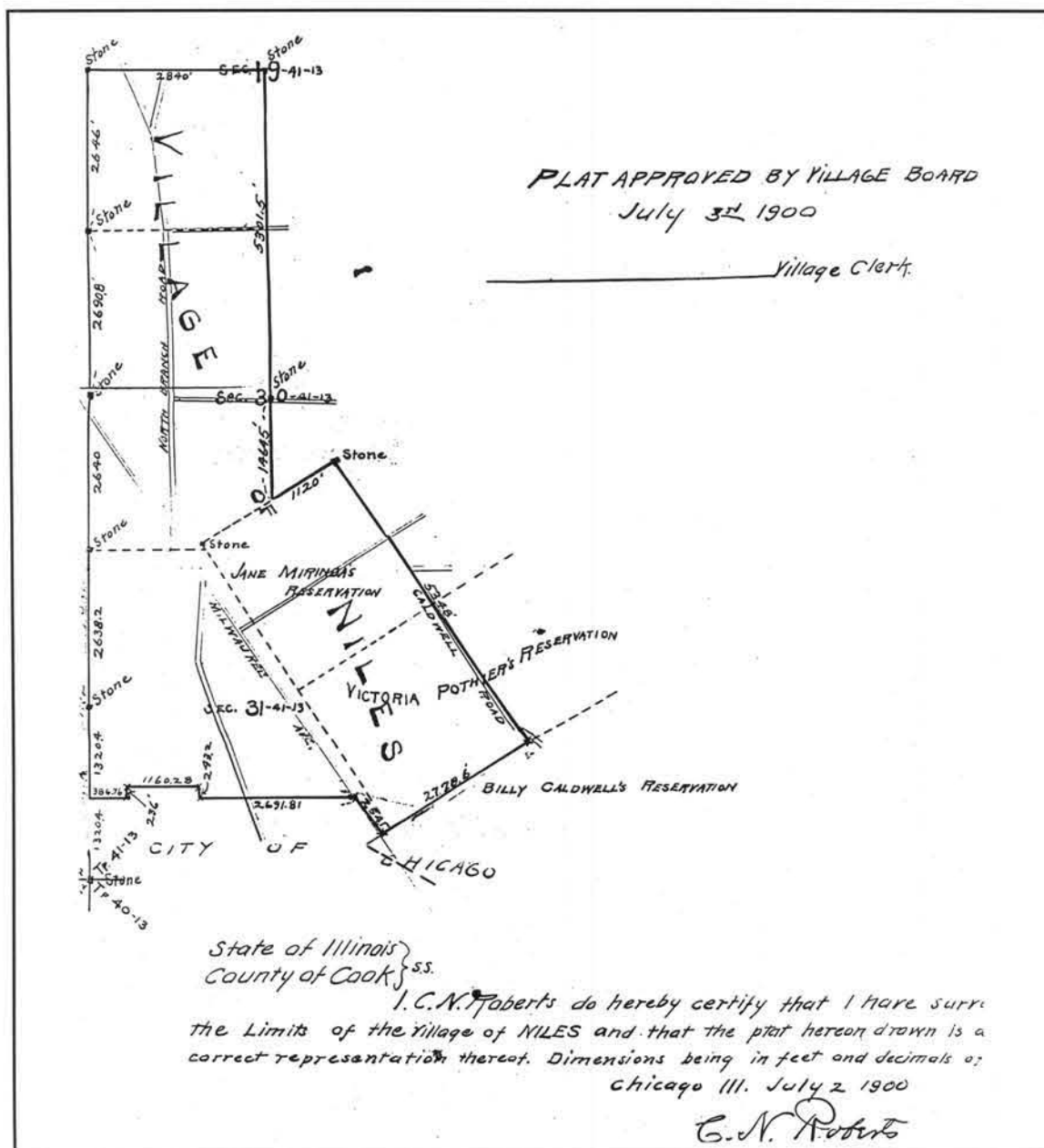
Sources from the cemetery also cite the importance of the superintendent: "Julius Szatkowski... was appointed in 1921 and served most years in that position. He was instrumental in purchasing much of the land for... St. Adalbert.... In 1951 he was succeeded by Cass E. Gramza (who) was superintendent...until his death in 1968. (In 1972 the) superintendent, now called sexton, (was) Adam Bona, Jr."

Since 1917 the sextons at St. Adalbert's were: Ron Niemer, 1977-1982; John Jacek, 1982-1991; Rich Kwazniak, 1991-1992; Ted Ratajchek, 1992-1994; Randy Wisowaty, 1994-1995; Tom Collins, 1995-1997. The title of the administrator was changed in 1997 to general manager. John Minogue was appointed general manager in 1997. The Archdiocesan Cemetery Board of Directors governs St. Adalbert's Cemetery and all other Catholic cemeteries in the archdiocese.

THE VILLAGE OF NILES

Agreements made at the Treaty of Prairie du Chien in 1829 were instrumental in determining the southeastern boundaries of the Village of Niles in 1899 when the decision was made to incorporate as a village.

Those provisions read: "To Billy Caldwell two and one-half sections on the Chicago River above and adjoining the line of the purchase of 1816. To Victoria Pothier one-half section on the Chicago River above and adjoining the tract of land herein granted to Billy Caldwell. To Jane Miranda one-quarter section on the Chicago River above and adjoining the tract herein granted to Victoria Pothier." The former Miranda and Pothier reservations became today's Niles, along with two parcels approximately twice as large to the north and west.



The handwritten minutes of the early sessions of the Niles Village Board have been preserved and are on deposit at the Niles Historical Museum. They were probably written as the meetings were in session. Marginal notations, corrections, and minutes of a few meetings not recorded in the ledger book reflect the same handwriting style and format. Much of the handwriting found in these minutes could easily cause envy in today's elementary students, teens, secretaries, and probably every corporate official or government official who reluctantly takes pen in hand for even a few minutes.

The council chamber for the first meeting of the Village Board of Niles was "the home of Christ Luth." The date was October 4, 1899; the time 7:30 p.m. John Huntington, president, conducted the meeting. He made the following appointments: Fred Mau, village clerk; Christ Thorsen, village treasurer; and Frank Whittington, commissioner of streets. The following committees were appointed: financing and auditing claims; drainage, license and sewage; streets, alleys, and bridges; lampside and crosswalks; and judiciary plats and subdivisions

The first business brought up at the next meeting, October 14, 1899, was granting licenses to sell malt liquor. Anton Saczureck, Christ Luth, John L. Calef, Frank Pavel, John Kessel, Herman Kirchhoff, and John Niemann, all of Niles, were granted licenses to sell malt liquor. The village's first ordinance, passed two weeks later, was titled "concerning licensing the sale of liquor." A \$20 to \$100 penalty was provided for all dealings in liquor without the proper village license. Liquor could not be sold to minors "without the written permission of his or her parents" or "to any person who is intoxicated or is in the habit of getting intoxicated."

In describing the requirements explaining the location at which the liquor was to be sold, a rather curious slip of the fingers was recorded by the person writing the ordinance.

Although every ordinance was signed by the president and clerk, it is obvious that many of the ordinances were in handwriting other than that of the president or clerk. Perhaps the "error" of the fingers reflected what was on many minds in Niles: "The king of license, and the lenght (sic) of time the same is wanted."

Liquor licensing was, indeed, "King." The village board would take few measures to issue any other type of license until liquor licenses, thanks to prohibition 20 years later, could no longer be issued.

In April 1900 an ordinance was passed establishing the cost of a liquor license "at the rate of five hundred dollars per annum for the sale of spirituous, vinuous or malt liquors, to be retailed by less quantities than one gallon." In 1906 "all doors and windows opening out and upon any street from the bar or room where such saloon or dram shop is kept" were to be "furnished with suitable shutters or curtains."

After passage, all ordinances were to be posted in three public places. The minutes indicate the liquor ordinance was displayed at the post office and "at the saloon of John Kessel's and... at the saloon of Frank Pavel." Almost all ordinances in the future would also be posted in one or more saloons within the village. In 1904 the ordinances were posted in what was titled "the three most public places" those being "the saloon of Charles Lochmann, ...the saloon of John Niemann, ...the saloon of John Calef."

Johanna Geffinger was the first woman granted a dram shop license to sell malt liquor. By 1904 10 licenses were granted to sell malt liquor. In 1909 new liquor licenses were not to be issued "until the number of licences in force at the time shall be less than one for every three hundred of the population of the village of Niles." In 1913 total annual licenses were limited to 9. In 1916 the ordinance to limit the number of dram shops was repealed. In 1914 the closing hour for saloons

was set at 1:00 a.m.; for picnics and dances the closing hour was 3:00 a.m.

Other business considered at the first village board meeting was the concern about an Edison Park sewer extending to Niles since "it was considered endangering to Niles citizens." A third motion was made "to fill an extension on a bridge on Milwaukee Avenue." At the October 17, 1899 meeting, men were assigned to work on this bridge at \$1.50 per day and \$3.50 per team.

On October 31, 1899, \$125 was voted for officer fees and salaries of village officials. From this amount, each judge for the previous election was paid \$3. Each trustee, including the president, would be paid \$1.50 for each board meeting attended. The village clerk was paid \$48 annually. In 1913 the president received \$3 per meeting, while the other trustees continued to receive \$1.50. The village clerk was usually paid more than any other officer until 1919 when the salary of the president was raised to \$100 annually. The village treasurer received 1.5 percent of all monies paid out by him. In 1900, the village marshal was to be paid 25 cents an hour not to exceed \$2 per day. In 1925 the village president's annual salary was \$240; trustees received \$5 per meeting.

On March 6, 1900, the council approved to "engage C. M. Roberts Engineer and Surveyor to draw a map of and survey the territory of the Village of Niles and also to have cornerstones set, to designate the boundary of said village and have a copy thereof recorded in the Recorder's Office of Cook County."

Two weeks before the scheduled election of April 17, 1900, an ordinance was passed to control dogs running at large in the village; 100 dog tags were purchased to be issued whenever a license was purchased. A fine of \$5 was imposed for dogs running "at large"; a further provision read "if such dog has attacked or bitten any person, it shall be killed and buried." The village marshal in May was to canvass all homes for a count of dogs. The village clerk would inform citizens they must purchase a license for a second dog in the household within 10 days. One citizen was warned "to do away with his dog within three days or the Village would prosecute." In 1905 an ordinance was passed "to keep cattle from running on other people's properties" and a pound was established for animals "running at large."

In 1903 the village made payment of \$2 for "burying a dead horse." When another horse was found dead, payment was made for the burial of the horse with the stipulation that the owner be located and assessed for the burial.

Conditions of road, drainage, and sidewalks took up much of the council's consideration at most meetings. Very specific directions were generally given for how drainage was to be provided, how sidewalks were to be laid, and the types of materials to be used. Many of the projects were extensive. In October 1901, 2,324 feet of sidewalk was completed at 22-3/4 cents a foot.

Within the first year the council voted on "renting of a certain place on School House Road to build a jail on, at a yearly rental of \$1." Christ Luth was paid \$5 for being the police marshal and received \$2.50 for a cap and uniform. On July 7, 1900, an ordinance was passed to build a "calaboose or jail." The building was to be 16 feet wide, 24 feet long, 10 feet high and containing a council room and two cells.

Two weeks later B.V. Morris was paid \$207.10 for construction of the building. On September 4, 1900, the council met for the first time in their own council chambers.

One regular and five special police stars were purchased in May 1902. Concern was expressed about handling the crowd on Decoration Day at the Cemetery. A month later the council voted to pay the police marshal three hours pay at 35 cents an hour for an arrest made when

not on duty and six hours' pay for prosecuting people arrested.

In 1901 two pairs of handcuffs and two jail locks were purchased. In 1906 a window was installed in one cell at a cost of 50 cents. On September 5, 1916, the Village of Niles would "enter into a contract with the House of Correction of the City of Chicago for the housing of prisoners at the cost to the Village of Niles at a rate of 30 cents a day." By 1918, this cost increased to 50 cents a day.

Fragmentary police and court records are available at the Niles Historical Society. Because many of the cases were heard at night or early morning, it may explain why the ledger reflects different handwritings and entries are not always in chronological order. The spelling in the original entries is kept intact in the following account.

The first clear entry for 1916 is marked "May 8th Arested" at the top of the page, followed by two line entries for "May 27th Arested, and May 6th Arested." The next line reads: "Arested June." The first completed entry reads as follows:

"Arested 1 July 1916
Andrew Lutz 13 years old lives at 1456 Chicago Av
arested for burglirising Wawzzynkiewicz
salon and on the 14 day of July sent to
St. Charles School by Judge Amald Curt."

Frank Kaslowski was the elected Police Magistrate for Niles in 1916. No record of Judge Amald Curt ever being elected in Niles could be located.

Other entries indicate payment of fines and costs. On May 13, 1917, "Village Vs Herald Bremzorn" who was charged with "being drunk and trying to run a automobile." He was fined \$10 & cost. A notation indicated, "Paid." On May 16, 1917, a complete entry states: "Arested W P leroooks Disordely & Drunk driving car while in that condition and running into 3 other cars fined \$25.00 \$10.00 & cost. Paid."

Although driving offenses were frequently cited, other crimes were brought before the court. On May 30, 1917, John Day and Bob Clem were fined \$1 each "for gambling with dice." Also on "May 30th Judge Benswanger (heard the case of) George Kuzek verse Bill Walzencavige Verses Village Niles (who were charged with) dischargen fire arms in the Village and carrying concealed weapons." A \$25 fine was paid. A month later Mary Bochal and Frank Cimol were fined for "pick-ing flowers on cemetry" and paid a fine of \$5.

A rather confused and garbled entry was noted for June 4, 1917. In a case involving the Anti Vice League, a fine of \$23 was assessed, paid and noted as being in Judge Beiswagner's court. However, a separate notation indicates, "Village got nothing."

Judge Beiswagner, although elected several times to be Police Magistrate, was out of office, according to village minutes, for several years before 1917.

In May, June, and July 1916 (?) about 14 were arrested for "riding on the sidewalk."

On August 13 (year not indicated) John McCabe and May Davis were arrested. Both were fined \$50. McCabe agreed to pay \$5 per week (four \$5 payments were recorded). Davis had her "fine suspended on promise to nevr come in the village of Niles."

September 27, 1916, "Vincent Glayonski arested on warent for leaving his cows running on

street case tried Monday Oct the 2nd he got fined \$300 & cost Judge got 5. Village got \$200 which was paid."

Charles Hoppie was "Arested Oct 6th 1917...for seling liquor without a license; warrent sworn out by Henry Rudenback; Case set for Oct 10th 1917; case continued from time to time till finly on November 7 was non suited on promise to reform; (in a different handwriting and ink) the middle of January he left Niles."

Louis Klonoski was "Arested Aprail 12th 1919 ... on beating his wife & non support; war-ent sworn out by her; case con. till 23 April; cash Bond by his brother \$2500 on 23 Aprail; he was fined \$500 (the figure and placement of the decimal point make it difficult to determine if the fine paid was \$5 or \$500) on the 14th May." The last line of the unsigned entry states, "I received check from Juge. turned it over to President." No other entries indicate that any other monies were turned over to any official in Niles.

In February 1901, an ordinance was passed that no picnic or dance permit would be granted unless \$2 was paid for police service. In April nine licenses to sell malt liquor were approved. In May, five citizens were approved as policemen without pay. Four of the five had malt liquor licenses. They would apply for a permit and have themselves assigned as the required paid policeman for the event. In 1904 the permit for a picnic or dance was raised from \$5 to \$11 and two policemen were required to be present.

In reviewing the early minutes of the Niles Village Board it would appear that permits were freely given for dances and picnics. Usually the owner of the picnic grove or dance hall requested the permit.

Individual groups also requested permits. The Niles Pleasure Club sponsored dances with regularity in any of the dozen saloons Niles housed in the first decade of the 20th century. Unfortunately only the names of groups are indicated and specific names associated with groups requesting permits are not given. Just who were the "Jolly Three" and what type of dance did they sponsor?

Other groups who had dances and picnics seem to blend into the historical landscape for the times. Of course, the Niles Poultry and Pet Stock Association had some dances. As would the Cook County Truck Gardeners Association. One could even understand why the Niles Baseball Club, the Niles Musical Club, or the Niles Volunteer Fire Department would like to blend social activity with other gatherings that brought these groups together on a more formal basis.

Groups from neighboring towns and big-city Chicago streamed into nearby Niles for picnics and dances over the weekends. Since Milwaukee Avenue was a toll road until the late 19th century, one could calculate the number of visitors to Niles by checking the tolls collected at the Niles gate, in the area of today's merger of Elston and Milwaukee Avenues. On an average week-day about \$400 was collected; those making that Sunday journey to Niles for a cemetery visit, picnic, or dance would almost double that total. This would indicate about 3,000 visitors to Niles on Sundays during the summer months.

Out-of-town groups helped make Niles the "in" place to be for social affairs. The Park Ridge City Band, the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Park Ridge, the Maine Military Band, and the St. Martin's Cadets spent a day of fun and frolic in nearby Niles. But who were the Solak Tiri Vatofo Siri? And where were they from? And why did they choose Niles for a day of fun? The Village Board minutes offer no clues.

The Village Board sometimes expressed concern about the conduct of those groups who

were granted licenses. When the St. Martin Cadets were granted a license for a picnic, a condition was attached that the cadets must surrender their rifles to the Niles Police Marshal after the ceremony at the cemetery and before they entered Pavel's picnic grove on May 30.

The Village Board also issued warnings to proprietors of picnic groves and dance halls: the August 30, 1906, minutes state "the clerk is authorized to send Mr. Nieman a notice to conduct his place in a better manner than it has been done and if not the Board will have his license revoked at once." John Calef was to be prosecuted for "violating the closing of his saloon on election day April 21, 1914, providing the witnesses sign the complaint." In 1917 Charles Hoppe, Marcel Sobiesczak, and Michael Osikowski were prosecuted for "violating the Sunday closing law." An ordinance was passed later that year that would allow sale of liquor "within 500 feet of any building used as a church or for the purpose of divine worship or teaching." The vote was 120 votes for, 36 votes against.

In October 1901 a system of telephone service was authorized, with the village president to be provided telephone service free of charge. The first connection made for the president was to the residence of the police marshal. In 1903 the Chicago Telephone Company was given the right to construct and maintain poles and conduits and install service. In 1906 street lighting was authorized. A phone was installed in the village hall in 1916. On April 6, 1923, Niles gave permission to "Illinois Bell Telephone to extend cable and wires throughout village."

There were legal concerns. In 1903 Niles joined other towns to fight the movement "to prevent the city of Chicago from abolishing township organization." An ordinance "providing for a public vote upon the question of annexing certain territory to the village of Niles was passed" March 16, 1926. A special election, July 10, 1926, was called "for purpose of changing the name of Niles to Grennan Heights."

In 1904 a volunteer fire department was in effect and received an appropriation of \$50 for hook and ladders. They also were allowed the use of the village hall for meetings. A year later a fire bell "not to exceed \$50" was authorized. In 1912 the village board appointed "a committee of three to look over a fire pump engine" that was purchased, a month later, in March. A bell tower was purchased in 1914 for \$22.40 from Montgomery Ward. It was erected later the same year. In 1915 the board decided "to get plans and estimates for a small Fire Engine House." By August 4, 1915, the fire house was erected for \$65 by Harry B. Cook. In 1916, 150 feet of hose was purchased. In 1922, a Reo speed wagon and fire truck apparatus were purchased for the unpaid balance of \$1,250 on the fire apparatus. Also in 1922 Niles made an agreement with Chicago to purchase water.

The first property tax was passed in 1906: "the board takes a levy of 2 percent on all property owners in the village." It is difficult to determine if this tax was ever collected regularly. In 1916 the village board issued \$5,000 in street pavement bonds following a vote of 64 for and none against. The money was used to pave Milwaukee Avenue to ensure it was a width of "not less than twenty-four feet" at a cost of \$4,596.06. In 1916 the Chicago, Fox Lake, and Northern Electric railway company "leases and assigns certain rights in the Village of Niles" which passed as a village ordinance. In 1922 Niles passed an ordinance "providing for payment of 2 per cent of all premiums collected in the village of Niles, by all foreign corporations doing business within the village of Niles for the benefit of the Village of Niles."

Although the minutes of the Village Board for the first two decades of the Village of Niles give a comprehensive and probably complete accounting of how all monies were spent by the village, there is no record of income until after the "king" of licensing had died when prohibition was the law of the land.

Niles Village Ordinance 105, May 24, 1918, is thus a rather remarkable document. It is the only account found of an annual income statement for the Village of Niles. The following sources of income for the Village of Niles are indicated: Saloon licenses, \$6,500; dance permits, \$190; petty licenses, \$60; dog licenses, \$100; general tax levy to pay outstanding village bonds, \$1,000; to be raised by general taxation to pay interest on outstanding bonds, \$165. The expenses for the village were also listed: payment of bonds, \$2,000; payment of bond interest, \$165; street lighting fund, \$1,209.96; road and bridges fund, \$2,400; salaries of officers and employees of village, \$1,900; election fund, \$40; contingent fund, \$304.04, for a total of \$8,019.00.

With the loss of revenue from the licensing of saloons, Niles officials immediately went on a binge of passing laws to raise revenue. With Milwaukee Avenue a major thoroughfare for the entire Chicagoland area, trustees believed it could be a source for substantial revenues: an annual public (auto service) garage fee was \$15, each pump would bring in \$3; a one-horse wagon or vehicle was to display a license that would cost \$3; those with four horses would cost \$10; a motor bicycle would bring in \$2; pleasure cars under 35hp would be assessed \$5; those over 35hp, \$10; auto coaches or buses, \$20.

A license to sell near beer ("having an alcoholic content of less than one half of one per cent by volume") would cost \$50. If the liquor license was "king" for 20 years, perhaps the new "queen" of licensing was the annual cost, \$350, to own an establishment where "music and dancing is regularly had for the entertainment of guests." The first license to sell near beer was granted to George Kowalski, September 7, 1920.

Other annual licenses: junk dealer, \$2; picnic hall or dance hall, \$12; barber shop, \$1; paint oil and glass store, \$10; blacksmith or wagon making, \$5; cattle or horse dealers, \$5; tombstone or monument dealer, \$10; dealer in fireworks, \$5; meat market, \$10; ice cream and soft drink parlor, \$10; grocery and delicatessen, \$5; milk wagon, \$5; ice dealer or peddler, \$10; fish store, \$5; butcher's wagon, \$15.

Transportation concerns are reflected in the village minutes. In 1906 the village paid \$4.50 for the use of a horse for a day and a half. In the same year the first speeding limit for automobiles was passed: 8 miles an hour. Driving more than 8 miles an hour or frightening a horse with a motor vehicle was subject to a fine of "not less than twenty five dollars nor more than two hundred (\$200) dollars" and "possible confinement in the county jail not to exceed three (3) months." The finance committee was instructed "to hire a man to time all automobiles speeding through the Village of Niles and cause their arrest."

Concern about speeding motorists is reflected throughout the minutes of Niles. However, little information is available about the number of speeders on the streets of Niles.

The problems associated with drivers of speeding autos was apparently serious, as reflected by the entries titled "Accident Report" in records at the Niles Historical Society. The following are stated exactly as they appear in the record:

"Sunday June 17th 1917
between 1 & 2 sunday morning
Charles Wilson 6843 Walton St Chi
was Driving a Marion Handley. 6. at a
reckless gate and ran into three other cars
smashing them besides his one injuring 6 or 7
people besides killing one man."

Also

"Otto Grenie (?) Hired man backed in front of a car going South and had his leg bruised slightly attended by doctor"

Also

"in front of the cemetery gate
a car going South struck a boy but stopped
and took the child & his mother away at once"

Also

"About 11 O'clock Sunday night
a car turned over at Brunce's culvert on account
of a car going north and flashing a Bright light
in his face all went away unassisted"

During the 1920s weekly entries were entered with name, address, and charge abbreviated (S speeding; R.D. reckless driving). The fine and court costs were indicated. Some lines were initialed indicating payment. The weekly accounting of those who were charged and assessed a fine would average between three and 26 cases. It would appear that only those who were charged and assessed a fine are indicated. Those who may have been stopped or accused are not included.

"Resolution of the Fred Guelzow murder case (Nov 10, 1911 minutes) on file in clerk's office. sent to inspector of police, state's attorney and widow. Board of social improvement passed Aug 20, 1907."

"Case of Rickert V. Niles (June 10, 1916 attorney for Niles pd 423.10) Settlement for \$1200; Niles paying \$1100 to estate of Albert Rickert (March 5, 1918)"

"Vote of thanks to Old Maids Club for work on Service Flag April 20, 1918, Made "for boys that were drafted or who enlisted from the Village of Niles." The War Emergency Union Resolution was passed and the Board organized a Union May 24, 1918."

"Office of Supt of streets abolished July 24, 1922."

"Note to Bank of Niles extended for 90 days; for \$5000; due March 17, 1926 (March 2, 1926)"

Only one page - title Deaths 1916
Two deaths were recorded for July 31st "cause of death" listed for both as "Alcohol and Heat"

The first official to be granted a paid vacation was C. E. Van Dusen for two weeks, (Nov 7, 1919).■

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The settlers who came to farm and the saloons that sprung up in the 1850s were to remain a fixture in the economic development of Niles for well over 100 years. Farm areas were plentiful and productive. As nearby Chicago rapidly grew, truck farming communities such as Niles prospered.

When the Village of Niles was founded, the first village ordinances spelled out the dominant position saloons occupied in the economy of the village. Unfortunately, no documents have been located which would give accurate information as to revenues of an "average" saloon. The annual cost for a license in 1900 was \$500. Many sales were necessary at 5 or 10 cents for a glass of beer to produce the healthy profits that apparently were made.

Overhead and maintenance, however, were a negligible cost in running a saloon. A "License to Use Personal Property" issued to John Calef, a Niles saloon proprietor, can be found in the archives of the Niles Historical Museum. It states: "One bar, one back bar, one mirror, one floor screen, one cigar case and stand, three tables, 12 chairs, one clock valued at \$200, one top H&H (?) wagon, (and) one regulator... For one dollar and other valuable consideration... the fixtures described...have this day been sold to John Calef (who) shall use property only in carrying on a saloon in which beer manufactured by said Birks Bros. Brewing Company shall be exclusively sold." The date was August 30, 1903. Other saloon proprietors probably made similar arrangements.

Calef's Saloon later became Joker Joe's, perhaps the most famous, or, more accurately, infamous name associated with Niles after prohibition.



As prohibition took hold in the 1920s, beer was provided for the saloons and taverns of Niles from other sources. The Lone Tree Tavern opened in 1921. The Niles Historical Museum has a file containing letters and other items written by or about the daughters of the original owner which describe the first 20 years of the tavern's existence. One of the daughters of the original owner said her father, Carl Bromberger, "wanted to make a tavern" but was "not a person for that type of business." In less than a year, Bromberger sold the business to Bob Freebus from Chicago.



Lone Tree Tavern

Anna Bromberger Bialy Echt and her sister Alma worked at the tavern during the 1920s. Anna remembers how the "Capone gang and the Moran gang were always fighting" about who would control liquor distribution in the area. As a young teen she recalls always taking a peek out the window at the "big cars the gangs came around in." She was once admonished, "put your head in the house before we shoot it off."

Anna has vivid recollections of Al Capone. She described the atmosphere that accompanied Capone as "very, very solemn. He would always come with four or five guys and a machine gun in the car. Each guy had a pistol in their waistband."

Capone had a favorite bar stool at The Lone Tree Tavern. It was "at the end of the bar," says Anna. "One foot was always on the floor. There were three doors. He never had his back toward the door. He always had to face the doors. Capone loved my mother because she was such a good cook." Capone's favorite snack was the "ham sandwich" prepared by this Polish lady who always had a ham sandwich ready for him. "He would eat it with one hand when he sat at the end of the bar."

However, "after Baby Face Nelson was found dead in a ditch north of here, (actually in Niles Center), he (Capone) didn't come around much any more," says Anna. Neither did John

Touhy, a rival beer runner. He was shot inside The Lone Tree Tavern. "There was blood all over the floor," says Anna. "But it was hard to clean up. The floor had big planks, with the bark still facing up. Later, the spot where he was shot was marked."

Alma, Anna's sister, who wrote of her recollections of The Lone Tree Tavern during the 1930s, states, "the place had a bad name. It was a nude strip joint. Sally Rand ...performed her act in the tavern."

After Freebus died, The Lone Tree Tavern closed for a few years. The sisters were able to get a loan from their grandfather in the late 1930s and re-opened the business as The Lone Tree Inn. Business was "getting better" writes Alma, "after two young men came in who were going to Northwestern University. Both were lifeguards in Chicago... More and more students came, then the coaches from Northwestern, University of Illinois, Notre Dame, and Iowa. During the football season the place was full."

All evidence suggests that the daytime population of Niles was perhaps half the number of those who visited Niles after dark in the first 30 years of the village's history. The annual picnic of the Niles Volunteer Fire Company probably attracted a large crowd to Niemann's Grove, September 2, 1923. An ad booklet was printed for the affair. It provides an interesting insight into the types of businesses in Niles at that time. Almost all those listed were located on Milwaukee Avenue. About a dozen claimed they were across the street from the entrance to St. Adalbert's Cemetery. Niles commercial establishments on Milwaukee Avenue in 1923 included: River Tavern; Michael Stachnik's Flower Shop; Tony and Dick; Frank's Tire and Tube Station; Ernest C. Moss Soft Drink Parlor; Bond's Service Station; Martinek and Krejsa Saloon and Restaurant; Andrew Szymkowski's and Paul P. Tamillo's The Hollow Inn; R.J. Beiersdork Groceries, Delicatessen, Bakery Goods, Fruits, Vegetables, Cigars, Tobacco, Ice Cream, Candy, Soft Drinks; Joseph V. Vosmik & Son Tombstones, Monuments, Statuary; Marvel Inn Refreshments, Picnic Grove; Jan Kozak (in Polish) Fabrykant i Budowniczy Pomnikow (monuments); John S. Niemann Niles Inn Hall and Picnic Grove, All Kinds of Soft Drinks and Cigars; Bob's Lone Tree Tavern, Music, Dancing (indicating it was located "1/2 mile North of Niles"); The Auto Drive, Michael Heidinger, Prop., Popular Refreshments, Sandwiches of all kinds, Barney Richter Auto Inn Restaurant and Soft Drink Parlor, Pilsen Products Olympia; Dinty Moore Barbecue meats cooked over hickory wood in real barbecue oven, Chicken dinners on short notice, John McNamara; Chi-wa-kee Red Crown Service Station, C. M. Martin Prop. Other Niles businesses listed include: Avenue Inn Picnic, Grove for Rent; E. T. Ruthenbeck's Dry Goods and Notions, Gents Furnishings; F. Poggensee Tires, Tubes, Auto Supplies; Jos. Kozla, The Barber; The Inn, J. L. Calef, Prop., Cigarettes, Cigars, Tobacco; St. Hedwig's Printery; Gus Habedank Grocery and Market; Joe Wagner, A good bite to eat any old time; F. Urbanski, Cigars, Cigarettes, Candies, Fruits; Niles Garage; and Meet Us Inn, S. P. Kovalik, Prop., Dancing, Thurs., Sat. & Sun. Welcome Inn Restaurant & Cafe, Milwaukee & Dempster, was then in Morton Grove.

The State Bank of Niles invited depositors. It advertised its "Comparative Growth of Deposits" showing it opened July 23, 1921, with deposits of \$31,568.48. By August 10, 1923, deposits totaled \$170,772.71. The ad also advised prospective patrons: "Your attention is especially directed to our new and modern safety deposit vault, which we believe to be thoroughly fire and burglar proof." The Palatine Enterprise reported that total resources of the State Bank of Niles were \$269,151.45 in April of 1926. John F. Calef was president of the State Bank of Niles when it was forced to liquidate after the stock market crash in 1929. Depositors were paid in full plus 3 percent interest until the date the bank closed in 1932.

In 1925, with the population of Niles approximately 1,700, the first concentrated effort was made to attract new business to Niles. A "fun day" was organized by some businessmen in Niles to raise money to buy playground equipment for the local school. This first "days" festival, that



Silver Leaf Tavern, now known as The White Eagle

was to develop into "Niles Days," featured picnics, a parade, dancing, and refreshments. The idea was followed up in 1926 when the Progressive Club of businessmen was established. Its activities focused on the Christmas season, setting up a Christmas tree, and inviting children to receive gifts from Santa Claus by the tree.

The stock market crash of 1929 and the Depression which followed severely hindered development of any major businesses in Niles. The following were listed in a phone book for the area published in 1931: (capital letters indicate actual name, lowercase letters indicate directory identification) Atlasta Farm Recreation Club, Auto Drive restaurant, William Bott service station, Bunker Hill Country Club, Chicago Region Landscape Company, The Cottage restaurant, Crawford Decorating, Del Norte Cafe soft drinks, H. W. Elmore & Co real estate, Martin Feht restaurant, Florentine Restaurant, Hinds Mercantile Company general merchandise, House of Niles Restaurant, Humphrey Service Station, Joe's Tavern, W. M. Kulczyk grocery, Lehman Service Station, The Little Shack restaurant, Marvel Sweet Shop confectionery, Henry Meinke vegetables, Niles Bungalow restaurant, Niles Garage, Niles Garden restaurant, Niles Pharmacy, Mike A. Nowakowski restaurant, Mike Oszakiewicz restaurant, Alex Ranieri sewer construction, Vincent Reichel meats, Barney Richter soft drinks, The River Restaurant, Anna Romb restaurant, Rose Sweet Shop, St. Hedwig's Printery, State Bank of Niles, Tam O'Shanter Golf Club, Frank J. Thomas soft drinks, Emma H. Tiedt grocery, Joseph J. Vosmik (monuments), Joe Wagner restaurant, Walt's Barbecue, Whitepoint Serve Station, J. Paul Zaleski landscape architecture, and Anton Zamiar restaurant.

The Village Board of Trustees considered several matters at the April 29, 1931, meeting pertaining to developing transportation within the village. A letter was read "from the Peoples Party Club of the Village of Niles asking the President and the Board of Trustees to try to get a Railroad Station in the Village of Niles at Touhy Avenue, on the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad, also to try and get better bus service in the Village of Niles with an extension on Waukegan Road." United Motor Coach was to be contacted for a meeting. Neither railroad service nor regular bus service became available in Niles during the Depression or, later, during World War II.

THE WAY WE WERE

By Jim Bowman



Chicagoans in 1936 flocked to suburban stands, such as this one on Milwaukee Avenue, to buy fireworks that were outlawed in the city.

Truck farming remained the major legitimate employment in and around Niles throughout the 1930s and 1940s. After World War II many builders expressed interest in residential development in the suburbs around Chicago. Bob Wordel, active with the Niles Chamber of Commerce for 40 years and a long-time resident of Niles, said that farms in the area of Niles were being sold rapidly at that time. However, they were not immediately used for residential development. "Developers didn't want many of the farmhouses and barns in Niles," said Wordel, "so they turned them over to the fire department to practice on."

The population of Niles boomed in the early 1950s. In 1953, a special census paid for by Niles, had to be taken. The population increased 3,296 or 91.9 percent over the 3,587 inhabitants counted in the official population on April 1, 1950. Niles led all northwest suburbs with 553 home building permits in 1953, which almost doubled the number of permits issued by Niles in 1952. By 1960 the population was over 20,000 and in 1970 it hit an all-time high of 31,432.

The Niles Chamber of Commerce was organized in 1951 with 40 members. Three thousand dollars was raised from businessmen to sponsor Christmas parties for youngsters. The *Niles Spectator* wrote, "The Niles Chamber of Commerce well deserves the applause for the wonderful Christmas activities." A year later, membership in the Chamber of Commerce increased to 70 members. George M. Heinze was president and would be re-elected for several terms. Heinze was founder and first president of the Tool and Die Institute of Chicago. He and his brothers had a large plant in Chicago, which they moved to Niles in 1950. A substantial portion of the souvenir edition of the *Niles Spectator*, February 21, 1957, was devoted to the business and other interests of George M. Heinze in Niles.

A concentrated campaign was made by the Chamber of Commerce to attract major industries to Niles with the principal efforts directed at the Motorola Corporation.

Bob Wordel was president of the Chamber in 1969 and later held other administrative posts at the Chamber. Wordel says that, at that time, the Chamber of Commerce "was more like an athletic club than a chamber. There were some tradesmen, tombstone cutters, and maintenance men who would get together. They even had a softball league."

There was a lot of vacant space in Niles. Even when the farmers sold their land, development did not immediately follow. "There were a lot of gas stations--one big Sinclair station that had 26 pumps--no end of taverns, many barbers were bookies," says Wordel, who recalls the "biggest room of slot machines" he ever saw on the second floor in a local establishment in Niles. There were a lot of nurseries. "Even with the building boom going on in Niles," Wordel says, "some areas were as rural as could be. Along Cumberland homes still had their own wells and septic tanks."

Cass Gramza was elected president of the Niles Chamber of Commerce in 1956. He would be succeeded by Anton Smigiel and in 1961 by Ed Baumler. Al Green became president of the Niles Chamber of Commerce in 1963. There was also a Niles Junior Chamber of Commerce that was organized in 1955. Clint Sipe was elected president. After several years of inactivity, the Junior Chamber of Commerce was re-established in 1963 when Earle Rappaport was selected chairman as a temporary officer.

Several businesses established themselves in Niles. Ideal Overall Cleaners, opened in Niles before World War II, expanded rapidly after the war. The A. B. Dick plant, a manufacturer of printing presses, printing ink and printing paper, opened on a rural route in 1947 and quickly grew to employ 3,000. A T & T Teletype built a plant in 1950 that bordered Niles and Skokie and eventually employed 7,000. Other major employers in Niles were Wilson Jones, with over 2,000 employees, and Eagle Sheet, which employed more than 1,000.

By the early 1970s, says Wordel, 27,000 employees were coming to Niles every day to work.

Several businesses in Niles occupy rather unique historical positions. Meinke Garden Center, Niles' oldest surviving business, has been located at the same location on Touhy Avenue since 1871.

The House of the White Eagle--since 1966 occupying that most cherished commercial spot in Niles, "across from the entrance to the cemetery,"--sometimes advertises itself as the world's largest Polish-American restaurant. In 1985 it was doing over \$1 million worth of business annually. An "average" weekend might find as many as 5,000 patrons dining for lunch and dinner or attending specially catered events such as a wedding reception or political rally. Owner Ted Przybylo said the largest single event at the restaurant was the 3,000 plus guests who paid tribute to Congressman Dan Rostenkowski. In 1979 Pope John Paul II visited the restaurant, and the following year President Jimmy Carter came. Chicago Mayors Jane Byrne and Michael Bilandic dined on Polish delicacies featured at the White Eagle, as did Illinois Governor James R. Thompson at a later date.

Niles became corporate headquarters for the Bradford Group, the leading national and international



The Bradford Group now

company making collectibles available to an estimated 10 million customers worldwide. In business since 1973, by 1997 the company employed 1,000 people in 14 countries with 450 working in Niles. The Bradford Exchange, a direct marketer of collector's plates, also brings together buyers and sellers in marketing plates that are available for sale in the secondary market. Collectible dolls, teddy bears, music boxes, art boxes, and miniature buildings and villages are also sold. In 1996 some 4 million customers purchased 8 million items from the Bradford Exchange or other Bradford units.

Advertising Age ranks the Bradford Group as one of the top 200 mega-brands in the United States. It is the 19th largest magazine advertiser in the nation. In 1980 it launched publication of *Plate World*, a magazine which reached a circulation of 61,000. Bradford Group secured a site on the Internet's World Wide Web in October 1996. Within six months the site was receiving more than 12,000 monthly inquiries.

The company's headquarters occupy 92,000 square feet. Included in the complex are a museum and an indoor garden. The museum displays some 800 plates produced throughout the world during the past 100 years. The garden contains more than 30 varieties of plants and trees. When the building was expanded and renovated, it added dramatic architectural designs which won awards from The Society of American Registered Architects, The American Institute of Architects, and The Associated Landscape Contractors of America. The \$4 million expansion was completed in 1985.

While other rapidly growing communities and suburban areas planned central business and shopping centers, Niles never did. Perhaps there were concerns about the already high volume of traffic on Milwaukee Avenue. Others suggested that the location of the cemetery and St. Hedwig's orphanage hindered expansion in the area of the Milwaukee-Touhy-Waukegan intersection that many regarded as the "center" of Niles. A central shopping area would bring additional traffic and create the need to provide for parking. As the building boom of the 1950s and 1960s would reveal, the infrastructure, particularly sewers and water pipelines, was underdeveloped in Niles. At that time, massive rebuilding of existing areas was probably financially prohibitive.



John Jaacks' road stand, 1920's, stood where the south half of Golf-Mill Shopping Center is today. Oren Jaacks ran the stand as a young man. It was later called Oren Jaacks Farm & Business.

No such problems existed on 88 acres of cornfields at Golf Road and Milwaukee Avenue. John F. Cuneo launched the building of the Golf-Mill shopping mall in 1959, annexed to Niles the same year. It was formally opened October 12, 1960.

A 16-inch water main was laid from Notre Dame High School to the site along with underground water storage tanks and sanitary and storm sewers. A parking lot for 7,000 cars was provided.



"The Mill"

Sears, the mall's largest store occupying 230,000 square feet, Lytton's, Henry M. Goodman, Walgreen's and Hillman's were at the north end of the mall. Karroll's Men's Shop, Baker's Shoes, National Foods, Richmond Brothers, Woolworth's, Klein Sporting Goods, Margie Bridals, and the Golf Mill State Bank occupied the south end of the mall. A 10-story professional building at the south end of the mall, designed by the architectural firm of Belli and Belli, was completed in 1963.

When P. A. Bergner expressed an interest in moving into the mall, Niles approved \$10 million in industrial bonds to facilitate the move.

By 1984 the need to enclose the mall became evident. Many newer malls were being enclosed. The \$40 million project, when completed, would add 90 new stores and result in a total of 155 stores at the mall with a shopping area of over 1 million square feet. There would also be a food court with two theme restaurants and 16 other food establishments.

Thirty stores indicated they would leave the mall since the rents doubled and tripled to \$35 to \$65 a square foot. At the time, shops on North Michigan were averaging \$40 to \$50 a square foot. Many of the stores that left would relocate in the area on the east side of Milwaukee Avenue.

The completion ceremony was scheduled for October 29, 1986, but flooding in the area forced postponement of the celebration. The Niles Police Department welcomed everyone to Notre Dame High School for a Halloween Party October 31.

The official kick-off of the enclosed Golf-Mill mall was November 19, 1986. Gary Fencik of the Chicago Bears was joined by Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and soap opera stars from "General Hospital" for the grand opening. There was a fashion show and \$5,000 in prizes was given away. The newly opened stores, according to a newspaper account, were "outrageously busy." During the Christmas season many stores reported sales up over 100 percent from the previous year.

The first anniversary of the enclosed Golf-Mill Mall was celebrated October 8-11, 1987. Jerry "Leave it to Beaver" Mathis joined the Grand Fanfare festivities.

The Mill Run Playhouse, at the north end of the mall, was opened in 1969. Its 1,800 seats were often filled for performances by such theater personalities as Bobby Vinton, The Lettermen, George Carlin, Lou Rawls, Mitzi Gaynor, and Sonny and Cher.

During a performance by Liberace, a light bulb started smoldering. The building had to be evacuated. Since there was no fire escape on the upper level, and numerous difficulties would have to be overcome in building one, it was decided to close the playhouse in 1982. Golf-Mill playhouse, along with the Millionaire's Club restaurant, were demolished in August 1984.

In 1986 Jacobs, Visconti, and Jacobs, in charge of construction and development of the enclosure, made projections of the economic impact of the Golf-Mill mall by the year 2000. The primary population base for mall shoppers would be 184,900 with an additional 162,200 from further areas who would consider shopping at the mall. The buying income of these people in 2000 would be \$4,093,178,200. Twenty-four percent would be under 17; 21 percent would be between 18 and 34; 35 percent would be between 35 and 54; and 20 percent would be over 55.

In 1990 Tim Hayford and John Gorski rebuilt and displayed a replica of the mill in the water that symbolized the development of Golf-Mill mall in earlier years. In 1963 the patio, parkways, and working mill in a pond stocked with fish won a national award from the American Association of Nurserymen Incorporated for achievement in industrial landscaping and beautification.

The Oak Mill Mall at Oakton and Milwaukee Ave. was bought and sold several times. In 1990 Jeff Green and Harry Majors purchased the mall for \$7.1 million after the courts had rejected bids as high as \$5.75 million as being inadequate. The previous owner, Milton Schraiber, declared bankruptcy. Oak Mill Enterprises 2000 assumed direction of the mall. Anchored by a Jewel/Osco, European-style businesses were launched there in the early 1990s.

Lawrencewood shopping center, occupying 37.7 acres at Oakton and Waukegan, opened in 1959. Principal occupants were Goldblatt's, Bond's Clothing, and Walgreens. Later Woolworth's, Jupiter, National Tea, and A & P moved in.

In 1988, after a legal challenge, the village compelled Robert Krilich, owner and developer, to sell the property to the village. Niles claimed the property was "blighted, vacated and dilapidated" for six years. Niles also claimed Lawrencewood buildings violated numerous building codes. Once four feet of standing water was discovered in the closed Lawrencewood movie theater. Niles initiated a condemnation suit and took Krilich to court in 1987. A settlement was made out of court.

Niles purchased the site and in 1988 sold it to Jerry Biehl of Denver for \$13.5 million. Biehl, in turn, gave 7.1 acres to the village. Lawrencewood became Civic Center Plaza and a TIF (tax increment finance district). A TIF is a financing tool that allows a designated blighted area to be developed when it is too expensive for private dollars. Tax assessments are frozen at the unimproved rate. As property is developed, property and sales taxes from the development are

collected separately to pay off the TIF loan. The TIF for the Civic Center Plaza would provide the developer with \$3.5 million. Eighty percent of the buildings were torn down to make way for the Omni Superstore that would be the anchor for the new development. Two years later B.J.'s Warehouse moved in. B.J.'s later was replaced by The Home Depot. In 1997, the village administrative offices and council chambers were opened at the northwest corner of the plaza. The formal dedication of the Niles Village Administration Building was May 18, 1997.

Jerry Biehl, developer of the Civic Center Plaza, launched a new construction project at Ballard Road and Greenwood Road. Ballard Plaza was built with a total 100,000 square feet of shopping space. Dominick's occupies 65,000 square feet.

Village Crossings Mall opened in 1989 when Montgomery Ward & Co. dedicated a 133,500-square-foot facility in the Niles section of the former site of the AT&T Teletype plant.

One mile west of the Village Crossings Mall, a Target store and a second Niles Builder's Square opened in 1995.

In July 1997 Niles had a total of 445 stores in 21 shopping centers. Six of the centers had no vacancies. The vacancy rate for all centers was 16 percent with Golf-Mill having the highest vacancy rate at 27 percent.

By 1984, when Niles ranked 50th in Illinois in population, it was 12th in retail sales with around \$500 million. These sales yielded around \$5 million in tax revenue for the village and provided almost half the village budget. It also was one of the reasons Niles' property tax rate was near the bottom among Cook County suburbs. It was estimated that 38,000 cars came daily to Niles on Milwaukee Avenue, many of them bringing customers from other towns and cities to shop in the 800 shops and service stores in the village.

Ralph J. Bast was hired in 1984 as the village's coordinator of business and industrial development. Mayor Blase indicated that Bast's responsibility was "to make sure that the industry we do have knows that the village is interested in their problems." Bast said 80 percent of his job was to call on each of the 850 businesses in the village at least once a year, determine which problems each may have, and develop an approach to solve the problems.

In 1985 Niles was the third community in the state to be recognized as a "Certified City" by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs. To qualify, Niles had to submit self-evaluations of the business climate, community development and human resources in Niles. Representatives of the village library and park district, fire department, chamber of commerce, and local business were involved in the evaluation. "The designation has earned Niles the right to be promoted as an ideal site for business to relocate," said Curt Hockett, then president of the Niles Chamber of Commerce.

In 1986 about 18 percent of Niles' total land area was devoted to light industry: American V. Muller (surgical instruments); Wells Lamont (glove manufacturer); Coca Cola Bottling of Chicago; Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich Inc. (publishers); Jay Foods Inc.; The Argus Press; and General Biscuit Brand Inc. were the principal industries in Niles.

In 1987, with Niles' commercial and industrial development "virtually complete," as one newspaper wrote after interviewing Bast, "That means its biggest job now and in the future will be to hold on dearly to what it already has." Bast replied, "keeping what we have as satisfied as possible commands most of my efforts."

To help further this goal a Niles Enterprise Assistance Team was organized to provide coun-

seling for businesses in trouble. Volunteers from the Niles Chamber of Commerce and Industry would work on-site with the troubled business to prevent minor problems from becoming major concerns.

Village Manager Jack Hadge said at the time, "Our sewer infrastructure is a major challenge for us over the next 10 years." However, another area, roadways, would require little additional attention.

"We have a rule of thumb," Hadge said. "Every street is repaved every 10 years. That's incredible. So our street conditions are fantastic here, and we want to make sure that continues."

That would seem to be the best explanation for the continued prosperity and expansion of shopping malls in Niles. Other amenities "encourage" shopping in Niles: There is a no-parking-meter policy. Never has anyone ever been "booted" for a parking violation. The Niles free bus service ensures that a resident is never more than two blocks from a bus stop within the village. A consumer fraud division was one of the first such agencies set up in any suburb.

David and Holly Franke in the book, *Safe Places for the 80s*, wrote: "If you have a champagne taste, but a beer and bourbon budget, you'll find (Niles) a stable, pleasant and community-minded middle-class haven." Its low crime rate also made it one of the safest places to live.

A beautification program in the late 1980s was launched. The main effort was on the village's southern border along Milwaukee Avenue.

Toward the end of 1997, the largest employers in Niles were W. W. Grainger (830), A. B. Dick (800), Salerno (550), Imperial Eastman (500), CCL Custom Maintenance Inc. (500), Vapor Corp. (450), and Coca Cola (350).

Since 1988 the Niles Chamber of Commerce has selected these businesses as the Niles Business of the Year: 1988, Meinke's Garden Center; 1989, Minelli Brothers; 1990, Skaja Funeral Home; 1991, Edison Lumber Company; 1992, First National Bank of Niles; 1993, W. W. Grainger; 1994, Edward D. Jones Co.; 1995, Wells Lamont; 1996, ARA Roofing; and 1997, The Argus Press.

The Niles Chamber of Commerce, since 1984, has presented the Ken Scheel distinguished service award. The award came to be known as "The Oscar" and the Chamber says it is presented "to those chamber members who make outstanding contributions to the growth and professionalism of our organization."

The award was presented in 1984 to Irv Coats and Ed Zielinski; in 1985 to Pat Kasch; in 1986 to Nick Carter; in 1987 to Irv Coats; in 1988 to Jane Janus; in 1989 to Bob Wordel; in 1990 to Gordon Faller; in 1991 to Bill Rothwell; in 1992 to Larry Ptasinski and Robert Christensen; in 1993 to Don Meseth; in 1994 to June Wisowaty; in 1995 to Wally Agee; in 1996 to Dolores Meinke; and in 1997 to Joanne Cwynar.

Citizens of the Year selected by the Niles Chamber of Commerce

1982	Bernardine Reid
1983	Elaine Heinen
1984	Ray Newman
1985	Robert Wordel
1986	Marilyn Brown
1987	Lois Kozeny

1988	Ted Przybylo
1989	Walter Beusse
1990	Joanne Clark
1991	Marge Berles
1992	Sam Bruno
1993	Todd Bavaro
1994	Edwin Miller
1995	Dean Strzelecki
1996	Adolf Foss
1997	Pete Zonsious

The Niles Chamber of Commerce presented a Lt. John Christie Citizen's Award, between 1981 and 1989, to citizens who "assist the Niles Police Department in the apprehension of a perpetrator of a serious crime." Some of the recipients of the award elected to remain anonymous. Stuart Feiler, Harry Fitzmaurice, and Mr. and Mrs. Steve Wisniewski received the award in 1981; Clement Naughton received the award in 1982; Victor Rodriguez received the award in 1984; Anthony Neva received the award in 1987 and Ricky Cherio received the award in 1989.

The Niles Chamber of Commerce recognized secretaries working in Niles. At several programs all secretaries present at the program would be recognized. Those secretaries who were designated as the Secretary of the Year included: Maxine Kolak (1988); Rita Behrendt (1989); Evelyn Gaertner (1990); Betty Rolla (1991); Marybeth Laernahan (1992); Millie Horak (1993); and Florence Wichlac (1994). In 1995 this award was replaced by a "Right Hand Employee" luncheon sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

The Niles Employee Assistance Program was launched to help employees who have personal problems that may affect job performance. These employees do not have to be residents of Niles to take advantage of the services. Problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, family conflicts, and financial difficulties are treated by professional counseling services of the agency.■

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLING: NILES TOWNSHIP

The first school in Niles was opened in 1838 at the intersection of today's Touhy and Harlem. There were four pupils: two each from the Ebinger and Ruland households. The first teacher was a Scotsman named Ballentine. The second teacher, Miss Phillips, was paid \$2 per child, per term with the "bachelors chipping in to help maintain" the school. Mrs. Cordelia Wheaton, the third teacher, was paid \$12 a month and was provided room and board.

In 1849 John Odell provided a plot of land near Milwaukee and Harlem Avenues for a new school. John Ketchum, brother of Mrs. Ruland, built the new school for \$25.

George Eckhoff, in preparing material for an article on the development of Milwaukee Avenue, wrote that Frank Whittington had in his possession an early record of taxpayers in Niles. These records show that "in 1851 William Horner donated ground for a school and a school district was organized by the following residents: John Gray, later the founder of Grayland; Robert Hart, for whom Hart's Road was named; George Scolley, later postmaster of Niles, and James Milne. By 1854 the names of taxpayers had reached about 20, including Nicholas Eckhoff who had lived on the North Branch."

This school was built, writes a Mr. Beaudette, for \$1,000. By 1884, about 65 pupils were attending school, with half at "the German school."

A school known as Niles District No. 2 was built in 1860 in today's Morton Grove. The school, mandated by the state, was called the "Little Red School House." It served a large geographical area.

By 1915, school districts changed their numerical designations. Beaudette, writing in 1916, describes a school in Niles District 71, "this school was the one of the old District No. 3 previously, and had stood on this spot for 22 years, but the building is a new one."

Former teachers are identified as Mrs. Kaly, "of the younger days of the school," and Mrs. J. Day of Park Ridge who "taught here for 20 years."

In 1915 the teachers were Miss Elizabeth Johnson, a teacher in the fifth through eighth grades, and Miss Alice Wagner, who taught first through fifth grades. Both teachers were from Chicago. Johnson is described as the "youngest principal in Cook County. (She) came to school every morning on horseback. Her horse, 'Mary Ann' is gentle only with its mistress."

In 1988, 185 graduates of Niles Elementary School District from 1912 to 1948 had a reunion. Published comments from that



*First and second grade, Niles Elementary School
District 71 - 1928-29*

reunion provide insight as to the growth and development of the school district during the first half of the 20th century.

Shirley Kluesing Bianchi, class of 1938, said "It was a little stricter back then. The class sizes were smaller." Typical graduating classes were eight to 12 students. Since many of the families in Niles at that time were Polish, Ukrainian, or German, Bianchi said, "You learned the native language at home while at school you learned English."

Barbara Kozla, class of 1912, attended the reunion. Her brother Jim Kozla was a member of the District 71 School Board and had the only barber shop in town located on the northeast corner on Milwaukee and Touhy.



The original Niles Elementary School dating back to the 1930s.

Marilyn Brown, president of the Niles Historical Society, class of 1935, provided a 16 mm movie showing many of the school's graduates dating back to the 1890s and the changes in the school buildings and grounds.

The original school was built in 1838. A two-story brick building was built in the area of the present school building in 1894. An outhouse and a pump for water were added. A portable schoolhouse was added in the 1920s. A two-story four-room brick building was built in 1927 with the 1894 building and portable building still in use. Additions were made in 1938,

1952, and 1955. In 1998 the school was closed and students were relocated to the Culver School.

PUBLIC SCHOOLING: MAINE TOWNSHIP

Most children in the immediate area of the first settlement of Niles at Milwaukee Avenue, Touhy Avenue, and Waukegan Road probably attended school near this settlement. However, many families were also settling northwest of this area and probably sent their children to schools in Maine Township. District boundaries were re-drawn several times and frequently reported payment of non-resident tuition. It is likely that students would travel to an available teacher as work requirements decreased on the farms.

School trustees were elected in Maine Township at a meeting convened August 24, 1841. That same year, during September, school districts were established.

In November funds were distributed to the school districts: District 1 received \$12.36; District 2, \$5.77; District 3, \$9.48; and District 4, \$14.42. In 1843, records A.T. Andreas, historian of Cook County, \$978.58 was provided for the school districts. The trustees distributed only the interest on the school fund. Amounts ranged between \$10 and \$15.

The first teacher's receipt, October 12, 1844, was signed by Mrs. Eliza P. Wood. She received \$15.52 for teaching in District 3. Others received lesser amounts.

Total number of all students was 174; District 3 had the most students with 54. By 1849, districts were expanded to six and students totaled 265. District 3 again had the most students with 56 enrolled.

Anita Anderson of the Park Ridge Historical Society uncovered a fragment of an unidentified newspaper that indicates "All school teachers in the town(ship) of Maine had to go before him (Mr. Brown) to get their certificates appointing them to hold forth as teachers capable of having charge of the then children now men and women of today." This original news item is in the archives of the Arlington Park Historical Museum and, it is believed, was published in the late 1850s or early 1860s. That analysis appears accurate. Editions of *The Prairie Farmer* published in Illinois at that time devoted considerable attention to the qualifications and preparation of teachers.

On October 1, 1855, Martha Ferguson gave account for teaching 1,703 days; the amount due her was \$55. Miss M.C. Skinner taught 1,002 days and was paid \$72. Harriet Clark taught 1,109 days and received \$36. No explanation is provided by Andreas to explain the discrepancies.

The State Superintendent of Education ordered a census. The following statistics were released:

	Under 21	Between 5 and 21
District 1	140	85
District 2	190	118
District 3	71	57
District 4	149	101
District 5	104	75
Totals	654	436

The total number of students was 889 in 1871. By 1875, it was 1,199.

A document provided by School District #63 states, "We have in our files, records of this school district going back to 1848." Those records, unfortunately, are not available.

The account indicates a one-room frame building was the first school in the district and was located at Ballard Road and Western Avenue. It is not clear when the school was built. In October 1848 a library for the school was provided at a cost of \$15.52. In 1857, the school collected \$18.87 for tuition from non-resident pupils.

Frederick A. Cutter was paid \$30 a month for teaching the five months of the winter term of 1858. School enrollment was 47 but average attendance was 25. Attendance remained around 50 percent well into the early 1900s.

In 1865 John Wood sold a one-half acre plot to the Maine Township School Trustees for \$25 to build a school on Milwaukee Avenue in the area of today's Golf-Mill shopping center. Part of the original structure of the school has been kept intact and is today a section of Doerner Jewelers at 9201 N. Milwaukee Ave.

In each of the five years following the Civil War, 1865 through 1870, the school tax was raised. In 1876 a new one-room brick schoolhouse was built.

Vaccinations for school children in Illinois became mandatory in 1893. In 1900, the school district was re-titled District #63 in Cook County and would no longer be known as Illinois School District #3. (This identification in the account appears to be in error. The unidentified author probably has reference to this district as the Maine Township District #3. This would agree with the account of Andreas given above.)

A vote to build a new school, with two rooms, was passed in May 1902 by a margin of 24 votes to 12 votes. Another favorable vote on a bond issue for \$3,500 covered the cost. This school, called East Maine School, opened on Milwaukee Avenue across from St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in 1902. A well was drilled in 1909. The wooden steps and sidewalk were replaced with cement. A furnace was installed in the basement in 1926.

A parent-teacher organization was organized in 1930. PTA members cleaned and painted the basement in 1931. In the mid-1930s PTA members purchased and planted 29 elm trees and 80 shrubs around the school.

During the 1930s several elections were conducted because the school became overcrowded. All elections voted favorably to build a new school with monies raised by a bond issue. Five acres were selected at Ballard Road and Cumberland Avenue. In March 1940, application was made for assistance from the Works Project Administration (WPA). It was granted and the school building was completed April 20, 1942. The WPA continued working at the school improving and landscaping the grounds. Two additions were added to Ballard in 1949 and 1961. The school was closed in 1978. In 1997 it was sold to Opus Dei for use as Northridge Academy.

The Nelson School in Niles was named after Viola Nelson, one of the teachers at East Maine School. Mrs. Nelson began teaching at the East Maine School in 1929. At that time there were 40 pupils enrolled. The Nelson School was built in 1961, with additions in 1962, 1963, and 1966.

Other schools in East Maine School District 63 include: Apollo built in 1970, with an addition in 1975, closed in 1981, and reopened in 1992; Gemini was built in 1960 and had additions in 1962 and 1965; Emma S. Melzer was originally built in 1956 with additions in 1958, 1963, and 1966; Shelly Nathanson was built in 1961 and closed in 1980; Oak was built in 1964, with additions in 1957, 1962, and 1963, closed in 1980; Adlai E. Stevenson was built in 1968 and closed in 1992; Twain was built in 1962 with additions in 1963 and 1964; Washington was built in 1959 with additions in 1963 and 1967; and Woodrow Wilson was built in 1965 with an addition in 1965 and closed in 1978.

Most of the schools that closed were used by community or religious groups for educational purposes.

Mabel Warnke, author of several personal histories, and a direct relative of one of the settlers in Maine Township, wrote of the homestead of Dr. John and Mary Kennicott and the "one-room Grove school founded by Dr. John" in 1853.

Each Illinois Township, according to an Illinois law passed in 1857, could establish one high school. The first high school attended by Niles residents was Jefferson Park Township High School, built in 1869.

The school opened in May 1870 above a police station at Irving Park, Cicero, and Milwaukee Avenues. In 1883 it moved to a site at 4626 N. Knox near the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad station at Montrose.

Early records of Jefferson Township High School are still maintained today by its succes-

sor, Schurz High School. The names of early Niles residents, particularly the Ebingers, are still on school records indicating they attended Jefferson Township High School.

Rapid population growth in Maine Township led to the establishment of Maine Township High School in 1901. Dr. C. A. Earle headed the first school board.

A site was purchased at 1557 Thacker Road in Des Plaines. Construction of the high school began in 1902. A \$15,000 bond issue covered costs.

The school opened in November 1902 with 35 students who had been meeting in a Park Ridge elementary school since the beginning of the school year. By the end of the school year, there were 50 students in the school. W. L. Smyser was the principal.

Earling Lunde, a 1910 graduate, wrote in the *Park Ridge Herald* that the school was the first to organize a suburban high school baseball league. He was the captain of the team, practicing in an unheated hall of a saloon keeper. His courses of study included spelling, grammar, rhetoric, literature classics, commercial arithmetic, algebra, plane and solid geometry, Latin (2-1/2 years), German (2 years), history (2 years), physiography, physiology, penmanship and music. Lunde received a scholarship to the University of Chicago but could not attend until he completed courses in physics and chemistry, which were not taught at Maine Township High School.

A \$55,000 addition, with an auditorium, gymnasium, and "swimming tank," was built in 1915 for the 185 students at the school.

Maine Township was the first school in Illinois to teach telegraphy and automobile repair. A hole was chopped in the school's 2-foot-thick walls so cars could be driven in to be repaired. An instructor, who did not know how to drive, worked with students in repairing the cars.

In 1927 Maine Township High School was in danger of losing its North Central Association accreditation. The building was judged to be inadequate and overcrowded.

A new \$650,000 high school building at Dempster and Potter Road was made available to Maine Township High School in March 1930. Later this school would be called Maine East High School. Today most students of high school age in Niles attend Maine East.

Niles high school students also attend Maine South High School, which opened in September 1964 at Talcott and Dee Roads, and Maine West at Wolf and Oakton, which opened in September 1959. When Maine North High School near Golf-Mill was open in the 1970s some students from Niles attended the school.

Maine Township schools have been recognized by the United States Department of Education in the National Secondary School Recognition Program: Maine East in 1985, Maine South in 1989, and Maine West in 1991. The schools have some 200 courses available. Approximately 85 percent of graduates attend a college or university. Enrollment at the Maine Township High School peaked in the mid-1970s with almost 12,000 students. Enrollment declined to about 5,000 in the late 1980s, and by 1997 was growing again and stood at 5,500 in 1997. There were 823 students from Niles attending the three Maine Township schools in 1997.

A 1914 survey in Niles Township indicated that, although there was some interest in developing a high school, the community was not ready for such a step. Niles residents interested in attending high school in Niles Township had to travel to New Trier High School or Evanston High School for a secondary education. The Niles Township Post of the American Legion took a similar survey in 1928 but again the project of a new high school was postponed.

Niles Center High School was created within the building of Lincoln Elementary School by District 69 in 1931. Initial enrollment was 48 with maintenance funds provided from tuition received from Non-High School District of Cook County. In 1932 a third year for high school studies was added. The school was renamed Niles Township Community High School. Official approval for a four-year township high school district came on June 6, 1936. This district would later be known as District 219. The first class of Niles Township Community High School graduated in 1937. After a separate board of education was elected, Ralph E. Cotanche was appointed principal.

A completely new building was opened for the exclusive use of Niles Township Community High School in 1939. It accepted students from Morton Grove, Niles Center (Skokie), Tessville (Lincolnwood), Golf, Glenview, and Niles. This school came to be known as Niles East in 1961 and was closed in 1980.

There are two high schools in today's Niles Township District 219: Niles North, which opened in 1964, and Niles West, which opened in 1958. Both schools are located in Skokie. Approximately 4,000 students attend the schools. In 1995 61 students from Niles attended Niles North and 202 students from Niles took classes at Niles West.

In 1991 Niles North and Niles West received the U. S. Excellence in Education award. In 1997, of the 194 courses available, 13 advanced placement courses were taught in seven subject areas. The graduation rate in 1996 was 94 percent with 89 percent of graduates indicating they would be continuing their education.

NILES COLLEGE

After St. Hedwig's Orphanage and Training School was officially dissolved October 1, 1960, the 32-acre campus and buildings were designated as the Junior College Department of St. Mary of the Lake Seminary.

Classes began in September 1961. Msgr. Eugene F. Lyons was appointed rector. Ten diocesan priests were assigned as the faculty. Students studied liberal arts in the two-year program in preparation for continuing their studies in philosophy and theology at St. Mary's College in Mundelein, Illinois. They were also encouraged to participate in apostolic programs in the archdiocese such as working in retirement homes, hospitals, or individual parishes. Some students elected to work in foreign missions.

Through the Priestly Formation Program, the entire student body would be broken down into small groups. Each group would meet with a director every week and discuss relevant topics of concern. Individual counseling was provided for each student, and each student received a personal evaluation of his personal development at the seminary.

In 1968, St. Mary of the Lake Junior College became Niles College of Loyola University. Seminarians could now major in subjects other than philosophy and theology. A student would take core subjects at the Niles campus and courses for his major at the Loyola campus in Chicago.

Msgr. Lyons became rector-president in 1968, to be succeeded in 1971 by Very Rev. William O. Goedert, who was followed by Very Rev. Richard B. Saudis in 1977.

In its first 15 years of existence, St. Mary of the Lake Junior College and Niles Seminary of Loyola University accepted 2,000 students. In the first year, 320 students were accepted. A few



Niles College

years later the school reached its peak enrollment of 400. A steady decline began and by 1979 there were 165 students. In 1994 there were only 85 students studying at Niles College.

Throughout the years the college maintained an active role in the cultural life of the community. A Niles College Symphony and Niles College choir performed numerous times at the school and throughout the community over the years. The Niles College Theatre performed popular plays such as "Of Mice and Men" in 1980. Newspaper accounts indicated it was "a hit" and was performed for several performances for the community.

Efforts to keep the campus viable were undertaken. An early 1993 report indicated that contributions and corporate grants to the college ranged from \$300,000 to \$700,000 during the early 1990s. During the summers of 1990 and 1991, Performing Arts Festivals were staged on the campus. In 1992 Niles College received a \$35,000 grant from the Chicago Community Trust to continue the Performing Arts Festival.



Enrollment at the college did not improve. Niles College closed in 1994. The faculty and programs were moved to Loyola University in August 1994 where the school would be renamed St. Joseph Seminary. In 1995 the final public program took place at Niles College: the Running Revs, a basketball team of archdiocesan priests, took on former Niles College students in a basketball game.

The buildings of Niles College were put up for sale in 1994. After several proposals were rejected, an eventual sale was made to Pontarelli Builders. The 21-acre site was purchased for \$9.2 million. St. Adalbert's Cemetery would receive 4.6 acres and an area was set aside for a public park. On the portion that remained 80 one-bedroom condominiums, 276 two-bedroom and 64 three-bedroom condominiums were built. Niles officials expressed satisfaction, as they believed younger families would be attracted to the area.

NORTH SUBURBAN POLISH LANGUAGE PRE-SCHOOL

The North Suburban Polish Language Pre-School, organized in 1992, met regularly during the week and on Saturdays at the Ballard School. Enrollment was usually in the teens but did reach 30 students in one year. The school was active in Niles until the Ballard School facility was sold in 1996.

Other groups who met at the Ballard School associated with the North Suburban Polish Language Pre-School were the Adam Mickiewicz Choir, the Lowiczanie Dancers, and a language class for adults.

NORTHRIDGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Northridge Preparatory School was founded in 1976. The school's first enrollment was 34 students. Students attended grades 6 through 12. At that time, the school occupied the former Wilson School in Niles at 8255 Harrison. Northridge is fully accredited by the Illinois Department of Education and is a member of the Illinois High School Association.

Parents, instrumental in the founding of Willows Academy for girls, sought out James B. Stenson of The Heights School in Washington, D.C., to establish a similar school for boys. Northridge was founded with a curriculum based on a liberal arts orientation: eight semesters of each of the following are taught: English composition and literature, mathematics, history, science, and Latin and/or Spanish. Theology is taught to Roman Catholics and other interested students. There is also an introductory course on computers. All students are scheduled for four semesters of physical education.

Study skills are a year-long activity, with all students required to study three hours every night and complete reading and writing assignments during the summer.

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor and meets with him approximately nine times a year. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved with these meetings and other school events throughout the year.

Each of the 12 students in the school's first graduating class in 1980 went on to a college or university. Three were national merit semifinalists and two others received recognition as commended students. "Virtually all of Northridge's graduates go on to competitive four-year colleges," states a recent profile issued by the school.

There are numerous extracurricular and athletic activities. Approximately three-fifths of all students play in at least one interscholastic sport. Varsity championships have been recently won by the soccer and basketball teams. Students are also encouraged to participate in local, state, and national contests for writing, computer skills, and various academic competitions. A Homepage



The former Ballard School, now Northridge Preparatory School

was recently introduced on the World Wide Web.

Northridge, with an increased enrollment of 206 students, relocated to the former Ballard School at Ballard Road and Cumberland Avenue for the beginning of the fall term of 1997.

Tuition is \$4,800 to \$5,500 annually. Approximately 38 percent of students receive full or partial financial aid. The purchase of the current school building was made possible by a successful \$3.2 million campaign concluded in January 1997. The archdiocese of

Chicago rejected an effort by Northridge to move into the former quarters of Niles College.

The Catholic Prelature of Opus Dei (God's Work), a lay organization which in some ways is structured like a religious order, provides spiritual formation and religious instruction at the school. Opus Dei is not subject to the rulings of the archdiocese of Chicago and reports on its activities directly to Pope John Paul II. It was the agency that purchased the present site for the school for \$925,000.

Opus Dei also approves the membership for an elected Board of Directors.

Headmasters:

James B. Stenson, 1976-1988

Dr. Gerard W. "Jerry" Shepherd, 1988 -1997

Robert J. "Bob" Pasquesi, 1997-

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

The population of Niles was dramatically increasing after 1950. Samuel Cardinal Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago, saw a need for a Catholic high school in the northwest suburbs. He invited the Holy Cross Fathers to found such a school. That school would be Notre Dame High School. Today it is the only regular four-year high school in Niles.

Ground-breaking ceremonies took place September 1, 1954. In June of 1955, Rev. Theodore Mehling, C.S.C., provincial superior, selected the 16 priests who would be the first faculty members of the new school. The Holy Cross Fathers staffed Columbia Preparatory School in Portland, Oregon. That school closed in 1955. Many of the teachers from that faculty were assigned to the new school in Niles. They brought with them Columbia's school colors, green and white, and school song, only the words were changed, to the new facility.

Applications for Notre Dame were taken as early as 1954 in a store front on Harlem and Dempster. When the school opened in 1955, 550 students were accepted; 450 were freshmen and sophomores. The gym and library were not finished. Harrowing, and unfortunately true, stories are still told about cars being towed after being stuck in the mud of the school's first parking lot, which was unpaved.

In 1956, close to 500 freshmen enrolled. The following year, 425 freshmen were enrolled with others placed on a waiting list. The aim of the school was to stabilize each new class with an enrollment of 425 after 1957. Total enrollment declined in the 1990s; current enrollment is 680 students.

Academic preparation and achievement were always top priorities at Notre Dame. Since its founding, more than 90 percent of all graduates have gone on to further studies at colleges and universities. In recent years that figure is closer to 95 percent. Notre Dame students taking college board tests and other qualifying exams generally score above national averages. Illinois State Scholar programs, advanced placement classes and the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C., Scholar Program present especially challenging academic curricula for gifted students. The Brother Andre Program is designed for students of average and below-average ability who show interest and demonstrate potential in continuing their education beyond high school.

Father James d'Autremont, C.S.C., the school's first principal, after discussions with students, selected the name "Dons" to represent the school's athletic teams. "Don" is Spanish for gentlemen. Notre Dame (Our Lady) men would be Gentlemen of Mary. This theme was carried out in other school programs. The school yearbook is called MARIDON, a combination of the two words "Mary" and "Don": Gentlemen of Mary.



Aerial view Notre Dame High School

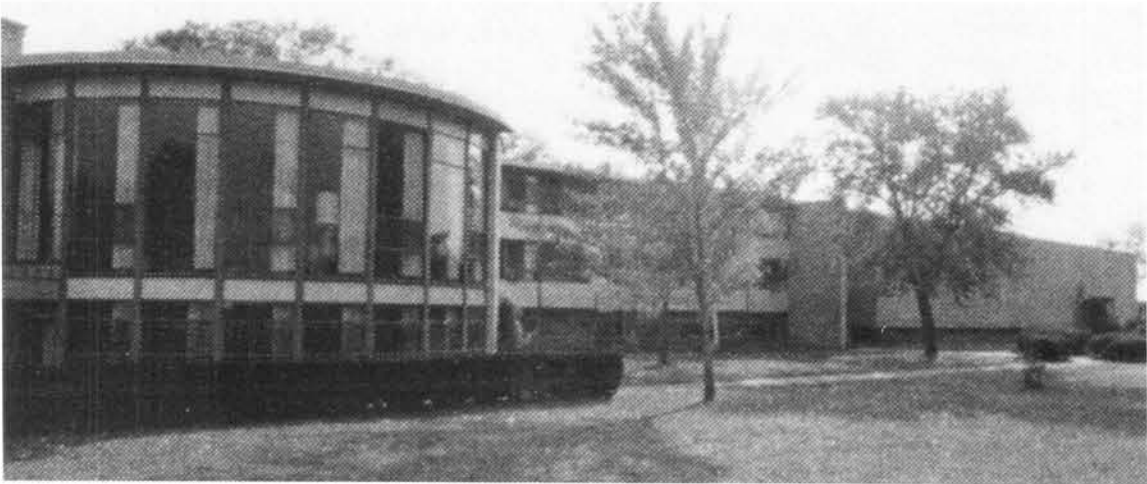
One of the first student groups formed at the school was Cross and Anchor, a service organization. Activities of this group rapidly expanded and in 1989 Notre Dame established community service as a graduation requirement.

Early floods on the gymnasium floor, outdoor practice fields and running tracks did not stop an active athletic program from developing. Today, with facilities and equipment that are among the finest in the area, Notre Dame fields teams in cross-country, football, golf, soccer, basketball,

hockey, swimming, wrestling, baseball, tennis, track and field, and volleyball. A member of the Illinois High School Association, Notre Dame competes in the East Suburban Catholic Conference on the varsity, sophomore, and freshman level. Many championship trophies won in athletic competition adorn the school's trophy case.

School principals:

Rev. James d'Autremont, C.S.C.	1955-1961
Rev. Joseph O'Neill, C.S.C.	1961-1967
Rev. William Simmons, C.S.C.	1967-1969
Rev. Charles Kohlerman, C.S.C.	1969-1971
Rev. Donald Haycock, C.S.C.	1971-1973
Rev. Milton Adamson, C.S.C.	1973-1977
Rev. Thomas Markos, C.S.C.	1977-1980
Rev. George Highberger, C.S.C.	1980-1981
Rev. David Tuschar, C.S.C.	1981-1985
Rev. George Kahle, C.S.C.	1985-1986
Rev. Ken Molinaro, C.S.C.	1986-1998
Mr. Paul Maloney	1998-



Notre Dame High School

OAKTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Maine-Niles Community College, today's Oakton College, opened with temporary quarters in 1970 in Morton Grove. The school had a district office in the Golf-Mill shopping center.

In 1971 Oakton selected the site of the former Dempster Golf Course at Dempster Street and Milwaukee Avenue for its permanent campus. After purchase of 30 acres was approved by the College Board of directors, a building program was launched for 1973 through 1979 to accommodate the projected 7,000 students who would be attending by 1980.

Immediate opposition developed from Catholic Charities and the archdiocese of Chicago. "The New World," official publication for the archdiocese, wrote in its November 26, 1971, edition that the permanent campus for Oakton at the Dempster-Milwaukee site is a "good idea (but it is the) wrong location" and that the archdiocese "will oppose (further plans) every step of the way."

Lawyers for Oakton Community College attempted to have 105 acres in the area condemned so the college could proceed with plans. The archdiocese warned that the "campus could be one of the costliest in history."

By February 1972, the Oakton Community College Board of Directors dropped plans for building the college at this site after the Illinois Junior College Board rejected Oakton College's proposed acquisition. R. W. Brune, chairman of the Illinois Junior College Board, said that continued effort to acquire the site "was not in the best interests of the junior college system." Citizen opposition was developing and fears of prolonged litigation were factors in the decision.

Oakton Community College broke ground in Des Plaines in 1975 with the first class taught in the fall of 1978. In 1980 space was rented from Niles Township District 219. The Skokie campus of Oakton Community College was opened in 1993 at the former Niles East High School. The Ray Hartstein campus was opened in Skokie in 1995.

In the 1970-71 school year, 832 students were enrolled at Oakton Community College; 116 were from Niles, including 49 full-time and 67 part-time students. In the fall of 1997, total enrollment at Oakton was 10,007. Full-time students from Niles numbered 361, with an additional 306 attending part time.

There is also a continuing education program conducted by Oakton Community College. In 1979, 13,000 were enrolled. Today the program is called the Alliance for Life Long Learning. Enrollment for 1997 was 22,703, with 1,030 students from Niles.■

St. Hedwig's Orphanage

St. Hedwig's Orphanage was built in response to the growing needs of the Polish-American community in the Chicago area in the late 19th century. Existing orphanages serving the county and the Polish-American community were not able to care for the rapidly increasing numbers of orphans caused by the Chicago fire of 1871, and the epidemic which followed called the "Black Death Pox."

On July 13, 1906, Archbishop James E. Quigley of Chicago called a meeting of all pastors of Polish-American parishes. He encouraged the building of a new orphanage to care for the estimated 200 Polish dependent and neglected children in public and non-sectarian orphanages. A committee was appointed to purchase land. A decision was made to purchase 17 acres from the Polish-Bohemian Cemeteries (where St. Adalbert's Cemetery was located). The Felician Sisters were selected to administer the institution. They accepted the responsibilities for providing care, but would not accept financial responsibility for the project. The Institution became an archdiocesan project with each Polish-American parish contributing funds.

The cornerstone was laid June 12, 1910, with the title St. Hedwig's Orphan Industrial School. Legally, the titles would read: "The Polish Manual Training School for Boys" and "St. Hedwig's Industrial School of Girls." Rev. Francis S. Rusch was appointed the first superintendent. On July 12, 1911, 63 children were admitted: 34 boys and 29 girls.

A thesis, *An Historical Study of St. Hedwig's Home*, written by Sister Mary Dulcissima Malolepszy in 1945, and submitted to Loyola University in 1945, gives a wealth of information about the development of St. Hedwig's. The early surroundings were, writes Sister Dulcissima, "in no way impressive. Far on the outskirts of Chicago, it was a barren, treeless territory, uncultivated and forlorn." Rev. Rusch, an ordained priest for one year before given the appointment to St. Hedwig's, commented, "Niles was the end of the world in those days. There wasn't much of anything there. There were no roads and no neighbors, just the isolated brick building with which we started St. Hedwig's."

Rev. Rusch undertook the physical development of the institution: "The campus was designed, the lawn was prepared, trees planted, farmland cultivated, and the orchard established." There were problems. The well which supplied the school with water was operated by an electric motor that constantly stopped functioning. This caused Rev. Rusch to borrow a horse and wagon and haul barrels of water from the nearest farm. This proved to be a concern even when the well was working. "Many's the times I awoke at two or three in the morning," said Rev. Rusch, "I'd put on my cassock and make the rounds on all three floors to be sure there was no fire."

The first building was erected at a cost of \$110,000 in 1910. Over the years the campus grew to 41 acres. Additional buildings were added to the school and administration building: the boys' section, the girls' section, and the chapel. These four buildings were three-story, separate brick buildings, joined to the administration building by hallways. Other buildings included an infirmary, dining hall and kitchen, print shop and bindery, laundry and power plant, gymnasium, rectory, garage, barns, and poultry house.

Age limits for admission were usually between 2 and 15. In 1911 the total population of boys was 121, that of girls, 90. Admissions continued to climb until the late 1920s when the total number of boys was 461 in 1929. In 1928 the largest population for girls was reached with 405. Population continued to decline during the 1930s and 1940s, with the exception of 1945-46, following the conclusion of World War II, when 104 child refugees were admitted. The population

continued its decline throughout the 1950s. The orphanage was disbanded shortly after the death of Rev. Rusch in 1959.

The staff of the school was divided according to responsibilities. The teaching staff, during the 1940s, consisted of two priests, 12 sisters, and four instructors in the trades. Two assistants were also available to teach religion and to structure a recreational program. Sisters also acted as supervisors. Each group of 25 youngsters had a supervisor. Three sisters were in charge of the preschool children: one for the nursery and two for the kindergarten. In all, 55 sisters provided a variety of services.

The medical staff consisted of a physician, a dentist, a graduate nurse, and two practical nurses. The physician visited twice a week and the dentists examined the teeth of all children four times a year.

Household duties--laundry, cooking, baking and sewing--were performed by sisters. Term employees included an engineer, farm hands, printers, binders, fireman, a carpenter, a plumber, a painter and a night watchman

The educational curriculum provided was approved regularly by the State Board of Education. Academic subjects on the high school level were religion, English, Latin, history, sciences, civics, algebra, typewriting, shorthand, bookkeeping, domestic science, arts and crafts, and physical education. Vocational subjects taught were agriculture, printing, binding, woodwork, barbering, sign painting, gardening, baking, secretarial studies, art, child care and training, clothing, foods, home nursing, beauty culture, and power sewing.

Other regular activities included the opportunity to attend daily mass, take part in special religious devotions in May and October, and observe other holy days throughout the year. Regular sports activities included baseball, basketball, volleyball, croquet, marbles, touch football, handball, indoor softball, and ping-pong. After teams were organized, competition with other schools was encouraged. An R.O.T.C. program was launched for boys and soon afterward one was started for girls. Community activities saw children take part in local theater groups, attend amusement parks, take annual outings to zoos, museums, Wrigley Field, and picnics. Swimming parties and hikes were also arranged. Coed dances and other activities were also scheduled several times a year. All students were eligible to play in the school band or take vocal music lessons if they so desired.

Those who were of age, and qualified, were encouraged to apply for part-time work both inside and outside the home.

Financing was provided by diocesan funds collected in an annual charities drive, Community Fund allocations through Catholic Charities, public payments for children committed by the juvenile court, the Chicago Welfare Administration, tuition fees and voluntary donations. Annual per child cost was \$388 in 1944.

The building complex that once was St. Hedwig's was totally demolished in 1996 to make room for a condominium development. However, the spirit and influence of St. Hedwig's Orphan Industrial School continues with the Hedwigian Alumni Association. This group of members exchanges information by means of *The Hedwigian II* newsletter and meets for an annual dinner.

ELECTION OF 1961

Frank Stankowicz was well-known in Niles for more than 40 years. Appointed a policeman in 1929, Stankowicz was elected clerk in 1937 and then, in 1941, mayor. He was re-elected in every election with comfortable margins until 1957 when he won by less than 150 votes.

In February, previous to an election, candidates generally file their declarations regarding the office each will seek in the upcoming April election. As anticipated, Frank Stankowicz filed for re-election as mayor. Leader of the Progressive Economy Party, his slate included Ed Marszalek for clerk, and John Sapit, Kevin Barry, and Joe DiMaria for trustees. Some commentators noted that he had not placed seasoned pros on his ticket as he had in all previous elections.

In mid-February, Stankowicz "leveled a heavy salvo at opposition parties," reported *The Life*, February 23, 1961. Stankowicz claimed the opposition parties are insulting the intelligence of Niles citizens. They are "promising all things to all men, promises they know in good conscience cannot honestly be fulfilled without resultant harm to the entire village."



*Frank Stankowicz
Mayor, 1941-1961*

Stankowicz explained, "To attempt to relegate village government responsibilities to the position of a proving ground for amateurs or self-seekers is foolishly asking for disaster itself."

Stankowicz pointed out the accomplishments of his administrations: one of the lowest tax rates in Cook County, no deficit spending or financing in providing village services; free garbage and rubbish pick-up; an award-winning fire department and ambulance service at no extra cost to taxpayers; the lowest fire insurance rates in Illinois for communities of comparable size; the lowest crime rate when compared to surrounding communities; a police department that provides excellent protection to families and their children; and an administration that opens its records to the voting public.

The Life article noted that this "blistering attack" was surprising because the campaign was so young. During his campaign Stankowicz continued to emphasize his long experience in Niles government, continually reminding voters that the low tax rate in Niles was the result of his administration, and cautioned voters to beware of the promises of his opponents because they would not be able to fulfill them.

The Action Party was headed by John F. Stanley. His running mates were Walter J. Lorenz for clerk and Roy Berquist, Gregory Clark, and Raymond Wilkins for trustees. Stanley was a member of the village board of trustees at the time. He was very active in promoting and was generally given credit for having the massive Golf-Mill shopping mall constructed on the village's northern boundary and then annexed to the village. He brought to the attention of voters, and gave reasons why, Niles would need a new zoning code. Along with other candidates, he took a strong

position on the "hot issue" in the campaign: the amount of multiple unit dwellings that would be permitted in Niles and what types of restrictions would be placed on future developments of multiple unit dwellings. Stanley wanted them strictly controlled.

This election was the first run for public office for Nicholas Blase. As head of the New Era Party, Blase and his slate of candidates included Marge Lieske running for the office of clerk and Kenneth Scheel, Robert Wente and Leonard Szymanski, candidates for trustees.

Blase was active in two community organizations. As president of the Greenwood Estates Homeowners Association, he was able to convince contractors that they had to return to the homes they built in Niles and install the proper construction designs for drain tiles using only approved materials. This was completed at a modest cost to homeowners. Blase's running mate, Szymanski, was very active in the Kirk Lane Homeowners Association. Kirk Lane was actively involved in assisting in the development of other homeowner associations. Since many Niles residents were actively involved with homeowners associations, they were probably favorably disposed toward the New Era candidates. Wente and Scheel, New Era candidates for trustee, were active on the zoning board and had taken definite positions on annexation concerns that won the support of many voters.

Blase was also president of the Niles Citizens Committee, which tackled major concerns of citizens that local government agencies often ignored. At the time of the election, the committee was advocating a Niles Recreation Center, a project strongly supported by the people, and attempting to have all Niles citizens in one voting district. This issue so confounded actual voters and so discouraged potential voters that many probably believed the problem without solution. In some elections, Niles library voters voted at one polling place, Niles park district voters voted at another polling place, and Niles voters for village government may have to vote at yet a third polling place. When all three votes were cast the same day, a voter would usually have to visit two different voting booths to cast ballots. It was confounding, confusing, and probably exasperating. The fact that a committee would take on potential solutions for such problems might have caused a small glimmer of appreciation in voters. Blase, who would later call the committee the most important committee in Niles, was, no doubt, the beneficiary of this appreciation.

Blase and his party frequently spoke about Niles having an independent government. They called for public forums on issues affecting the people of Niles and supported rigid control on multiple unit dwellings.

Ed Ciccone was the presidential candidate on the Niles Improvement Party. His running mates were Michael Provenzano for clerk and Gerald Sullivan, George L. Loechl, and Douglas J. Strutz for trustees.

The key issue for the Improvement Party was the appointment of a village manager. Neighboring towns had appointed village managers. It could easily be demonstrated that governments were more efficient in those towns. The idea of a village manager and the end results may have been desired by voters. However, discussion of such a radical change for Niles government was not an easy campaign theme to explain. Everyone was for efficiency, but the details might invite numerous questions: The village manager would be appointed by the mayor, may be removed by law, would be the chief administrative officer in the village, must attend all board meetings and is responsible to the board of trustees, makes recommendations regarding village government, makes recommendations regarding hiring and firing, recommends pay scales, recommends consolidation of offices, investigates complaints against the village and the services the village provides, is the village purchasing manager, handles all finances for the government including estimated funds available, the annual appropriations, and the tax levy, and keeps an inventory of all village properties.

Voters probably listened more sympathetically when the Improvement Party spoke about how they would rectify traffic problems in the village.

Two other announced candidates probably influenced some of the voting. Ben Sosnowski filed his candidacy for village clerk and indicated he would run on a full ticket that would be filed later. Those candidates never filed and Sosnowski withdrew from the race. In the previous election Sosnowski ran on the same ticket with Stanley, who almost ousted Stankowicz. Sosnowski's support of Stankowicz after his withdrawal was not easily explained.

James Kozak, who had run as candidate for clerk with Stankowicz in previous elections, filed as an independent candidate. Kozak was an extremely popular candidate but his comment after filing--"It's now up to the people to decide if I'm to continue my job"--seemed to indicate he did not feel comfortable either as an independent or as a member on any of the slates running candidates.

Although the positions of candidates were frequently printed in the local press, and *The Life* asked, "Will this be the year that Frank Stankowicz tastes defeat?" Only *The Niles Bugle* published a strong editorial on the eve of the election.

As expected, voter turnout was heavy. The *Niles Bugle* reported, "The startling upset was unbelievable because of the decisiveness at which the non-professionals swamped the 'pros.' The New Era Party won 14 precincts out of 20 and Blase, low man of the four winning candidates on his ticket, received 700 votes more than Mayor Stankowicz who finished second in the four-man mayoral race."

Kenneth Scheel, Robert Wentz, and Leonard Szymanski were elected trustees. James Kozak, the only independent in the race, was re-elected village clerk.

The Niles Police chief, Robert A. Romey, submitted his resignation as did the village attorney, Henry Wells. Other resignations and new appointments soon followed.

A month after the installation of the new officers, Mayor Blase announced that no new gambling stamps had been issued to Niles and the jar games of gambling, detailed in the Chicago metropolitan press, had been removed from the village. The mayor also said that he and members of the committees of the board of trustees would be available at convenient times to meet with individuals or groups who have concerns to express about the village.

As Mayor, Blase became Niles Liquor Commissioner, governing the protocol for businesses to obtain and hold permits to sell liquor in Niles. Later, in 1985, he appointed a trusted associate, Nicholas Costantino, as Assistant Liquor Commissioner to preside over liquor hearings. Costantino instituted educational seminars for the benefit of liquor permit holders.

In office but six months, Blase appointed himself and two trustees to a special committee. It would "work out technicalities (so that Niles would) eventually get a village manager."

The New Era in Niles was well under way.■

would be "Progress" and "Pride." "Progress," reflecting the Mayor's announcement, became the "middle name" of Niles. "Niles Progress Year" translated into a living, personal awareness reflected by the people of the village who knew the demands and work necessary to keep Niles modern and progressive. "I'm proud of Niles ... now, let's tell America!" repeatedly urged the cartoon tiger of the Niles Junior Chamber of Commerce. With encouragement from village government, guided by the perceptive vision of the Jaycees, the people of Niles responded.

For five months data was gathered and assembled by the Jaycees. The official entry blank for a 1964 All-America City award was quite lengthy and the Jaycees prepared well to document the submitted application.

The second question asked: "What have citizens done to merit an All-America award?" Four specific points were listed: "worked to vote reform mayor and administration into office; started and expanded library facilities; set up park district and expanded recreation facilities; conducted money-raising campaign drive for a new YMCA."

The question, "What prompted the citizen action?" was answered in the following manner: "The old village administration was in power 20 years and was not in accord with changing times or needs of a growing population. Citizens were concerned about uncontrolled gambling." The lack of or inadequate library and park facilities were also mentioned. Citizens "felt the need for the opportunities the YMCA can provide."

Citizens were able to accomplish their goals, according to the application, in the following manner: "Thirteen homeowner groups backed the candidacy of the reform mayor and trustees...; the Woman's Club of Niles formed a special library committee and recruited volunteers. Later (a) Friends of (the) Library group was formed which helped pass the bond issue; civic organizations and homeowner groups secured volunteers to circulate petitions requesting referendum for the formation of a park district. Later, citizens organized Citizens for Better Parks to pass bond issue; Development Division of the YMCA contacted several prominent citizens and suggested need for Y in the village. The need was recognized...." The application indicated that over 800 citizens actively participated in these efforts.

Specific individuals were mentioned as being active leaders in the efforts to accomplish these goals: They were: (reform government) George Gauthier, Stanley Lowe, and Robert Wingfield; (library) Clarence Culver, Edna Walger, Rudolph Hazucha; (park district) Lee Cress, August Scully, and Keith Peck; and (YMCA) Angelo Marcheschi, John Poeschl, and Al Green.

A detailed narrative explained how changes in these four areas were accomplished.

A rather interesting question was asked about the unresolved problems in the community. Niles' answer made reference to the fact that geographical boundaries for schools set by the state "bear no geographical similarity to the village." Inequities for funding the schools were explained and efforts to correct these measures were outlined.

Niles was in competition with 110 other cities.

In October 1964, Niles received word it was selected as one of the 22 finalists invited to the All-America conference where the All-America cities would be determined.

Earle Rappaport, president of the Niles Jaycees, complimented Walter Zinn, who had compiled the information and submitted the application, Russell McAndrew, and Kenneth Cohen for "the tremendous amount of hard work" performed in presenting Niles for All-America City consideration.

Each of the 22 finalists was to send a delegation to San Francisco, November 20, 1964. A jury called by the 70th annual National Conference on Government would evaluate the presentations made by each delegation. Jury foreman was Dr. George H. Gallup, chairman of the Council of the National Municipal League and director of the American Institute of Public Opinion. Members of the jury included Vernon C. Myers, publisher of *Look Magazine*; Lois V. Edinger, president of the National Education Association; Allen H. Seed, Jr., executive vice-president, Keep America Beautiful; Mrs. Robert H. Rawson, assistant to the president, Greater Cleveland Associated Foundation; Mrs. Dorothy M. Ford, president, National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs; Willard V. Merrihue, chairman, Effective Citizens Organization; William E. Dauer, president, American Chamber of Commerce Executives; Dr. Donald H. Webster, director, Bureau of Governmental Research and Services, University of Washington; Mrs. Robert S. Stuart, president, League of Women Voters of the U.S.; Mark Matthews, former president, Junior Chamber of Commerce; and George W. Jones, secretary, San Francisco Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

After arriving in San Francisco, the Niles delegation traveled by cab to the meeting. One cab was loaded with display materials, brochures, and a large neatly prepared scrapbook. When the delegation arrived at the conference, each member was wearing a large button proclaiming, "Niles" prominently displayed in the center and made reference to the "progress" Niles had recently made. It proved to be a coup because no other delegation chose to visually project their purpose in coming to the conference. Leading the Niles delegation was Mayor Nicholas Blase. Village clerk Margaret B. Lieske, trustees Angelo Marcheschi, Kenneth Scheel, Leonard Szymanski, and Robert Wente, and Village Manager James Pryde also represented the village government. Others in the delegation were Albert Green, president of the Niles Chamber of Commerce, and Kenneth Cohen, Russell McAndrew, and Walter Zinn of the Niles Jaycees. Each was prepared to participate in the oral and visual presentations to the jury that would select the All-America cities. Funding for the trip was made possible by the Jaycees.

Judging would be based on what the judges saw and heard. The Niles Jaycees came well-prepared with visual displays. The smiling Jaycee Tiger beamed a friendliness that invited a closer examination of Niles exhibits.

"Niles... Progress... 64" was attractively placed on the cover of the booklet that documented the reasons Niles deserved the All-America City designation. This booklet was cleverly illustrated and visually appealing. The first page shows a torn section of a newspaper. The headline screams, "Chicago Daily News Finds New Gambling Game in Niles." The date, April 6, 1961. The second page projects another headline. "Stankowicz' 20 Year Reign Ends," dominates the upper left-hand corner. Coming into view in the lower right-hand area is another headline, "Blase Promises Niles New Era." Complete stories are printed with each headline.

Next page: a headline announcing Police Chief Romey's resignation is accompanied by his letter of resignation. A new police chief "vows action" on the next page. The headlines proclaim, "VICE WAR ON..." "Pinballs Are Moved Out."

With the bold headlines, judges in San Francisco, in a matter of seconds, knew what the problem in Niles was. For Niles to be considered worthy of All-America City designation, judges would have to know, would have to be convinced of -- how Niles had changed, and what would motivate Niles in the future.

As the headlines reported the "vice war," emerging from the background and coming into view on the same page, judges saw at the top of the page, "Citizen Action in Niles Means Progress and Progress is our Middle Name..."

A momentary pause seemed natural for viewers of this page as their eyes naturally descend to review two photos with large, very pronounced, hand-drawn "X's" crossing out two of Niles' infamous "clip joints." Without words, the viewers "see" where the war has already been successful. The final message on the page, where the thumb is ready to turn, lets the judges know why Niles is in San Francisco: "Proud, You Bet We Are, of People, Places and Things..."

Those four introductory pages may have taken each judge a few seconds to scan. The impact perhaps left a lasting impression that prepared the judges to read the remainder of the booklet. They would discover many, many cold, hard facts, statistics, and details. The focus of the narrative would be to present a complete picture of Niles. These were the changes made in Niles. This is what we call progress. The underlying unwritten theme projected from every page: This is how the people of Niles work. This is why the people of Niles deserve your vote in selecting Niles as an All-America City.

A variety of visual formats was employed in describing and showing the changes in the Niles police and fire departments, explaining the campaign for the creation of a public library, showing the development of the park program, and describing the construction of the YMCA.

Judges were made aware that "In Niles, We're Proud of our... Village Executives, the Niles Youth Commission Theatre, Niles Days" (with complete documentation of monies raised and distributed). "Growth in Niles" is shown by many more statistics than are given in this abridged summary: in 1955, 28 plants employing 4,170; in 1964, 88 plants employing 9,611; tax revenues increasing from \$23,000 in 1955 to \$375,000 in 1964. A page is devoted to Niles schools and another page to Niles area churches.

A seven-page narrative without any illustrations concludes the pamphlet. We read, "It is impossible to relate more than some of the highlights of the dynamic rebirth of a village" in this brief presentation made. Judges probably agreed, there was not "time to fully tell about the hours of discussions, the days, weeks, and months of planning, and sometimes the years that the citizens put into various efforts," as the final page states. However, it bears repeating that judges in San Francisco were always made aware of a "secret ingredient" Niles had in its "recipe for making a village good." That secret ingredient is "people" who are active citizens. Judges had read:

"A government is as good as the people want it to be."

"Fortunately, various citizen groups stepped in and began working to improve Niles."

"The first successful citizen action was setting up an independent Niles Park District."

"The Niles Village Library, completely citizen supported..."

"Hundreds of citizens... believed Niles deserved a better government and went door-to-door..."

"The YMCA was ready... to start fund drives... Niles residents surpassed their goal by almost 35%."

"As long as there are people willing to give of themselves, there are no obstacles that cannot be overcome."

It was evident that the Niles delegation came to San Francisco equipped with enthusiasm and determination to go along with their pamphlets, displays, and badges. Everything that could be prepared, was. A final evaluation would be made based on the oral presentation. What questions would be asked? More importantly, how would these questions, questions that no one knew

in advance, be answered?

Mayor Nicholas B. Blase made the oral presentation for the Village of Niles.

Judges were favorably impressed, no doubt, by comments such as the following exchange reflects. When asked what Niles does to attract industry, Blase responded that in Niles, "we don't really have to seek out industry since industry comes to us."

After viewing and listening to other presentations, Green predicted that Niles has "an excellent chance to be a winner." The delegation had done its work. It could but return to Niles and wait.

Previously an announcement had been made that All-America officials would be visiting all 22 cities selected as finalists. These visits would be between October 1964 and March 1965. Several days before Christmas a delegation came to Niles. They stayed three days, took a lot of photographs, and left.

The letters came March 4 and March 10, 1965. One was from the National Municipal League, the other was from *Look Magazine*. Both sent notification and congratulations to Niles on its selection as an All-America City. Both asked the news of the selection remain confidential until a news release would be issued. *Look Magazine* in its release wrote: "In Niles, just north of Chicago, a bitter block-by-block, door-by-door campaign was needed to elect a reform slate in 1961. Reform was overdue, not only to bring community services abreast an eight-fold increase in population but to rid the town of gambling establishments. With citizen committees and government working together, the town now has an anti-gambling ordinance, a new 52-acre park and community center, a new library building and a new village hall."

Further notation was made that "The All-America City designation is given each year to eleven cities whose citizens made outstanding progress in solving community problems."

This notification that Niles was selected as an All-America City resulted in a feeling of justifiable pride immediately sweeping the village. A telegram arrived from the White House. President Lyndon B. Johnson congratulated Mayor Blase and the people of Niles. He also added, "The example you have set of constructive citizen action and interest in municipal affairs deserves the highest praise."

The village announced that an official flag raising would be conducted April 11 at the new village hall. On that day, a few minutes after 2 p.m., the All-America City flag flew over Niles.

A major parade, advertised as the largest the northwest suburbs had ever seen, was scheduled for May 2. An evening banquet was also planned. Joseph Bayard of *Look Magazine* would officially make the presentation.

The Life newspaper, April 8, 1965, wrote in a front-page story, "One of the big reasons for Niles winning this honor... was the effective clean-up of alleged honky-tonk and gambling operations in a strip located on the village border." The newspaper praised the Mayor Blase administration and *The Life* editorial campaign in the "clean-up." Mayor Blase returned the compliment and said the editorial campaign was a "major contributor to our winning the award." However, Blase gave his highest praise to the people of Niles, "The village is All-America because its people are All-American."

An editorial in *The Life*, April 15, 1965, pointed out: "Today the village is still the fastest growing on the North Side in population, but it has become a booming suburban center of industry that provides employment for Nilesites, therefore increased identification."

"An administration supercharged by Mayor Nicholas Blase has knocked the big-city's palookas over and out and unerringly is forging an economic future to Niles second to none.

"Today Niles is a village for and by the villagers.

"It is a community epitomizing cooperation--to the tune of bigger and better police and fire departments, more recreation and open air space, municipal structures corresponding with growth, comprehensive planning and more still to come, like schools, parks, libraries."

This same newspaper featured the "All-America City, Niles, Illinois" newly designed emblem across its entire front page April 29, 1965. Niles also commanded the entire front page of the monthly publication of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce for May 1965. The proposed new library for Niles was on the front page.

The Pickwick newspapers published a "Niles All-America City Section" in their editions. Major portions of the Jaycee pamphlet, prepared for distribution in San Francisco, were re-printed for the general public for the first time. The newspaper has several historical features. One of them commented on the fact that this would be the second major parade down Milwaukee Avenue in the village's history. Previously, in 1927, a parade was organized to celebrate the widening of Milwaukee Avenue.

The Niles Bugle wrote that the festivities of May 2 were "Niles' finest hour." The comment most frequently heard that day, reported *The Niles Bugle*, was, "I'm proud to be part of Niles."

Governor Otto Kerner declared May 2, 1965, "Niles, Illinois Day." Congressman Donald Rumsfeld had the day's festivities recorded in the *Congressional Record*.

Chuck O'Grady was the organizer of the three-hour parade on Milwaukee Avenue featuring 150 units. Paul Douglas, U.S. Senator from Illinois, was one of the honored guests attending the parade.

Caren Karpiak was selected the All-America City Queen and Paul Tony Frer wore the King's crown for the festivities. The Niles Lions Club was awarded first prize as the best professionally decorated float. The Women's Auxiliary of the Niles Police had the most attractive non-professionally decorated float. The Niles Fire Department reflected the best theme with its float. It portrayed, "Niles, Whale of a City." It was estimated that more than 15,000 people viewed the parade in Niles.

Rev. George Wiskirchen, C.S.C., of Notre Dame High School wrote and directed the high school band in a musical rendition of his own composition, "The Pride of Niles." It began: "Niles, we salute a great city in Illinois!" urging all to, "Just keep improving and go on building with civic pride and renown." It paid tribute to, "A mayor devoted to our problems," and concluded, "Just keep on going, our All-America town."

Del Clark of radio station WRSU provided exclusive coverage of the All-America City presentation and parade.

The evening's festivities were at the Tam O'Shanter Country Club. Attendance was limited to 800, capacity seating on both levels at the club. More than 1,600 reservations had been requested.

Mayor Blase, in his welcoming remarks, greeted everyone at the banquet as a guest of honor. He said, "I congratulate you, the people of Niles for making this award possible. It was not

just new government that brought about this change in Niles but, rather, a change in attitude brought about by the nature of the times.

"Government cannot do anything--like eliminating gambling... It is done by the people--government in itself does nothing.

"We stand here to congratulate the people of the Village of Niles for having brought about something that wasn't here before, something that makes you proud to be here to accept an award, something that thousands of communities cannot and never will have--because you chose to make a change."

A few days after the official presentation of the All-America City Award, the Village Board of Trustees appointed an All-America City Commission to plan appropriate ceremonies for celebrating the award during the coming year. Members of the Commission were Al Green, Marge Lieske, Angelo Marcheschi, Walter Zinn, Russell McAndrew, Steve Tsalikis, Diane Hansen, Sam Bruno, Charles O'Grady, Nort Goodman, and Stan Lowe.



All-America Award Presentation

Activities launched May 2 continued to snowball. Radio station WRSV broadcast a regular series on "Niles: All-America City." The program had features such as "Mr. Average Citizen," interviews with top officials in Niles government, interesting people, tales, facts, and statistics culled from the history of Niles, and reports on Niles clubs and charitable activities.

"The Pride of Niles" was recorded, released as a 45 rpm record, a popular collectible at the time, and distributed free of charge by the Bank of Niles.

Requests for the special expanded edition of *The Niles Bugle*, which reported on the festivities of May 2, could not be met even though copies were being "marketed" by enterprising individuals for \$1 a copy, well above the cover price of the newspaper.

The shield logo proclaiming the "All-America City, Niles, Illinois" quickly began appearing on numerous flags, logos, emblems, and newspaper and magazine covers. Everyone in Niles seemed aware of the All-America designation and reflected it in some personal or public manner.

The All-America City Commission had a plaque designed displaying the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. After this plaque was exhibited in the Niles Village Hall, the display was offered to other communities to display free of charge.

Operation Standby was a project announced by the All-America City Commission. Non-perishable items were to be collected and distributed to families in need. By year end, 3,850 cans of food were collected along with 50 blankets.

The major event to commemorate the All-America Year was inviting the mayors from the other All-America Cities for an All-America weekend in Niles, October 8-10, 1965. The *Look Magazine* coordinator for the All-America Cities project, complimented Niles officials for organizing such a weekend of activities: "This is the first time such a conference has been undertaken--you people in Niles are real pioneers. Congratulations!" In cooperation with the National Municipal League, *Look* arranged for Dr. Edward M. Martin of the *National Civic Review* to address the seminar in Niles for All-America City mayors.

After the mayors arrived, it was discovered that most of their luggage could not be located. Niles merchants were put on short notice to design, sew, and properly fit appropriate formal evening wear. Wives of visiting mayors were particularly concerned about what they would wear for the ball. Bridal shops in Niles were hard-pressed. However, it was reported, wives of visiting mayors were highly satisfied with the exclusive Niles fashions prepared for them in less than 24 hours for the formal evening ball at the O'Hare Inn the following day.

Visiting All-America mayors included William Barr from Fort Worth, Texas; F. Ernest Lackey of Hopkinsville, Kentucky; Councilman P. Morrow of White Bear, Minnesota; H. Rubin of Columbia, South Carolina; and Edward L. Twomey of South Portland, Maine.

On Friday the mayors were given tours of the Niles police station, fire station, and other municipal buildings. Each was interviewed by national radio personality Jack Eigen for broadcast on coast-to-coast radio. On Saturday all participated in a seminar of local municipal government at the Niles municipal building. While gentlemen attended a press luncheon at The Lone Tree Inn, wives and other guests were escorted to Tiffany's for an All-America Style show and luncheon.

Mayors, their wives, and guests met Saturday evening for a formal ball in the Grecian Room at the O'Hare Inn. Guests were formally introduced and escorted to a table. An official host or hostess representing Niles accompanied each mayor. Diane Hansen, All-America City ball chairperson, greeted the guests. Nort Goodman, chairman of the All-America City Commission, introduced members of the commission and other dignitaries in attendance. Mayor Blase was presented as the Master of Ceremonies who introduced each of the mayors in attendance.

On Sunday, after a visit to Ridgewood Cemetery to the grave of Clara Blase, the departed wife of Mayor Blase, the mayoral delegation were guests of the Mill Run Theatre.

News of Niles' All-America designation reached beyond the continental borders of the United States. In March of 1966, an All-America City tour took off for Honolulu where Mayor Neil Blaisdell was presented with a Niles All-America City flag and was granted honorary membership in the Niles Chamber of Commerce. Operation Wash Up resulted with a truckload of soap collected in the early months of 1966 and sent to U.S. servicemen in Vietnam. A baby from Hong Kong was brought to the United States for an operation that could not be performed in Hong Kong. After the baby returned to Hong Kong, bake sales in Niles raised funds as an All-America City project to assist this baby financially and also to help babies in need living in Niles.

The All-America Year concluded with a regular Village Board meeting and a dance at the Bunker Hill Country Club. Mayor Blase thanked the All-America City Commission, saying they "did a fantastic job of spreading good-will and making people aware of why Niles was elected for this honor."

The Niles Junior Chamber of Commerce published a souvenir booklet saluting Niles in receiving the All-America City designation. The last page was a personal note signed by Nicholas B. Blase. It was titled, "Where do we go from here..."

The Mayor of Niles wrote of Niles achieving All-America recognition and suggested, "we face an even greater challenge." He wrote of the importance of "building a cultural heritage for our community, the strengthening of community relationships, the creation of a sense of purpose for all of our citizens." Specific concerns were mentioned. "We cannot afford to rest on our laurels... We must go forward," wrote Blase. He implored all citizens to pledge themselves to the tasks ahead.■



NILES PUBLIC SERVICES

As early as 1899, when Niles was incorporated as a village, a strong sense of awareness, of what today is termed "public services," was evident. Three of the five standing committees of the first village administration made specific reference to areas of public services. There was a committee for drainage, license and sewage, another for streets, alleys, and bridges, and a third for lampside and crosswalks. Frank Whittington, although not an elected official, was the only Niles official listed in board minutes with other elected officers. Whittington was the commissioner of streets. Committee names were altered slightly but the above-named areas of responsibility, frequently discussed at Village Board meetings, remained constant well into the 1930s.

Issues relating to public services in early Niles would frequently develop according to the following pattern. A concern or problem was brought to the attention of the Village Board. A typical example might involve a specific section of a street to be improved. Whittington, as road--sometimes called "highway"--commissioner, would draw up or have drawn up specifications for a project. Often these proposals would fill dozens of pages of board minutes. After the project was approved by the Village Board of Trustees, Whittington would hire day workers for the project. The first recorded regular payment Whittington received as road commissioner was in 1909 when he was paid \$120 in March of that year. Records indicate this payment was for less than one year. In addition, Whittington received pay based on the days and hours he worked. In comparison, the village attorney Theo A. Kolb was appointed in 1909 at an annual salary of \$100. Ed Clark was appointed street commissioner in 1910. In 1914 his title became superintendent of streets.

Beginning in the 1920s rubbish in Niles was picked up once a year. Farmers were hired and used their own trucks to haul away rubbish.

Before Niles was able to obtain water from Chicago, the village blacksmith also served as the village plumber, who installed water services in homes. In 1924, a metered connection was made with the Chicago water system at Milwaukee Avenue and Imlay Avenue allowing for water mains to serve the 550 people of Niles. Special assessments made possible the extension of these water mains during the 1920s. In 1934, after Chicago extended a 30-inch main in Harlem Avenue to Touhy Avenue, a new metered connection was constructed at that intersection.

In 1930, the Village of Niles appointed a village tapper, Frank Freeman, and a village engineer, Arthur W. Consoer. Records indicate that Clark was appointed road commissioner. There was no appointment for superintendent of streets. Joseph Bailey was appointed road commissioner in 1931.

Frank Freeman was discharged as tapper and John Aliprandi was appointed tapper in 1932. A year later, the three committees of the Village Board related to public services were merged into two committees: one was public works, streets, alleys, sidewalks, and garbage; the other was public utilities, water, sewers and lighting. In 1935 John Aliprandi was appointed superintendent of public works. Committee appointments on the Village Board dropped the words "public works" and "public utilities" that were used in 1933. During this period, the superintendent of public works was the second highest paid official in Niles. He received \$125 per month; the police chief received \$150 per month.

The Depression affected Niles as it did many other communities. The Village Board was

successful in obtaining federal funding for several public works projects. Those employed in the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) cleaned up the North Branch of the Chicago River. The WPA (Works Progress Administration) hired people to install sidewalks and sewer and water mains. Niles residents were also hired to work on bridges in Niles. The Village paid \$190 to supply workers with necessary tools. Niles hired dozens of its own citizens for public services such as collecting garbage, or working in the water department. Each worker received 50 cents an hour. By Village Board action, all appointed village officials also took pay cuts. In 1935 regular garbage pick-ups were initiated every Friday after the village purchased its own dump truck. Garbage was hauled to an area near the southwest corner of Touhy Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue. Street signs were purchased and installed for all streets in Niles in 1937.

During the years of World War II, particularly after 1941 when the United States entered the war, Niles began to operate its public services with greater efficiencies. New trucks were purchased to haul garbage and dozens of workers were no longer needed. Delinquent water bills were no longer a concern of the Village Board and the water department. Numerous proposals were discussed to attract factories to the village. These proposals required coordination with the public services department in the village to assure prospective business corporations that their needs for water, roads, and utilities would be met.

Following World War II, housing developments began cropping up in Niles. Pressure of water coming in from Chicago was not sufficient to distribute the water effectively throughout Niles. A reservoir and pumping station were constructed near Harlem Avenue, north of Touhy Avenue, in 1947. Feeder mains were installed throughout the village for the estimated 2,500 residents. Financing for this improvement was made possible by issuing water revenue bonds.

Anthony Rodenski was appointed superintendent of public works in 1949.

In 1953, with the financial assistance of several industries, water mains were extended to the area east of the Chicago River, an elevated tank for 250,000 gallons was constructed, additional pumps were installed, and automatic controls were added at the pumping station. The village population had risen to approximately 7,000 and shared the costs of these improvements by issuing water revenue bonds.

Edward J. Bacher, Sr., was appointed director of public works (services) in 1956. Bacher, often called "Eddie," served as director until 1979. He was very popular within the department and throughout the village. During his tenure he received the Samuel A. Greeley Local Government Service Award for dedicated service to village residents by a public service official. After he died *The Niles Bugle* wrote in a major front-page article that "his contributions to Niles ...rightfully earned him the title of 'Mr. Niles.'" Mayor Nicholas Blase commented, "Eddie Bacher was the foundation of our community.... His feeling for and dedication to the community will never be replicated."



Edward J. Bacher, Sr.

In 1956, a second pumping station was added, the reservoir was enlarged to hold 1.6 million gallons, rechlorination facilities were provided, a second elevated tank holding 250,000 gallons was constructed, and feeder mains throughout the village were installed to increase water pressure and improve fire protection. These improvements were made possible after issuing water revenue bonds in 1956. The same year a tree removal

program was initiated for parkway streets and the following year the department began a weed-cutting program. The population of Niles was approximately 11,000 residents.

In 1957, the Metropolitan Sanitary District extended an interceptor sewer from McCormack Boulevard and Howard Street westward through Niles. This sewer eliminated the need for the two lift stations, which Niles had been using. The public services department also entered into a contract with the State of Illinois for the maintenance and cleaning of state highways. In 1958 Niles purchased its own grader which made possible more efficient maintenance of streets and alleys. A new sewer machine was also purchased and a thorough sewer-cleaning program was initiated. Additional equipment and vehicles were purchased in 1959 and a decision was made to maintain a separate department in public services for repair and maintenance of all equipment and vehicles within the department.

In 1960, preliminary plans were drawn up for the proposed installation of 14,635 lineal feet of water feeder main extending from the water reservoir to Nora Avenue to Milwaukee Avenue to Dempster Street to Prospect Avenue to Elizabeth Street and terminating on Milwaukee Avenue. This installation would provide additional water pressure for the northern section of Niles. Plans were also made for the acquisition of additional land at Touhy Avenue and Waukegan Road for the construction of a 3 million-gallon addition to the existing reservoir. A semi-annual tree-spraying program began in 1960, public services became involved with rodent control, and a sign machine was purchased to manufacture within the department all necessary reflectorized signs for the village.

Since the population almost doubled from 1957 to 1962, rising to 25,000, further improvement plans were made during the construction of the 3 million-gallon reservoir addition. Plans were approved for a 5 million-gallon reservoir addition and would provide 150 percent of maximum day capacity requirement when completed in 1966. This addition brought total underground capacity to 10.2 million gallons. Additional pumps were added to increase pumping pressure to all sections of Niles.

During the 1960s back-up systems were added to ensure water distribution during emergencies: a combination diesel-electric stand-by engine was installed at the pump station to safeguard against a complete power failure; an emergency water connection to the City of Chicago water main was installed to enable Niles to receive water in the event of a main break at the Niles source of supply connection at Harlem Avenue and Touhy Avenue; and an alarm system was installed at the Niles police communication center to provide 24-hour alert when mechanical trouble developed at pump stations, reservoirs or overhead tanks.

The following statistics published in the spring of 1964 in the village newsletter illustrate "a few of the facts that will help the (water and sewer) committee determine the requirements of reservoir water capacities needed based upon present and future anticipation:

1. Total water reservoir capacity including overhead tanks	5,500,000 gallons
2. Daily average 24-hour water supply from City of Chicago	3,800,000 gallons
3. Daily average winter consumption	3,500,000 gallons
4. Daily average summer consumption	4,750,000 gallons
5. Highest summer water consumption on record (6/26/63)	6,759,000 gallons."

As the village grew, so did the public services department. In 1954 the department left their quarters in the fire department for a new 94-foot-by-50-foot garage built at 6849 West Touhy Avenue to house the department's eight employees, two dump trucks, a 1-16 yard Packer, two pick-up trucks, and one sewer-cleaning machine. By 1964, 30 pieces were in use. Additions were

built in 1958-59 and 1962. By 1964, the public services department had 120 miles of sewers to service, 100 miles of streets to maintain, and 7,000 water meters to read.

With water capacity, water pressure, and back-up systems in place, Niles was able to obtain a favorable insurance rating from the Illinois Inspection and Rating Bureau, which resulted in savings on fire insurance rates for all properties within the village.



L-R: Robert Komar, Thomas Mahoney, Louis Hoelbl, Edward Bacher, Richard Albrecht

As the village rapidly expanded in the 1950s and 1960s, there were numerous concerns about flooding. The record rainfall of 4.75 inches on June 10, 1967, dramatically illustrated the need for cooperation among state, county, and village officials in alleviating future problems which might develop as a result of a major storm. Beginning in 1967, a major project was undertaken to widen and install a sewer on Oakton Street. The State of Illinois and the Cook County Highway Department cooperated with Niles in installing a sewer that ranged in size from 15 inches to 5 feet. This sewer would carry off storm water from intersecting streets removing water from combination sewers installed in these areas more than 30 years earlier. Relief sewers were also installed along Oakton Street to tie into the storm sewer.

While plans were being made for the construction of these sewers, Niles became the first local municipality to adopt a flood ordinance plan approved by the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Chicago. In 1970, Niles and Cook County jointly financed the installation of a storm sewer on Howard Street. In 1971-72, village personnel cooperated with the Cook County Forest Preserve by removing fallen trees and debris from the North Branch of the Chicago River. A storm water retention basin was constructed in Maryhill Cemetery in 1973 to bring flood relief in the northern areas of the village. In recent years sophisticated machines have been purchased to assist the village in maintaining its sewer system. A "Vactor" was purchased in 1995. It cleans sewers by flushing out debris, cuts through roots in sewer lines, and removes debris from catch basins. This is all accomplished without the need of employees climbing into sewers to remove objects. In 1997 miniature television cameras were used to determine areas of 150-mile sewer system under Niles in need of repair.

The Niles public services department invited the community to learn about its activities. On June 27, 1965, the public was invited to view and tour the water reservoirs and pumping stations. More than 650 residents attended and other similar programs were scheduled and have been conducted since that time.

In response to a request from the Oak Elementary School in 1970, the Niles public services department assisted school children in the planting and care of trees. In 1973 a tree-planting program was launched for the entire village and trees were purchased and planted along Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road. The tree-planting program has continued to expand and, by 1997, reached annual plantings of 200 new trees. During the Christmas season, the public services

department hangs wreaths, candy canes, and other decorations throughout the village. Niles was awarded a grant from the Illinois Department of Conservation, Urban and Community Forestry Program in 1995 to conduct a comprehensive management plan that includes tree inventory and management software to continuously update and maintain information.

The Isaac Walton League proposed a project to the Niles public services department to clean up the Niles portion of the Chicago River. The project was launched in 1971. The Niles public services department contributed a total of 141 hours and 41 truck hours cleaning the river. The Niles Park District also cleaned a portion of the river and the Environmental Control Board assisted by coordinating plans.

A major responsibility of the Niles public services department is snow removal. The major snowstorm of the January 26, 1967, weekend required 45 men working around the clock from Friday morning to Saturday evening to clear all streets in Niles. Since that time, as one newspaper article has commented, "Niles Snow Job to Date a Cinch Compared to '67."

Keith Peck, who had served Niles as a park board commissioner and village trustee, was appointed public services director in 1975. After Peck retired in 1992, Mayor Blase complimented Peck on his skills in dealing with other local agencies. Even in retirement, Peck has remained a consultant to the department of public services.

During Peck's administration numerous successful efforts were undertaken to secure over \$37 million in federal and state funding for improvement of the 48 miles of federal and state roadways in Niles.

The Niles free bus system, thanks to federal funds obtained through the RTA, was expanded from two to eight vehicles and the water system was completely modernized in the 1980s.

A new public services building was dedicated May 27, 1984.

Jun Noriega was appointed director of public services in 1992.

The Village of Niles maintains a full-service engineering division within the department of public services. It is staffed by professional civil engineers. Its main functions are project management, inspection, capital improvement planning and (GIS) geographic information system maintenance. GIS is a computer program linking graphics and data concerning utilities and properties within the village. All public improvements, including water mains, sewer mains, streets, signs, street lights, traffic signals, manhole locations, valve locations, and parkway tree inventory can be stored on the GIS.

In 1997 plans were announced to expand the public services facilities west of the Touhy location. The village planned to exchange 7 acres of the recently sold properties at Touhy Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue for the 5.7 acres of Jozwiak Park in the Niles Park District.

Over the years the Niles public services department has won praise and received awards from professional societies. The Niles Savings and Loan Association took out large ads in local newspapers during the 1960s that proclaimed its Salute of the Niles public services department and commented on the "26 Niles Men serving Niles Around The Clock... Meeting All Emergencies." In 1965 the *Water Journal* magazine featured Niles on its front cover and in an article stated, "It is a tribute to the Niles Public Works Department that there never was a water crisis in the community, as many cities have had serious troubles when faced with a population boom."

The Niles Lions Club, Niles Chamber of Commerce, Niles Days Committee, and Maine

Township High Schools also presented the Niles public services department with several awards. The American Water Works Association cited the department numerous times for its safety performance and in 1966 selected Niles as one of the five finalists for the American Water Works Association Advancement Award in Water Works. In 1972 Hawkeye-Security Insurance presented an award to the department for its safety record. The National Safety Council presented the Council's Award of Merit to the Niles public services department in 1972 for its excellent safety record. The American Public Works Association gave its service improvement award to the Village of Niles in 1995 for its proactive sewer maintenance program. In 1997 the Consulting Engineers Council of Illinois gave its "Engineering Excellence Merit Award" in the environmental category for the design and construction of the Niles transmission main and pump house No. 4. Niles public services were credited with helping to preserve the forest preserve with its design and construction of this facility, which was built with piping under the North Branch of the Chicago River without removing or destroying any trees.■

Lee Street? Which Lee Street?

<i>Today's:</i>	<i>Was once named:</i>
Algonquin Rd.	Lee Rd.
Amelia Drive	Lee St.
Betty Terrace	Lill (Ct. or Street?)
Canfield Avenue	Clark Road
Church Terrace	Gayle Terrace
Clara Drive	West Kedzie (8400-8600)
Cumberland Avenue	Brickton Road, Meachem Avenue, Prairie Avenue
Dempster Street	Kreiger Road, Delcour Road
Forestview Lane	Rosemary Lane, Ebinger Lane, Riverview Lane
Golf Road	Sabins Road
Harlem Avenue	Town Line Road
Higgins Road	Chicago, Dundee Road
Howard Street	Hall Road
Johanna Drive	Stolting Road
Lee Street	Scott Road
Milwaukee Avenue	North Plank Road
Mount Prospect Road	Division Road
Newark Avenue	Evergreen Road
Oakton Avenue	Jefferson Road
Oliphant	Depot Road
Shermer Road	Telegraph Road
Talcott Avenue	Tanner Road
Touhy Avenue	Mecklenburg Road, Park Ridge Road, School Street, Talcott Road
Waukegan Road	North Branch Road

Lengths of Main Roads in Niles

First column indicates mileage of full-width streets in Niles.
Second column indicates half-streets bordering Niles.

Milwaukee Avenue	4.65	
Howard Street	1.53	1.02
Harlem Avenue	1.50	1.24
Waukegan Road	1.50	
Caldwell Avenue	1.28	.89
Dempster Street	1.05	1.39
Oakton Street	1.05	1.24
Touhy Avenue	.89	.68
Grosse Point Road	.77	
Ballard Road	.67	.19
Lehigh Avenue	.53	.73
Harts Road	.51	
Golf Road	.42	.19
TOTAL:	16.35	7.57

NILES POLICE DEPARTMENT

As the first Niles Village Board of Trustees was organizing in 1899, they immediately recognized the need for law enforcement. A police marshal was hired, a jail was built, and within three years, the first Police Magistrate was elected to hear cases of those accused of violating the law in Niles. However, it became quickly evident that without established procedures, police "services" seemed to take on a life of their own.

Christ Luth, the village's first Police Marshal, was apparently working satisfactorily for two years. Village records indicate he was paid twice in 1901. In February 1901, he received \$2 and four months later was paid \$16.15. No account of his services is given in the minutes of the Village Board of Trustees. In 1901, since the village trustees so authorized, he was probably being paid for arrests and for those he prosecuted after the arrests were made.

In 1901 the village created the position of policeman without pay. Vaclav Kuderle was designated a Sergeant, Frank Pavel, John Drabeck, Frank Stankowicz, and John Wagner were designated policemen. In June, Anton Sochurek and Leonard Stankiewicz became policemen without pay. Paul Schramm was appointed a policeman without pay, November 12, 1901, the same day he was approved for a dram shop bond. The village had passed an ordinance requiring that a policeman be present at every picnic and at every dance for which a permit was granted. Saloon owners got themselves appointed as policemen and so they were always available for the permit-approved activities at their saloons or picnic groves.

Christ Luth was asked to resign by the Village Board of Trustees as he was finishing his second year as Police Marshal. The trustees gave no reason for the resignation. After Luth gave up his star, Fred Cosmen was appointed Police Marshal, October 8, 1901. The new marshal got a star and a direct phone line from his residence to the residence of the village president. Luth was re-appointed Police Marshal, May 5, 1903.

Henry Bierschwale was elected Police Magistrate for Niles in 1904. Fred Biesswanger was elected in 1905 and in 1908. In 1907 he was appointed village collector. Problems developed between the village and Biesswanger. Village trustees voted to place Biesswanger's report for December 1910 on file. It wasn't and hasn't ever been located. The Village Board of Trustees voted to sue Biesswanger, May 2, 1911, for monies collected by him for fines. The village attorney was instructed to proceed "at once against ... Biesswanger to turn over all monies collected by him to the village of Niles." The matter remained unresolved and on December 6, 1916, Biesswanger was ordered "to go before some judge" to "show cause why he did not make a monthly statement and turn over all monies collected by him to the village of Niles for fines imposed and collected." The village minutes do not reflect that Biesswanger made any appearance before any judge. Nor were any monies every recorded as turned over to the village by Biesswanger.

It is not clear why Biesswanger was still hearing cases well after others were elected Niles police magistrates (Joseph F. Stoelting, 1906; William Goerke, 1914; Nick Rohs, 1915; Frank Kaslowski, 1916; and George Hines, 1917) and Biesswanger was being sued and under investigation by the village. Fragmentary court records from Niles on deposit at the Niles Historical Museum indicate that Biesswanger heard several cases in 1917. One involved the Anti-Vice League. A \$23 fine was collected. A separate notation on this case stated, "Village got nothing."

It is difficult to determine the exact responsibilities of the police marshal in early Niles. John Frohm was appointed in July 1907 and discharged in January 1909. J. M. Stoelting was appointed a special policeman, which probably was different from a policeman without pay, for several years and then, in 1914, was appointed police marshal and village janitor. C. E. Van Dusen was appointed a police officer in 1916, 1917 and 1918 at a monthly salary of \$85. In 1919 he had the additional title of road commissioner and in 1920 he was named the commissioner of highways. Van Dusen was the first village employee to receive a paid vacation.

Peter Oszakowski was appointed Niles Chief of Police in June 1924. Village records for the period between 1926 and 1930 are missing. Even though Niles did not have a newspaper during this period, other newspapers commented on concerns with the police in Niles. The *Cook County Herald*, October 24, 1925, wrote that many were arrested in Niles for not stopping at "through street signs in Niles."

A *Chicago Tribune* article by James Braden in the files of the Niles Historical Museum about the Niles Police Department is sub-titled "Investigation Brings Out Charges of Mounting Police Incomes." The article claimed that the Mayor of Niles, John Calef, was "on the fence" and did not want to see Niles branded as a "speed trap."

After Beisswanger died, it is not clear from village records or available police department records if any money collected from fines was ever turned over to Niles. Motorists who received citations for speeding, reckless driving, glaring lights, no head lights, no tail light, parking without lights, no truck license, no auto license, no chauffeur's license, passing street car, disorderly conduct, violating traffic ordinance, or drunk and disorderly were sent to Judge Ward in Park Ridge. Blank books, indicating such traffic violations were issued to Niles policemen in the 1920s. Motorists who were stopped for a suspected traffic violation and who could not resolve the matter with the attending Niles police officer did appear before the judge in Park Ridge.

The assistant state's attorney, in preparing one of those cases against Niles, is quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*: "Complaints have been arriving for some time in this case." After a review, "action was started" on the case by the state's attorney.

The *Tribune* describes the findings: "It develops that Officer Gunther and Chief Oszakowski were either discharged or resigned from the Niles force after the 1926 investigation, and that they resumed office in May, 1929, after a political upheaval left Mayor Calef with only two supporters on the board of the village. Mr. Braum (of the Chicago Motor Club) also stated that Mike Oszakowski appears to be the village 'boss' and that he engineered the re-instatement of his brother, together with Officer Gunther.

"More automobile traffic passes through Niles than any place around Chicago. The Waukegan Road, Touhy Avenue, Milwaukee Avenue, and Harlem Avenue cars meet inside the village, and it is of utmost importance that there is no hold-up in such a 'rich' fishing spot. Mayor Calef has not paid the salary of Officer Gunther since he began operation last May. He has been worried as to how the officer manages to pay his bills, but it has been shown from former investigations that men have left well-paying jobs to become motorcycle cops, and that they have been able to buy real estate in addition to living well."

Calef would be quoted 50 years later in *The Niles Review*, March 4, 1976, that he discouraged officers from accepting bribes.

John Bolek, Niles resident, recalls that Oszakowski and his brother had run-ins with the hoodlums in Niles. On one occasion, Oszakowski was held captive in a second-story apartment for several days until an accommodation could be reached for his release.

Julius Szatkowski was appointed Niles Chief of Police in May 1930. However, a month later, Oszakowski and Werner Gunther were re-appointed as police chief and policeman over the village president's veto. After the April 1931 elections Oszakowski was discharged August 4, 1931. Werner Gunther was appointed Chief of Police and Frank Stankowicz became a sergeant. The new police chief was ordered by the Village Board of Trustees to sign a complaint against Theodore Wunderle, Police Magistrate. In December 1931 Gunther said he could not locate the records in regard to Wunderle. The motion of the village trustees to discharge Gunther failed.

Fines totaling \$446 were collected by Niles police in November 1931 and turned over to the village clerk.

William Mandernack was appointed Chief of Police after the 1932 election. Mandernack made a strong recommendation to the Village Board of Trustees, July 5, 1932, urging the trustees not to give a roadhouse license to Vic. Miller. "Places of business in other villages and the county where she has operated have been classified as a house of ill fame or disorderly house... You would not want to tolerate a place of business of this kind in this village." In August 1932 Vic. Miller got her license to operate in the village.

Mandernack's salary was reduced, as were the salaries of the two Niles police officers: Mandernack from \$200 to \$175 monthly; Stankowicz from \$150 to \$125; and Robert Romey from \$125 to \$100. In May 1933 Stankowicz was relieved from duty. A month later, charges were brought against Mandernack and Romey became temporary Chief of Police.

A letter dated July 5, 1933, was sent by the village president, Michael Didier, to the board of trustees. Didier explained that Mandernack "has not cleared himself of charges made by V.O. Zimmerman... Mandernack has been very lax in his duties regarding village records and arrest books during ...1932 and 1933... (so I, Didier) do hereby discharge Mandernack." Three trustees voted to accept, three others did not vote. Didier said the discharge stands.

In August 1933 Mandernack was re-instated. Zimmerman dropped his charges saying he "is not interested further in this case." Didier indicated he would file "a message vetoing the action of the board...with the village clerk."

About the same time Mandernack was being re-instated, documents of the former Police Magistrate, Wunderle, were being delivered to the state's attorney by Park Ridge Justice of the Peace Ward. Also, the suit initiated by the village against Max Lindy, village collector, was assigned a court date, September 6, 1933.

Robert Romey was appointed Niles Chief of Police in October 1933. Charles Zaleski became first police officer and Edward Krysiak was designated second police officer. Further



1928-1933
*Frank J. Stankowicz, Sr.
Sergeant of the Niles Motorcycle Division.
Later became the 7th Mayor of Niles in 1941.*

delinquencies were reported in the office of the then Police Magistrate, Peter F. Lenzen, and cases were not to be booked to his court.

In May 1934, the village attorney reported to the Village Board of Trustees that the village "could do nothing to recover the shortage in the account of former Police Magistrate Theodore Wunderle." In June 1934 Peter F. Lenzen was still identified in village records as Police Magistrate for Niles and George Mittelstaedt was a Justice of the Peace in Niles. Neither was listed as candidates in the April 17, 1934, election.

Romey was appointed a "police officer, #1" in 1934 and 1935. No one was appointed as Chief of Police in Niles. Romey was appointed Chief of Police in Niles in 1936 and would be re-appointed chief until he retired in 1961.

Joseph H. Jozwiak was elected Police Magistrate in 1936. Jozwiak had some legal background and, it was estimated, heard some 20,000 cases during the 20 years he served as Police Magistrate. In 1939, the Village Board of Trustees voted to prohibit "any action by a trustee as a legal counsel for defendants in the police magistrate court" since these kinds of actions are "likely to bring about a complete breakdown of law and order in this village."

The practice of appointing special police in Niles continued in the 1940s. In 1941, seven special policemen were appointed. These policemen would be paid on an hourly basis, receiving \$1 per hour. After Joseph Catanzano resigned as police sergeant in 1943, the decision was made to keep a two-man police force in Niles. In 1945, after other resignations, Romey "was carrying on alone" said the village minutes. Not quite alone, as the special police were working hundreds of hours monthly. In July 1948 one Niles special policeman was paid for working 292 hours in June 1948.



First squad cars or patrol cars of the Niles Police Department

During the 1950s the police force had a "communication system (that) was not efficient... equipment... was poor." A "push to build a top notch police force...(came) in 1953 when voters approved civil service and a police pension plan... political intervention was removed...and for the first time examinations to be a patrolman and promotional advancement took the place of political appointments."

The elections of 1956 changed the political climate in Niles. Frank Stankowicz, former policeman, was elected mayor. Anton Smigiel, extremely popular Niles resident and attorney, was elected police magistrate. Smigiel, almost immediately, put into effect a traffic violations bureau. This concept and his other procedures were accepted and endorsed by the American Bar Association Traffic Courts Committee. Two of his changes were requiring parents to appear in court with teens accused of traffic violations and introducing staggered schedules for court cases so officers would not have to remain in court for several hours until their cases were heard.

Mayor Stankowicz began uncovering unexplainable practices within the Niles police department. In 1957 Stankowicz demanded an investigation of a man who was driving a vehicle with municipal plates and carrying a Niles police badge since 1955. It turned out that a permit was issued to a Niles Park District police employee who had applied for the plates because the park district was regarded as a separate jurisdiction.

In early 1958 Police Chief Romey was called to a meeting of the Fire and Police Commission. *The Niles Bugle*, January 8, 1958, reported, "Romey who had created a great deal of ill-will both in and outside the police department, was under cross-examination by all sides as the groups tried to improve the relationship between the chief of police and the many areas that have suffered from his autocratic methods." The article went on to say that trustees have twice recommended to Romey that he cooperate with the press, but he ignored the recommendation both times. There were troubles reported within the department as well. "Morale of many of his own policemen has been extremely poor due to his dictatorial methods in controlling the police force," wrote *The Niles Bugle*, and "Romey was antagonistic to any of his men participating in the many schools that are offering programs relating to police work." Romey's "public relations with industry in Niles (were) practically nil."

In October 1958 the Village Board of Trustees passed a resolution "because certain factors and conditions exist within the department of police in the village of Niles indicate that there is a need for the instituting of more modern practices and procedures and more integrated and better supervision... more thorough and comprehensive teaching and education of recruits and other officers... (the) police committee ...(will be the) full supervisory body of the police and fire departments." Since this three-person committee would be able to issue directives directly to the police department, Stankowicz issued a veto message claiming the resolution would take away the powers of village trustees. The veto message was overridden. In response, the police issued 194 tickets in a three-day period, which Romey said, "was not his doing."

Concerns were developing about the alarming rise in burglaries. The minutes of the Grennan Heights Improvement Association for February 16, 1960, report that Officer Homer Becker, "representing the Niles Police Department ... told us that the Village of Niles has a 300% increase in commercial burglaries and 200% in home burglaries. He warned us not to invite burglars by leaving a light on the outside and the garage doors wide open, when we leave the house. He also stated that we have the lowest juvenile problems of any of the surrounding villages."

In June 1960 one of the village trustees asked the others to join him in a vote to remove all pinballs from Niles. The mayor and the other five trustees opposed him.

Changes were taking place in the police department. *The Life*, on January 19, 1961, wrote that "(Niles) village residents can rank their police department with the best." New report forms and a new rifle range were cited as improvements that would "give police more time to protect the village." The efforts of Romey, Captain Andrew Cameron, Lt. William Mehring and Sgt. Homer Becker were cited, as was the "assistance of the late village trustee John Trocki, along with the complete board that has led to the department's emergence to the top."

A full-time detective bureau was launched. Officers worked in plain clothes, drove unmarked cars, and performed follow-ups on complaints. This division also employed an evidence technician and an identification bureau to take and develop color as well as black and white photos of evidence. *The Life* wrote that this department "has already proved its worth."

By 1961, the police roster had grown to one chief, one captain, one lieutenant, four sergeants, two detectives, and 17 patrolmen. Six marked squad cars were in use; one other squad car was unmarked.

The 1961 election brought a rapid acceleration to the changes within the Niles Police Department. After the election, Romey submitted his resignation. Clarence "Whitey" Emrikson was appointed Chief of Police.

Other changes were announced. A new police station was built in 1964. It also housed a courtroom and the village council chambers. In 1967, a communications center was placed into operation. Six different frequencies were being beamed with capabilities of communicating with all other village departments. A customized burglar-hold up alarm panel gave individualized protection to merchants in the village.

Specific responsibilities were issued for the uniform division of the Niles Police Department. Officers in this unit were identified as "the department's first line of defense against crime as well as being trained to handle traffic, accidents and many situations requiring police attention." Police crossing guards were assigned to this unit.

The new administrative-services section included community service-youth, programs involving Officer Friendly, bicycle safety, home security, and self-protection for women, and programs directed at schools and homeowner groups and clubs in the village. The firearms instructor, an animal control officer, and central records were also assigned to this division.

In 1975 Niles developed a bicycle patrol, implemented by Sergeant James Gerhardt, composed of 10 college students to patrol the bike trails in Niles. Youngsters between 10 and 14 received the most traffic violations. They had to appear in court, pay a fine up to \$5 and view the film "Bicycles are beautiful." The Niles Police Department received a bicycle safety award from Secretary of State Alan J. Dixon in 1979 "for innovative and aggressive leadership and outstanding programming demonstrated in the field of bicycle safety which helps the State of Illinois to be a top leader in the reduction of bicycle fatalities."

The Niles police-social work program, launched in the 1960s by Chief Emrikson, has attracted the interest of numerous observers from other cities. Initially the program was designed "to keep teen-agers out of the criminal justice system." It expanded to include community-wide cases and responded to calls that were "psychological or social in nature." Park Ridge, Evanston, Wilmette, Maywood, Downers Grove, and Zion adopted similar programs based on the Niles model. Observers from England and Germany also recommended programs based on the Niles experience for locations in those countries.

A restructuring of the Niles Police Department occurred in 1978 as a result of a management study authorized by the Village of Niles. Police Chief Emrikson, who was involved in many police functions, which kept him from day-to-day administration of the police department, would return to the department full time. Russ Beavers, who was handling daily operations of the department, was re-assigned to a non-personnel job. All requests for police services, including those that came from the mayor's office, would now go directly to the Police Chief. There were other recommendations which focused on centralizing authority in the Police Chief, limiting the powers of the "overheavy officer structure," and strengthening the roles of the village board and village manager in overseeing the police department. Mayor Blase said he would definitely implement the recommendations.

The Niles Police Department launched a Law Enforcement Explorer Program in 1986. Designed to meet the needs of youth between 14 and 20, the aim of the program is to provide an insight into law enforcement and provide information to assist teens to qualify for a career in the field.

Raymond Giovannelli, a career Niles policeman, was appointed Niles Police Chief after Emrikson retired in 1988.



In 1988 a major shift in emphasis was announced in investigating drug-related crimes. The Niles Police Department had been cooperating with the Metropolitan Drug Agency. New Police Chief Raymond Giovannelli announced he would want all Niles police more directly involved in intelligence and surveillance in drug-related crimes.

The Niles Police Department has launched several major programs in recent years. PRIDE (Positive Response in Drug Education) is directed to all elementary schools in Niles. For two to three weeks Niles police officers speak about the dangers of drugs to all grades from kindergarten through eighth. The DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) specifically targets the fifth and sixth grade.

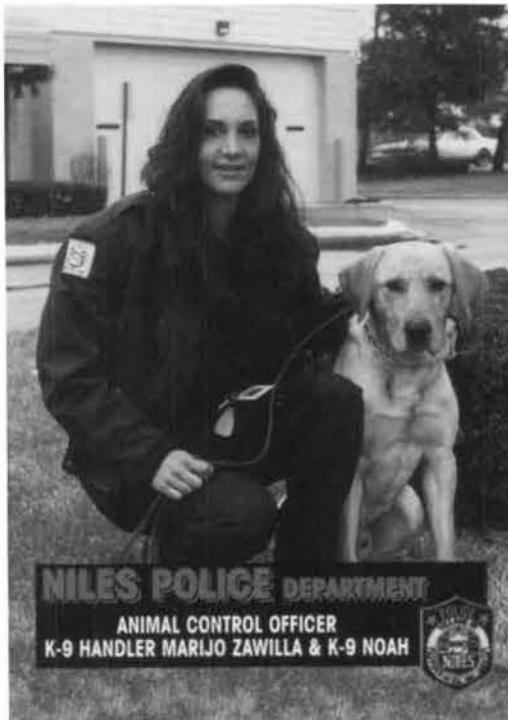
Since 1994, the neighborhood-walking program has assigned two officers to walk in specified neighborhoods for three-hour shifts. A walk and talk program has also been in effect since 1994 in major shopping centers. Shoplifting had been on the increase in these areas and police officers work with merchants to combat shoplifting. A Niles public information officer also speaks to merchants, seniors, and other groups concerned with theft and related crimes. These programs appear to be helpful in reducing theft. In 1995, between July and December, 73 felony thefts were reported and 125 theft misdemeanors. In 1997, during the same time period, 54 felony thefts were reported and 72 theft misdemeanors.

An immediate response team was launched to increase efficiency of Niles police officers. It was discovered that officers, after turning in daily activity reports, became more efficient in gathering evidence, were more objective, and developed a more aggressive attitude in their daily responsibilities. Frequently, the initial officer who made the report would be assigned to follow up his own report as an investigator. Chief Giovannelli commented that this program has worked out well. "Reports are now more concise. Officers have more self-confidence."

The Halloween party conducted annually by the Niles Police Department since 1987 is an effort to discourage youngsters from traditional patterns of "trick or treat" practices of collecting candy or other items throughout the village. Halloween festivities were conducted by Niles police at Notre Dame High School for 10 years. In 1997 the party was switched to St. John Brebeuf Church. Attendance, which was approaching 3,000 in 1997, has continued to increase since the parties were started. The police department says there has been a definite decline in calls to the department of suspected tampered Halloween candy and that the



Sergeant Roger Wilson with a couple of Niles Halloween goblins.



program has been "well accepted by the community."

Special service officers, usually retired Niles police officers, have been recently assigned to high visibility, non-emergency, non-hazardous duties since 1995. The aim of this program is to allow full-time officers to devote more time to more pressing responsibilities.

An Explorer program utilizes boy scouts to assist the police department during community-related programs such as the 4th of July Parade and safety day.

A canine program was introduced to assist the department in locating narcotics and tracking lost children or escaped criminals. "Noah," a yellow labrador retriever, has been on the job since 1997 and is used extensively in the PRIDE programs in local schools.■

Policemen of the Year

The Niles Lions Club, the Niles Chamber of Commerce and the Niles Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7712 selected a Policeman of the Year and recognized the officer in a public ceremony.

Police Chief Robert Romey and Andrew Cameron, several newspaper accounts wrote, were selected as Policeman of the Year before 1957. In later years the following were selected:

1958	Frank Hulock
1958	Frank Stankowicz, Jr.
1959	Ed Dennis
1960	Homer Becker
1961	Albert Golback
1965	Frank Wichlac
1978	James Gerhardt

Judge Says Niles Needs Lower Speed Limits

The *Niles Spectator*, May 21, 1958, reported that Judge Anton Smigiel issued a fine of \$155 to a motorist who was speeding through Niles at 115 miles per hour.

Six months earlier Smigiel was insisting that Niles lower its speed limits. At the time, 40 was the speed limit on Touhy Avenue. Smigiel proposed a 20 mph speed limit in business districts and a 25 mph speed limit in residential areas.

NILES FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Niles Volunteer Fire Co. was organized in 1901 with F. J. Lenzen serving as chief. The only piece of equipment, as stated in a booklet published by the fire department years later, was a chemical pump built by the Chicago Fire Apparatus Company. It was equipped with a 100-gallon tank, ladders, picks, axes, and small chemical fire extinguishers. This wagon was probably stored in a buggy shed at the rear of Henry Bierschwale's hardware store.



Niles Fire Department - 1908

When dedicated in 1984, The Niles Fire Co. issued a booklet, which states that Blue Boy, on display at the museum, is the first piece of equipment owned by the Niles Fire Department. It claims Blue Boy may have been purchased in 1899 or 1900. Blue was used in Evanston and may have been built as early as 1835. Blue Boy could be pumped by raising and lowering bars on each side to a maximum pressure enabling a water stream extending 20 to 30 feet.

All accounts agree that the Niles Volunteer Fire Co. owned and maintained all pieces of equipment. The first reference of the village's interest in support of a fire department was in 1904 when an appropriation of \$50 was made for the fire department.

The booklet issued by the Niles Fire Department notes that a "more modern machine" was purchased in 1904. It further indicates a drawn pumper was purchased in 1910, reducing Blue Boy to part-time work.

The first horses used with this equipment were furnished by August Habedank. With "Gus" and "Frank" Habedank at the reins, it was reported, a new local record was set in responding to a fire. A call came from Dohl's Morton House in Morton Grove. Responding from the original fire house, located in a shed at Touhy Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue, all eight men answered the call

and arrived at the scene of the fire in 16 minutes. Unfortunately, there is no record if the mission was successful.



1900

August Kadlec Jr. in fireman's uniform

By 1910 the Niles Volunteer Fire Co. was fairly well organized. The company was granted a state charter, February 19, 1912. Frank Lenzen was the Fire Marshal. John L. Calef was president. Charles Sickinger was listed as the engineer. Christ Luth, Gust Habedank, Alois Krejsa, and John Niemann were members.

By 1925, the Niles Volunteer Fire Co. had nine officers and 11 active members: John F. Calef was still president; John F. Lenzen was now vice president. Others listed were: J. Niemann, treasurer; A. C. Luth, secretary; M. Heidinger, chief; August Kadlec, ass't chief; F. Lenzen, Sr., ass't chief; R. F. Beiersdorf, ass't chief; and Wm. Sietmann, captain. Members included O. Krejsa, R. Neetz, A. Neetz, L. Preadaux, V. Taraba, L. Urbanski, H. Olson, W. H. Smith, J. Beto, P. Kloettner, and S. Kovalik. The village would utilize volunteers until 1972.

A revitalization of the fire department started in 1921. Younger members were enlisted. The existing equipment was determined to be obsolete. Two motorized trucks were purchased. The "modern Reo Truck" was equipped "with a Chemical Tank carrying 100 gallons and 50 ft of Extension Ladders, 1,000 feet of hose, 2 hand Extinguishers, pike poles and other paraphernalia installed with a Hill Pump," wrote the fire department, making "it a real up-to-date outfit."

The fire department also commented that the volunteers were "21 live wire members who are always on the job ready to sacrifice all for the protection of lives and property in their own and neighboring Villages."

A steel tower and siren were erected and a new firehouse was built in 1922 on the southwest corner of Touhy Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue. The building could more properly be called a re-building of a barracks from the Great Lakes Naval Training Station used during World War I. Funds for these projects were raised through donations, picnics, and dances.

The Niles Volunteer Fire Co. joined the Illinois Firemen's Association in 1922. John Calef and Frank Lenzen attended conventions and other meetings of the association to learn the latest fire-fighting techniques. In 1925 other officials from Niles would be authorized to attend programs of the Illinois Fire Prevention Bureau.

Minutes of the meetings at the Niles Volunteer Fire Co. for the 1920s have been preserved. Members had to attend regular meetings of the department to remain active volunteers. When a member missed a meeting and was not previously excused, he would have to pay a fine to be reinstated. New members were examined before they were qualified to serve.

One of the earliest entries recorded in the minutes for April 1922 was a reference to the Woman's Club with "thanks for proceeds of party donated to fire company." A year later, minutes gave a "standing vote of thanks to Girl's club for their donation."

Raising funds for the department was a constant concern. Sponsoring dances was an especially successful method as the following tabulation for 1923 and 1934 reflects:

\$192.95 dance proceeds reported June 14, 1923
\$452.30 dance proceeds reported September 13, 1923
\$454.45 dance proceeds reported December 13, 1923
\$219.60 Mask Ball proceeds, with ticket money still to be collected,
reported February 14, 1924
\$591.95 picnic proceeds reported September 11, 1924
\$315.24 dance proceeds reported December 11, 1924.

After "quite a debate" a decision was made "that fire company could derive no benefit (by sponsoring a) bunco party." Instead, a Maypole party was organized and resulted in proceeds of \$340 "with a balance yet to come," reported the March 1924 minutes.

Neighboring fire departments also had dances and Niles firefighters would attend these dances "in a body," said the minutes. Toward the end of the decade, letters would be mailed to each household in Niles with two dance tickets enclosed at 50 cents each. There were 480 residents of the village in December 1929; 394 purchased tickets to the fireman's dance.

The April 1922 minutes reveal that the firemen were "to get information on how to turn fire company over to Village of Niles" so that by the next meeting they would be able to "turn company over to Village."

No response was received from the village. The company remained volunteer. Chief Kadlec asked in August 1922 "to be shown who was willing to give his services free of charge for balance of the year to see that truck was properly taken care of." Regarding the building of the firehouse, Kadlec announced that "all men would render their services free of charge to see that building would be erected as soon as possible."

Individual uniforms were authorized for purchase in September 1923. Six sets of boots, coats, and hats were ordered. Another all-white set was also purchased. Car fires were increasing during the 1920s. Foamite tank equipment was purchased to assist in fighting auto fires.

Discussion at the June 12, 1924, meeting indicated that someone was needed to "keep engine house and trucks in better order." August Kadlec was hired and was to receive \$30 annually.

A sick benefit fund was discussed at the October 1922 meeting. In November 1925 "the thought of protection of our drivers arose." Windshields were authorized for the fire trucks. Spotlights were purchased for the trucks in 1927.

No minutes of the Niles Volunteer Fire Co. have been located after 1929. The trustees of the Village Board did appoint a Fire Committee. Unfortunately, that committee's reports were not preserved and neither were the reports of the Niles Fire Chief after they were presented to the Village Board of Trustees.

In October 1931 the Niles Volunteer Fire Co. sent a letter to the Village Board of Trustees. The minutes of the board reported, "Letter was read stating what terrible condition the fire apparatus is in and requesting Village Board to give a helping hand. It was moved ... and unanimously carried to refer same to the Fire Committee."

The Village Board minutes reflect that George Pasek was appointed to the Niles Volunteer Fire Co. May 1, 1934. The Volunteer Fire Co. informed the Village Board that Pasek was its Chief. On May 19, 1936, the Village Board of Trustees approved the following list of firemen and their respective titles: George Pasek, Fire Chief; Otto J. Krejsa, First Assistant Chief; Frank Stankowicz, Second Assistant Chief; Charles Bacher, Captain; Frank J. Krejsa and Edward Bacher, Lieutenants. The first appointment of George Pasek as Fire Chief for the Village of Niles came in 1937. Pasek was paid \$5 per month as Fire Chief.

The Village Board of Trustees authorized a new firehouse in September 1934. The resolution further stated that "application with the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission for labor and materials" was to be made. Cost of the firehouse was listed at \$999.99 in March 1935. A letter of thanks was sent from the fire department to the Village Board of Trustees "for co-operation... in bringing about the erection of their modern fire house; and also for the Vehicle Tax License, given free of charge to all members of the Fire Dept. who attend fires with their own cars."

It was the good fortune of Niles to have George Pasek as its Fire Chief until he retired in 1964. While still a "volunteer," Pasek began to develop a fire department that reflected a professionalism that was recognized by numerous state and national firefighting associations. Numerous awards were won by the fire department. In many instances the Niles Fire Department was the leader of the nation in introducing equipment that would be later adopted by other cities. Pasek, an engineer, personally adapted commercial equipment for use by the fire department. He worked with manufacturers in developing specifications for fire equipment that would be built and in use in Niles. Other fire departments around the country would stand in line waiting to get similar equipment for their own departments.

Several examples should be noted. In 1936 Pasek insisted that a 750-gallon Pirsch pumper be purchased for the village. Many considered it the finest equipment money could buy. It was Engine No. 1 of the Niles Fire Department and saw extensive service. It proved its unexpected usefulness more than once. When Tam O'Shanter Country Club was in flames in the 1930s, Engine No. 1 was able to do the job even though there were no fire hydrants in the area of the fire. Hoses were placed into the North Branch of the Chicago River. The river water was pumped and the fire was extinguished. Neighboring communities, when faced with similar situations, often called Niles and specifically requested Engine No. 1.

At Pasek's continual urging, Niles citizens went door-to-door collecting money in the 1940s to purchase an ambulance. The campaign was successful. A Ford emergency unit, some called it "the last word," was purchased for \$6,000. Many writers have noted Niles ambulance service pre-dates Chicago's.

In the 1950s Pasek purchased a panel truck and converted it into an emergency vehicle that could be used for highway accidents. Niles had one of the first such services in the nation. When the Niles Fire Department got a new Olds station wagon in 1963 "fully equipped to handle any emergency in which an ambulance might be needed," it featured some of the designs Pasek was using a decade earlier.

The *Volunteer Fireman* magazine ran a feature story entitled, "Built to the chief's own specifications--A 'Customized Snorkel.'" The article stated, "The new snorkel, built to Pasek's demanding specifications, may be the finest rig of its sort in the country--better even than Chicago's much-publicized snorkels."

Reasons are presented as to why Pasek's design produced a better snorkel. Ladders were enclosed. The manufacturer said, "it couldn't be done." It was done. Pasek's design resulted in a snorkel that served Niles with more than 200 feet of ladders "enclosed and readily available."



Firemen James Foerester (left) and Charles R. Kozak, both of Niles, ride in "basket" of Niles custom built snorkel. Snorkel boom can extend 85 feet and basket carries one man to operate control to swing boom into position. His partner handles turret gun hose which can be adjusted to give 100 pounds of pressure.

There was a "control panel that would command the respect of a jet airliner pilot." A special 300 horsepower engine "which provides both the power for transporting the apparatus and the power for elevating the boom, (and which) can move the snorkel truck at speeds up to 80 miles an hour."

Four years before the *Volunteer Fireman* article, another very favorable article about the Niles Fire Department was published April 1958 in *Fireman* magazine. Niles was cited for its comprehensive program of inspection of industrial plants. Every Niles fireman was given 27 drawings in a notebook showing the layouts of industrial plants, schools, hospitals, and other large buildings. Each layout showed where all exits, walls, fire extinguishers, stairways, and other prominent features were located. Each member of the fire department was quizzed monthly on each layout. Firemen would also visit one of the buildings once a month. Niles fire inspectors were regularly sent to all business and industrial establishments. All large plants were inspected at least six times a year. Those with hazardous materials were inspected every month.

All firemen in Niles, said the article, were in a continual training program. The article also commended the Niles Fire Department for the specialized training it was giving its firemen in fire-fighting procedure and for working in buildings with sprinkler systems.

In 1958, the same year the *Fireman* article was published, the Niles Fire Department received a special award from the Boy Scouts for providing training that helped 419 scouts earn First Aid Red Cross Certificates, and for providing training for all lifeguards at Whalen Pool, near Devon and Milwaukee, where thousands of bathers visited the pool on an average summer weekend.

The Niles Fire Department was appreciated. *The Niles Bugle*, January 22, 1958, urged readers to acknowledge "the tremendous effort Chief Pasek and his men have made to give Niles the finest department in the area."

In 1953 the Village of Niles created a full-time fire department. The first full-time firemen, Charlie Pickup and Charlie Bacher, were hired in 1947 at a monthly salary of \$50. On January 1, 1948, each received a monthly salary of \$225 and were named as full-time firemen and custodians. Their monthly salary for custodial work was \$175. The ordinance for a full-time Niles Fire Department was passed in September 1953.

There was a major fire at the Bunker Hill Country Club in the early 1950s. After the Niles Fire Department put the fire out, they soon found themselves back at the scene rebuilding the facilities which were destroyed in the fire.

Since 1950, the Niles Fire Department had been receiving recognition from the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry in its annual Fire Prevention Contests. It received seven honorable mention citations in the 1950s before it garnered the Grand Award in 1959. That same year it also received a certificate of merit from the National Fire Protection Association and an award from the Niles Township Safety Council.

Awards continued throughout the 1960s. In 1965 the Niles Fire Department was ranked 11th best in the nation of all cities in all population classes. The award committee was impressed with EDITH: the Exit Drills In The Home the Niles Fire Department conducted throughout the village. In 1966 it received a Grand Award in a fire prevention contest sponsored by the Chicagoland Association of Commerce and Industry for its HIP program. The Home Inspection Program made inspections of 8,000 homes helping to eliminate potential fire hazards.

Annual reports of the Niles Fire Department sum up the work of the department. In 1958 there were 423 total alarms: 54 were for house fires, 104 were resuscitator calls, and 140 were for an ambulance. Monetary loss was \$14,175. There were 26 calls from outside the village. In 1959 there were 457 calls. Each man received 120 hours of training and drilling on the job. The 1960 annual report noted the Niles Fire Department was "extremely proud of the Industrial Fire Brigades" that were in operation. The A. B. Dick Company was cited for receiving its ninth consecutive award for "Accomplishment in Fire Prevention."

The Niles Fire Department and the Mobil Oil Company conducted fire-training classes for Mobil dealers in 1963. These classes were developed by the Niles Fire Department so that dealers would know how to respond to a gasoline fire. In 1964 the Niles Fire Department cooperated with United Airlines programs which taught firefighters how to respond to aircraft emergencies and disasters. That same year they signed a mutual aid agreement with Skokie stating that each town shall assist the other whenever requested. In 1966 a similar agreement was made with Park Ridge. Scuba diving was also taught to Niles firemen because there was increased concern about deaths from drowning in large pools.

The Firemen's Benevolent Association, organized in 1955, provided for firemen's, or their family's, needs on an individual basis. Both full-time and volunteer firemen were eligible for benefits from the association. Joseph Jozwiak was the first chairman of the association. It introduced a life insurance program for the benefit of all Niles firemen in 1963. Activities such as the annual benevolent ball provided funds for this and other programs of the association. The association participated in Niles Days and helped to raise funds for the purchase of equipment for the first ambulance in Niles and for other fire fighting equipment. Activities of the association diminished after the village no longer hired volunteer firemen in the late 1960s.

With the mushrooming Niles school population in the early 1960s, the Niles Fire Department launched a school administrator Fire Safety Council in 1962. Numerous programs were developed and implemented. Materials were provided for classroom instruction. Children met with firemen, participated in contests, and were made aware of the importance of fire prevention and safety.

On March 17, 1963, Niles dedicated a \$211,000 fire station at 8360 Dempster. Chief Pasek helped design the firehouse. The one-story 15,000-square-foot facility included a 20-man dormitory, lockers, radio and alarm equipment, parking for eight vehicles, a 40-foot training tower for practice with ladders and hoses, a lecture room, photography lab, and printing room.

George Pasek resigned in 1964. Albert Hoelbl, who began his service with the Niles Fire Department in 1953, succeeded him.

Chief Hoelbl upheld the high standards established by his predecessor. In 1967, Niles received a Class 3 fire insurance rating. Chief Hoelbl later would relate that this designation was a highlight of his career with the Niles Fire Department. "I was pretty proud of that," he said. "At that time there were only three towns in the entire state to have such a high rating--Rockford, Evanston, and Oak Park." He explained that a Class 3 rating meant lower insurance premiums for the municipality's residents and the commercial and industrial firms in Niles.

Niles' second station was built at 6611 Jarvis Avenue, near Oak Park Avenue. It was occupied and dedicated in 1969. The building of this station paved the way for the Illinois Rating and Inspection Bureau to give the Village of Niles a Class 3 insurance rating.

Hoelbl became very concerned with the new hazards that firefighters faced since factories and other commercial businesses provided different challenges than in the past. In 1964 Hoelbl directed all firemen to take a tour of the Rauland Corporation plant "to acquaint Niles firemen with special hazards which are becoming more and more common." He pointed out the large quantities of hydrogen, nitrogen, liquid oxygen, and other substances present in the plant. Representatives of the Public Service Company were also invited to inform Niles firemen of the hazards of electricity in firefighting.

The Niles Fire Department won its third Grand Award at the annual fire prevention contest in 1973. It was the 15th consecutive year the department won a top award sponsored by the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry. In its application, the Niles Fire Department pointed out that it had recently installed 26 strategically placed fire boxes throughout the village and a full-time, three-man fire prevention bureau was now in operation at the Fire Department. The "House of Hazards," introduced in 1972, made Niles' Fire Prevention Week one of the most successful ever conducted. The "House of Hazards" is a 30-foot trailer, which uses life-size mannequins to illustrate fire hazards commonly found in the home. Some 5,086 adults and children viewed the trailer at 11 sites during the week. Many visitors from out of town inquired if the "House of Hazards" could be shown in their communities.

A program to acquaint emergency room nurses with the problems of Fire Department ambulance crews was initiated in 1972. The aim of the program was to provide nurses with a better understanding of the nature of the emergency, how it is handled, and what stress and crisis situations exist prior to the arrival of the victim at the hospital. Since Niles had the first emergency service in the area, the program was continued in other towns as they formed emergency ambulance services.

Three Niles firemen were qualified as Emergency Medical Technicians in 1972. Although these men were not "paramedics" as the term was then used, they were qualified to give emer-

gency service. Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase said that "Paramedic service will require a drastic increase in personnel as well as the need to purchase more sophisticated equipment."

In July 1973 the Niles Fire Department requested funding for a paramedic unit. Training would be provided at St. Francis Hospital. Seven men would take the required courses and receive training.

LeRoy Callison, Tom Marcotte, Alex Weber, Richard Timm, Richard Pickup, Rich Valkanet, and George Twarski graduated in January 1974. An ambulance was ordered for delivery in March. Men were assigned as a Mobile Intensive Care Unit and would handle heart attack victims and other emergency medical cases. Tim Crossin and Dan Driscoll were appointed as the first full-time paramedics for the Niles Fire Department. Electrocardiograms, resuscitator units, and a defibrillator that provides an electric shock to a failing heart were to be installed in the unit. Fully equipped, the unit would cost \$26,000.

Unexpected delays postponed the unit's use until September 9, 1974. Costs for the ambulance, equipment, and electronics rose to \$41,500. The *Niles Spectator* reported, October 10, 1974, "In its 54 days of service to date, the Niles Paramedics have made 236 runs, of which two were obstetrical calls. There have been 147 MICU (Mobile Intensive Care Unit) runs, with each run consuming about 57 minutes.... Since Sept. 9, three lives have already been saved."

A major fire in a Rolling Meadows apartment building in the late 1960s led to the formation of MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System). MABAS was inaugurated on June 1, 1973. A fire alarm indicating a major fire in one community would immediately trigger response in a neighboring community. On September 12, 1973, the Niles Fire Department and 10 other suburban communities combined personnel and equipment to fight a \$1 million fire at A. B. Dick Company. The fire started at 10:30 p.m. and was put out at 4:30 a.m. It was the first time Niles used MABAS.

The Regional Emergency Dispatch (RED) was formed in 1976. Niles and four surrounding suburbs, Morton Grove, Glenview, Glenbrook, and North Maine, joined together to handle emergency calls and ensure that the nearest station responds. The initial dispatch center was established at Niles Fire Station 2 in Niles. A permanent future site would be set up in Glenview. It was estimated that the mutual aid provided by RED would produce cost benefits for all departments since the need for overtime and paid-on-call and off-duty men may be reduced. Early test results would show that with the program, the average response time was 2 minutes, 11 seconds as opposed to the average 4-minute time without RED. In 1991, RED handled 10,000 calls. By 1994, RED was handling approximately 15,000 calls a year.

The Niles Fire Department began conducting CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) classes for adults in August 1976. Similar techniques were taught in elementary schools since 1965. Since there was an "unusually large response" by adults, additional classes were scheduled for a few years. Then classes were discontinued for a few years. In 1995 they were re-introduced and have been conducted for an average of 15 students monthly until the present time.

Chief Hoelbl was chairman of the Doppler Now Committee. In 1979 the Niles Fire Department hosted a meeting for more than 100 fire chiefs. Each fire chief was urged to work with his home City Council in passing a resolution urging that a Doppler radar system for the Chicago area be installed. Petition signatures were to be obtained so that they could be forwarded to congressmen to impress them with the need and urgency of installing a Doppler system as soon as possible.

John Coleman, a popular Chicago weather television personality, was the featured speaker at the meeting for fire chiefs. He explained that the Doppler system is 80 percent accurate in

predicting tornadoes and lead times are at least 22 minutes. Under certain circumstances, lead times can be as long as one hour.

The Doppler system was activated in 1983. Although Hoelbl was the chairman of the project, he commented, "Most of the credit belongs to the mayor (Nicholas Blase), who spearheaded the system in 1979."

In 1970 it was determined that only one in every 20 homes in Niles had smoke detectors. By 1983 two out of every three homes had a smoke detector. An ordinance was passed that required smoke detectors in new homes before a certificate of occupancy was granted. In 1986 an Illinois law was passed requiring smoke detectors in all homes. Niles firefighters went house to house to ensure compliance with the law. Current fire codes also mandate a sprinkler system in commercial and industrial buildings of more than 10,000 square feet and in multiple occupancy buildings such as apartment complexes and condominiums.

Harry Kinowski became Chief of the Niles Fire Department after Hoelbl retired in 1984. Kinowski joined the fire department in 1960. His teaching skills were soon recognized and he was selected to conduct a brigade instructors' program for the A. B. Dick and Teletype corporations at the Niles Fire Department in 1964.

As Director of the Bureau of Fire Prevention, Kinowski was responsible for enforcing the fire prevention code, conducting inspections, investigating the cause, origin and circumstances of fires in Niles, investigating complaints regarding fire hazards, reviewing and approving plans for new construction and additions to industrial, commercial, educational and public buildings in Niles, conducting educational programs for the public, and for providing improvements to the fire prevention code.

In 1994 Kinowski successfully completed the Executive Fire Officer Program conducted by the National Fire Academy. The course required completion of an applied research project which, after approval, would be completed in each officer's own fire departments. Kinowski's project was based on the logistics of firefighting and use of alerting systems.



Kinowski has frequently encouraged continuing education programs for firefighters. The Niles Fire Department received a recognition award from the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association and the Fire Safety Alliance for promoting fire safety education to the residents and school children in the village. Annually, the department honors local students who participate in the Illinois Fire Inspectors Poster Contest. The Niles Fire Department is an active member of the Public Safety Education Network made up of seven communities in the northern area of Cook County. A safety educational program is conducted annually in Niles, "Golf Mill Fire Safety Day." In 1997 approximately 2,000 attended, including 500 youngsters. The main theme of the program is to

educate "children and their families in the areas of fire prevention and home escape."

Within the past four years, the Niles Fire Department has been attempting to raise awareness of the many children who perish in fires. Bill White, public education officer for the Niles Fire Department, was impressed by the AIDS quilt, which seemed to be always attracting attention. He thought a similar quilt with each square dedicated to a child who was lost in a fire would bring increased awareness of how vulnerable children are in a fire. The program has been positively received throughout the northwest suburban community. By late 1997, eight quilts have been displayed individually in Niles, Justice, Champaign, Carbondale, Chicago, Springfield, Homewood, and Mount Prospect, Illinois, and are usually displayed in the fire safety trailer which travels to different communities. The quilts have also been used in fire department open houses in River Grove, Park Ridge, and West Dundee.

After Kinowski became chief, he undertook a review of the equipment of the Fire Department. In 1986 Kinowski informed the Village Board of Trustees that mechanical and electrical problems with the three ambulances are hindering the department's ability to provide emergency services. On several occasions all three ambulances were incapacitated simultaneously and the village had to borrow vehicles from other communities. The oldest ambulance, which was in service since 1976, was out of commission 151 days during the preceding 11 months, according to Kinowski's report.

Two new ambulances were purchased in 1986 to add to the three the department owned. Each ambulance cost \$58,000 plus a \$3,000 conversion allowing diesel fuel to be used.

A GMC "Topkick" ambulance was put into service in 1995. In 1996 and 1997 two new 4700 LP Navistar Ultramedic Type 3 ambulances were purchased.

When emergency ambulance service was initiated in 1946, the Niles Fire Department responded to about 100 calls. From 1958 to 1968, the calls more than tripled from 233 to 808. By 1978, emergency calls increased to 1,900. Latest figures indicate 2,713 calls were made in 1997.

In 1996 the Illinois Professional Fire Inspectors Association honored the Niles Fire Department as one of 12 finalists, from 250 participants, in its annual competition of public education and life safety activities. Niles was awarded a First Place Superior rating for finalists in its population category. In 1997 the Niles Fire Department also merited a first-place rating.

In 1997, after the Niles Fire Department retired a Darley 1500 gallon per minute fire engine, it donated the vehicle to Anna, Illinois, as part of the "shared" program started by the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. Anna lost firefighting equipment in major flooding across Illinois. The Niles Fire Department also donated equipment to the Phoenix, Illinois, Fire Department in 1995.■

Fireman of the Year

The Niles Lions Club, the Niles Chamber of Commerce,
and the Niles Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7712
formerly selected a Fireman of the Year and recognized
the officer in a public ceremony.

The following have been selected Fireman of the Year:

1957	R. Phillips
1958	A. Hoelbl
1959	R. Dittmann
1960	F. Smith
1961	J. Lammersfeld
1962	P. Waldin
1963	C. Pickup
1964	J. Kozak
1965	H. Kinowski
1966	D. Hoppe
1967	A. Weber
1968	V. Lesiowski
1969	N. Nowakowski
1970	T. Sweeney

NILES PLAYGROUND AND RECREATION BOARD AND NILES PARK DISTRICT

A Niles Playground and Recreation Board was appointed by the Village Board of Trustees November 2, 1937. Terms of the directors were to be staggered. The first appointments included Jacob Heinz (five-year term), George Hedlin (four-year term), Robert Smith (three-year term), Paul Schneidewendt (two-year term), and Rene Maitzen (one-year term). In December 1937, Maitzen was elected chairman and Smith became the secretary-treasurer. Although village board minutes do not give extensive details, it is likely this board cooperated with the Niles Days committee in promoting events for celebration during Niles Days. In 1940 a village board committee was to "work in conjunction with the Niles Playground Association to run Niles Days." Joseph Jozwiak was identified as chairman of the Niles Playground Association.

It is believed the first area designated as a public park in Niles consisted of six lots "lying immediately East of the Public School in the Village of Niles, Cook County, Illinois." The village minutes of November 6, 1940, indicate that the land north of Touhy Avenue was to be excluded from the park. Trustees voted favorably on a resolution "accepting the property as heretofore described, as a gift from various organizations of the Village of Niles, purchased by funds realized from Niles Days Celebrations."

In March 1941 the Niles Playground and Recreation Board reported that an architect was hired "to draft plans for a playground, construction of which was to be done with W.P.A. assistance in the amount of approximately \$42,000.00 and the sponsor's contribution to amount to approximately \$18,000.00." The Village Board went on record "to sponsor said project and cost of same to be paid with Niles Days Funds." Frank Stankowicz was appointed "to act as sponsor's agent in the proposed playground project."

Land for a second park was obtained in May 1950. The designated parcel was described as "lots 18 to 43 both inclusive in Niemann's addition to Niles, to be used for park purposes." These parcels, adjacent to Niles Park which had been developed on Touhy Avenue, were used for park purposes. Niles Park would later be renamed Jozwiak Park.

In 1951, the village attorney explained to the Village Board of Trustees that a park district could be created by referendum and a park board could be elected that would have taxing and bonding powers and be a body entirely separate from the Village Board of Trustees.

A favorable vote for an independent park district passed in 1954 and the Niles Park District was incorporated November 19, 1954. The district acquired its first building, the Grennan Heights field house, in 1955. Three parks were also acquired: Niles Park (renamed Jozwiak Park in 1960), Grennan Heights Park, and Oakton Manor Park. Donations from developers enabled the Park District to acquire NICO and Point Parks.

The Niles Park District programs were attracting large audiences in the early 1960s. An ice derby was establishing itself as an annual event with hundreds in attendance. In 1960, some 750 enrolled in the following programs: 410 in arts and crafts, 240 in dancing, and 100 for tennis instruction. There were also many dances for teens at Park District facilities, Christmas dances for teens at Bunker Hill Country Club, and teen hayrides. The Niles Echoes, an adult choral group,

first performed in 1963. The winter carnival of 1964 was described as a "huge success."

A successful referendum in 1962 enabled the park district to purchase land at Ballard Road and Cumberland Avenue. Land was also purchased that was used to develop the park at the Oak School property. Additions were made to NICO Park and the site at 7877 Milwaukee Avenue was developed and became the administrative office, recreation center, and Oasis Waterpark. By 1965 approximately 30 acres in Niles were devoted to parks.

In 1966 the Niles Park District annexed 200 acres of land in Niles, then under the jurisdiction of the Skokie Park District with an estimated land value of \$11 million. Additional lands were brought into the Niles Park District in the Howard Street, Central Avenue, and Lehigh Avenue area.

In 1968 a referendum approved \$1.61 million for park development. Additional grants of \$307,000 were available for expansion. Construction was launched on the Grennan Heights gymnasium, the Ballard sports complex, an ice rink, the Oakton Manor fieldhouse and the administrative office. Land was also purchased that was later developed into Kirk Lane Park, Greenwood Park, and Washington Terrace Park.

Tam O'Shanter Country Club was located in Niles. Internationally famous for its golf course, some of the world's best-known golfers played at Tam. Some 34 major tournaments were played on the course.



After the Western Open golf tournament in 1964, Tam O'Shanter was sold, it was reported in 1964, for \$5 million. In 1965, J. Emil Anderson & Sons, land developers, were revealed as the buyers. After Steve Chamerski was elected president of the Niles Park District Board that year, he announced, "Tam is a major goal." In 1965, a condemnation suit was filed to obtain the golf course. A federal grant of \$1.5 million requested by Niles to purchase Tam was denied in December 1965. In March 1966 the condemnation suit was rejected by the court. A month later the Niles Park District board vetoed a referendum regarding purchase of Tam O'Shanter.

In August 1966 a somewhat revised proposal was put forth setting aside 85 acres of Tam property to be zoned for manufacturing. The Niles Park District would obtain 37-1/2 acres for \$1.33 million. This money was to be raised equally through golf revenue bonds and a federal grant. J. Emil Anderson & Sons was to make a gift to the park district of \$550,000 in installments. The new Tam golf course would be built with nine holes and measuring 2,250 yards. An October referendum rejected the revenue bonds for purchase of the course.

A new comprehensive plan for the entire park district was authorized in December 1966.

A "SAVE TAM" committee emerged and filed a lawsuit against the Village of Niles and J. Emil Anderson & Sons. The committee protested the zoning of Tam property for industrial use and asked the court to prevent further rezoning for manufacturing. Judge John J. Lupe sustained the rezoning. SAVE TAM appealed the decision. The appellate court sent the case back to the circuit court for more information.

Litigation was terminated in 1970 when a further modification was made of the original agreement. The Niles Park District, not the Anderson firm, would redesign, construct, and operate the golf course. Cost of the nine-hole golf course would be underwritten by the Anderson firm until the Niles Park District would exercise its option to purchase the property at \$1.33 million plus the \$175,000 improvement fund. This option to purchase would terminate January 31, 1975.

On November 21, 1970, Niles Park District commissioners met with J. Emil Anderson & Sons to finalize the revised agreement. Niles park board attorney, Gabriel Berrafato, said that the park district would apply for a Federal Open Space Grant equal to 50 percent of the land value of the golf course. The remainder of the funds necessary to purchase the land would be obtained through general obligation or revenue bonds. The bonds would be retired through golf course proceeds.

The Anderson firm agreed to make the cash gift of \$550,000 over a 10-year period if the park district exercised its option to purchase. The park district also received 1.5 acres from the Anderson firm south of Howard Street adjacent to the North Branch of the Chicago River.

After this meeting, plans for an almost new nine-hole golf course were developed. Four new greens and five new tees were constructed for the 2,414-yard, par 33 course. Two holes from the old course remained: No. 1 and No. 6 (that used to be 16).

The new Tam O'Shanter Golf Course was officially dedicated, July 31, 1971. Plans were announced for an Illinois Golfers Hall of Fame at the new site.

After the course was open to the public, it proved to be a major attraction to area golfers. Twenty years later when the course was celebrating its 20th anniversary as a public course, it was announced that some 50,000 rounds of golf have been played annually on the course since it opened.

In 1972 Ed Thompson was appointed as head tennis pro for the Tam O'Shanter Racquet Club. A tennis club was organized and a Tam O'Shanter International Open was announced for 1973. Jan Kodes, 1973 Wimbledon singles champion, was to lead a 32-man draw competing for \$50,000 in prizes.

Tam Golf Course was purchased by the park district in 1973 along with Golf Mill Park, and Jonquil Terrace Park. This was possible after a \$2.7 million referendum passed that year.

Webbs Norman, formerly director of the park district in Oak Park, who had been appointed as a pool consultant for Niles, was named as director of parks and recreation. Norman released some part-time employees and announced the park district could not continue to subsidize areas such as the swimming pool, which was running annual deficits of \$21,000 or more.

The Ballard Park groundbreaking took place October 15, 1970. Within a month, the Niles Park District board of commissioners approved a \$250,000 bond issue for the addition of an ice rink. Total cost for the swimming pool-ice rink project was \$978,256.

After the release of some park district workers, complaints of parents and lifeguards, who said they had to work long hours, began to mount. With confusion still surrounding Tam negotiations, the park board decided to re-establish a citizens' committee in 1971. Citizens of the village would be better informed of park district activities. Each civic organization in the village was to send a representative to the park board to "assess the overall needs of the park district and assist in determining needs and improvements." This committee, further explained park board commissioner, Ray Eagan, "would have a grass roots effect in telling the board the needs of the community."

In May 1971, formal exploration of the Village of Niles taking over the Niles Park District was initiated. Park Board President Gerald Sullivan suggested that such a merger might be inevitable under the new state constitution. Other commissioners expressed a contrary view. Jack Leske said, "People were forming, not losing, independent park districts."

A joint committee was organized. Three representatives from the village and three from the park district were "to probe the facts and information on a professional basis." The study was to be completed in 60 days. After six meetings with park district representatives, village trustee Peter Pesole recommended the village board take no action.

In 1974 the Niles Park District received a state grant of \$138,750 for acquisition and development of a park site. The application, when made, envisioned a park at Jonquil Terrace. Since that site was already purchased when the state grant was awarded, lighted tennis courts and a basketball court were added at Jonquil Terrace.

In 1975 Niles received a grant of \$134,532 from the U.S. Department of Transportation to purchase buses. A free bus service had been initiated to serve patrons of the park district in 1972. It proved to be extremely popular and successful and later was expanded to include service for the entire village.

The Niles Park District obtained other grants for the park district. In 1978, the park district received the first of three CETA (Comprehensive Employment Training Act) grants. Fifteen specified positions were to be filled with the \$120,000 award: park custodian, golf course maintenance man, three park rangers, landscape foreman, landscape laborer, recreation specialist, four painters, and three skilled laborers. In 1979, 10 positions were filled and in 1980, nine positions were assigned using a grant of \$64,000.

In 1983, the Illinois Department of Conservation awarded a \$22,000 grant to the Niles Park District for planting and care of trees, shrubs, and flowers.

Soon after the new park at Golf-Mill opened, residents began to express concerns. In October 1975 some 200 residents met with park commissioners and officials to complain about conditions at the park. The playground meant for youngsters was 25 feet away from Davis Street. There was no guardrail between the street and the playground. Teens driving in cars would drive into the playground. Bill Hughes, appointed director earlier in the year, explained that a football field was being planned for the park and a guardrail and lighting would be considered if conditions did not improve.

The Niles ice rink proved to be extremely popular in its first few years. Other suburbs quickly began to build their own rinks. Soon supply outran demand for such a facility. In 1977, the Niles Park District was evaluating the \$40,000 deficit the rink sustained in 1975. Expenses were trimmed. Arrangements were made with Park Ridge and Des Plaines to employ cooperative measures in permitting residents to use each other's facilities. Morton Grove agreed to change its plan for an ice rink; it would build a racquetball court instead. Morton Grove, Skokie, and Niles estab-

lished a cooperative agreement to use each other's facilities at resident rates. Des Plaines, which turned down an ice rink facility in 1971, rejected plans to resurrect plans for an ice rink in 1977.

In 1977 the Niles ice rink facility was used by the Chicago Metropolitan High School Association, Northeastern Illinois University, Niles Amateur Hockey Club, Notre Dame High School hockey team, Park Ridge Montessori School, Maine-Niles Handicapped, and Northwest Speed Skaters. The rink was also open for public skating five days a week for five hours a day and was used for lessons three hours a day. In the summer, an indoor golf facility was provided.

Over the years the park board continued to adjust ice-skating programs. Renamed "Iceland" in 1993, the facility was opened on a year-round basis. By 1997 five separate sessions of an ice-skating school were available throughout the year. Ice-skating programs were so full that the park district announced that the facility "will stay open for hockey or recreational skating whenever it is available--24 hours a day!"

In 1980 a campaign was launched by a park commissioner to raise funds for park equipment specially designed for the handicapped to be installed at Golf-Mill Park. The park board agreed to provide space. Work crews agreed to install the equipment. Since the park budget did not have available funds for the equipment, \$13,000 would have to be raised for the equipment and adjustments necessary for water fountains and park benches. The Niles Days committee pledged the first \$7,000 it would raise. Other groups stepped forward with donations. The Lions Club, the Knights of Columbus, Niles Lioness Club, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars were among the early contributors.

An All Child Play Center was installed in the park. It was considered unique since it could be used by all members of the family. Six other communities associated with the Maine-Niles Association for Special Recreation were made aware of the facilities and were welcomed to the park.

In 1982, the Niles Knights of Columbus, North American Martyrs Council 4338, pledged \$10,000 for a second recreation facility in Niles for the mentally and physically handicapped. This facility opened and was dedicated as a universal playground, October 2, 1982, on grounds at the Recreation Center at 7877 Milwaukee Avenue.

The United States Council for the International Year of Disabled Persons recognized the Niles Park District for its efforts on behalf of the disabled in 1982.

On November 20, 1992, Niles residents voted 6,500 to 3,500 to turn over all park district operations to the Village of Niles. Three park district commissioners voted not to abide by the election result and filed a lawsuit to prevent the Village of Niles from taking over park operations. The suit asked the court to uphold the theory that in order to dissolve the park district, a decision would have to be based on a majority vote of all registered voters. The lower court upheld this view. The Village of Niles appealed without success. The Niles Park District remained in control of parks in Niles.

As parks and facilities became available in all sections of Niles, concentrated efforts were always under way to provide a variety of activities for all age and ability groups. Competitive as well as leisure-time activities were provided. The proverbial "A to Z" could be found in detailed tables of contents describing the programs of the Niles Park District over the years: archery, ballet, baseball, basketball, charm, cheerleading, Delta, Early Morning Patch, fishing derby, football, floor hockey, fun club, golf, guitar, gym for tots, Halloween parade and party, horseback riding, ice skating, jazz, judo, karate, little chef's delight, macrame, oil painting, pre-school activities, puppetry, rug hooking, sculpture, sketching, soccer, softball, square dance club, tap dance, tee ball,

tennis, tiny tappers, trips (ladies choice, parent/child, men's time out), tumbling, woodcarving, young adventures, and youth arts and crafts.

NILES PLAYGROUND AND RECREATION BOARD AND NILES PARK DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMISSIONERS

The Niles Playground and Recreation Board and the Niles Playground Association probably came into being as groups of quasi-public officials assisting in the promotion of Niles Days during the 1930s. After specific land was set aside in 1940 for use as a park in Niles, the Village Board of Trustees began paying more attention to making regular appointments. No minutes or records of either group have been located nor have any records been found of either group reporting to the Village Board of Trustees.

In 1954 the Niles Park District was established and commissioners were elected by Niles Park District residents.

Niles Playground and Recreation Board Appointed, November 2, 1937:

Jacob Heinz, 5-year term

George Hedlin, 4-year term

Robert Smith, 3-year term (elected Secretary-Treasurer)

Paul Schneidewendt, 2-year term

Rene Maitzen, 1-year term (elected Chairman)

Joseph Jozwiak, in 1940, identified in minutes of Village Board of Trustees as Chairman of the Niles Playground Association. No exact date of election or appointment.

Joseph H. Jozwiak, November 4, 1941, appointed member of Niles Recreation Board to serve 5-year term ending November 1, 1946.

William M. Hart resigns as member of Niles Recreation Board December 2, 1941. Village board minutes are not clear as to Hart's appointment.

Ralph Fanning appointed member of Niles Recreation Board, December 2, 1941, filling vacancy of Hart. Fanning resigns October 31, 1943.

Robert E. Smith, January 6, 1941, appointed member of Niles Recreation Board for term ending November 11, 1945.

Rene Maitzen moved from the village and his seat was declared vacant on Recreation Board October 6, 1943.

Rudolf Wahlborg, October 6, 1943, appointed to Recreation Board to serve until November 2, 1948.

Joseph Mulhern, October 6, 1943, appointed to Recreation Board to serve until November 2, 1948 (seat vacated December 3, 1947).

James G. Kozak, June 12, 1945, appointed to Recreation Board to serve until November 2, 1949.

Three vacancies on Village of Niles Playground and Recreation Board reported December 2, 1945. The following were appointed: Jul. F. Szatkowski, to November 2, 1950; Peter J Kluesing, to November 2, 1948; Emil J. Patek, to November 2, 1949.

Joseph H. Jozwiak, February 4, 1947, appointed member of Recreation Board for term ending November 2, 1951.

Lee Cress, December 3, 1947, appointed to Playground and Recreation Board for term ending November 2, 1952.

Joseph H. Jozwiak resigns June 23, 1949, as chairman and member of Niles Recreation Board.

Arthur F. Meier, June 23, 1949, appointed chairman and member of Niles Recreation Board.

Emil Patek, May 3, 1950, appointed member of Playground and Recreation Board to November 11, 1954; resigns February 1, 1951.

Alois L. Roels, February 7, 1951, appointed to Recreation Board until November 2, 1954; resigns June 2, 1953.

Jul. F. Szatkowski, February 7, 1951, appointed to Playground and Recreation Board to November 2, 1955.

Otto Mikkelsen, October 3, 1951, appointed to Niles Playground and Recreation Board; specific term not indicated.

Joseph H. Jozwiak, December 12, 1951, appointed to Niles Playground and Recreation Board to November 2, 1955.

February 6, 1952, appointment of Village Treasurer to be member "of the Recreation Board."

Edwin A. Leath, June 2, 1953, appointed to Playground and Recreation Board to November 2, 1954.

Peter Kluesing, term expired November 2, 1953; Village President announces, May 26, 1954, Kluesing would remain in office until election to create Park District and Board members.

NILES PARK DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS AND PRESIDENTS

Dates indicate year elected or appointed commissioner or date served as president.

1954

Lee Cress elected commissioner
William Dressel elected commissioner
John Lambert elected commissioner
Ed Leith elected commissioner
Walter Zalud elected commissioner

1956

Arnold Spencer appointed commissioner

1957

Charles Giovannelli elected commissioner
Louis Schreiner elected commissioner

1959

Charles Giovannelli elected commissioner
Frank Jacobs elected commissioner
Bernard Miller elected commissioner
Louis Schreiner elected president

1960

William Dressel appointed commissioner
Frank Jacobs elected president

1961

Raymond Eagan elected commissioner
Jules Pandera elected commissioner
Jack Leske elected commissioner
Steven Chamerski appointed commissioner
Joseph Diliaria appointed commissioner
Bernard Miller elected president

1962

Sherwin Levinson appointed commissioner
Louis Schreiner elected president

1963

Steven Chamerski elected commissioner
Keith Peck elected commissioner
Louis Schreiner elected commissioner
Raymond Eagan elected president

1965

Raymond Eagan elected commissioner
Gerald Sullivan elected commissioner
Steven Chamerski elected president

1966

Jack Leske elected president

1967

Jack Leske elected commissioner
Michael Provenzano elected commissioner
Jack Leske elected president

1968

Louis Schreiner elected president

1969

Walter Beusse elected commissioner
Gerald Sullivan elected president

1970

Gerald Sullivan elected president

1971

William Keener elected commissioner
Gerald Sullivan elected commissioner
Gerald Sullivan elected president

1972

Walter Beusse elected president

1973

Mildred Jones elected commissioner
Jack Leske elected commissioner
Jack Leske elected president

1974

Robert Romano appointed commissioner
William Keener elected president

1975

Jeffrey Arnold elected commissioner
Steven Chamerski elected commissioner
Mildred Jones elected president

1977

Jeffrey Arnold elected commissioner
Daniel Kosiba elected commissioner
Mildred Jones elected president

1978

Mary Marusek appointed commissioner
Louella Preston appointed commissioner
Jeffrey Arnold elected president

1979

Walter Beusse elected commissioner

Elaine Heinen elected commissioner
Daniel Kosiba elected president

1980

Daniel Kosiba elected president

1981

Daniel Kosiba elected commissioner
Mary Marusek elected commissioner
James Pierski elected commissioner
Daniel Kosiba elected president

1982

Walter Beusse elected president

1983

Walter Beusse elected commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected commissioner
Daniel Kosiba elected commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected president

1984

Mary Marusek elected president

1985

Mary Marusek elected commissioner
James Pierski elected commissioner
James Pierski elected president

1986

James Pierski elected president

1987

Walter Beusse elected commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected commissioner
Mary Marusek elected president

1988

Val Engelman appointed commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected president

1989

Carol Panek elected commissioner
Bernard (Bud) Skaja III elected commissioner
James Pierski elected commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected president

1990

Walter Beusse elected president

1991

Marlene Baczek elected commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected commissioner
Carol Panek elected president

1992

Carol Panek elected commissioner

1993

Myrna L. Breitzman elected commissioner
Richard Sheridan elected commissioner
Bernard (Bud) Skaja III elected commissioner
Bernard (Bud) Skaja III elected president

1995

Val Engelman elected commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected commissioner
Elaine Heinen elected president

1996

Myrna L. Breitzman elected president

1997

Charles Barbaglia elected commissioner
James Hynes elected commissioner
William Terpinas, Sr. elected commissioner
Charles Barbaglia elected president

Tam O'Shanter Country Club

For 17 years, between 1941 and 1958, some of the world's greatest golf tournaments were played at the Tam O'Shanter Country Club in Niles. The world's richest golf prizes attracted internationally and nationally known golfers such as Ben Hogan, Sam Sneed, Lloyd Mangrum, Byron Nelson, Babe Zacharias, and Louise Suggs. Prominent amateurs such as Arnold Palmer and Frank Stranahan also played at Tam.

Course owner and tournament organizer was George S. May. *Golf* magazine called May one of the "100 Heroes of American Golf." Easily recognized by the style and colors he wore and known for his flare for the game, May was "one of American golf's most flamboyant figures," wrote *Senior Golfer* magazine, who "singlehandedly lifted (golf) to prominence."

Two big events at Tam, the World Championship of Golf and the All-American, attracted the best golfers from around the world. In 1954, the golfers from 25 nations were represented in the tournaments.

May did the unthinkable with tournament golf. He raised the money prizes for golfers and lowered entrance fees to \$1 for spectators. Clubhouse admission, shuttle service to and from the course, and many other "firsts" in tournament play were introduced for the spectators at fan-friendly Tam.

In 1953, May's assistant, Chet Posson, agreed to televise the tournament for one hour to an estimated audience of 2 million viewers. While the "winner" was standing on the green, he decided to let the players behind finish. Lew Worsham hit a 104-yard wedge shot for an eagle-two and a stunning victory. No script could have been written to match the dramatic impact of that shot on live television. Posson was concerned that May would have thought his expenditure of \$32,000 for the televising was extravagant. May supposedly later told Posson, "I don't care if it cost a million dollars."

May had his disputes with other golf organizations. In 1958, the Professional Golfer's Association demanded all entry fees be turned over to them. May rejected this type of contract. *Senior Golfer*, in describing this last battle between May and the PGA, wrote, "After 17 Bravura performances, the showman went down with the show."



Ben Hogan and George S. May at Tam O'Shanter Golf Course

Niles Leaning Tower of Pisa

Robert Ilg, a successful businessman, built a 22-acre park during the 1920s near the area of today's Touhy Avenue and Caldwell Avenue. The park had two large outdoor pools. Ilg was concerned about preserving the natural beauty of the areas as much as possible. The outdoor pools would have to be supplied by a large outdoor water tower. Ilg decided to build a replica of the Leaning Tower of Pisa to conceal the water tower.

The tower in Niles would be half the size of the original in Pisa: 94 feet tall, 28 feet in diameter, leaning 7.4 feet. Ilg needed specially designed tools for the project. Marble was used for the tower in Pisa; reinforced concrete would be used in Niles. Construction began in 1931 and was completed in 1934.



Leaning Tower under construction

Arrangements were made to turn over the tower to the Niles YMCA, which occupied the property in the early 1960s. One of the conditions attached to the YMCA gaining the property was they would spend a minimum of \$500 annually to upkeep the tower and surrounding area until the year 2059.



The tower soon showed problems of aging. Cracks in the concrete would widen with every freeze-thaw cycle. The \$500 annual budget to upkeep the tower and grounds proved inadequate.

In 1995, after leasing the area and tower from the YMCA, the Village of Niles began a \$1.2 million renovation project. Concrete was repaired, new lights were added to each of the eight floors, and a plaza was developed around the tower with four fountains, a 30-foot reflecting pool, a "telefono" booth, and landscaping. The Leaning Tower Plaza was formally dedicated June 26, 1997. Renovation funds were raised by a tax on customers in nearby shopping areas.

NILES PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Woman's Club of Niles conducted a survey in 1955 to determine the needs of the community. The survey revealed that the top priority for Niles was establishing a library and providing library services. Local school libraries were inadequately stocked and staffed for students to complete assignments. Many students traveled to Park Ridge and paid \$7 per year for library privileges.

Leadership for the movement for a public library in Niles was undertaken by Mrs. Edward Aigner, chairman of the education department of the Niles Woman's Club and president of the Niles Woman's Club Library Board since its inception in 1955. "It was an uphill fight all the way," said Mrs. Aigner.

An appeal for assistance was rejected by the State of Illinois that pointed out the library would need an annual tax base of \$32,000 before the state would provide any assistance.

"We had no space," said Mrs. Aigner. At first turned down by the village, a second request for facilities was made in person by a delegation of the library board of the Niles Woman's Club. Niles' first public library became a reality: a room adjoining the board room in the Niles Village Hall.

It was a mixed blessing. Says Mrs. Aigner, "we launched our big book drive. It was so successful that we outgrew our village quarters before we were able to open." Nevertheless, the Niles Public Library opened in May 1956 in the Village Hall.

The Library Board of the Niles Woman's Club rapidly expanded to include representatives of other community organizations in Niles. Many contributed funds. On December 3, 1956, \$1,000 was sent to the Niles Park District to share the cost of completion of the south half of a room at the east end of the Grennan Heights field house. Work on this, the future home of the Niles Public Library, was to be completed within a year. The Niles Park District was to pay the balance of the costs on the project. On behalf of the village, the agreement was signed by the Niles Village Library, Inc.

When the Niles Public Library opened in the Grennan Heights field house on April 13, 1957, 3,600 books were available in a room that measured 12 feet by 24 feet. The first library inventory taken five months later gave some indication of the collection: there were 127 reference volumes; 1,429 books of adult fiction, 404 juvenile fiction; 109 volumes in the adult science section, 130 juvenile; 142 selections of adult literature, 130 juvenile; and 108 adult history books, 192 juvenile. The collection in the Village Hall numbered approximately 1,500 volumes. A volunteer staff provided services at both locations. The libraries were open 15 hours a week. By March 1959, 1,700 library membership cards were in use.

Funding for both libraries came from contributions from the village and numerous civic and social groups. A referendum in 1957 approved taxes of 60 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for the library district that was being formed.

Unanticipated organizational problems proved to be a time-consuming burden for the Niles Village Library Board of Trustees and the staff at the library. The board would have to deal with

two townships--Maine and Niles--because the library district would be in both. As the Village of Niles annexed areas, these areas did not automatically become part of the Niles library district. Many residents of Niles who lived in areas recently annexed by Niles had to pay library fees until special elections were conducted to annex those areas by the library district. These elections, as well as those for library trustees, could not be conducted by the Village of Niles. A separate election had to be organized and administered by the library district. Also, it was determined, some Niles citizens were members of Glenview's library district to which they paid taxes. Refunds had to be calculated. In 1978 the Niles Public Library District won a court case that would keep the 90 acres of the Zenith Glenview facility in the library district for 10 years. This translated into additional revenue for the library district.

A November 1958 referendum establishing a library board of trustees for Niles passed 740 to 246. Elected to serve on the first library board were Rudolph Hazucha, Jane Weber, Edna Walger, Eva Meyer, Clarence Culver, and Eugene Anderson. At the first meeting of the newly elected board, June 19, 1959, Hazucha was elected president and Meyer became secretary. Previously, Hazucha served as president of the Niles Volunteer Library Board.

The first official financial statement of the elected board indicated receipts of \$8,875 (\$8,500 were classified as gifts) and a balance on hand at the end of the fiscal year of \$9,570. A tentative budget for 7/1/59-6/30/60 was submitted based on anticipated tax revenues of \$48,000; the major outlays were to be \$22,300 for capital expenditures and \$12,250 appropriated for salaries.

Jean Fox, campus librarian at DePaul University, was appointed librarian in October 1959.

There was discussion at the July 1959 board meeting to relocate the library to the community center being planned by the Niles Park Board. However, a vacated Ben Franklin store on Waukegan and Oakton would be available and a motion was approved to arrange for that property to be the next home of the Niles Public Library.

The move, began in September 1959, was completed in early 1960. A formal open house, June 26, 1960, invited the community to the library. The annual report for June 30, 1960, indicated that 2,574 borrowers took out 31,513 volumes during the year. Some 1,944 books were added to the collection for a total of 4,499 available to patrons.

Once established in the larger facilities on Oakton and Waukegan, monthly appropriations for new books were set at \$2,500. Best sellers were obtained through a lease program. Within four months, monthly circulation of 4,000 plus was almost doubling the previous year's figures. The book collection also doubled by September 1961 to 9,335 volumes.

In 1961 the members of the Woman's Club reactivated the Friends of the Library. Within six months, the Friends of the Library announced a specific goal: building a new library. The 1962 annual report of the library showed that the library had some 15,000 books in its collection, registration increased to 5,991, and circulation was almost 75,000. Although these figures reflected increases of 35 to 40 percent over the previous year, they remained under national averages.

Negotiations for 2 acres of property at Waukegan and Oakton were under way in October 1962. Orput and Orput were hired as architects. A \$575,000 referendum was approved in July 1964 for a new library. Additional funds of \$212,963 came from a federal grant. Groundbreaking was August 29, 1965.

Since the inception of what may be properly called a most dedicated community movement to establish a public library in Niles, many organizations have been active. There is little docu-

mentation--although results are more than convincing--that numerous groups and individuals were involved in raising or contributing funds, materials and services that made the community dream of a library a reality. The Woman's Club of Niles certainly planted and cultivated the seeds. The Friends of the Library dedicated themselves to the building of a modern new library. Niles firemen, on their own time, built shelves for the first public library in Niles. The Niles Chamber of Commerce donated--"gave up"--its Christmas parties and used those funds to fund early development of the library. Profits of many organizations from Niles Days were turned over to the library. The Niles Township Jewish Community Club donated children's books. A Clara Blase Memorial Fund was established to furnish the children's room in the new library.

As plans for the new library unfolded, library activities increased. A specialized collection of books in Polish was developed in 1962. A facility in the Golf-Mill shopping mall was open to the public with 150 books. Kenneth J. Cohen was appointed as a liaison consultant between the library board and village officials in 1963. A 1946 ambulance was converted and put into use as a library bookmobile in 1964.

The new library opened September 7, 1966. It measured 20,500 square feet and had a 100,000-volume capacity. On October 23, 1966, with Congressman Donald Rumsfeld as the featured speaker, the library was formally dedicated.

The library continued to reach out to the community with its services. In October 1966 a regular bookmobile service was launched with four scheduled stops at Oakton Manor Park, Courtland Park, Chesterfield Gardens, and Our Lady of Ransom, with provisions for four other stops. A universal library card was introduced that could be used throughout the North Suburban Library System. The library hosted a Polish Millennium exhibit in December 1966.

Organizations continued their support. The Niles Art Guild made annual donations for the purchase of art books. The Lions Club donated funds for purchase of large-print books. A fountain, in memory of Vivian Egan, was presented to the library by the Woman's Club.

In 1968 the library began publishing its own newsletter. Numerous issues could be explained in the newsletter regarding the differences in geographical boundaries between the Village of Niles and the Niles Library District. Many in the village were not in the district and many in the district were not in the village. The problem became acute when students attempted to use the library. In 1970, although not in the district, library cards were granted to junior high students of the Apollo and Gemini schools.

The 1970 annual report indicated 56,334 volumes were available in the library for public use. Circulation was 187,961. The collection now also had 1,300 phonographic records, 110 sets of slides and other audio-visual materials. The budget was \$213,431.

In 1971 circulation dropped 11,691 to 176,270. The improvement in school libraries was cited as the reason for 609 fewer youngsters with library cards. Less adult borrowing was the result of the universal library card being available for use in 26 libraries. This was more than double the number of libraries in the system three years earlier. The Friends of the Library, as would be revealed in 1972, were critical of the library board's and the administration's lack of interest in the projects and programs of the Friends.

The library, attempting to keep abreast of the expansion of the Village of Niles, annexed six areas to the library district in 1972. Use of computers in the library was discussed in 1972 but tabled until early 1973.

A demonstration library containing 1,880 square feet was established at the Golf Mill State Bank Building in 1973.

In 1974 the library purchased land immediately west of its building for \$127,500. It also contracted for four units of storefronts in the Shoppers' Walk on Milwaukee Avenue since the Golf Mill facility was scheduled to be closed. By 1977 it purchased the facilities at 9004-9030 N. Milwaukee Avenue for \$550,000.

The lease at the Milwaukee Avenue library facility was not renewed in mid-1980. However, in November 1980 the library established a new branch at the former Ballard School. The library also received a \$130,000 CETA grant and was able to hire five people to work in the library.

The outreach program, launched in 1981, proved to be extremely popular. The library and its services were brought to nursing homes, senior citizen centers, nursery schools, churches, synagogues, and shut-ins. Within a year the program expanded some 300 percent and was "perhaps the finest of its type in the north suburban area." By 1984, thanks to a Project Plus grant, the Outreach program was reaching an additional 12 day care centers and 11 senior citizen centers. In 1985 a total of 1,030 library cards were issued for Project Plus patrons: 922 in the unincorporated areas of Glenview, 108 in the unincorporated areas of Des Plaines.

In 1983, at a cost of more than \$1 million, the library would be increased by 12,840 square feet. The following were added or altered: a more prominent entrance area, a new area for the circulation desk, making the children's library almost three times larger, centralized office space, and second-level adult reading areas. A Shell gasoline station at the corner of Oakton and Waukegan was purchased for \$265,000 in 1985 and eventually used for a parking lot.



Niles Public Library

In 1989 the Illinois Library Association presented the Intellectual Freedom Award to the staff, administration, and board of the Niles Public Library.

Dr. Thomas Murray was appointed a communications advisor and Daniel Macken was appointed administrator in May 1990 at \$45,000 annually.

Beth Mueller was hired in June 1991 as a special consultant to assist in a search for a new administrator. The 1991 summer reading club broke all records with 1,176 children registered, a 76 percent increase over the previous year. In October the library contributed \$1,000 to the Fair

Tax Policy Committee to challenge the tax limitation act. Donald E. Wright was appointed administrator effective March 2, 1992. Oakton Community College taught classes for senior citizens at the library beginning in May 1992. After Wright resigned for health reasons, Cary Czarnecki was appointed library administrator August 1, 1993.

After expressing reluctance several times over the past 20 years to move into the computer age, the library began moving rapidly in that direction with the initiation of a computer lab. Numerous computers and programs were purchased. Patrons found the equipment both challenging and productive. Those who are not intimidated by numbers, related to computer storage of information, could probably better explain just what capability the computer lab has when analyzing this 1994 statement of the library administrator: "Each of the 26 total CD-ROMs has 600 million bytes of information each -- for a total of 15,600,000,000 bytes of information! All that information is currently available for our patrons to access through six computers in the main reference area, and the reference staff from the desk." Much of the equipment had been purchased thanks to a \$64,600 Illinois State Library Association Grant. In 1996 an additional \$59,000 was spent on computers that would be able to handle new programs that might be introduced in the coming 5 to 10 years.

There would be concerns with the computer lab. A very popular computer program, ki Nexus, would list the availability of some 2,500 jobs every two weeks. Five months after the program was introduced, a record 41 patrons had registered to be placed on the waiting list to use ki Nexus. Unfortunately, unauthorized access to applicants' confidential information exposed potential risks in using the program. The program was withdrawn after a year.

Then there was Die-Hard and AntiEXE. Both are viruses. AntiEXE was a minor irritant. But Die-Hard, the library administrator would report to the board, "is... rare and very dangerous. It inserts itself into every program that runs on a computer, copies itself on every disk put in a floppy drive, and then moves on." Removing the viruses and making the computers clean were intricate and time-consuming processes. "The PCs were down for only one day," reported the administrator.

Ungarbling 15.6 billion bytes of information in a day is perhaps just one of the reasons Mike Jackiw, head of the Niles Public Library computer lab, was included in the expertise directory of the North Suburban Library System.

Early in 1994 Anders Dahlgren, a building consultant who was studying the needs of the library for several months, presented his evaluation of space needs for the Niles Public Library to the Board of Trustees. He recommended a collection of 250,000 volumes, 17,500 audio visual items, 650 periodicals, 210 reader seats, and a variety of staff work stations. A building of some 63,690 square feet was recommended. The present library had 33,895 square feet.

Early in 1995 tax cap legislation was passed. As the board studied the Dahlgren survey suggesting library expansion, there was mounting concern that a referendum would have to be passed to pay for any library expansion. In June 1995, Frye, Gillan, and Molinaro were selected as architects for the expansion. By July, the cost of a 28,000-square-foot expansion was estimated to be \$7.6 million with an additional \$353,000 necessary for annual operational costs.

In October 1995 the library received a recognition award from the Illinois Library Association Assistance Division for "outstanding contribution to the growth and development of library support staff." It was accompanied by a grant to train and educate support staff.

A Citizen Referendum Committee was formed. Jack Sugar and Matt Matthias were named speakers on the public information committee and Bart McQuinn would organize a neighborhood

committee. An \$8.8 million bond issue would be presented to the voters November 7, 1995. A state grant of \$250,000 for this construction project was approved in 1996.

After the bond issue passed by a 400 vote margin of 3,000 votes cast, a decision was made a month later to keep the library open during construction. However, by July 1996, the architects indicated that if the library moved, the expansion work could be completed by January 1998. Working on site and keeping the library open would delay opening until February 1999. Moving would save the library \$140,000 in construction costs. The library's business manager indicated the move would cost \$320,000 while saving the library \$225,000 in construction costs and \$51,000 in current building maintenance and repairs. Plans were approved to move back to the newly completed library February 1, 1998, when 34,000 square feet were scheduled to be available.

The move to temporary facilities at 7400 Caldwell began in December 1996. Cost for rental was set at \$40,583 a month. Groundbreaking for the library expansion was January 14, 1997. Shell Oil Company, when informed of additional soil contamination, would appropriate \$200,000 to further clean the site so that a "no further remediation" ruling could be obtained from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, provided the area be used only as a parking lot and would not be sold for residential building.

In mid-1997 the library collections included almost 200,000 items. The operating budget was just shy of \$3 million. Circulation that was 733,265 items in 1992-93 reached 827,531 in 1995-96, but fell to 678,135 in 1996-97, when the library changed facilities. Since the circulation figures had shown a steady annual increase since 1985, it was anticipated circulation would again increase after the library would move back into expanded facilities at Oakton Street and Waukegan Road.

TRUSTEES AND PRINCIPAL ADMINISTRATORS OF THE NILES PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Dates indicate when elected or appointed

1959

Rudolph S. Hazucha, President
Jane Weber, Trustee
Edna Walger, Trustee
Eva Meyer, Trustee
Clarence Culver, Trustee
Eugene Anderson, Trustee
Jean Fox, appointed librarian, September 19,
1959

1960

Rudolph S. Hazucha, President
Sigmund Lewicki, Trustee

1961

Eugene Anderson, President
Carlyle Esser, Trustee

1962

Eugene Anderson, President
Clarence Culver, Trustee
Carlyle Esser, Trustee
Sigmund Lewicki, Trustee
Eva Meyer, Trustee
Edna Walger, Trustee
Daisy Dennis, appointed librarian September
27, 1962
Francis S. Allen, appointed library
administrator March 13, 1963

1963

Jane Weber, Trustee

1964

Clarence Culver, President
Isabel Curtin, Trustee
Eva Meyer, Trustee
Arlene Brandt, Trustee

1966

Carlyle Esser, President
 Sigmund Lewicki, Trustee
 Clarence Culver, Trustee
 Diane Hansen, Trustee

1968

Carlyle Esser, President
 Sigmund Lewicki, Trustee

1970

Carlyle Esser, President
 Felix C. Dospil, Trustee
 Martin Hodes, Trustee
 Arlene G. Brandt, Trustee

1972

Martin Hodes, President
 Diane K. Hansen, Trustee
 Jerome Krok, Trustee
 Clarence Culver, Trustee

1974

Martin Hodes, President
 Carlyle Esser, Trustee
 Sigmund Lewicki, Trustee
 Clarence Culver, Trustee

1976

Martin Hodes, President
 Clarence Culver, Trustee
 Felix Dospil, Trustee
 Lloyd Gillet, Trustee
 Chester Lasken, Trustee
 Lois Grant, Trustee

1977

Sue Kraus, Trustee
 Clarence Culver, designated honorary lifetime
 non-voting member of Board of Trustees
 Edith Jackson, appointed library administrator
 designee: December 1, 1977, assistant
 administrator; February 1, 1978,
 administrator

1978

Lloyd Gillet, President
 Diane Hansen, Trustee
 Margaret (Peggy) Rajski, Trustee
 Rita Breithart, Trustee
 Harry Pestine, Trustee

1979

Irene Costello, Trustee
 Judy Czyzewicz, Trustee
 Ruth Machowski, appointed interim
 administrator March 29, 1979
 Dr. Donald Foos, appointed administrator
 after April 1, to be effective before June
 1, 1980; could not accept appointment
 due to medical disability

1980

Harry Pestine, President
 Irene Costello, Trustee
 Judith J. Czyzewicz, Trustee
 Lois Grant, Trustee
 Mark Neyman appointed library
 administrator September 15, 1980

1981

Josephine Buck, Trustee
 Robert Young appointed interim
 administrator September 3, 1982

1983

Harry Pestine, President
 Frank J. Biga, Trustee
 Jaroslawa Benko, Trustee
 Terri Spreckman Carman, Trustee
 Myles P. Dimand, Trustee
 Irene M. Costello, Trustee
 Duncan J. McKenzie appointed
 administrator September 21, 1983

1985

Harry Pestine, President
 Charlene R. Wagner, Trustee
 Margaret (Peggy) Rajski, Trustee

1987

Terri Carman, President
 Walter Chmielowski, Trustee
 Robert Quattrocchi, Trustee

1989

Margaret Rajski, President
 Ted Przybylo, Trustee
 Irene Costello, Trustee
 Carol Levey, Trustee
 David Laske, Trustee

1990

Richard Weaver, Trustee
 Frank Allocco, Trustee
 Florence Krok, Trustee
 Daniel Macken, appointed administrator
 May 16, 1990

1991

Ted Przybylo, President
 Frank Allocco, Trustee
 David Laske, Trustee
 Alan Rosen, Trustee
 Donald E. Wright appointed administrator
 March 2, 1992

1993

Ted Przybylo, President
 Richard Barnat, Trustee
 Anthony Serritella, Trustee
 Rosanne Dulski, Trustee
 Avis Gibbons, Trustee
 Cary Czarnecki appointed administrator
 August 1, 1993

1994

John C. Hanna, Trustee

1995

Ted Przybylo, President
 Irene Costello, Trustee
 Richard Barnat, Trustee
 John Hanna, Trustee
 Kurt Schmeisser, Trustee

1996

Tom Surace, Trustee

1997

Ted Przybylo, President
 Irene Costello, Trustee
 Tom Surace, Trustee



Niles Library - 1998

Library Gives Books Away

During the mid 1990s, the Niles Public Library was removing numerous books no longer appropriate for the collections along with other equipment. Discarded books were frequently given to the Friends of the Library for resale for the benefit of the library. Other books were given to Project Books, Etc. for distribution. An April 1996 report by library administrator, Cary Czarnecki, details where books removed from the Niles Public Library were sent: Battered women's shelters for women and children (5 sites); homes for children and teens who have special problems (6 sites); shelters and drop-in agencies (7 sites); projects serving children (12 sites), adult education (3 sites), and hospital and clinics (4 sites)

Macintosh computers were sent to Joseph Academy, Our Lady of Ransom school, and St. John Brebeuf school.

A Library for Niles in 1934?

The minutes of the village board of trustees for September 4, 1934, reveal, "A letter was then read from the Associated Libraries, offering the Village of Niles a Public Library, at no cost to the Village of Niles Board."

The village clerk was instructed to "send a letter to the Associated Libraries, inviting them to explain there (sic) proposition."

Later board minutes do not indicate whether such letter was written or any response from the Associated Libraries.

NILES DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Today's Department of Human Services in Niles is the result of more than 30 years of successful efforts by Niles officials, professional staff, and volunteers. Each of these groups has been most responsive in assisting groups and individuals in Niles in alleviating, diminishing, or solving problems, concerns, and challenges.

Over the years, village officials had studies made which analyzed the perceived and real social and human needs of its citizens. These studies made evident that specific targeted groups such as the aged, the youth, those emotionally or mentally upset, the unemployed, and those affected by broken homes, alcoholism, or drug abuse, had personal problems which affected the well-being of the larger community. Often, family members were unaware of problems. Even when a problem was identified, it was difficult for the affected individual to work out a solution. A comprehensive approach with professional assistance was necessary.

Staff trained to deal with identified human and social problems were appointed by the village. Input, opinion, and suggestions from others were also sought out before launching major programs.

Individual volunteers have been, and continue to be, valuable co-workers assisting the Department of Human Services. Schools, businesses, and churches also offer volunteer institutional assistance necessary for the success of the programs conducted by the Department of Human Services.

In the past, individual and separate agencies in Niles for mental health, senior citizens, and youth were given somewhat independent status in developing programs of action. Names and labels frequently changed. Nevertheless, for many years, all residents of Niles were aware that it was the Niles Family Service that was always available to assist any member of any family who had any type of problem. Today, providing family services still remains a major objective in Niles. However, a decision was made to use the more inclusive title of Department of Human Services, coordinating the cooperation necessary to develop programs with other community, educational, private, industrial, and governmental agencies which also provide assistance to the people of Niles.

Thousands of lives were influenced, probably enriched, fulfilled, and made more productive thanks to the Niles Department of Human Services. People--in government, on staff, volunteering--made the programs work. So did communication. Whether it was word of mouth, the extensive coverage in local newspapers, or the published newsletters of the village or those of Niles' senior citizens, the response of all age groups has resulted in dynamic programs answering the needs of the people of Niles.

The sheer volume of activity over the years was, no doubt, constantly propelled toward additional new programs and associations. Unfortunately, many of the meetings and relationships with other groups and agencies have not been fully documented. However, even casual references to such associations in the following historical account may serve to reflect how the Niles Department of Human Services has attempted to embrace everyone willing to help and respond to the needs of the people of Niles.

The Village of Niles appointed C. M. Noble, M.D., its first Commissioner of Health in 1902. For the next 20 years there were some concerns expressed about the cleanliness of saloons. A more serious problem developed when milk would be stored for long periods in the village before it was sold. This caused spoilage and, in several instances, the health commissioner would have to rule it unfit for consumption.

Issues that today are labeled "human services" did not attract attention in the Village of Niles until 1931. In that year, Dr. F. J. Laughlan presented himself to the Village Board and "received permission to present a talk on starting an Infant Welfare Station in the Village of Niles. Dr. Laughlan explained that the only expense to the Village would be printing of charts and other incidental expenses, and that said welfare work would be held in the Village Hall." Dr. Laughlan was given permission to use the Village Hall to set up the program. Unfortunately, there were no further reports given to the Village Board on the Infant Welfare Station.

A month later the Village Board of Trustees appointed a committee of three to determine "if something could be done in regard to getting help for the unemployed and needy in the Village of Niles." No report of this committee could be located. Employment was procured when Niles was awarded funding for some federal government projects. During World War II, the Village of Niles also was aware of the concerns of the unemployed residents. However, no formal program was established to deal with the unemployed or needy in the village.

It is likely that some of the funds generated by Niles Days, which were conducted during these periods, were set aside to assist in providing medical care for the village and give direct help to the needy and unemployed.

Concepts of human services took on definite shape in Niles during the 1960s. In 1964, Niles Recovery, Inc. announced "the celebration of another anniversary of self-help and service." A newspaper account explained, "The anniversary of the Niles Group represents the advance and the stability of techniques of self-help through group-therapy for those with mental or emotional problems." Mrs. Howard A. Haave, who would later become active with Niles Family Service, was the leader of Niles Recovery, Inc.

In 1965 Nicholas Blase, mayor of Niles, announced that psychiatric counseling would be available at the Niles village court. A Niles psychiatrist volunteered his services, to anyone over 12, for a modest fee. "This could be another first for Niles," said Blase.

A Mental Health Association of Niles increased awareness of individuals with mental problems. It published information and in 1966 was able to collect \$1,105 from Niles residents to continue their work.

In December 1967, the Niles Village Board of Trustees heard the report of Trustee Edward Berkowsky regarding the establishment of a Family Service Bureau. Berkowsky said he met with representatives of other villages that have similar agencies. Berkowsky also said that Nort Goodman investigated "as to whether there is a real need for this in Niles."

The Village Board of Trustees minutes state: "Nort Goodman summarized for the Board his calls to the clergy from many churches within the boundaries of the Village of Niles, and a social worker and psychologist from School District #67, as well as the Director of the Department of Special Education in Niles Township. All of these recognized the need for such a service in the Village of Niles and expressed their willingness to cooperate with such a Bureau, when established."

An ordinance was to be written similar to an ordinance in Oak Lawn. Mayor Blase appoint-

ed Nort Goodman for a term of four years, and chairman for the first year, to the newly developing Niles Family Service Commission. Goodman was to "have a recommendation back to the Board of other members for consideration."

In February 1967, seven citizens of Niles were appointed by the village board to serve on the first Niles Family Service Board of Directors: Rev. D. Douglas Seleen, Mrs. Therese Costa, Stanley Frank, Sheldon Mantelman, Jerome G. Santowski, and Edward F. Vodvarka. Larry F. Renetzky, a social worker, was appointed to organize the department. At the time, the Niles Family Service Agency was the second such agency in the State of Illinois. A decision was made to call the agency Niles Family Service when it was first open to the public January 9, 1969. Offices were at the old firehouse near Touhy Avenue and Milwaukee Avenue. In June 1969, Niles Family Service moved into the Lawrencewood Shopping Center at Oakton Street and Waukegan Road.

By 1974, Niles Family Service provided assistance to an estimated 200 families in Niles. Crises, which brought families to the service, were handled by counselors in confidential, private sessions. These were also educational workshops. Preventive measures were discussed. Guidance was provided to alleviate potential marital concerns, anxiety often associated with pre-retirement decisions, and the types of assistance available to parents of children with special problems. The Lions and Rotarians assisted Niles Family Service in setting up the first workshops.

The Village Board of Trustees established a Senior Citizen Commission in 1972. Harold Golden was appointed chairperson in 1974. The commission was assigned the task of determining what services and activities the seniors in Niles needed. The commission discovered concerns seniors had--income, transportation, health care, recreation--and studied how to respond to these concerns. A full-time coordinator was needed to develop a comprehensive program for seniors.

A Senior Citizens Department was established by Village Board of Trustees in February 1974. Mary Kay McCarthy, a registered occupational therapist, was appointed as coordinator and Director of Senior Citizen Services and maintained an office in the Village Administration Building. Publication of a newsletter, "Senior Citizen News and Views," was launched in 1974 to let senior residents know about services and programs available. The newsletter, distributed by the Senior Citizens Department, reached all Niles seniors who had registered at the center. It was effective since it informed seniors of legislation affecting them, grants available to them, and programs available for seniors.

It was estimated that there were about 3,000 Niles residents 62 and older in 1974. Although McCarthy stated her first objective was "to let seniors develop their own programs," she arranged lectures and films on Social Security and the Internal Revenue Service. Legal aid at the Niles Public Library, special courses for seniors at Oakton Community College, an organized senior bowling league, lip-reading classes, and a part-time work exchange were now also available to seniors in Niles.

Six senior citizens asked for assistance in organizing a senior citizens club. The Niles All-American Seniors Club was launched. Within a month it had 35 members. Contact was made with other similar clubs--The Niles Senior Citizens Club, the Grandmother's Club, and the Huntington Social Club--to explore areas of mutual interest and concern.

Services provided by Niles Family Service and Senior Citizens Department were rapidly expanding during the 1970s. A recommendation was made to involve the youth, particularly teens, with the center more directly. A broader range of evening programs than were available with the Niles Park District at the recreation building was suggested for teens. It was estimated that only 20 teens a day made use of park district evening programs. Other facilities and better-planned activities were needed for Niles teens.

There was an abandoned Jewel Food Store on Oakton Street near Prospect Avenue. Niles purchased the 15,000-square-foot facility, with 92 parking spaces, for \$250,000. Renovations costing \$170,000 converted the building into the future home of Niles Family Service, the Senior Citizens Center, the Youth Teen Center, and the temporary home of the Niles Historical Society. Space would also be available for other groups to conduct activities and activities.

A special committee was assigned by the Village Board of Trustees to direct the renovation: trustees Pete Pesole (chairman), Angelo Marcheschi (vice-chairman), and Abe Selman; village inspector Joseph Salerno; and director of Family Services, Larry Renetzky.

Several names were considered for the new facility. The name Trident was selected after a contest was conducted to name the new facility. John Sokolowski suggested the name "Trident" to reflect the three major groups who would be using the facility. The Trident Center was dedicated November 24, 1974, with 200 Niles officials and guests in attendance. The major portion of the building would be used for a variety of activities designated as the Senior Citizen Center. The section of the Niles Family Service had 10 permanent counseling rooms and the Youth Teen Center had 11 table games installed. A hall was available for all groups. Activities scheduled for the hall included classes for seniors, workshops for family services, and Friday night dances for teens.



Larry Renetzky

At the dedication the following were presented as responsible for determining future activities of the Trident Center:

Family Service Board: Larry R. Renetzky, Director of Family Services, Sylvia McNair, chairman, Dr. D. Douglas Seleen, Virginia Haave, William Sanz, Sheldon Mantelman, Edward Vodvarka, Lorraine Zielinski, Marie Kurtzer, Dr. Walter Zinn, Jack Canto, Father John Finnegan.

Senior Citizen Commissioners: Mary Kay McCarthy, coordinator, Harold Golden, chairman, Todd Bavaro, Marion Ciepley, Millicent Dachman, Robert Goldberg, Millie Jones, Alfred Martin, Sister Irene Sebo.

Youth Commissioners: Abe Selman, chairman, Tom Argyrakis, Mary Ann Massari, Ambrose Panico, Kurt Redig, Nancy Redig, Rhoda Salins, James Slowik, Michael Provenzano, Marilyn Stibling, Roland Stibling, Donna Bavaro, Carol Chaconas, Roz Ehrenreich, Dave Williams, Jeffrey Arnold, Jerry Lazer.

Although formal membership was not required to participate in the activities of the Senior Citizen Center, 1,700 seniors were registered by 1974. A volunteer staff of 20 worked at the center. The purpose of the Senior Citizens Center was explained in a publication sent to every home in Niles. It said, the Senior Center exists "to provide service of any and every kind to our residents. Its major purpose is to plan, promote, coordinate and carry out activities that contribute to the well being of citizens in the community. Another responsibility is to inform the community of the needs of senior citizens and to serve as an advocate on behalf of elderly people."

For the past 25 years, thousands of activities have been planned with and provided for seniors. From individual counseling sessions on filing tax returns, or legal concerns, to trips to Door County, Wisconsin; from informal arts and craft classes to regular college courses; from driver's training to obtaining public transportation--formerly CTA and currently PACE--cards; from an individual card game to a pinochle tournament; from dances, dinners, bingo, writing the newsletter, to, in reality, any activity a senior may find interesting and beneficial. Other services



are available away from the center such as the "lending closet" which makes available wheel chairs, walking canes, and other medical aids and the meals on wheels program that delivers meals directly to homes of senior citizens.

Latest available figures in 1997 indicate that about 150 seniors utilize the Trident Center every day.

The Youth Center at Trident was available to teens and pre-teens Monday through Thursday, 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.; Friday 7:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Regular nightly attendance, toward the end of 1974, averaged about 70 young adults between 13 and 18. Friday night dances attracted an average of 200. A graduation dance for eighth-graders was sponsored to introduce younger teens to the activities at the club. A constitution was adopted which urged youth involvement in social, civic, and humanitarian activities. A Youth Council assisted in directing activities at the Trident Center. Youth activities at the Trident Center were terminated

when there was concern expressed about teen smoking at the center and use of cars by teens in the surrounding neighborhood.

By 1978 approximately 8,000 people were served by Niles Family Service. Many were provided direct family counseling. An employee assistance program, in cooperation with business and industry, was developed to assist the troubled employee in becoming a more productive worker. A school community outreach provided life education courses for high school students; consultation and program development for teachers; and courses designed for the entire family. The streetwork program informed young adults of available employment in the area. By 1981, some 10,000 individuals benefited from individual and marital counseling sessions and another 5,000 were included in the school outreach programs and the educational programs aimed at prevention of potential problems.

Mary Kay (McCarthy) Morrissey was appointed Director of Human Services for Niles in 1992. Morrissey, who had administered the Niles Senior Citizen program since its inception in 1974, was now also given the responsibility for the direction of Niles Family Service. In late 1997 plans were well under way for a new center since the current Trident Center was not able to accommodate all activities and programs. Some were being conducted at other village sites such as the Ballard Leisure Center.



Mary Kay Morrissey

The Niles Department of Human Services has gained attention outside the Trident Center.

In 1995 the Cook County Sheriff's Office honored Eleanor Kostelny with its Senior Medal of Honor for her 15 years of service at the Trident Center. A major community project since 1995, coordinated by the Senior Citizens Center, was the "Community Paint-a-Thon." The Department of Human Services joined with other government agencies, schools, churches, parks, and businesses to this grass-roots organization. Many seniors and others in Niles were not able to paint their own homes. A quick campaign let word out that the Niles Senior Citizens were ready to take on the job of helping others get their homes painted. In 1995 volunteers painted two homes of eligible seniors. In 1996, four homes were painted, and in 1997, four additional homes were painted.

With some 5,000 seniors currently registered with the Niles Human Services Department and recent census figures showing that Niles' fastest growing age group is over 75, a greater demand for services seems inevitable. Human Services Director Morrissey points to recent statistics showing that the senior population of Niles is 35 percent of the total population of the village and it is anticipated that population will continue to rise over the next 10 years. With a new, larger center for seniors under construction in early 1998, Niles will be well-prepared to meet the needs and respond to the interests of its senior citizens well into the future.

It is anticipated that Niles Human Services Department will move into its new facility toward the end of 1998. Increased programming and services for community residents are anticipated since the facilities will be larger than ones currently occupied. The Family Fitness Center will be able to provide a variety of activities for younger families. The Human Services Department continually evaluates new programs and services that will make Niles a safer, healthier, and more comfortable place to live.

Directors of Niles Human Services
(formerly Niles Family Service)

Larry F. Renetzky	1974-1986
John Halverson	1986-1992
Mary Kay Morrissey	1992-

Senior Center's Men's Club Presidents

Gene Mowinski	1980-1981
Ralph Lieske	1982-1984
Lambert Bender	1985-1986
Carmen Mazzuca	1986-1987
Ray Grochocki	1988-1989
Lou Kokinis	1990-1991
Walter Krause	1992-1993
Peter Finon	1994-1996
Adolf Foss	1997-1998

Senior Center's Women's Club Presidents

Evelyn Heidemann	1981-1983
Rose Bochochim	1983-1985
Joanne Provenzano	1985-1987
Helen Pokorni	1987-1989
Mildred Licitra	1989-1991
Ann Janusz	1991-1992
Pat Travin	1992-1993
Helen Zwierszowski	1993-1995
Celine Tymczuk	1995-1996
Jerrie Elder	1996-1997

Hospital for Niles

The earliest record of activity to have a hospital located in Niles was a letter from a Dr. Gaetano Carrao read at a meeting of the village board of trustees, April 2, 1946. Dr. Carrao identified two possible sites for the hospital. Since both were in residential districts, Dr. Carrao asked the village board to consider rezoning an area so a hospital could be built. Discussion concluded with an understanding further action would be taken after a definite location for the hospital had been established. No such action developed.

In January 1964 the Niles Village Board voted to rezone a property scheduled for a convalescent home to make a hospital possible on the site. The envisioned Niles Community Hospital would be a medical-surgical, diagnostic, 93-bed facility.

In April 1964 a board of directors was approved by the village board for the hospital: Albert Green, a Niles druggist; Edward Ciccone, sewer contractor and director of the Bank of Niles; F. C. Zapota; Ed Berkowsky, member of the village board of trustees; and Nicholas Blase, Niles mayor.

The Pleasantview Convalescent Center was dedicated at the proposed site for the Niles hospital, June 13, 1965.

Attention was then focused toward the Oakton-Milwaukee area for a 250-bed facility. Interest was shown by the Franklin Blvd. Community Hospital, which was seeking a new site on which to relocate. As the Niles Planning and Zoning Committee was considering appropriate zoning changes to make a site available, the Hospital Council for Metropolitan Chicago turned down the request of Franklin Blvd. Community Hospital to relocate to Niles, citing the increase of hospitals in the area.

Norman Dachman, following publication of a letter to the editor in *The Niles Bugle* January 26, 1967, was appointed in February to chair a "Hospital for Niles" committee. Dachman wrote, "No longer is there any doubt that Niles needs a hospital." He cited the population explosion in Niles and that existing hospitals were operating at 100 percent of capacity.

Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge and Resurrection Hospital in northwest Chicago, both in the immediate area of Niles, launched major expansion programs. After these announcements, further efforts to establish a hospital facility in Niles did not materialize.

RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS

THE BELDEN REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCH

The Belden Regular Baptist Church had its origin in Chicago. In 1871, after the Chicago fire, the Central Baptist Church of Chicago decided to relocate and moved to a site at Belden and Halsted Streets in Chicago where they built a chapel. The church was organized with 79 charter members.

After the City of Chicago indicated it needed the church property to widen a street in 1970, the church sought a new location and purchased two properties at 7315 and 7333 N. Caldwell in Niles for \$191,000.

A decision was made to build a new church. Ground was broken in the spring of 1972. The first service at the new church was January 21, 1973. The church was completed and dedicated on April 8, 1973. It was at this time that the church took the name Belden Regular Baptist Church. However, the church maintains its association with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. Three stained glass windows, handpainted in Germany in 1888, are in the front of the auditorium. They came from the old church and serve as a reminder and link between the old church and the present facility.

In 1973 the congregation numbered 316, mostly from the City of Chicago. Many of the members could not continue to attend because of distance and other problems and by 1997 there were 160 members, most of whom were from Niles and the surrounding area.

To support its teaching ministries a library was launched in 1974 with 165 fiction titles and 185 nonfiction books. A parking lot was designed and paved in 1975. It would prove useful as the regular site for the church's annual picnic. The church purchased adjacent property in 1978 to provide for additional ministries of the church.

Belden Regular Baptist Church celebrated its centennial in 1988. Former members from California, New Jersey and points between attended a weekend of festivities. Dr. Paul Tassell, national representative of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, was the featured speaker at a banquet at Allgauer's in Northbrook.

In addition to regular Sunday services, there are Youth Club meetings, prayer groups, Bible study sessions, and, in some years, monthly prayer breakfasts. The church sponsored a "Thank God for Israel Day," and conducts Team JAM, Jesus Athletic Ministries, an evangelistic outreach ministry directed at athletes in the Chicago metropolitan area. An annual missionary conference usually includes one or two of the 23 missionaries Belden helps to support in various areas throughout the world. Sunday school offers classes to toddlers, teens, and adults. A nursery is provided. There is also an Awana group for youth which has been meeting regularly since 1974.

Regular monthly activities are conducted for Golden Agers, seniors over 55, and classes for those interested in teaching English as a second language. Gym nights are sponsored at Maine South High School. Seminars have been presented on gang awareness. The church also participates in the Niles Fourth of July Parade and organizes Super Bowl parties in the area.

The church choir has been invited to sing at several locations including the Lincoln Town Mall. The church's senior group also sings regularly at nursing homes throughout the area. Delegations from the church frequently attend concerts as a group. Over the years guest performers have also given concerts at the church.

Ministers:

Dr. Gordon L. Shipp	1973-1975
Guest speakers each Sunday	during 1975 and 1976
Dr. Wm. Kuhnle	Interim pastor, 1976
Rev. Gerald Safstrom	1976-1992
Mark Doss	Assistant pastor for youth and music, 1980-1982
Jay Jackson	Minister of Christian education, 1988-1993
Rev. Thomas Kubiak	1993 - present

B'NAI JEHOShVA BETH ELOHIM REFORM JEWISH CONGREGATION

In 1966 B'Nai Jehoshva Beth Elohim Reform Jewish Congregation met at the East Maine Junior High School in Niles. The following two years the congregation met at the Niles Community Church. In 1967 the congregation used the Woodrow Wilson and Mark Twain schools in Niles for religious studies. In subsequent years they built their own building on Milwaukee Avenue, north of Niles.

EAST MAINE BAPTIST CHURCH OF NILES

The East Maine Baptist Church of Niles was organized by Rev. Roger Maslin in 1949 with seven charter members using a small chapel on Ballard Road near Cumberland Avenue.

A new church was dedicated at 10500 Milwaukee Avenue on May 12, 1963. Rev. Louis A. Maple followed Rev. Maslin as pastor in 1964. Rev. Maple often spoke out against a proposed Human Relations Commission for the Village of Niles. He appeared before the Village Board of Trustees, took polls, and wrote items for publication in local newspapers.

East Maine Baptist Church operated a private school and pre-school (East Maine Christian Academy) at the Milwaukee Avenue location from 1965 to May 1994.

Rev. Maple passed away in 1995. A missionary to the Koreans, Dr. Seo Ku Lee, sponsored by the East Maine Baptist Church, became interim pastor for six months. Rev. David Rhine followed as pastor for approximately one year. Toward the end of 1997 East Maine Baptist Church was without a pastor. Lay preachers were handling the services either at the Golf Maine Park District or in private homes. Three services are conducted every week on a regular basis.

A search for a suitable site for a new church has been under way since January 1995.

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF NILES

The First Baptist Church of Niles meets in the oldest church building in Niles. Benjamin Lupton was converted to Christianity at a tent meeting in Niles in 1870. Lupton donated the property on which the church stands today, approximately one-half acre, for use only as a church. A formal trust for this purpose was established in 1879.

In 1870 a building was erected and used by the Methodist Evangelical Church. Rev. Bundock is credited with organizing the first congregation. Around 1884 a Sunday school was launched with 25 students and five teachers. That church remained active until 1920. An attempt was made to sell the church property for use as a saloon. A member of the congregation, Matilda Schwinge, protested and brought civil action trying to prevent the sale. She lost the original action but, on appeal, the Supreme Court overturned the lower court decision and the property remained in trust.

The building remained vacant for several years until Moody Bible students began using the building. It was then known as the Grace Church.

In November of 1953, with Rev. Charles Svoboda as pastor, the Niles Bible Church began using the church. The Niles Bible Church had been in existence for 80 years. With this move to a permanent location, the church was "received into fellow-

ship under the charter of the State of Illinois--thus forming a nucleus for the first organized group in the church's 80 years of existence," reported the *Niles Spectator*, November 13, 1953. Twenty members were received into fellowship in November. Stewart Macnider and George Siefert were elected elders. The following month, the church had 100 members. In 1963 Milton Siefert was appointed as the new minister for the Niles Baptist Church. Other Pastors of the Niles Bible Church were Rev. Paul Werner and Rev. Claude Grannas.



First Baptist Church of Niles

In 1967, Rev. Roger L. McManus opened the First Baptist Church of Niles in the same structure with 14 charter members. Roy W. Anderson was the first deacon. Current deacons are Rudy Riemer, Richard McManus, and George W. Henning, Jr. Associate ministers have included Rev. Gary Palmer and Rev. Kenneth Haak.

Since the original building retained its architectural features, it was often referred to as "The Little Country Chapel." The original structure was expanded with a 33-by-26-foot addition in 1976 making seating available for 150. The addition was formally dedicated May 2, 1976. The Niles Village Board declared the building a Niles historical landmark. A new baptistry was dedicated November 21, 1971.

The church currently ministers each week to approximately 70 families. The church is a family ministry, ministering to all age groups including children, teens, and seniors. The church conducts ministries that include worship, teaching, and service programs for all members. In addition to Sunday and Wednesday services, there are also bible study groups and Sunday school classes. Drama and music presentations are often made from among the people who attend services. Gospel music programs include the adult choir, the youth choir, a children's choir, and other special groups. Church members also support missionaries in various places.

In 1997 Rev. McManus began his 30th year at the First Baptist Church of Niles as the only senior minister for the congregation during its history.

GRACE CHINESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Grace Chinese Christian Church was founded in May 1991 and has been meeting in Niles at the Niles Park District Recreation Center since 1995. It has two ordained ministers, Rev. Fook Tin Ho and Rev. Samuel Tong, seven deacons, and 45 communicants.

A Sunday school was organized in 1995. There are three sections attended by 22 youngsters: pre-school, grade school, and junior high school. There are two sections of the Sunday school for 18 adults. During the week, members of the church also attend district Bible studies and other meetings.

Grace Chinese Christian Church has sponsored missionary agencies, has supported missionaries in China, and has provided financial support for a student at Trinity International University who is preparing to do missionary work in China.

Grace Chinese Christian Church is one of 20 Chicago-area members of the Chinese Christian Union.

THE HOLY TAXIARHAI AND ST. HARALAMBOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF NILES



The Holy Taxiarchai and St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church of Niles was originally established in 1951 in the Humboldt Park neighborhood in Chicago. In 1977, the parish community acquired the property at 7373 Caldwell Avenue which, at that time, was occupied by two houses.

For several years, one of the houses was adapted to serve as a church building. The other was used as a school-community center. In 1983, the house on the north side of the property was razed and a new school-community center was built. His Grace, Bishop Iakovos of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Chicago, presided at its grand opening, June 3, 1984. In attendance were Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase, Fr. Constantine P. Botsis, pastor, and several hundred well-wishers.

In 1987, construction began on a new, Byzantine-styled domed church building to serve the expanding needs of the parish. Designed by architect Dr. Radoslav Kovacevic, the church was officially opened November 13, 1988, with His Grace, Bishop Iakovos, conducting ancient ceremonies of the Orthodox Christian faith. Although the interior of the church remains incomplete, the community is working diligently to obtain the furnishings and appointments proper for orthodox worship including a hand-carved, mahogany icon screen and hand-painted Byzantine iconography.

The church has a double name. The Holy Taxiarchai refers to the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel as the captains of the orders of angels. St. Haralambos was a priest from the second century who was martyred in the area of Magnesia in Asia Minor.

The Greek Orthodox Church traces its origins to the Church of the New Testament. The Holy Taxiarchai and St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church celebrates traditional Christian holidays. It supports itself through contributions of the 650 families who attend its services and other events such as the three-day annual July Greek Food Fest of Niles which attracts several thousand visitors.

Services are conducted in Greek and English. A Greek language and culture school is conducted by the church.

Father Constantine Botsis has been the church's pastor since 1982. Deacon John G. Suhayda serves as current assistant to the pastor.

LAKEVIEW KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Lakeview Korean Presbyterian Church was founded January 23, 1977, with 15 members. A team ministry led the church in its first years during which a Sunday school was formed and a choir was organized. In 1979, membership in the church numbered 40 adults and 30 children.

Rev. Jong Min Lee was appointed first Senior Pastor, May 6, 1979. Lakeview Korean Presbyterian Church joined the Presbyterian Church USA and became the first church to send a missionary to Korea. The installation of the Senior Pastor and three elders--Byung II Park, Hyuun Jung Shin, and Sang Eun Han--took place in February 1980 after Lakeview Korean Presbyterian Church became a member of the Chicago Presbytery.

Membership continued to increase as In Shik Kim led the children's ministry and Senior Pastor Jong Min Lee established youth fellowship meetings. A Mission Center was opened and an early morning service, a campus ministry, and young adults ministry were launched. Pastor Byung Ki Choi was invited to be education pastor; Linda Hall was appointed youth pastor. Membership grew to 100 adults and 70 children.

Church services were being conducted in Norwood Park and the need became evident for larger quarters. After an unsuccessful attempt to relocate in the Chicago area, Lakeview Presbyterian Korean Church purchased the Woodrow Wilson School in northern Niles for

\$500,000. The building had 20 classrooms, a gym, and a parking lot for 130 cars. Dedication of the building was March 17, 1985.

In September 1985 the Niles Korean School was launched. The language and culture of Korea along with the Bible were taught at the school. Church membership increased to 300 adults and 200 children by 1989. A radio ministry aimed at the Korean community was also started.

Elders Suk Jin Lee and Byung Il Park visited China in 1993 to establish a mission on behalf of Lakeview Korean Presbyterian Church. The following year Rev. Myung Sung Han and Ji Eun Kim were commissioned to China as missionaries. They are currently establishing themselves as English teachers at BalHae University. Lakeview Korean anticipates North Korea allowing missionaries in the future and plans to be prepared for that circumstance with established personnel in China. Suk Min Song was assigned to a full-time ministry in missions and evangelism in 1996.

A ministry for the English Congregation began in 1989. The Lakeview/Niles Summer School opened its doors during the summer of 1990 for 80 students. By 1996, when Rev. Joshua Kang was appointed, summer school enrollment had grown to 190 at the school. After-school programs and activities were launched for the regular school and special classes prepared high school students to take SAT tests in qualifying for college entrance. Four \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to students going on to college and an additional \$10,000 was raised for future scholarships. Elder Seung Suk Noh has been instrumental in developing the school's educational programs. The school is now believed to be the largest Korean school in the United States.

With 300 students in the Sunday school and the day and summer schools growing, Lakeview Presbyterian Church is also working on plans to establish a day-care center for 80 pre-school children and a regular kindergarten.

Toward the end of 1997 total membership in Lakeview Korean Presbyterian Church had reached 1,000. It had an annual budget of \$1.1 million.

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection was officially organized as a mission congregation of the Lutheran Church in America, April 21, 1963. Rev. Steven E. Murphy was the mission developer and first pastor. There were 75 families when the mission congregation was established. The congregation has grown to approximately 100 families in 1997. The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection has served in the Village of Niles as a representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, participated in the Niles Clergy Association, and other ecumenical projects.

The Sunday worship and church school were conducted in the Golf Junior High School in Morton Grove until 1965 when construction of a new church in Niles was completed. The church was dedicated April 1965. The church building was refurbished in 1995.

A love of Lutheran liturgy, church music, and congregational singing of hymns characterize the congregation. Church members have been active in numerous outreach projects for Lutheran social services, such as serving disabled children. Sunday school, confirmation, adult Bible study, and participation in the Gideons are important services in the church. For the past several years a regular monthly jazz vesper service on Sunday evenings has raised benevolence money for Augustana Center for Children. A women's group and an arts and crafts group also sponsor programs throughout the year.

Pastors:

Rev. Paul Tideman	1967-1974
Rev. Dr. Bruce Anderson	1974-1997

MAINE TOWNSHIP JEWISH CONGREGATION SHAARE EMET

The Maine Township Jewish Congregation Shaare Emet began in 1962 when Rabbi William Lewis conducted High Holiday services at the Dolphin Motel, at that time in unincorporated Maine Township. Attending the services were 19 families from the Golf Park Terrace and Twin Oaks subdivisions. In January 1963, Sunday school was opened.

The first official meeting of the congregation was March 24, 1963. A Hebrew school was opened in September 1963 and High Holiday services were conducted at the Dolphin Motel and East Maine Jr. High School with Rabbi William Lewis officiating.

In 1964 Rabbi Emanuel Bennitt conducted High Holiday services and Friday night services every other week. He was also the Hebrew schoolteacher. Kaspi Silverman was hired as school principal and as an additional Hebrew schoolteacher.

Rabbi Jay Karzen arrived in 1965 as the congregation's first full-time rabbi. His office and the congregation's Hebrew school were moved into a house in the Twin Oaks subdivision. Over 500 people attended High Holiday services conducted at St. John the Baptist Church.

In 1966, the congregation moved into a vacant house on Ballard Road in Des Plaines. Ground was broken for a new building on this site on September 24, 1967. Congregation offices moved to a trailer on the property and daily minyon services began. The building was dedicated on February 5, 1971. In October 1978, an addition to the building was started. New classrooms, offices, a youth lounge, and Bet Midrish were built. The completed building was occupied September 1, 1980, and dedicated January 30, 1981.

The first bar mitzvah was conducted in September 1968. In 1969 and 1970, Maine Township Jewish Congregation United Synagogue Youth won national awards as a best chapter. Samuel Mendelson was youth director. In 1971 a Kadima youth group was organized for seventh- and eighth-graders. In 1976 Jeffery Schonberg of Maine Township Jewish Congregation United Synagogue Youth was elected national president of United Synagogue Youth.

In 1980 senior citizen lunches were initiated.

Rabbi Karzen retired in 1984. Rabbi Jay Lapidus joined the congregation in 1986 and served three years. In 1990 Rabbi Edmond Winter joined the congregation and has also served as its education director until the present time.

In 1997 there were 200 families in the congregation with approximately 15 percent residing in Niles.

NILES ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH

Niles Assembly of God Church was organized by founding pastor, Rev. Gary Grohs, October 10, 1983, with a prayer service at the Niles Sports complex on Ballard Road and Cumberland Avenue. Home Bible studies, a Kids Back Yard Club, and a Kids Easter Egg Hunt, in

addition to Sunday services, were regular activities for the church.

Rev. Tom Call became pastor in 1986. Six years later Sunday services were moved to the Niles Recreation Center and the congregation met there for five years.

Rev. Marian Michaliszyn became pastor in 1990. A third move was made to the church's present location in the Oak Mill Mall. The first service at the Oak Mill Mall was in July 1996. The church was dedicated June 1, 1997. Rev. Paul Martin, superintendent of the Illinois District of the Assemblies of God, was welcomed to the church's new home by the 75 active members in the congregation.

In addition to Sunday services, the church maintains involvement with promise keepers; conducts ministries for women, youth, and children; sponsors a pioneer club; and provides a children's church and a Sunday school. There are also home Bible studies, outreach activities, and counseling. Social activities include music and drama groups, a coffee house, and a men's fishing trip.

The Niles Assembly of God Church supports home and foreign missionaries. In 1997, these included Heins and Renata Heisterman in Germany, Gary and Wilma Schneider in Madagascar, Steve and Jackie Sullivan in Cambodia, Thom and Connie Gagne in West Africa, Wayne and Barbara Soemo in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and Steve and Peggy Janes in Chicago.

NILES COMMUNITY CHURCH

Niles Community (United Presbyterian) Church was organized March 23, 1952, with 33 charter members. In 1951, affiliation with the Church Federation of Chicago was established by 24 petitioners who paved the way for the establishment of the church. The first service of Niles Community Church was conducted in the Niles Public School on Touhy Avenue. Ten members were in attendance. A student from McCormick Theological Seminary, Robert F. Kaiser, conducted the service. Rev. Kaiser was installed and ordained a minister in 1954.



A new, and current, church was dedicated January 22, 1956. An educational wing was added in 1960 and used as a Sunday school. The church seats 200 and the Sunday church school was

used to teach some 300 pupils. During the 1950s, the facilities of the Grennan Heights field house were also used as a Sunday school.

By 1970 the congregation grew to 683 members. The church was often made available to other religious congregations and community organizations.

During the 1970s Niles Community Church was home for the Korean Presbyterian Church, which numbered 60 adult members and 50 children. Pastor of this church was Rev. Young Sam Rhee, a graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary. Rev. Rhee refused to accept any fees for his ministerial functions since he believed members of his congregation were often in need of financial assistance.

Church services were in Korean and the New Testament used was printed in Korea with both English and Korean translations. While adults attended services, pre-school to sixth-grade children took part in Sunday school classes. The children had a choir. They often sang in English saying they were more comfortable with English than Korean.

Rev. Rhee assisted adult members of his congregation in locating employment and published a shopping guide in Korean, which included sections on banking and other community services. Seminars were also conducted at the church to acquaint members with such topics as health concerns in the United States, insurance, and home ownership.

The church currently welcomes members of the Hosanna Korean Evangelical Church and the Korean Seventh Day Adventist Church of Chicago.

The Niles Community Church hosts numerous meetings of value to the community. In 1997, a variety of 12-step groups were meeting at the church. These included Alcoholics Anonymous, Children of AA, Al-Anon, and Overeaters Anonymous. Other general-interest groups also meet at the church such as Weight Watchers and an Irish dance class. The church makes space available for classes in the Alliance for Life Long Learning conducted by Oakton Community College. Classes are taught preparing students for the GED (general education development) test, which is the equivalent of a high school diploma, and learning English as a second language.

Niles Community Church takes part in the Wings Shelter program that provides help to women who have been abused.

Current membership of Niles Community Church is 290 adults and 30 children in the Sunday school.

Pastors:

Rev. Robert F. Kaiser	1952-1956
Rev. R. W. Gish	1956-1965
Rev. D. Douglas Seleen	1966-1986
Interim and guest pastors	1986-1989
Rev. Howard W. Boswell, Jr.	1989-

OUR LADY OF RANSOM CHURCH

Our Lady of Ransom Parish was established in May 1960 when the Rev. Theodore Paluch was named pastor. Rev. Paluch took up residence in a home at 8262 Elmore until the present rectory at 8615 W. Norman could be built. A 10-acre tract of land at Norman and Greenwood

avenues was selected as the site for Our Lady of Ransom Parish.

For more than a year, Masses were celebrated on Sundays at Notre Dame High School, 7655 Dempster. In January 1961 a fund-raising drive began for the construction of 16 classrooms and a multi-purpose building which would contain a church and parish hall. Groundbreaking took place August 20, 1961. Architects and engineers were supplied by Ralph H. Burke Company. The first mass was celebrated in July 1962 and school opened two months later by the Felician Sisters who taught grades one through six. A convent for the Sisters was completed in 1963.

On April 5, 1963, *The New World*, Catholic archdiocesan newspaper, reported that Our Lady of Ransom Church and school complex was selected to receive the 1962 Thomas Jefferson Award for architectural achievement presented annually by the Monticello Life Insurance Company of Chicago.

Albert Cardinal Meyer dedicated the new church, school, and convent August 18, 1963, for the 1,200 families who then comprised the parish after only three years of existence.

Eight new classrooms were added for a junior high school. This school was dedicated October 24, 1965, for the 780 students enrolled. Nine Felician Sisters and nine lay teachers were the faculty.

Parish population continued to mount. By 1978, the parish had enrolled 2,225 families in its membership.

Twenty years later school enrollment has declined to 342 students in the elementary school, 43 in kindergarten, and 86 in pre-school. The church's youth group for teens has 60 participants. Some 2,350 families are registered in the parish.

Within the past year, Our Lady of Ransom has performed 82 baptisms, 84 confirmations, 25 weddings, and 76 funerals.

Throughout the history of the parish, church groups have served in various ministries. A lay liturgy board structures and provides readers, ushers, Communion ministers, choir members, and altar servers. The ministry of care visits area hospitals, nursing homes, and the homebound. The church's fastest growing group ministry, senior friendship, provides numerous activities including all-day trips for seniors. Complete dinners are provided and served by parishioners to 400 persons every other month at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Chicago. The St. Vincent De Paul Society provides for those in need throughout the year; at Thanksgiving the group distributes dinner baskets with frozen turkeys. Every Christmas a tree is decorated with white snowmen (gifts for children at St. Francis of Assisi/Our Lady or Angel parishes), red stockings (Christmas dinners for needy families), and green trees (small gifts for shut-ins in the parish).

Several ethnic groups are in the parish including an organized Filipino Catholic Community.

Pastors:

Rev. Theodore B. Paluch	1960-1979
Rev. John V. Boreczky	1979-1982
Rev. Thomas Dore	1982-1994
Rev. John R. Hall	1995-

ST. ANSELM'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church was organized in April 1958 when the Rev. Ralph Deppen witnessed 30 founding members sign the necessary documents.

The Rev. Walter C. Klein served as the first Vicar of St. Anselm's. On June 1, 1958, an altar, built by the men of the church, was dedicated in the Jefferson School in Niles. The altar had to be set up every Sunday for church services and then dismantled after the services. The altar also served as a storage facility for all the hymnals, prayer books, and other items necessary for religious services.

The first confirmation class of St. Anselm's was confirmed at the Jefferson School on November 9, 1958. Christmas Eve was celebrated at the school with the 12-member choir, wearing borrowed robes, leading the congregation in singing carols. At midnight, members received the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Rev. John Plummer served as Vicar, followed by the Rev. Paul Elmen. In June 1959, when the Rev. Sheldon M. Smith became the first resident Vicar, the church school was under way, and the Altar Guild, the Women of St. Anselm's and the Men's Club were organized.

Ground was broken for a new church in Park Ridge, April 29, 1962. The new St. Anselm's was dedicated February 17, 1963, by the Rt. Rev. James W. Montgomery.

The Church, since 1995, is known as One in Christ Episcopal Church.

ST. ISAAC JOGUES CHURCH

St. Isaac Jogues Parish was organized in 1956 with a nucleus of 280 families who attended other Catholic churches in the area. The parish property of 6.25 acres on Golf Road near Washington Avenue was annexed to Niles February 28, 1978.

Rev. Leo M. Spring was named pastor in 1956. He celebrated the first Mass for parishioners July 22, 1956, at Notre Dame High School, 7655 West Dempster. A house was purchased in Glenview and served as the first rectory of the parish. In February 1957 construction began on a church and school building. Leonard Gliatto was the architect. The Sisters of Christian Charity were the first teachers at the school that opened on September 16, 1957. The first mass was celebrated in the new church November 24, 1957.

The parish grew rapidly. Enrollment in the school skyrocketed from 350 students in 1957 to 1,256 students by 1962. A farm house east of the property was rented in 1958 as a temporary convent since the sister's living quarters were remodeled into additional classrooms. Additional classrooms and a convent for the teaching sisters were added in 1962-1963. A \$350,000 fund-raising campaign was launched to fund the project. School enrollment peaked at 1,432 students in 1964. An active athletic program and scouting groups were established for students. In 1978, approximately 600 children were enrolled in the parish Confraternity of Christian Doctrine education program.

Over the years the school earned a reputation for its science programs. In 1971 it was named an outstanding participant in the Notre Dame of Niles High School Science Fair. It was the only non-public school to be frequently invited to the Niles West High School Science Fairs. It was named a top school in State of Illinois Science Fair competitions in 1973, 1975, 1980, and 1981.

The Kettering Foundation gave the school a grant for its gifted education program in 1971. By 1978, 463 students were enrolled in this program. The school also received numerous music awards for its band, which participated in city, state, and national competitions.

The school closed in June 1992 when the student enrollment dropped to 172. A religious education program was maintained and, in 1997, had approximately 250 students. Former classrooms now are utilized as meeting rooms and offices.

A St. Vincent DePaul Society was established to provide for the needy in and outside the parish. A liturgy team prepares for services in conjunction with the choir and the guitar mass combo. A blood program has been established, along with the medical missions club, the Good Samaritans, and various women's guilds. In 1983 a youth group from the parish traveled to Montana to work and learn about Indian culture.

In 1997, approximately 1,800 families of many different ethnic backgrounds comprised the membership of the St. Isaac Jogues parish.

Pastors:

Rev. Leo M. Spring	1956-1973
Rev. Elmer C. Klug	1973-1981
Rev. John C. Massion	1981-1986
Rev. John E. Hennessey	1986-1997
Rev. Edward R. Fialkowski	1997-

ST. JOHN BREBEUF CHURCH

The first Catholic parish established in Niles was St. John Brebeuf. Rev. John J. Flanagan was appointed pastor, July 14, 1953. A house at 8307 Ozanam was purchased to serve as a temporary rectory. Twenty acres of property along Harlem Avenue that were formerly a cornfield were available and would be developed. Ground was broken August 25, 1953, for a temporary building where the first Mass was celebrated October 18, 1953. Although this church could seat 350 and the original census of the church established that 300 families were the original parishioners, this church, then known as the Redwood Church, was soon outgrown.

In 1954 a decision was made to construct a combination school-convent-rectory. The Sisters of St. Francis from Dubuque, Iowa, agreed to staff the parish school, which opened September 15, 1955, with 420 children. A hall in the new building served as an additional chapel for the overcrowded services in the church. By 1956, 1,000 families belonged to the parish; 550 children were enrolled in the school. First-grade enrollment for the 1957-58 school year was projected at 150 students. Construction began on six new classrooms and an expanded church. On July 14, 1957, the first Mass was celebrated in the larger quarters. There were 1,500 families in the parish at that time. A 12-room addition to the school was completed in 1962 when the enrollment stood at 1,470. A station wagon was "purchased" for the teaching sisters in 1962 as a result of a parish woman's club project; 1500 S & H saving stamp booklets were collected and were used to "buy" the station wagon.

Ground was broken for a new church September 13, 1964. The first Mass in the new church, built at a cost of \$900,000 and seating 1,600, was April 3, 1966. A Blessed Sacrament chapel seats an additional 75. The church was said to be built from the "sky down, not from the ground up." A 49-foot tower caps the dome, which measures 144 feet in diameter. Since the architecture of the church was interpreted as a reflection of the spirit of the meetings of Vatican II, the church building was featured in numerous magazines and other publications. When the parish observed its



jubilee in 1978, 2,620 families were in the parish and 699 children attended the school.

Over the years, parishioners have engaged in numerous community and social activities. A "Christmas Share Program" encourages parishioners to donate presents to poor and needy families, orphans, and senior citizens. There are men's and women's clubs, religious education programs for the mentally handicapped, a senior citizen's club, Boy and Girl Scouts, St. Vincent de Paul and Junior St. Vincent de Paul Societies, a Marian prayer group, a Right to Life Committee, Joy in Jesus program, couples club, and athletic programs in baseball, volleyball, basketball, football, softball, floor hockey, and cheerleading.

Pastors:

Rev. Msgr. John J. Flanagan	1953-1974
Rev. J. Edward Duggan	1974-1986
Rev. Robert Banzin	1986-1998

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Rev. Francis Hoffman, pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church of Schaumburg, conducted the first services for this congregation in 1848 and 1849 in a home that stood on the land now occupied by St. Matthew Lutheran Cemetery on Shermer Road. The following year on April 30, 1850, the Rev. John George Kuechle was ordained and installed as pastor for this same group of believers who took as their name St. John Lutheran Church.

Between 1852 and 1855 the group was without an assigned pastor but were served by neighboring pastors.

In 1855 Rev. Heinrich Bauer was installed as pastor. He was followed by F. T. Hennicke in 1857. On January 12, 1859, the congregation was formally organized.

Rev. Gotthilf Loeber was installed March 11, 1860, the same year the congregation would build a two-story brick building measuring 30 feet by 50 feet. The upper story would be used as a church and the lower level was for the school and a dwelling for the pastor and his family. Total cost of construction was \$1,311.63. A bell was added for \$165 and placed in a steeple built in 1888. Pastor Loeber was the teacher in the church's school for 10 years until 1870 when August Krueger was appointed. Enrollment at the school in 1874 was 115 children; 83 were members of the congregation and 32 were non-members. Collected tuition amounted to \$323.25. The teacher's salary was \$330.

In 1872 a two-story frame building, 28 feet by 44 feet, was built for \$2,054.53 on land purchased or donated by members of the congregation. The school was located on the first floor; the teacher's quarters were on the second floor.

Rev. Herman Brauer became pastor July 27, 1884. A new parsonage was built for \$1,500 in 1894 on land donated by William Lill, a brewer.

In 1895 some members requested release from the church and founded St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Niles.

A decision to build a new church was made in 1902. After the church built in 1860 was razed and sold for removal for \$60, a new brick church, 32 feet by 50 feet, had the cornerstone in place June 8 with dedication of the completed church November 2, 1902. The cost of construction was \$6,000. While the church was being built, services were conducted in the school building.

In 1914 Franz Stoll, teacher at the school, announced he would be leaving. Pastor Brauer indicated he would teach at the school but had a nervous breakdown and resigned. Pastor A. T. Lange provided services at the church until Rev. Louis A. Grotheer was installed as pastor in 1914. Rev. Grotheer was also the teacher at the school for seven years.

By 1895 the congregation had grown to 600 members with 300 communicants and 60 voters. Residents from Wilmette, Wheeling, Des Plaines, Park Ridge, Norwood Park, and Jefferson Park frequently came to worship at St. John Lutheran. In 1909, 12 members were released and they founded St. Andrew Church in Park Ridge. In 1916, seven members requested release. In 1921 they were able to organize Our Savior Church in Norwood Park.

The Depression years took their toll on the congregation. Receipts in 1929 were \$4,735.10; in 1935 they were \$2,026.84. School enrollment dropped to 14 students for the 1939-40 school year. Assistance was sought and granted for five years, 1938 to 1942, from the Lutheran Missions treasury of northern Illinois. Borrowed funds were used to pay the pastor's salary of \$1,000 annually and the schoolteacher's annual salary of \$900.

Prior to World War I all services were in German. After 1920 English services were said once a month. By 1950 all German services were discontinued and all church documents were printed in English.

Rev. Daniel Wenz was installed as pastor May 3, 1942. Although pastors and teachers of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, served St. John Lutheran Church through the years, formal affiliation with the national group was not made until July 12, 1943. The following year, May 1, 1944, St. John Lutheran became a member of the Lutheran Charities Fund.

In 1946 St. John joined the northern district of the Lutheran High School Association of Greater Chicago. That same year, St. John Lutheran, in association with St. Paul Lutheran of Skokie and Jerusalem Lutheran of Morton Grove, formed the Niles Township Lutheran School that continued in operation until 1955. In 1957, St. John Lutheran withdrew and announced it would open an independent school.

Rev. Robert E. Wiltenburg was pastor from 1946 to 1959. Rev. Martin H. Behling followed him from 1960 to 1962. In 1958 a new school and parish hall were opened. Cost of the 101-foot-by-58-foot structure was \$130,000. Much of the labor was donated by the congregation.

In 1959 when St. John celebrated its centennial, it announced that during the past century 2,101 baptisms, 1,209 confirmations, 481 weddings, and 679 funerals were performed for the congregation. Centennial celebrations were marred by a fire that completely demolished the St. John Lutheran Church.

Ground was broken November 27, 1960, for a new church. The cornerstone was laid April 30, 1961, and the church was dedicated November 19, 1961.

Pastor Paul E. Bussert was installed in 1964 and served until 1972. Rev. James M. Herzog



7429 Milwaukee Avenue

was pastor from 1974 to 1978 to be followed by Rev. Harold A. Neuberger (1979-1981) and Rev. Thomas K. Stoebig in 1984.

In 1984 St. John Lutheran Church membership was 400, with school enrollment at 80.

Pastor Stoebig served at St. John Lutheran Church until November 1991. The Rev. Marvin F. Mueller became interim pastor at that time and was installed as pastor of St. John Lutheran, November 8, 1992.

St. John Lutheran School was closed August 4, 1997.

The current membership of St. John Lutheran Church is 289.

ST. MATTHEW'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The present-day St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church, formally organized in 1896, may actually be the second church with the exact same name in the history of Niles. Church records of the current St. Matthew's indicate, "There had been a church by the name of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church during the early 1860s." That church may have been more of a house than a church. However, baptismal certificates dating from the 1860s show the name St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The pastor was F. H. Warnke. Services were conducted in the area where St. Matthew Lutheran Cemetery is located today. Members of St. John's Lutheran Church also had used the facility before formally organizing as a separate church in a different location.

St. Matthew's was founded January 29, 1896, when a constitution was adopted and signed. After Christopher Engel and Wm. Wichmann each donated about three-fourths of an acre of land along Milwaukee Avenue, pledges were taken for the building of a church. The cornerstone was laid in December 1896.



The original church was dedicated on June 6, 1897.

During the formative years, close association and assistance came from St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Skokie and Pastor Frederick Detzer, who gathered together the organizers of St. Matthew's. Some were members of St. John's Lutheran Church. Apparently there was interest among the new congregation in establishing union with the Wisconsin Synod of the Lutheran Church. It was felt that the Missouri Synod would not supply a pastor for a second congregation in Niles.

On March 28, 1897, following favorable negotiations with professor August F. Ernst of Northwestern University of Watertown, Wisconsin, which resulted in a union with the Wisconsin Synod, Rev. Karl Buenger was called to St. Matthew's to serve as pastor. The church building was dedicated June 6, 1897, and Pastor Buenger was installed June 27, 1897. A parsonage was also built in 1897. A mixed choir was started in 1897 and, for a period of about 20 years, was the only social group within the congregation. It organized dinners, outings, and ice cream socials.

In 1898 a school was launched. The early pastors were the first teachers. A side room, or annex to the church, was used as a classroom. Instruction was in German. Since there was a public school directly across the street, students also attended this school during the early grades. Students attended only St. Matthew's, known locally as "the German school," for seventh and eighth grade. Some students continued in public high school, but many elected to take individual courses in business schools.

During the formative years, a close relationship existed between St. Matthew's and Jerusalem Lutheran of Morton Grove. Pastors from each congregation served the other when there was a vacancy. Joint meetings of the men's clubs from both congregations were conducted over the years. School children formed joint sports teams. A common float was built by both groups and used in the annual 4th of July parade. In the morning the float was in Niles and, in the afternoon, in Morton Grove.

The second pastor of St. Matthew's was Rev. Julius Toepel, who began his 50-year ministry at St. Matthew's March 1, 1903.

As the congregation grew, a decision was made to build a separate facility for the school. Oren Jaacks donated the property. The school was built in 1923. The cost of the building was \$13,277. Lester Sonn became the school's first teacher and principal. Miss Anna Winter was hired in 1924. Sonn was paid \$1,050 in 1925; Winter received \$595. In 1937 a kitchen was added to the back of the school building on land donated by Leo Jaacks after the kitchen was already built.

additional children not required to pay. By 1996-97 tuition increased to \$140 for the first child and \$70 per month for additional children; for non-members of St. Matthew's, tuition was \$215 per month for the first child and half that amount for additional children.

The 25th anniversary of the dedication of the church was celebrated June 11, 1922. Two of the services were in German and one service was in English. On January 15, 1933, a decision was reached to hold services in English every other Sunday. In 1953 all services in German were discontinued.



The new church was dedicated September 29, 1963.

In the early years of the church, men would sit on the right side of the church, the women on the left, and children in the front. Men would receive Communion first. Younger couples began to sit together in the late 1920s. Ladies wore hats and gloves to church. Girls wore a white dress for confirmation, held on Palm Sunday. When the confirmation class took their first communion on Good Friday, girls wore black dresses.

A Ladies Aid Society was organized on June 19, 1924, when 12 women met with Pastor Toepel. Within six months membership increased to 27. The society would prepare and serve food at numerous social gatherings of the congregation. These included the harvest festival, church picnics, special birthdays and anniversaries, farewell dinners, annual voters' meeting luncheons, district pastoral conferences, Christmas dinners, mission festivals, funeral luncheons, wedding receptions, mother-daughter banquets, and concert performances. Some required extraordinary efforts. The Easter breakfasts always began at 5:00 a.m. by cracking 50 to 60 dozen eggs. When celebrating the 75th anniversary of the church, 651 meals had to be prepared by noon. The society also did numerous tasks around the church and provided services in the community. A cookbook was published and sold for a profit of close to \$5,000. Monthly dues were 25 cents. By 1974, over \$50,000 had been gathered. The centennial booklet commented, "Sadly, on June 4, 1991, the Ladies Aid Society of St. Matthew's was dissolved."

An Entertainment Night was initiated in 1924. It took place for a full three-day weekend before Lent and attracted 150 people for each performance. A form of Entertainment Night continues to the present day.

A bowling alley was built in 1924. It was open for five nights a week, with men bowling three nights and women two nights. There was also an annual bowling tournament during the winter that was open to non-members. The bowling alley was razed in the mid-1960s.

Pastor Howard Henke was installed April 26, 1953. In 1954 two vacant adjacent parcels of land were purchased for \$4,250. Members found this to be most fortuitous because the land was later needed for the building of the new church that began construction in 1962. The completed church cost \$110,000. It was dedicated September 29, 1963.

Activities for the youth in the congregation increased during the 1950s and 1960s. Boys and Girls Clubs were started as well as a 4 H Club, Young Peoples' Society, and the Lutheran Pioneers. Team sports were played in the old church after it converted into a usable "gym."

A kindergarten was added in 1955 and pre-school programs were initiated in 1981. School enrollment reached a peak of 70 students in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Pastor Lyle Luchterhand was installed July 19, 1970. Two Sunday morning services were now necessary as membership of the congregation increased.

In 1976 Pastor Glen Schaumberg was installed. It was noted that many in the congregation no longer lived in the area and had to commute to attend services and other activities of the church. The congregation was able to maintain its German flavor as new arrivals from eastern Germany were coming into the area and joining the church.

The school building was completely remodeled in 1979 at a cost of \$100,000. New plumbing, wiring, walls, ceilings, and floors were installed.

St. Matthew's observed its centennial in 1996. Darlene Felice prepared a series of articles on the history of St. Matthew's which were published in the monthly newsletters of the church and in the centennial historical booklet. A painting of the original church by Ted Juern was unveiled during the centennial celebration, May 26, 1996.

There were 289 active members in St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Niles toward the end of 1997.

ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CHURCH

St. Michael's was originally organized in Chicago in 1914. In 1960 a decision was made to relocate the church. Five acres of land were purchased in Niles. A parish house was constructed and dedicated September 12, 1964. Groundbreaking for the new church took place the same day. The cornerstone for the new church was blessed in 1965. The church, which cost \$300,000 to complete, was dedicated September 18, 1966, with Bishop Orestes P. Chornock from Johnstown, Pennsylvania, conducting the service. Assisting in the ceremony was Very Rev. Protopresbyter Michael Slovesko, pastor of the church, and William Haschal, chairman of the building committee. The church building can accommodate 350 worshippers. A separate social hall for 400 is also included in the structure. The following year, in 1967, Bishop John R. Martin blessed the icon screen and sanctuary. Bishop Martin returned for the 70th anniversary celebrations of the church at which time he also blessed the new stained glass windows.

In 1974 the congregation witnessed the historic burning of the mortgage on the church's rectory building. The church mortgage was burned September 9, 1990.

In 1972, St. Michael's became the Deanery Seat of all the Chicago area churches that are members of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese located in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The Diocese is under the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, the 270th successor to St. Andrew the Apostle.

Today, St. Michael's membership includes over 100 families. Parishioners travel from areas as distant as Crystal Lake to worship at St. Michael's. Membership is not limited to any one particular background. Everyone is invited and welcome to worship at St. Michael's.

Pastors of the congregation:

Very Rev. Protopresbyter Michael Slovesko	1959-1970
Very Rev. Dean Charles Panchisin	1970-1991
Rev. Dean Mark Leasure	1991-1997
Rev. Dean Samuel Sherry	1997-present

ST. PAUL'S REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH

St. Paul's Reformed Episcopal Church was organized in Niles during the 1950s. Rev. Bartholomew A. James was the congregation's first pastor and remained pastor until 1967 when the church closed. The church building was sold as a residence and remains occupied as such in present-day Niles.

Although the permanent membership of the church was limited to about 15 core families, some church activities attracted a larger response from the community. A Sunday school was usually conducted for about 25 youngsters. The daily vacation Bible school, a two-week summer program, often had 30 to 35 participants. The woman's club sponsored a sunrise religious program for the community during the summer months, a grand picnic for the 4th of July, a homecoming during the fall season, and a Christmas pageant. Men in the congregation were members of the vestry that assisted in needed repairs for the church building and performed other work around the church.■

COMMUNITY GROUPS

ACTING UP!

Acting Up!, a senior adult performing group, was organized through the Outreach Program at Oakton Community College in 1977. Membership, which averaged about 15 members annually, was open to those 60 and older. Members often wrote the plays they performed at Oakton and throughout the area.

Originally organized as a creative arts exercise workshop for seniors, Acting Up! began writing material based on their adopted theme, "Life After 60 Can Be a Time of Self-discovery."

In 1982 the group performed in Washington, D.C., at the 32nd annual conference of the National Council on Aging.

Two documentaries were made about the troupe: "Learning to Enjoy," narrated by Don McNeil, and "Acting Up!"

Karol Verson, Niles resident, was the troupe's director during the 1980s.

Acting Up! disbanded in 1996.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

The Friends of the Library evolved alongside the movement to open a library in Niles. Records of the Friends were donated to the Niles Public Library but have not been maintained and are unavailable.

Elaine Bergeron was president of the Friends of the Library for about 10 years from the late 1950s through the 1960s. Henrietta Livorsi succeeded her.

The Friends of the Library were active in collecting books and circulating petitions to establish the library in Niles and the Niles Public Library District. After the Niles Public Library was formally organized, they raised funds for the new library. Friends signed up approximately 200 patrons of the library with each member paying a \$2 annual membership. Friends also conducted book fairs, luncheons, and collected donations for the library.

The Friends of the Library organized activities in the library. They provided music and appropriate settings for their story hour. Frequently, tots came in their pajamas, holding their favorite blankets. Most left asleep in the arms of their parents. The Friends eventually purchased a piano for the library, which they played during the story hour.

Other activities included sponsoring operatic and theatrical presentations and donating a running-water decorative fountain to enhance the appeal of the entrance lobby to the library.

The current Friends of the Library reorganized as a group in 1985 to support the Niles Public

Library. Their principal activity is conducting a continuing year-round book sale in the library to raise funds. The sale is launched every spring and fall with an array of all new titles. When the Friends also obtain useable office equipment from the library or by donation, they arrange for a silent auction of such items. Sales from books and equipment have ranged between \$1,500 and \$2,500 for each of the past twelve years.

Since 1987 the Friends have asked the library administrator to provide a "wish list" of necessities for the library. The friends have made the following purchases for the library: 1987, an Apple computer; 1988, two dictionaries for the computer room and two 10-inch globes; 1989, a lectern, lectern light, and amplification equipment; 1989, speakers and a book truck; 1990, Macintosh computer; 1991, landscaping supplies, "T" shirts, book bags, and an anti-fatigue carpet; 1992, a piano program, Hewlett-Packard fax machine, computer terminal stand, and patron access station; 1993, an Eiki portable video projector, an art book, computer software, and fliers for book sale; 1994, Peavey public address system; 1995, 20 card tables for a literary group; and 1996, gondola compact disk rack.

The Friends of the Library also host annual luncheons and seasonal parties for the library staff. Individual Friends provide floral and other decorative arrangements for these social affairs.

The Friends of the Library have paid for promotional materials on behalf of the library when referendums were conducted. They also paid for mailings of such materials and spoke to community groups urging the passage of library referendums.

A recent major project of the Friends of the Library was placing "stripes" into individual items in the library's collections to complete the library's security maintenance for its entire collection. Work involved hundreds of hours performed by the 15 active members of the Friends of the Library.

The Friends of the Library participates in programs of the North Suburban Library Association. Members attend seminars and exchange ideas about fund-raising programs. The Friends has presented displays at such meetings and has distributed bookmarks and other items prepared for the use of the Niles Public Library.

In 1995 the Friends of the Library honored Anthony "Tony" Mette and presented him with a plaque for his exceptional dedicated service.

Frank Biga, Sr. has served as president of the Friends of the Library since 1985.

GARDEN CLUB OF NILES

The Garden Club of Niles was established in 1944. Although the prime objective of the club was to assist in the beautification of Niles, the club's early activities were more practical.

When World War II began, there were many vacant parcels of land in the Grennan Heights area of Niles. Residents were asked to plant vegetable gardens for patriotic reasons. These gardens would help win the war for the Allies. They were called "victory gardens."

The first formal meeting of the Garden Club of Niles, then called the Grennan Heights Garden Club, was in the Niles Village Hall with 15 people present. Westfield Homes, a real estate company, donated funds to the Grennan Heights Improvement Association with the stipulation that a lawn and a victory garden contest would be conducted. Mrs. Herminia Leidner, Mrs. Millie

Westerlund, and Joseph Gels organized the contest and the fall festival that followed.

After the club was formally organized, it continued furthering interest in home gardening, promoted horticultural practices, and advocated use of decorative flowers and plant materials. The club was a member of the Chicago Plant, Flower, and Fruit Guild and in 1948 became affiliated with the Garden Club of Illinois.

Some of its early projects included participation in the Illinois Garden Club Shows and contributing flowers to Chicago State Hospital patients. Members frequently went on tours of nurseries, furniture stores, and pottery stores to get ideas for future projects.

During the early 1960s the club purchased trash baskets for distribution throughout the city and distributed litter bags for use in cars. In 1961 the Garden Club was given \$1,000 from the proceeds of Niles Days to beautify the entrances to five elementary schools in Niles. The week of May 12, 1963, was declared Garden Club of Niles Week. The club prepared a special floral exhibit at the Niles Community Church which they titled "Village Vignette." At the time there were 55 members in the club.

The club's calendar for any year reflected a variety of interests. In 1962, the club supplied a "garden-on-wheels" for Niles Days and also sponsored a stuffed animal booth. Members handled placement of entries on the junior section of the Old Orchard Show and were judges of the sixth annual flower show at the Niles Public School. The annual card party and fashion show featured the styles of Lord's of Golf-Mill. There was also a potluck supper.

In 1969, when the club celebrated its 25th anniversary, club members were able to point to the floral baskets they placed on Milwaukee Avenue between Touhy and Harlem, the flowers planted around the Village Hall, and the shrubbery planted at Point Park on Shermer and Waukegan as their current efforts at beautification. After initial planting was completed, club members maintained the displays and the flowers, plants, and shrubs during the growing season.

Presidents of the Garden Club of Niles:

Herminia Leidner	1944-1946	Ruth Mueller	1960-1961
Martha Andrews	1946-1948	Jean Basham	1961-1962
Tillie Weber	1948-1950	Marilyn Wentz	1962-1964
Dorothy Rietz	1950-1952	Rita Suppan	1964-1965
Herminia Leidner	1952-1953	Dolores Fangral	1965-1967
Betty Luecker	1953-1954	Elsie Geis	1967-1969
Eva Meyer	1954-1956	Lucille Kozanecki	1969-1970
Rose Wawrzyniak	1956-1957	Betty Cusimano	1970-1971
Lois Wagner	1957-1958	Sandy Friedman	1971-1973
Elinor Frick	1958-1960		

GOLDEN AGE CLUB

The St. John Brebeuf seniors consists of members 55 and over. They began meeting in 1975 in members' homes. As the club grew, they decided they needed a permanent place for their get-togethers and began meeting every Tuesday in Flanagan's Hall in the church. Although at one time there were 250 members, there are now about 200, with approximately 170 of those Niles residents. They are active in their community and participate in planned social activities.

Felix Jonnie	1975-1977	Matt Araszewski	1987-1989
Stanley Gozdecki	1977-1979	Henry Piontek	1989-1991
Dorothy Warmann	1979-1980	Joan Provenzano	1991-1993
George Hall	1980-1981	Michael Provenzano	1993-1995
Russell Gawne	1981-1982	Robert Bianchi	1995-1996
Michael Provenzano	1982-1984	Chester Bonk	1996-1998
Dorothy Warmann	1984-1985	Dorothy Warmann	1998-
Rose Majewski	1985-1987		

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

Homeowner associations played an important role in the development of Niles. These associations were usually formed to resolve concerns which residents had about issues affecting the construction of and the materials used to build their property and other issues affecting the value of their property.

Although some of the descriptions of these associations are brief in the accounts that follow, most had several scheduled activities a month. However, such activities were almost always directed at homeowners living within the specific area of the association and had little relevance to the remainder of the village: a softball game, a shared recipe, a cookout, a baby shower, or a school graduation celebration.

Most of the associations would submit press releases to local newspapers and several had regular columns published in the local press. Some had their own newsletters. Members were well-informed of the issues that affected them directly or could affect them in the future.

Beginning in 1974, condominium owners and developers were to submit their declaration and bylaws before beginning construction. Niles Mayor Blase was quoted, saying that the village "wants to tie developers to board terms and conditions, especially in maintenance, recreation areas, and charges to condo owners to prevent a rip-off of owners or deterioration of buildings." During the building boom of the 1950s and 1960s, homeowners did not receive similar guarantees from developers.

Many of these associations are no longer active. Over the years the village has had to react to problems and concerns revealed and uncovered by these associations. Constructive responses by the village served several purposes: problems were resolved, homeowners were able to have that "pride of ownership" so frequently expressed as the reason for their association, and potential future difficulties were avoided as the village was in a position to better plan the community's development for the betterment of all concerned.

BUNKER HILL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Bunker Hill Homeowners Association is an active group of residents dedicated to improving their neighborhood and the Village of Niles. The association was initially formed in the late 1950s to ensure the developer of the area completed all the necessary improvements.

CHESTERFIELD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Chesterfield Homeowners Association was organized in 1963. Residents of townhomes

in the area bounded by Harlem Avenue, Greenleaf Avenue, National Avenue and Dempster Street found themselves in a dispute regarding the swimming pool the builder had provided but now wanted to sell to the residents of the area. When residents indicated they would not pay for the pool, the owner petitioned the village to remove the pool and build more townhomes. Homeowners protested to the village. The builder did not receive necessary permits to build more townhomes.

Members of the Chesterfield Homeowners Association launched the Chesterfield Country Club, a not-for-profit organization, to purchase the swimming pool. A small parcel of land around the pool became known as Chesterfield Park. At first, the pool and park were leased to the Niles Park District for a nominal sum. In 1982-83, the park was formally given to the park district but the pool remained, and continues to the present day, under the administration of the Chesterfield Pool Partners.

The Chesterfield Homeowners Association was active for approximately 30 years. Its annual picnics and pool parties were well-attended. The group regularly took part in Niles Days and published its own phone book and directory for more than 200 active members. The association often encouraged its members to vote in village elections and vote totals from the area were among the highest percentages in the village.

Presidents over the years have included Abe Selman, Bill Bers, Sydney J. Mitchell, Jeff Arnold, Ed Douglow, Bruce Goodman, Bob Shufton, Sam Feldman, and Rich Barnat.

GOLDEN ACRES HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Golden Acres Homeowners Association was formed in November 1962. Luke V. Belgou was the association's first president. The group was concerned about zoning issues and local improvements.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The Golden Triangle Homeowners Association was organized in 1972 to protest a proposed taco restaurant at 7813 Milwaukee Avenue. The group, which collected 445 signatures, also wanted to extend the park in the area of the swimming pool and recreation center. At an early meeting, members indicated they would pattern future activities similar to those of the Kirk Lane Association and the Jonquil Terrace organizations.

Ben Sosnowski, past president of the Kirk Lane Association, assisted the Golden Triangle homeowners in initial plans, which called for activities with parents and teens, block parties, and picnics. Vernon Kemp was chairman of the executive committee of the Golden Triangle Homeowners Association.

GREENWOOD ESTATES HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Greenwood Estates Homeowners Association was organized in October 1959. Nicholas Blase was selected as the group's first president. Initial efforts were directed at correcting faulty construction in the subdivision and acquiring a new park for the area. The association was successful in attaining both goals. In 1969 Marshall Gardner was president of the association.

GRENNAN HEIGHTS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

On August 14, 1941, a group of Niles residents met at the home of Ralph Fanning. Fanning was elected president of the group and a charter and bylaws formally established the organization as the Grennan Heights Improvement Association. The constitution stated, "The objects for which this Association is formed are to promote and encourage higher standards of community co-operation, living and dwellings, education, adequate zoning, civic improvement, utility control, transportation, and recreational facilities."

Members became influential in obtaining street lighting, house-to-house mail delivery, telephone service, playgrounds, bus service on Milwaukee Avenue, speed limit signs, zoning, and shelters for children. During World War II they planted Victory Gardens, organized paper drives, and had campaigns to purchase war bonds and stamps. They were concerned about sewer problems, firearm control, proper zoning for property, and became active on the local school boards.

The group built the Grennan Heights field house, which was used as a temporary public library and later turned over to the Niles Park District.

The Grennan Heights Association sponsored many community gatherings. An annual Christmas dance was popular for many years. The summer Grennan Heights festival attracted large crowds. In 1957, bowling, dances, and softball were advertised as attractions for the festival. Diane Kussman was selected as Queen of the Festival. The following year Little Oscar and his wiener mobile made an appearance. A helicopter landed at the 1958 festival. This is believed to be the first helicopter landing in Niles. Funds collected often went for charitable causes. Proceeds from the festival in 1958 were used to furnish a room at Lutheran General Hospital.

By 1966, when the group was preparing to celebrate its 25th anniversary, many of the objectives of the association were realized and few activities were sponsored. Three years earlier, the minutes reported, "The entertainment for the evening was a movie called Magic Highways. The speaker was Mr. Jack Guthrie. His talk was an inspiring one on Niles Sewerage." According to the minutes of the association for May 25, 1965, discussions frequently centered on the topic of, "What can we do to create interest in the Association?"

Presidents:

1941	Ralph Fanning	1954	Joseph Rosy
1942-1943	George Martens	1955	Frank Congui
1944	Henry Kramer	1956	Henry Kramer
1945	Roy Chaffin	1957	Oscar Meyer
1946	Ted Olson	1958	John M. Peterson Jr.
1947	Lee Cress	1959	Anthony F. Castle
1948	Mrs. Andrews	1960	Frank Congui
1949	Mr. Fluecker	1961	Jack Frick
1950	Bert Westerland	1962, 1965	Stan Lowe
1951	Mr. Lazard	1967-1969	Stan Lowe
1952	Frank Hauser	1963-1964	C. O'Grady
1953	Lou Schriener	1966	F. Herberts

JONQUIL TERRACE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The Jonquil Terrace Civic Association was established in 1952 when Edwin A. Leith called together a meeting to establish bylaws for the group. Friendship and social events for adults and children were to be organized. In 1954 the association initiated plans for a junior chamber of commerce for Niles. The association continued throughout the 1960s. Raymond Wieser was president in 1969.

KIRK LANE ASSOCIATION

In early 1946 a large prairie was all that could be seen between Waukegan Road and Harlem Avenue, south of Oakton. Plans for a beautiful subdivision were presented by Robert E. Reed for the site. He constructed an attractive Cape Cod brick building on Waukegan, priced to sell for \$11,000. The price was not really modest; most full-time employees were not earning a dollar an hour at the time: policemen in Niles were paid 85 cents an hour in 1946.

Reed advertised he had approved plans to build 72 similar homes adjacent to the model. They would be provided with sewer, water, paved streets, and concrete sidewalks. Postcards were sent to interested parties inviting them to visit the site and personally look over the development. Two offices were opened: one in Chicago, the other in the model home on Waukegan. In a matter of a few weeks, 53 (other accounts say 56) persons signed on the dotted line, giving Reed down payments of \$2,000 to \$3,000.

Veterans, who recently returned from World War II, were attracted to the project. They would scrape together what funds they could, sometimes borrowing from others, and gave it to the man they believed to be Robert E. Reed as a down payment. Reed handed them a contract.

None of the prospective or actual buyers were aware that Reed, using another name, had already pulled a similar scam in another city.

Buyers would come out to Niles every weekend to see how their dream was taking shape. Mounds of soil began to appear as freshly dug excavations were added week after week. However, no buildings were started for several weeks. When Reed was pressed for an explanation, a few more basement excavations were dug.

Future homeowners again became annoyed and demanded more action from Reed. Two foundations were added and four rows of bricks appeared at one building site, then nothing for several weeks, with more complaints. One house was partially finished.

The headlines in the *Chicago Herald* and *Examiner* throughout November 1949 shocked and stunned the would-be homeowners. Reed had taken off with their money. They read the details: Reed did not even own title to the property they thought they had purchased. The check Reed had written for partial payment for the land bounced. His unpaid construction workers walked off the job. The state's attorney began searching for Reed.

Owners of the unbuilt homes met in a chilly basement of one of the dwellings. They elected a steering committee who attempted to get legal aid. One attorney after another turned them down until Anton A. Smigiel listened sympathetically to an explanation of the entangled legal dilemmas they faced.

Smigiel brought all debtors together. Tradesmen who were not compensated joined the cause. The home recovery project report written at the time said that Smigiel had "all the eagerness of a gladiator ready for the fight." Meetings, scheduled for three evenings a week, often were

conducted daily as details had to be worked out to enable victims to buy back their homes which they now, legally, did not own.

After contact with 12 other institutions, 13 proved to be the lucky choice: Talman Federal Savings and Loan Association agreed to take on the mortgages with all the legal complications still to be resolved.

The owners undertook many aspects of the construction of the houses. They mixed cement, worked on the carpentry, arranged for sewers and utilities. Village officials were cooperative and helpful. To raise needed funds, they danced with their guests at Bunker Hill Country Club.

The recovery project took three years. Some families, then called the "pioneer families," were able to start moving in a year after Reed took off. Others had to be patient: there were still no streets and sidewalks in much of the area. There were unexpected delays such as a steel strike, rain or snow would cause floods, and the price of lumber took an unexpected jump upward.

Fifteen of the original 53 who gave Reed a down payment dropped the project. The other 38 were able to complete their homes and receive a rebate of 25 percent of their down payment.

Reed was arrested in California, extradited to Pittsburgh for a similar offense, and given a 10-year prison sentence.

The Niles Recovery Association, which guided the three-year battle, decided to call themselves the Kirk Lane Homeowners Association.

Smigiel remained active with the group and was selected as the first president of the Kirk Lane Homeowners. He was twice elected police magistrate in Niles, judge of the court in Niles, president of the Niles Rotary, president of the Bank of Niles, and president of the Niles Firemen's Benevolent Association. Others also took an active interest in Niles civic affairs. Leonard Ramel, a member of the original steering committee, became a trustee on the village board. Leonard Szymanski was also a trustee and a member of district 71 school board. Keith Peck went on to become a park commissioner and a member of the village board of trustees. Joseph Mollica and Joe Raymond have both served on the Niles planning and zoning board. Ben Sosnowski, who would be president of the association in 1969, conducted the book drives that resulted in the eventual establishment of a library in Niles. Leonard Szymanski was president from 1957 to 1961.

PARK LANE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Park Lane was developed as a result of a plot of land donated by real estate agent L. B. Anderson in 1935. The area bordered Niles. A charter for an association was obtained in 1937 and by 1947 a portion of a meeting hall was completed. In 1950 the area was annexed to Niles and water and sewer facilities were available to the entire subdivision. The Park Lane Women's Club was launched in 1955 to help maintain the Park Lane Community House.

Randy Norris was president of the Park Lane Community Association in the early 1970s.

OTHER CIVIC AND HOMEOWNER GROUPS

During the late 1960s and early 1970s other homeowner and civic associations were active in Niles. These included the Crain Gardens Civic Improvement Association (J. Manning, president); Golfview Homeowner's Association (Robert Rohweder, president); Niles Gardens East

Homeowners Association (Arthur Kapchinski, president); Niles Terrace Association (Ben Mankowsky, president); North Niles Homeowners Association (James Richmond, president); Park Lane Community Association (Randy Norris, president); Ranson Ridge Civic Association (Nick Dinapoli, president); and Lake Street Homeowners Association (Sherwin Klein, president).

KIWANIS OF NILES

Kiwanis of Niles were chartered February 27, 1965. Bill Grafke was president. In 1966, the Kiwanis sponsored a basketball tournament and purchased an exercycle for physically disabled youngsters that was installed at the Niles YMCA.

In 1970, the Kiwanis sponsored "Operation Drug Alert," a program of education about drug abuse.

Mo Wittkamper was president in 1971. A donation was made to the Institute on Narcotics and Drugs for use by the Niles Drug Coordinating Council.

During the 1970s Niles Kiwanians sent several children to a special Kiwanis camp in Plymouth, Indiana. They also donated money for spastic paralysis research at Children's Memorial Hospital and raised money to buy blankets for residents at Niles nursing homes.

In 1981 the Niles Kiwanis initiated a program conducted by the Niles Police Department. Policemen distributed sports cards with safety messages to youngsters.

Presidents:

Bill Grafke	1965
Edward Salerno	1966
Mo Wittkamper	1971
Al Johnson	1979-80

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS NORTH AMERICAN MARTYRS COUNCIL 4338

The Knights of Columbus North American Martyrs Council 4338 was chartered in February 1956. John Trocki, Bill Bock, Frank Lawrence, Bob Pifke, and Don Walgren conducted initial meetings at St. John Brebeuf Church in Niles and were elected the council's first officers. Since that time the council has continued to meet regularly in Niles. Membership has grown to 290 members in 1997.

The Knights of Columbus is an international fraternal benefit society. Although membership in the council is limited to men--for several years there was a ladies auxiliary linked to the group in Niles--a renewed emphasis on family life involves the member's wife and children in the numerous activities of the council.

Throughout its history North American Martyrs Council 4338 has been noted for its community activities. In 1997 it was voted "Most Outstanding Council in the State of Illinois." It was cited for assisting flood victims, sending aid to those affected by the Oklahoma bombing disaster and supporting Rev. Anthony Chen at the St. Theresa Mission in Chinatown.

During 1997 it also provided \$2,200 to Newman centers throughout the state of Illinois.

These centers, located on college campuses of public universities, make facilities available for Roman Catholic students on the campuses.

The North American Martyrs Council 4338 is involved with numerous youth projects. It currently sponsors a baseball team. In the past it has also sponsored a girl's softball team and a hockey team. Since 1965, the council has conducted a basketball tournament for boys and girls in elementary grades in both public and private schools. As many as 112 teams participated in the late 1970s and approximately 105 teams have been participating in recent tournaments. The council also hosts a separate free-throw contest. Boys and girls between ages 10 and 14 are invited. During the past few years 50 to 75 youngsters have taken part. Winners are encouraged to enter regional and state competitions. Over the years, the Knights have sponsored teams from St. John Brebeuf in various CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) sports tournaments and activities. The Knights sponsor spelling bees and essay contests open to all schools, public and private, in Niles. For many years the council has co-sponsored a Boy Scout troop at St. John Brebeuf Church.

Concern for the mentally disabled has always been a priority for North American Martyrs Council 4338. In 1996 more than \$28,000 was collected by council members during its annual September Tootsie Roll Day. The Knights in Council 4338 were cited as the most successful council out of 370 in Illinois in raising funds for the mentally disabled.

The past three years the council has co-sponsored SMART games. SMART, Sports for Mutual Admiration and Respect among Teens, provides opportunities for teens with physical and mental impairments to interrelate with able-bodied teens. Games are played at Maryville Academy in Des Plaines. Rules are adapted so that blind teens are able to play sighted teams who are blindfolded, mobility-impaired and able-bodied teens all play in wheelchairs, deaf teens play teens who wear soundproof headgear, and cognitively impaired teams are paired with able-bodied teams to form teams who are matched with like teams.

In 1973, and again in 1974, the council presented \$1,000 checks to Jefferson School in Niles to support programs for the handicapped at the school. The commitment to support programs for disabled youngsters led to development of the Niles Park District Golf-Mill Handicapped Park in Niles. The park, built and dedicated in the early 1980s, received monies raised by the Knights in their Tootsie Roll Drives. In October 1982 a universal playground was dedicated by the Niles Park District thanks to the Knights pledge of \$11,000 for the project. This second playground in Niles, known as Knights of Columbus Universal Playground, is designed to be accessible to the handicapped. It was built over the five-year period as funds would be made available by the Knights: \$3,000 was donated in 1982 with the remaining \$8,000 donated in the following four years. Walter Beusse, president of the Niles Park District and Grand Knight of Council 4338, in 1982 coordinated efforts to make the park possible and enlisted the active support of the Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation making the park accessible to six neighboring park districts.

The council launched a program, Life Athletes, in association with Notre Dame High School in Niles. Professional athletes in football and basketball, who support a lifestyle of no drugs, no alcohol abuse, and abstinence of pre-marital sex, are invited to address elementary and high school students. The Knights provide a photo opportunity for the youngsters with the visiting professional athlete and supply lunch. In 1997 approximately 50 youngsters took part in the program.

Each month Council 4338 selects a "Family of the Month." A "Family of the Year" is also named. Selection is based, in part, on community activities of the family. In 1997, Irv and Lucille Blaszyński were the "Family of the Year." They conduct the raffle program at the annual corned beef and cabbage dinner, the principal activity of Council 4338, which raises funds to support many of the Knights' programs during the year. Irv is also active with veterans' organizations, helps organize reunions for veteran groups, and writes the bimonthly newsletter of the Knights.

The Respect Life committee of Council 4338 supports the Women's Center in Chicago. In 1997 the council provided financial aid and the honor guard for the dedication of the St. Jude Chapel at the Women's Center. This committee also sponsors programs of selected speakers at St. John Brebeuf Church. The public is invited to these programs.

The vocation director of Council 4338 provides \$500 annually to each of three seminarians to assist them in their pursuit of a vocation to the priesthood. These funds, raised from the proceeds of a spaghetti dinner, are meant to supplement personal expenses of seminarians who are still in school. One of the priests assisted, Rev. Andrew Barzyk, was assigned to St. John Brebeuf in 1994 after his ordination.

The Knights of Columbus North American Martyrs Council 4338 is very visible in community activities. It takes part in the Columbus Day Parade in Chicago, the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Chicago, the 4th of July Parade in Niles, Niles Days festivities, the Veteran's Memorial Mass at Maryhill Cemetery, and for numerous affairs when a church or visiting dignitary is invited to a religious observance at St. John Brebeuf Church.

Past Grand Knights of Knights of Columbus North American Martyrs Council 4338, Niles, Illinois:

John Trocki	1956-57	Joseph Bachochin	1978-79
William Bock	1957-58	Daniel Cincinelli	1979-80
Donald Walgren	1958-59	Matt Araszewski	1980-81
Francis Lawrence	1959-60	Edward Coudek	1981-82
Emmett Heil	1960-62	Walter Beusse	1982-83
Dennis H. Birch	1962-64	Paul Dahlgren	1983-84
Richard E. Burton	1964-65	Robert Bianchi	1984-85
Thomas H. O'Donnell	1965-66	Edwin Zalesny	1985-86
Thomas W. Christian	1966-67	Joseph Paine	1986-87
Irvin Blaszyński	1967-68	Walter Zalesny	1987-88
Stanley M. Ptak	1968-69	Carl A. Ferina	1988-89
Stanley P. Niski	1969-70	Tad Lesniak	1989-90
John J. Quedens	1970-71	Nick Vasile	1990-91
Charles V. O'Grady	1971-72	Ray Restarski	1991-93
August F. Pranske	1972-73	Gary K. Warner	1993-94
Joseph Bradtke	1973-74	Lee Gerstenberger	1994-95
Robert Komos	1974-75	Andrew F. Beierwaltes, Jr.	1995-96
Kenneth Piasecki	1975-76	Robert E. Galassi	1996-97
John Imber	1976-77	William Chase	1997-98
Kenneth Lee	1977-78		

LIONESS CLUB OF NILES

The Lioness Club of Niles came into existence in 1976, one year after the International Board of Directors of the Lions International approved the concept of the Lioness organization. Activities of the Lioness clubs were to be conducted independently of the Lions International. However, once a year, Lionesses sponsored a "men's night," a social gathering with male guests.

Although independent, the Lioness Club of Niles worked for and supported causes Lions had long been associated with: large-print books were purchased for the visually handicapped patrons of the Niles Public Library, a subscription for the large-print magazine *Dialogue* was

provided for the Trident Center, and a blind bowling league and all-star band were sponsored. Lioness members also worked with the Lions on Candy Day and worked at Camp Lion during the summer assisting visually impaired children.

Lioness members assisted physicians in screening for glaucoma at the Trident Center and purchased benches for Golf-Mill Park when it was adapting facilities for handicapped children. For several years club members served refreshments during the Maine Township Special Olympics and assisted in Maine Township special education classes. In 1980, members worked with Maine Township special education classes by preparing and marking letters for visually handicapped students.

Money was raised in 1980 to send Niles ice skater, Patrick Moore, to the Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, New York.

Presidents:

Carol Hansen	1977-79
Gloryana Angus	1979-80
Carol Angus	1980-81
Grace Willert	1981-82
Muriel McAndrew	1982-84
Carol Wollenberg	1984-85
Judith Nivens	1985-86

MORTON GROVE - NILES LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters, established in Morton Grove in 1961, was fully certified in 1963. Joan Goldberg and Mary Pionke, Niles residents, were active members of the League at this time. In 1967 Mayor Nicholas B. Blase appeared before the League when he was a candidate for an elective office in Maine Township. Also in 1967 candidates for the Niles Village Board of Trustees sent their responses to the League regarding their candidacies. Edward B. Berkowsky, Erich M. Buck, Angelo G. Marcheschi, Edwin D. Mitchell, Richard Harczak, and Mandy Honold explained their educational background, occupational experience, types of training they had, and indicated two problems facing the village. The League sent these candidates' responses to Niles newspapers for publication.

In the mid-1960s the League of Women Voters of Morton Grove launched a major campaign strongly supporting a council-manager form of government for Morton Grove. Although rejected by Morton Grove in 1968, the following year the League published a 34-page booklet, "League proposes the trustee-manager plan," and continued to support a council-manager form of government. Niles approved the position of a village manager in 1967.

By 1969 Niles residents numbered 22 in the League's membership of 94. Niles sought more formal identification with the League. The League undertook a study, "Know your town." This resulted in a 64-page publication about Niles which included the following: village history, census figures, village government, village board and commissions, finances of the village, village services, the library, park district, schools, other governmental districts, the Huntington, churches, voter services, public meetings, and a map. With this type of publication completed, Niles was able to complete its prerequisite for affiliation with the Morton Grove League of Voters. Since 1970 the name of the organization has been the Morton Grove-Niles League of Women Voters.

The purpose of the League is to promote informed and active citizen participation in government. The League studies and then supports or opposes issues. A newsletter is published and

forums with candidates for public office or on specific issues are conducted. Several booklets have also been published. Topics range from information necessary when considering running for public office to a listing of business establishments which are handicapped accessible.

In 1976 the League completed a two-year study of Niles and made the following recommendations: open budget hearings, providing access to public buildings and a public bus for the physically handicapped, a day-care center under the auspices of the Niles Family Service, appointment of an appearance commission, voluntary tree planting on private property, major tree planting on public property, and a statement of village objectives. Other activities included a study of the Niles Public Library and support of a Niles Park District referendum. In 1985 the League produced a video, "Grandma was a Suffragette." It was awarded first prize by Women in Cable.

The League arranged a drop-off center for recycled items at Milwaukee Avenue and Waukegan Road. It was dedicated on Earth Day in 1990. The League also introduced waste-free lunches for the elementary schools in the area and E-Challenge, an environmental game for students.

Within recent years the League has advocated abolishment of township government and supported efforts regarding the accountability of local Cable TV franchises.

Presidents:

(* indicates Niles resident)

Betty Hanson	1961-1963	Co-presidents	1982-1983
Evelyn Cartwright	1963-1964	Marilyn Kramer *	
Gloria Potter	1964-1965	Ruth Hibnick	
Miriam Barlett	1965-1967	Pat Horn *	1983-1985
Shirley Keller	1967-1969	Co-presidents	1985-1987
Charlotte Adams	1969-1971	Fern Anderson	
Ruth Baum	1971-1973	Monalu Meyers *	
Carol Panek *	1973-1975	Co-presidents	1987-1989
Mary Marusek *	1975-1977	Maggie Kohls	
Barbara Blonz	1977-1979	Helen Barrow	
Co-presidents	1979-1981	Co-presidents	1989-1991
Joan Goldberg *		Lyn Warmack	
Sue Kravis *		Elizabreth Matteoni *	
Ruth Hibnick	1981-1982	Sue Kravis *	1991-1994
		Joyce Herter	1995-1997

NILES ART GUILD

The Niles Art Guild was founded in October 1963 by Marge Berles and Edna Walger. Other charter members of the guild were: Marilyn Alden-Brown, Robert Berles, Estelle Boyk, Kay Groh, Diane Huisel, Marcia Keith, Raymond Koll, Henry B. Ray, Dorothy Taylor, Helen Tempera, George Waiflen, and Edward Walger.

The stated objectives of the guild were "to promote and stimulate interest in the graphic arts in the community and to offer scholarships to worthy recipients to encourage them in the field of art."

Edna Walger, the guild's first president, was the chairperson of the art department of the Woman's Club of Niles. In March of 1963 she organized an art fair at Grennan Heights that was very well-received.

In October 1963 the Lawrencewood Shopping Center Management expressed its interest in hosting an art fair in celebration of its first anniversary. The shopping center indicated it would provide room for a gallery the sponsoring organization could use for the remainder of the year. As it turned out, the guild was provided two locations at the shopping center in the following six years.

The Niles Art Guild, with some 44 active participating members, made its debut art exhibit for the first anniversary of the Lawrencewood Shopping Center in 1963.

Interest and support for the group quickly mushroomed. Art classes for youngsters and adults were scheduled at the "229 Lawrencewood Gallery." An exhibit was scheduled for 1964 and the Village of Niles established a \$100 purchase award, which it would continue to make available for more than 20 years as the guild continued to sponsor art fairs.

By 1967 a monthly program for members and guests featured demonstration sessions, films, and lectures. Members and invited guest artists were featured.

The first Niles Art Guild scholarships were awarded in 1966 to Janet Soby and Sue Beverly. They would attend the junior school at the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1967 Daniel Boyk won the same type of scholarship. Kandy Diakoumis and Nancy Wahle were awarded scholarships in 1968. Other scholarships were for a 10-week course at the Village Art School in Skokie. These scholarship winners included Marianne Kuchta, who went on to earn an internship with the Association of Medical Illustrators, Barbara Kramer, Linda Kargol, and Kandy Diakoumis. The guild also sponsored art exhibits for these and other young artists at the YMCA.

Maurice Chambers was the winner of the first village purchase award at the guild's art fair in 1964. His work and the works of the other winners remain on exhibit in the new village hall. Those artists, with year of award noted, include: Stanley Marlewski (1965), Adrian Verschoor (1966), Tom St. Clair (1967), Gail Stahkel (1968), Ralph Furmanski (1969), Maurice Chambers (1970), Jim Armstrong (1971, 1972), Glenn Tammer (1973, 1974), Keith Adams (1975), Alan Yau (1976, 1978), Richard Callopy (1977), Bob Proce (1979), Lee Pikovsky (1980), Joan Munson (1981), Claudia Anderson (1982), and Frank Kruzel (1985).

The early art fairs were at the mall in the Lawrencewood Shopping Center. After the guild lost its gallery there in 1969, the guild's art fairs were held at Oak Mill Mall and Golf-Mill Park. Regular monthly meetings were conducted at the Niles Park District Recreation Center.

In 1967 the guild launched publication of a newsletter which it distributed monthly until 1993. The newsletter would usually inform members of locations secured to exhibit members' works. Two of these sites were continuous for more than 20 years: the Niles Village Hall and Chambers Restaurant. Other locations were: Bank of Niles, Howard Johnson in Lincolnwood, Knight's Pub in Des Plaines, Deerfield State Bank, Maine North High School, Tam O'Shanter Racket Club, Niles Public Library, Norwood Park Library, Lutheran General Hospital, Resurrection Hospital, Talman Federal Savings, LaVenece Restaurant, and Uptown Federal Bank.

The guild charged annual membership dues. However, major funding for the guild's activities was raised by sponsoring Christmas bazaars, bake sales, Octoberfests at Oak Mill Mall, and booth sales during Niles Days.

The impact of the activities of the Niles Art Guild was felt throughout the village. The art fairs at the Lawrencewood and Oak Mill Malls attracted 80 to 100 exhibitors. Each had a 10-foot area to exhibit works. Officials estimated that 1,000 to 1,200 guests came to view each of the annual art exhibits between 1963 and 1985.

Active membership in the guild ranged between 44 and 70. It would have been higher had the guild accepted international memberships. Several came from areas as far away as China.

Marge Berles was given a special plaque in recognition for her dedicated service in 1983. As the appointed historian, Berles continued to preserve and organize the records of the Niles Art Guild after its dissolution. The records were then donated to the Niles Historical Museum in 1996.

In 1993, Kay Groh wrote "the most difficult article I've had to write since becoming publicity chairman." A farewell dinner was announced at which final plans were approved to disband the Niles Art Guild effective January 1, 1994. The principal reason for dissolution was the difficulty in securing officers for the club.

Presidents:

Edna Walger	1964-65	Kay Groh	1975-77
Henry B. Ray	1965-66	Isabel Curtin	1977-79
Marge Berles	1966-68	Robert Berles	1979-81
James Noffz	1968-69	Marilyn Brown	1981-82
Julia Guarnaccio	1969-71	Robert Berles	1983-85
Myra Steinbrink	1971-73	Bill Dati	1985-87
Marge Berles	1973-75	Marilyn Brown	1987-93

NILES CONCERT CHOIR AND NILES SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Niles Concert Choir and Niles Symphony Orchestra were founded by Rev. Stanley Rudcki in 1964 and 1966. Rev. Rudcki was chairman of the Niles College department of fine arts. These musical groups performed regularly at and were associated with Niles College. However, as the *Niles Spectator* wrote, they were also "an important part of musical life in Chicago." They frequently performed at Orchestra Hall, Holy Name Cathedral, and for college and university audiences for some 30 years. The chorus and symphony performed about 50 concerts per year.

The choir has traveled to Europe. In 1977 an Easter Mass was sung in a cathedral in Rome, run by English-speaking Paulists Fathers. The group sang in Germany and Spain over the next few years.

Each year the groups would perform a major spring concert at Niles College and three other concerts during the year. Rev. Rudcki often selected challenging and important works for his concerts. The Chicago premier of R. Vaughn Williams, "The Sea Symphony," was presented by the Niles Concert Choir and the Niles Symphony Orchestra at Holy Name Cathedral. Chicago audiences were also introduced to Benjamin Britten's "War Requiem" at Orchestra Hall in a concert performed by the Niles Symphony Orchestra. Guest soloists were Sarah Beatty of the Metropolitan Opera Company of New York and Bruce Schoonmaker, a graduate of Northwestern University School of Music, on the music staff at the University of South Carolina. This free concert, as were most of the concerts given by the groups, was described as an "inspiring and monumental spiritual composition set to poems by Walt Whitman." Free-will donations, The Musicians' Union Trust Fund, and Niles College provided necessary funding for the groups.

Students at Niles College were the nucleus of the concert choir. Other members included residents from Chicago and the northwest suburbs. The Niles Symphony was composed of professional musicians from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Lyric Opera Orchestra, and the Grant Park Orchestra. Rev. Rudcki handled all negotiations with musicians, undertook the arrangements of the music, and conducted the performances.

Professional musicians were impressed by the orchestra and the response from the community. Donald Koss, a percussionist with the Chicago Symphony who played with the Niles Symphony, said that professional musicians were astonished with the complexity and difficulty of the programs the symphony and chorus performed. Koss was especially enthusiastic about the performances in the Niles College gym: "We found what they did in the gym to be an absolutely marvelous series of events. They would always pack the gym with local people from the neighborhood, most who had never heard a symphony orchestra."

After Niles College closed its campus, the Niles Concert Choir was reformed as a not-for-profit organization. An executive steering committee, selected by members, makes decisions. In December 1996 Rev. Rudcki retired and Scott James Arkenberg became the music director of the Niles Concert Choir. The choir continues to sing throughout the Chicago area and has established its home base at St. John Brebeuf Church in Niles.

NILES GRANDMOTHER'S CLUB

Niles Grandmother's Club was organized January 15, 1964. Charlotte Prasch was elected president, Virginia Petretti was vice president, Isabelle Werdel, became secretary, and Catherine Schreiber took the treasurer's post. Ten members were present at the organization meeting. Charter 699 was obtained from the National Federation of Grandmothers Clubs of America. The aim of the group was to provide assistance to those in need.

In 1965, a set of encyclopedias was sent to the Uhlich Children's Home and a check and clothes were donated to the American Indian Center.

The following year a regular program of sending "goodies" to servicemen in Vietnam was initiated.

Presidents:

Charlotte Prasch	1964
Virginia Petretti	1965-66
Helen Skaja	1968
Edna Guarin	1970
Irene Feichtner	1971-72

NILES HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND NILES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Niles Historical Society was established in September 1970 as an affiliate of the Niles Woman's Club. The founding members include Mandy Honold, Estelle Boyk, Angela Giannone, Bernice M. Bay, Margaret Jacobs, John J. Boyk, Jr., Marcia Keith, Robert A. Berles, Marge Berles, Raymond S. Koll, Myra G. Steinbrink, Julia M. Guarnaccio, Columbia Hajduk, Nancy H. Saklak, Sandie Friedman, Elsa G. Koll, Marilyn K. Kramer, Richard Saklak, and Chet Hajduk. The Historical and Art Society, as it was then called, came into existence "to build a historical and cultural center in Niles."

The first floor of the proposed museum would make space available for public meetings, exhibits, performances, and other changing activities. "The second floor will contain a history of Niles and artifacts from our villagers and duplication of rooms in the early homes of Niles," proclaimed some of the society's early literature.

In November 1971 the society adopted its own constitution. The stated purpose was: "To

provide the opportunity to those persons interested in history to participate in the history of the village of Niles."

The major function of the society was, "To discover and collect any material which may help establish or illustrate the history of the area: its exploration, settlement, development, and activities in peace and war; its progress in population, wealth, education, arts, sciences, trade, and transportation. It will collect printed materials such as histories, genealogies, biographies, descriptions, gazetteers, directories, newspapers, pamphlets, catalogs, circulars, handbills, programs and posters; manuscript materials such as letters, diaries, journals, memoranda, memorabilia, rosters, service records, account books; and museum material such as pictures, photographs, paintings, portraits, scenes, aboriginal relics."

The constitution also stated that the society "will provide for the preservation of such material and its accessibility...will disseminate historical information and arouse interest in the past by publishing historical material in the news media, holding meetings, and sponsoring exhibits."

The site selected for the building to house the society was a parcel of 1.5 acres of the former Tam O'Shanter Country Club, west of the Chicago River, south of Howard Street. Some said the area was a flood plain. Other opposition developed.

By 1973 Mandy Honold, who was spearheading the building project, decided: "To go ahead and build our center on this site, in the face of so much opposition, would be foolhardy."

The society was offered the Kadlec home in 1972. It was the oldest home in Niles. Some considered it as a possible site for the Niles Historical Society. However, the Niles Historical Society would have to pay costs of moving the home. It was located at 7254 N. Milwaukee. These costs were prohibitive and a vacant site for the home was not available. Another site had to be selected.

In its early development, the Niles Historical Society, Woman's Club, and Niles Art Guild would frequently stage theatrical productions to raise funds. In 1971, a press release of the society announced the staging of "The Merry Widow" at the Niles Elementary School. Tickets were three dollars each; a full-page ad in the program book cost \$100. Proceeds were to benefit the establishment of a historical and cultural center for Niles. This initial public fund-raiser was such a success that a repeat performance of "The Merry Widow" was staged at Henrici's O'Hare Inn, July 11, 1971. Four other theatrical productions were later staged for the benefit of the future Niles Historical and Art Society and Cultural Center.

Specific requests from the proceeds of Niles Days for a historical museum were turned down during the early 1970s. Lack of information was cited as reason for the refusal. However, the idea of a historical museum did receive considerable support and \$6,435 was to be held in trust, as of October 16, 1975, for the Niles Historical Society until a definite site was selected. The funds were from proceeds of Niles Days. The Woman's Club of Niles also presented the society with a check for \$2,993.90 from the proceeds of their bicentennial theatrical production.

The Niles Historical Society purchased glass cabinets and began displaying historic items at the Trident Center in 1977. Some of the early exhibits featured bathing suits from the 1920s, early telephones, a patchwork quilt, Orphan Annie memorabilia, shaving paraphernalia, a kerosene heater, and a doll and her baby buggy. These exhibits proved to be so popular that others were arranged: christening gowns, tapestry purses and wedding photos. A third major exhibit featuring the military and military items was shown in the early 1980s.

In April 1985 the Village Board of Niles passed a resolution to lease the former sheriff's



Niles Historical Museum

facility from Cook County at 8970 N. Milwaukee Avenue. The lease was for 99 years at \$1 per year with the understanding that the facility would be used by the Niles Historical Society for a museum. Niles was willing to pay \$50,000 to repair the roof. The Niles Historical Museum would have its own home.

Columbia Pictures came along just at the right time. They requested permission to shoot several scenes for a motion picture, "Date Night," at the Niles Historical Museum. Columbia renovated and painted the second floor and stairwell and put in new venetian blinds. When the Niles Historical Society started moving into the facility in March of 1985, there was still much work to complete before the former sheriff's office could be used for a museum. When built in 1923, the 3,600 square feet were used to house the medical examiner's office, the adult probation office, and the north investigations and vice units. There were also some jail cells.

The Niles Historical Museum was open to the public in September 1986. Permanent exhibits included a replica of 1910 vintage rooms of a farm house, a typical 1910 kitchen, and a covered wagon. The covered wagon, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Virgil Horath of Arlington Heights who found it on a Wisconsin farm, has proven to be an extremely popular attraction. It was restored and was the centerpiece for a "Chuck Wagon Day" fund-raiser October 25, 1986. Marilyn Brown, president of the Niles Historical Museum, said that well over 300 attended. "It went over real big for a nasty rainy day," said Brown. A few years later it won first prize as the best float in a Niles Days Parade.

The Niles Historical Society has sponsored numerous fund-raisers to meet expenses. Bake sales, holiday bazaars, card parties, and promotional shopping at Jewel, Dominick's, Subway, and Columbia Bank allowed the museum to share in the sales. The Village of Niles has also been supportive. The village maintains the utilities, assists with major repairs, and allocates grants for necessary major items. Niles Events continues to support the Niles Historical Museum; a fund of \$5,000 was established to purchase and maintain a window air conditioner for the museum in 1990. The museum also received a \$200 community grant from F & M Distributors, \$500 from the Lions Club for track lighting, and special funds from life members. There is no admission or entrance fee to the museum, although donations are appreciated.

The major source of funding is members: their payment of dues and their constant support

of the programs of the museum. In 1982 there were eight members. By 1990 membership had risen to 300. The museum has been hosting programs, almost monthly, throughout each of the past 20 years.

Volunteers, who put in some 50,000 hours of work since moving into the present facility, have made the Niles Historical Museum one of the most viable in the entire Chicago area. In 1991, formal recognition programs were launched acknowledging those who contributed time and work for the museum. An account of the many hours of work has been maintained since March 25, 1991. With records updated to the end of 1996, this partial list of those who contributed their work to the Niles Historical Society is indeed impressive.

Marge Berles and Marilyn Brown have each spent more than 10,000 hours working for the museum.

The following were also cited: Howard Brown (over 3,000 hours), Tena Wiegand (over 3,000), Adolph Foss (over 2,000), Willis Kretschmer (over 2,000), Bob Berles (over 1,500 hours), Katherine Nelson (over 1,000 hours), Ethel Garry (over 1,000), Virginia Ludwig (over 500), Walter Beusse (over 500), Matt Laskowski (over 500).

Each item that arrives at the museum is evaluated. Those selected for the museum's collection are identified, described, and are then available to researchers, guests, and other interested parties. The variety of items in the museum's collection reflects accurately its mission as stated in its constitution cited above.

The museum receives approximately 100 calls and written inquiries for information annually. In 1996 it greeted 860 regular visitors on Wednesdays and Fridays when the museum is open to the public and during scheduled programs which are usually on Sundays.

A core staff of 10 works every week at the museum. Docents include Marge Berles, Marilyn Brown, Isabel Peterson, Dorothy Kretschmer, Will Kretschmer, and Adolph Foss.

The Niles Historical Society is a member of the North Eastern Illinois Historical Council and has been recognized by the Illinois State Historical Society. It has also received several certificates of recognition from School District 71 where it has established and helps to maintain a Niles History Club.

Presidents

Mandy Honold	1971-74
Judy Czyzewicz	1974-78
Sandie Friedman	1978-82
Marilyn Brown	1982-98

NILES JUNIOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Niles Junior Historical Society was launched in 1979 thanks to a donation from the Knights of Columbus North American Martyrs Council 4338 at St. John Brebeuf Church. The donation was given to the junior historical society so it would be able to obtain its charter and become a member of the American Association for State and Local History.

During the two years the society conducted activities, 15 members were enrolled. Aims of the society were to preserve, study, compare the history of Niles to similar communities, promote community pride, and assist in community projects.

Members of the society did participate in several essay contests and prepared a slide presentation of historic buildings and sites in Niles, which was presented to several audiences at area churches and at the Niles Public Library. The slides were donated to and are now part of the collection of the Niles Historical Museum. The group also participated in Niles Days and in the 4th of July Parade in Niles.

John Matuszak was the society's first president, Brian Farrell, the first treasurer. Judy Czyzewicz and Nick Adami served as advisers.

NILES LIONS CLUB OF ILLINOIS

The Niles Lions Club of Illinois was organized March 26, 1953, at the Lone Tree Inn in Niles. Charter night was June 14, 1953, at the Bunker Hill Country Club. The club enlisted 30 members in its first two months. A \$35 profit was recorded that night and a long and fruitful history of community service and assistance to the needy began.

By 1960 membership had risen to 88; the following year, member No. 100, Dr. John McMahon, a dentist, was enrolled. Fund-raising activities were in full gear by 1960: of the \$10,000 raised by projects and dues, \$9,600 was spent on the needs of others. By 1961 the Niles Lions Club twice won membership contests for villages the size of Niles.

One of the first community projects the Lions sponsored was designing and printing a map of Niles. It was distributed without charge throughout the village. Since the boundaries of Niles were rapidly expanding in the early 1950s, the map was marked "accurate as of October 1953." In 1961 the Lions joined the Village of Niles in promoting a slogan for the city. Mrs. Helen Jorgensen's words--"Don't hurry by, hurry back"--were posted on signs welcoming people driving into Niles.

Christmas baskets were prepared for Niles families in 1962. There was also a fund drive to purchase an ambulance for the village. With Lions Club support, a polio clinic was set up and the Sabin oral vaccine was given to youngsters in 1963.

The first of many pancake breakfasts, prepared and served by Lions members, began attracting hungry customers in 1964. By 1970 it was serving well over 1,000 breakfasts with profits for that year reaching \$1,900. A month later a good crowd came out for the Lions rendition of a St. Patrick Dinner and Dance. To bring attention to their causes, the Lions would prepare floats and parade during Niles Days celebrations.

Everyone who would attend a meeting of the Niles Village Board after 1965 would be reminded of President John F. Kennedy's words--"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." These words were placed on the village chamber wall in large letters as a result of a Lions' initiative.

The Lions launched a Niles bowling tournament in the mid-1950s. By 1964 more than 500 bowlers were vying for a \$1,000 first prize.

In 1961 the Lions joined with Junior Achievement in promoting a community project called Sho-way for Niles. A business company was structured. It was composed only of teens from Niles. They would be responsible for the entire production of the Niles Village map from survey to graphics to printing and distribution. By 1965 well over 500 were participating.

In more recent years a Lions Club was started at Notre Dame High School and the used eye-

glass collection project is now handled by Notre Dame students. In 1955, 500 pairs of used eyeglasses were collected at 14 sites in the Niles area.

The Lions sponsored a band contest in 1966. Several dozen school bands participated with Niles Elementary winning in division I ratings. In 1967 the Niles Lions hosted the Junior Miss finals at the Mill Run Theater.

In November 1953 a kickoff campaign for the blind was launched. At the following year's installation, a seeing-eye dog was presented to Franz Boudreau. Later the same year a mass vision-testing machine was presented to Clarence Culver, Niles school superintendent, for use in the schools. In 1956 "Eyes for the Blind" billboards were posted throughout the village. Bobby Kascher of Chicago, without sight since he was born, received a Braille typewriter from the Lions.

Frequent donations have been made to the Niles Public Library of large print books or equipment that enables magnification of regular print materials. In 1995 two table top magnification units were purchased for the library along with one portable unit.

The major annual Lions fund-raising project in the community to assist the blind was the Candy Days. Lions members, wearing their colorful yellow jacket vests, would distribute candy and solicit donations. Funds would be used to purchase leader dogs for the blind. In 1965 the Lions would provide funds for blind youngsters to attend summer camp. They also made a direct contribution of \$450 to Illinois Camp Lion in 1965 and almost tripled that amount the following year. In 1967 the Lions donated a Braille writer to the Hadley School for the Blind. Three years later the Lions arranged for a glaucoma screening unit to visit Niles; 420 were tested.

A more recent project, initiated in 1993, were contributions to CRIS (Chicagoland Radio Information Service). Fourteen visually impaired people in the area were provided with special radio receivers. They will be able to hear the local news of the area as printed in local newspapers being read to them. Arrangements have been made with the Niles Public Library, which enrolls the visually impaired and arranges for the reading of the *Niles Bugle* that can be heard on receivers provided by the Lions.

Since 1994 school children and local residents have been able to receive free eye examinations at Lens Crafters in Golf-Mill.

The Lions always had time for and supported programs for youngsters. In 1954 a Little League team wore uniforms displaying the Lions emblem. Sponsorship of Little League teams would continue for many years. For teens, the following year, the Lions donated a jukebox to St. John Brebeuf Parish for use until the field house at Grennan Heights would be completed. In 1960 the Boy Scouts of Troop 45 received two 14-foot canoes from the Lions, who also hosted a fun day at Riverview with free rides for all attending.

Concerned for the safety of patrol boys and guards, raincoats and caps were donated to the schools in 1954. A "Talent for Safety" show was conducted in 1955. They promoted essay contests for youngsters. In 1961 Cathy Bergstrom from Niles had her essay selected as the best from over 5,000 entered. Her topic was: "Be alert, be aware, always drive your bike with care."

The Lions were always in the forefront of promoting fire prevention campaigns. In 1964 during Fire Prevention Month they encouraged publication and distribution of fire prevention ads. They enlisted the cooperation of the Niles Fire Department in selecting the Fireman of the Year. The same year the Lions also honored the Niles Fire Department for the recognitions they were receiving: The first-place awards in 1955 and 1957 from the Chicagoland Association of Commerce and Industry and the Grand Award in 1959 for fire prevention activities.

Lions members seemed ever ready for fun times. In 1954 a fishing trip attracted 14 members and resulted in a profit of 84 cents. At a golf day in 1963 Lions members didn't play much golf but they surprised their wives and honored them during special festivities at the Bunker Hill Country Club. During the summer they took a lot of kids to a Cubs ballgame. In 1964 they joined the Niles Chamber of Commerce for their first of many golf outings. They honored their teen sons and daughters at a special "Teen Night" in 1965.

The first international activity for the Niles Lions, in 1964, was assistance to the School for Korean War Orphans. In 1972 the Niles Lions were hosts to a student from Japan, Naomi Fukui, for eight weeks.

Niles Lions Club hosted the All-America City news conference and luncheon with Lion President Angelo "Ginger" Troiani and Mayor Lion Nicholas Blase acting as Co-Chairmen in 1965.

Two Niles Lions distinguished themselves on the international and state levels of Lionism. Lion Angelo "Ang" Marcheschi, after serving on the state level as Zone-Chairman and Deputy District Governor, was elected to the International Board as District Governor for the year 1966-67. Lion Marcheschi served as Lions of Illinois Blind Activities Chairman for five years and headed the ad-hoc committee to form the new Lions of Illinois Foundation. Lion "Ang" was elected the first President of the Lions of Illinois Foundation to help the visually and hearing impaired people of Illinois and the World of Lionism. He also served for four terms of office as the President of the Lions of Illinois Foundation. Upon retiring he was appointed to the Office of President Emeritus for all his great work in activities for the blind and devotion to their needs.

Lion Angelo "Ginger" Troiani, after serving on the state level as Cabinet Secretary-Treasurer, Zone Chairman and Deputy District Governor, was elected to the International Board as District Governor for the year 1974-75. Lion "Ginger" was elected as trustee of the first Lions of Illinois Foundation Board of Directors. After his year as District Governor, Lion "Ginger" served at the state level with the Membership and Retention Committee and was appointed as its chairman in the Lions Year 1976-77.

The Lions Club of Niles honored Angelo "Ang" Marcheschi and Angelo "Ginger" Troiani by having them appointed life members of Lions Club International.

Past presidents of the Lions Club of Niles:

Ronald Pankau	1953-54	Edmund Zielinski	1970-71
Ted Lafeber	1954-55	William Wetendorf	1971-72
William Keating	1955-56	Anthony Hubick	1972-73
Ben Frankenberg	1956-57	Dominick LoVerde	1973-74
Joseph Dimaria	1957-58	Charles E. Pickup	1974-75
Joseph Conti	1958-59	William Angus, Jr.	1975-76
Charles Giovannelli	1959-60	Steven Dawiec	1976-77
Angelo Marcheschi	1960-61	Frank Hanson, Sr.	1977-78
Herbert Adler	1961-62	Dennis Burns	1978-79
Thomas Conklin	1962-63	David Angus	1979-80
Clifford Eickhoff	1963-64	Russell McAndrew	1980-81
David Hoppe	1964-65	Walter Beusse	1981-82
Angelo Troiani	1965-66	William Cornelius	1982-83
Carl Rathje	1966-67	George Kauffman	1983-84
Frank Troiani	1967-68	Walter Zinn	1984-85
Rudy Hill	1968-69	Roy Bergquist	1985-86
Todd Bavaro	1969-70	Thomas Argyrakakis	1986-88

Harry Kinowski	1988-90
Valentine Engelman	1990-92
Walter Beusse	1992-95

Thomas Arzt	1995-96
Cary Frick	1996-97
Thomas Arzt	1997-98

NILES MEMORIAL V.F.W. POST 7712

During World War II Friday Night Bingos were organized by Joseph Jozwiak and Frank Stankowicz at the Niles Elementary School to raise funds to support the 70 Niles residents who were serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. After the war ended, this fund had approximately \$7,000. A decision was made to ask the returning veterans how to appropriate these funds. Veterans decided to use the money to launch a V.F.W. Post in Niles.

Niles Memorial Post 7712 of the Veteran of Foreign Wars (V.F.W.) Post 7712 was chartered June 22, 1946. Since its founding the post has conducted public ceremonies every Memorial Day and every Veteran's Day in tribute to members who participated in the U.S. Armed Services in foreign wars.

Membership was over 800 in the years following World War II. By year-end 1997 it was approximately 250. The V.F.W., over the years, has involved itself in numerous community, social, and civic events. The group frequently wins a prize for the imaginative floats it has presented in many Niles parades. Golf outings at Bunker Hill Golf Course were very popular, with hundreds of members participating at these annual events.

A Ladies Auxiliary assists in observances of holidays such as Christmas, Easter, New Year's Eve, and Thanksgiving. Other activities include dances, picnics, rib nights, and bingo, which was popular for 15 years.

The Niles Memorial Post 7712 honors deceased members with a formal honor guard and escort.

V.F.W. Commanders:

Joseph H. Jozwiak	1946-50	James Callahan	1971-72
Lubert Saunders	1950-53	Al Tomzak	1972-73
David Henningson	1953-54	Oscar Meyer	1973-74
Arthur Schmidt	1954-55	Tom Berg	1974-75
Edward Arends	1956-57	Emil A. Theodore	1975-77
William Biel	1957-58	Tom Davidson	1978-80
Henry Green	1958-60	Russell Hansen	1980-81
George Bolek	1960-62	Dick Graham	1981-82
Leroy Krueger	1962-63	Eddie Majka	1982-83
John Gersh	1963-64	John Vallas	1984-85
Russell Hansen	1964-65	John Krettler	1985-88
James Callahan	1965-66	Ernie Loberg	1988-89
Paul Dobbs	1966-67	"Ginger" Troiani	1989-91
John Stack	1967-69	Walt Beusse	1991-92
Henry Symer	1969-70	James Callahan	1993-97
Thaddeus Jakubowski	1970-71	Tom Davidson	1997-98

NILES-NORTHTOWN AMERICAN LEGION POST 29

Niles American Legion Post 29 was formed November 17, 1964. The first officers included: Ray Illian, First Commander; Jack Schmidt, Sr. Vice Commander; Dick Bennett, Jr., Vice Commander; Ed Zalud, Adjutant; Carl Swanson, Finance Officer; and Kenneth Berg, Sgt-at-Arms.

In 1965 the post was able to send young men to Premier Boys State, a camp which fostered strong support of the concept of Americanism.

The *Niles Bugle* wrote July 8, 1965, that membership doubled in less than a year after the founding of the post. Current members recall that about 15 members were present at the founding and membership increased to about 35 within a year.

Early activities of the post included working for Niles Days events. Money raised at Niles Days in 1965 was appropriated to American Legion Post 29 for use at the Niles Youth Center in the Lawrencewood Shopping Center. Equipment was purchased. American Legion members also worked at the center in assisting the youth with various activities. When the center flooded one year, Legion members cleaned and rebuilt the center.

In 1977, the Niles American Legion Post 29 merged and has remained as the Niles-Northtown Post 29 until the present day. They have continued to sponsor Christmas dances and spaghetti dinners and make donations to the Niles Community Center, Gifts to the Yanks, and needy families in Niles. They also purchase medals which are presented to outstanding ROTC students at Lane Tech and Roosevelt High Schools in Chicago.

Joseph L. Battaglia was the commander of the Niles-Northtown Post 29 for 1997-98.

NILES RECOVERY, INC.

Niles Recovery, Inc. was initiated in Niles in 1962 and has been meeting on a regular weekly basis in Niles for more than 40 years. Recovery, Inc. is an international organization with hundreds of branches throughout the United States. It is a non-profit group which presents a systematic method of self-help developed by the late Abraham A. Low, M.D., to prevent relapses and chronic conditions in people suffering from mental or emotional problems.

Weekly meetings are conducted at St. John Brebeuf Church. Since 1994, monthly attendance has averaged 35 to 40 participants.

NILES SENIOR CENTER MEN'S CLUB

The Niles Senior Center Men's Club celebrated 20 years of service to the community in 1998. The original purpose of the Men's Club was fellowship with the original group of just six or seven growing to over 400 members at the present time. Now the group is geared toward fellowship and philanthropy. The Men's Club sponsors many social activities each year, such as the biannual barbecue, the St. Joseph/St. Patrick lunch and dance, and the Gala Christmas Party. The club has bowling and golf leagues and an exercise program.

Presidents of Niles Senior Center Men's Club:

Gene Mowinski	1980-81
Ralph Lieske	1982-84

Lambert Binder	1985-86
Carmen Mazzuca	1986-87
Ray Grochocki	1988-89
Lou Kokinis	1990-91
Walter Krause	1992-93
Peter Finan	1994-96
Adolph Foss	1997-98



Included in the photograph are past Niles Senior Center Men's Club Presidents along with the mayor of Niles. Pictured from left to right (years as president) are: Walter Krause (1992-1993), Louis Kokinis (90-91), Gene Mowinski (80-81), Adolph Foss (97-present), Mayor Nicholas B. Blase, Ralph Lieske (82-84), Carmen Mazzuca (86-87), and Lambert Binder (85). Not pictured are Ray Grochocki and Peter Finan.

NILES SISTER CITIES

PISA, ITALY

Niles officials and other interested parties first heard about the Sister Cities program at an introductory meeting September 26, 1985, at the Leaning Tower YMCA. Initial exploratory talks and contact with Pisa, Italy, did not bode well for Niles and Pisa becoming Sister Cities. In fact, in 1987, the National Organization of Sister Cities advised against Niles and Pisa becoming Sister Cities. Pisa, with its population of 100,000, was regarded as a thriving tourist and manufacturing center. Niles, with its population of 30,000, was viewed as a middle-class suburb by the Sister Cities organization. When Niles officials wrote to Pisa, with letterhead stating "Village of Niles," Pisa officials did not picture a cosmopolitan center.

Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase would not accept such analysis. Blase insisted, "the two cities are a match." Blase had strong support in encouraging the pairing of the two cities. Village trustee Angelo Marcheschi was an early booster. The Northwest Italian Club in the persons of Ray Giovannelli, Chief of Police in Niles; Charles Barbaglia, senior vice president of the First National Bank of Niles; Anthony Bartolomei of Park Ridge; and John Dimand, director of security at W. W. Grainger, personally went to Pisa as an official delegation to inform Pisa officials of the many benefits of becoming a Sister City with Niles. Niles officials also cultivated individuals from Pisa who had visited Niles to support their activities in Pisa.

Once in Pisa, the Niles delegation received a warm and cordial reception. Students from the University of Pisa suggested a student exchange. Numerous discussions were pursued about the

types of economic and cultural exchanges that could be developed between Niles and Pisa.

Once direct contact was established, events moved rapidly. Giovannelli was appointed to head a welcoming committee for the Pisa officials who would visit Niles. Tracy Frey, an eighth-grade student at Culver School, wrote to Mayor Blase and suggested a pen-pal program between students in Niles and Pisa. Blase quickly adopted the idea.

Money was raised to repair the Leaning Tower at the Niles YMCA. In November 1990, red, white, and green lights--the national colors of Italy -- were in place at the refurbished Niles Leaning Tower of Pisa. In 1991 a delegation of Pisa officials, including the Vice-Mayor Pietro Tremolanti, visited Niles. They toured the village, including a stop at the Culver School, signed similar documents that Niles officials had signed in Pisa, completing formalities to make Niles and Pisa Sister Cities.

The first student exchange program was in 1992. Tracy Frey, the Culver student who suggested the pen-pal program, was now attending Niles West High School. She was one of the first students selected for the four-week program in Pisa. Other students were: John Pirra, senior, and Tony Amelio and James Bay, graduates, of Notre Dame High School in Niles; and Dawn Passarella, Kathy Pieroni, and Tommy Chang of Maine East High School.

Ten students from Pisa came to Niles during the summer of 1993. They stayed with host families, as Niles students did when they visited Pisa. While in Niles, students from Pisa were taken on tours and to numerous places of interest by Niles officials. They were presented to and honored by the Niles Village Board.



In 1994, 11 students represented Niles in Pisa. These were: Jenny Wrzesinski (Marrilac High School), Kenny Callero (Notre Dame High School), Nicholas Beyer (Notre Dame High School), Jennifer Andreoni (a student from California--her parents were a host family for students from Italy), Karyna Zarate (Niles West High School), Marianne Piwko (Maine East High School),

Susanna Rio (Maine East High School), Anna LaFronza (Maine South High School), Sarah Bleeden (Maine South High School), Jamie Martello (Maine South High School), and Michael Marchi (Maine South High School).

Two years later Dawn Wrzesinski (Marillac-Loyola Academy), Stephanie Minkley (Maine East High School), Deana Strzelecki (Maine East High School), Tony Silvio (Notre Dame High School), and Giulio Bruni (Maine East High School) left Niles to spend a summer in Pisa on the exchange program.

NAFPLION, GREECE

With the success of the Niles-Pisa Sister City program, there was interest in similar arrangements with other cities. Several businessmen of Greek heritage and members of St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church had active associations with Nafplion, Greece.

A 27-member delegation from Nafplion visited Niles in 1994. Mayor Nicholas Blase and Nafplion Mayor Goerge Tsournos signed a joint proclamation which established Niles and Nafplion as Sister Cities.

A student exchange program, similar to the one established with Pisa, is planned for the near future.



Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase and Nafplion Mayor George Tsournos

SISTER CITIES ASSOCIATION OF NILES

Niles officials used the offices of the National Organization of Sister Cities in preliminary contacts in developing a Sister Cities program. After the Niles-Pisa Sister City structure was formalized, Niles elected its own officers for a Sister Cities Association of Niles. Charles Barbaglia was elected president in 1994 and has continued in that office through 1997.

NILES SQUARES

Over the years, perhaps no group has represented Niles in other communities as frequently as have the Niles Squares. When the club celebrated its 35th anniversary in 1990, more than 160 people were in attendance. No fewer than 10 other Chicagoland square dancing clubs were present.

Visiting other square dance clubs is a common practice for the more than 100 square dancing clubs that have been active in the Chicago area. Dressed in their club's colors - Niles' colors are shocking pink and black - two squares (eight dancers) would travel to another club and claim or "steal" their banner. Clubs which had their banner stolen have to visit the club "stealing" or claiming their banner with two squares (eight dancers dressed in their club's colors) to retrieve or re-claim their banner.

Delegations do get large. Once a delegation of 20 couples from the Niles Squares arrived in Arlington Heights to claim that club's banner. Since delegations for each of the 100 or so square dance clubs meet at least once a week, there may be as many as three banners "stolen" in any week by the different Niles Squares groups. In turn, the Niles Squares may have their own banner "stolen" three times in any week by three visiting delegations.

The Niles Squares began as the Little Squares when eight people joined together and began square dancing in the Niles basement of caller Ralph Glading in 1953. The following year the Niles Park District was organized and the group became part of the Niles Park District recreation program, providing the Park District with one of their first adult recreation programs.

The Little Squares danced at the Grennan Heights field house until 1964 when the Niles Recreation Center was opened at 7877 Milwaukee Avenue. The club moved to the Niles Recreation Center at that time and remains there.

In 1971 the club changed its name to Niles Squares. The club's colors were also changed: from the original black and white check to turquoise and white. In 1983 a third change was made to the current shocking pink and black.

To attract new members, free lessons were given every September. In more recent years, lessons have been extended and are available throughout the year. At its height of activity in 1980, the Niles Squares numbered 90 couples. An annual carousel dance called every March attracts as many as 200 couples.

Over the years most club members have also taken part in numerous activities of the club. There were knothead trips: one-day journeys to meet with another club for a day of planned activities. Badges are distributed and proudly worn for a variety of activities: an owl badge is given for dancing after midnight, particularly if the dance is at the caller's house; the snow bunny badge is given to those hearty enough to dance in snow at least a foot high; the jailbird badge is given to those who dance in jail behind bars. Other names--there are many more--of badges include: goon, square blades, square wheels, square angel, penguin, spook, kissin kuzzin, rain drops, stinkers, grasshopper, damp cracker, raft rocker, hobo, sand flea, bus hopper, rover, and sons of the beaches.

Annual trips to the Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells have attracted more than 100 clubs from Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota for a weekend of dancing to the calls of nationally known callers. There are also hayrides, picnics, potluck dinners, and even being featured on local television programs. Over the years the Niles Squares have been active performing and giving lessons during Niles Days.

The Niles Squares were often invited to perform for other groups, such as senior citizens, or as an attraction to promote a local business at a shopping mall in Niles or for some special event.

Because all square dance calls are in English, Niles Squares have attended national and international conventions, which draw as many as 40,000 participants. In recent years the Niles Squares have danced in Atlantic City, Orlando, Milwaukee, and Memphis in the United States. International conventions have been held in Germany, Sweden, and Japan.

Guy Adams, regular caller for the Niles Squares, frequently invites guest callers. A caller from Sweden visited Niles a few years ago. Other callers for the Niles Squares were Al Schaffner, Diamond Jim Young, Art Matthews, and Ken Anderson. Kevin Kasper was probably the youngest caller for the Niles Squares: he started at 10 and continued calling dances for many years.

In addition to being goodwill ambassadors for Niles throughout the area and the United States, Niles Squares have also made frequent financial contributions to the Niles Park District. In 1977 the Niles Squares received a community service award from the Illinois Park and Recreation Association for "unselfish contributions of time and money over the past 20 years to the Niles Park District."

Presidents of the Niles Little Squares, between 1953 and 1970, included Walt Schroeder, Art Gorski, Ron Knill, Ernest Ceisel, Ernie Johnson, Bill Nelles, Roy Gunderson, Keith Peck, Ed Kosuth, and Mike Capellani.

Presidents of the Niles Squares since 1970:

1970	Pete and Irene Capellani
1972	Bob and Gerry Ohlund
1973	Ed and Dottie Milanowski
1974-75	Walter and Penny Schultz
1976-77	Warren and Angie Goodcase
1978-79	William and Ruth Pugh
1980	Gene and Shirley Warrington
1981-82	William and Annise Casper
1983-84	Michael and Nancy Czapar
1985-86	Larry and Linda Whippie
1987-88	Michael and Nancy Czapar
1989	David and Maryanne Lee
1990	Michael and Nancy Czapar
	Norman and Dee Leach
	Carl and Mildred Ahonen
1991-92	Tom and Basia Parashis
1993-94	Edward "Bud" and Audrey Rompa
1995-96	Michael and Nancy Czapar
1997	Winfield and Barbara Greene

NORTHWEST ITALIAN-AMERICAN SOCIETY

The Northwest Italian-American Society was organized at a meeting in Angelo's Restaurant in Niles. Approximately 100 future members of the society gathered early in March 1964. Over the years the majority of the society's membership has been from Niles and the group met regularly at the Ballard School.

group announced it was a non-sectarian, non-political, charitable, social society, which would preserve Italian cultural traditions and take action against any discrimination directed at individuals of Italian heritage.

One of the first donations of the society was to Villa Scalabrini Chapel for the purchase of a pew. The society sent packages to sons of members and other servicemen in Vietnam, sent aid to victims of flooding in Italy, and gave assistance to Gary Stayer, an injured athlete from Niles.

The Northwest Italian-American Society float in the 1969 Niles Days Parade won first place. Their men's softball team displayed its skills at annual picnics the society regularly sponsored at the Bunker Hill Country Club. Members also displayed their theatrical interests by putting on a show with the Jefferson Theatrical Society.

In 1972 the society hosted a Christmas party at the White Eagle Restaurant in Niles for 160 women, priests, and nuns from Mt. St. Joseph. This event has become an annual tradition sponsored by the society, which also provides appliances and other necessities for the health-care center in Lake Zurich.

The society assists at the annual Niles Police Halloween party at Notre Dame High School. Thousands usually attend. Other recent projects in Niles include support for the Sister Cities Program with Pisa, Italy, assistance to Niles Family Services for abused children, purchase of a Braille computer for a Niles College student, providing food baskets for needy families, a high school leadership workshop program at Notre Dame High School, and participation in the Niles 4th of July Parade.

The Northwest Italian-American Society has initiated a scholarship program, sponsors Little League baseball and hockey teams, and works with the Niles Police Cops for Kids, and the Big Brothers and Big Sisters Bowling program.

One fund-raiser is conducted annually. In 1997, there were 57 very active members in the Northwest Italian-American Society.

Presidents:

Edward Ciccone	1968-70	Anthony Durso	1980-81
Robert Romano	1970-71	Nick Gargano	1981-82
Andy Clabattari	1971-72	Frank Baffa	1982-83
Anthony Scarlati	1972-73	Gene Till	1983-84
Thomas Imburgia	1973-74	Frank Romeo	1984-86
Anthony Gagliano	1974-75	Ed Miller	1986-88
Joseph Raymond	1975-76	Bill Darling	1988-90
John Trippi	1976-77	John Katsoolias	1990-92
Joseph Tripoli	1977-78	Emil Bertolini	1992-94
Todd Bavaro	1978-79	Larry Schweizer	1994-96
Perry Tarica	1979-80	Vince Zingarelli	1996-

OPA GREEK FOLK DANCE TROUPE OF CHICAGO

The Opa Greek Folk Dance Troupe of Chicago originated as an outgrowth of a dance group at The Holy Taxiarchai and St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church of Niles. Children at the school were taught Greek dances and performed at picnics and other school activities between 1988 and

1992. Some of the dancers and adults began meeting as a dance troupe at the church in 1990. The troupe then met at the Ballard School in Niles for two years from 1995 to 1997. Georgia Kralis-Sampras organized the troupe and has been director since its founding.

OPTIMIST CLUB OF NILES

The Optimist Club of Niles was chartered April 23, 1986. It is a voluntary organization that develops optimism as a way of life, promotes interest in government, civic affairs, and respect for the law, and aids and encourages development of youth. Membership, which is determined by invitation only, was 32 in 1986 and has grown to 36 in 1997.

Projects include sponsorship of a junior high school basketball and junior high school volleyball tournament. Approximately 80 youngsters participate in each tournament. The Optimists also sponsor a Niles baseball team and a junior world golf tournament at Tam O'Shanter Golf Club.

The group provides a safety tent for 4th of July festivities and supplies baskets of food, in cooperation with the Northwest Italian-American Society, for the needy in Niles. In 1997, some 50 baskets were distributed.

Artistic and literary skills of Niles youngsters are displayed in the annual poster and literary contests sponsored by the Optimists. The 1997 Halloween poster contest had 150 entries. The essay contest, open to junior high students, asks students to write on a selected topic. This type of contest has been conducted in Niles, off and on, for about 50 years. Winners are designated government officials for a day. They are invited to village hall chambers and each takes the seat of the village official and learns of issues and procedures involved in governing Niles.

Presidents:

John Katsoolias	1986-88
Ron Strzelecki	1988-89
Rich Mangold	1989-90
Mark Nannini	1990-91
Dean Strzelecki	1991-93
John Jekot	1993-98

POLONIA CARES

Polonia Cares was organized in Niles in 1982. Its purpose was to raise funds to address social welfare problems in the Polish-American community in the Chicago metropolitan area. Founder and president was Ted Przybylo, owner of the White Eagle restaurant in Niles, where Polonia Cares met and sponsored numerous activities.

Birthday Party banquets headlined by popular personalities such as Mike Krzyzewski, coach of Duke University's Blue Devils basketball team, and Francis Gabrewski, World War II American ace in the London Theater, attracted between 400 and 600 guests.

A women's chapter, which continues to the present day as a social group, also conducted fund-raising activities with its penny socials and banquets featuring a silent auction.

Ted Przybylo was president of the Polish Welfare Association from 1977 to 1981. Andrew Przybylo, member of the Niles Village Board of Trustees, was president of the Polish Welfare

Association from 1982 to 1985. A building at 2905 N. Milwaukee Avenue, owned and used for the work of Polonia Cares, was donated to the Polish Welfare Association in 1993 after Polonia Cares was dissolved.

Andrew Przybylo estimates that approximately \$100,000 was raised and distributed to those in need in the Polish-American community by Polonia Cares between 1982 and 1993.

ROTARY CLUB OF NILES

The Rotary Club of Niles was established March 5, 1962, when 25 Niles businessmen and professionals gathered at the Lone Tree Inn. Judge Anton Smigiel was named president. Other officers included Rev. Robert Gish, vice president; Kenneth Klehr, secretary; Dr. Edward Risk, treasurer; and William L. Keeran, sgt-at-arms. Herbert Harig, Arthur Rudolph, Arthur Weller, and George Welter became directors. The aim of the group was simply stated, "to encourage and foster the idea of service." The first installation of officers drew a crowd of 500.

The Rotary would frequently contribute to the Niles Christmas decoration fund. In 1965 they presented the Niles library with a microfilm reader. In 1970 the Niles Rotary volunteered to keep Tam O'Shanter open for two last days in September so all who wanted to have a final game on the championship 18-hole golf course were able to do so.

In 1974 the Rotary was very supportive of the "See a Bike, Save a Life" campaign. Some 4,000 bikes in Niles were supplied with signal flags and reflectors. These were installed by volunteers under the supervision of the Niles Police Department. The Niles Rotary covered all costs.

The Rotary Club of Niles merged with the Morton Grove Rotary in 1974 and meetings were regularly scheduled in Morton Grove. In recent years the combined club has been active with the Boy Scouts, Food Locker, has sent medical equipment to Peru, has provided toilets for a village in India, and has supported Polio Plus.

Presidents of the Rotary Club, while it was headquartered in Niles, include Anton Smigiel, Rev. Robert Gish, Dr. Edward Rink, Herb Harig, and Burton B. McRoy, Jr. In 1980, Niles resident, Robert Wordel, Jr. served as president of the Morton Grove-Niles Rotary.

ST. ISAAC JOGUES 55+ CLUB

The 55+ Club was started in the home of Peter and Florence Lencioni and Fr. Francis Cerniglia as founders on May 12, 1977. The club received its charter from the Chicago Metropolitan Area Senior Citizens Senate on September 6, 1977, with a total membership of 10. One year later membership had grown to an amazing 252. Today only one member of the original founding 10 members survives.

The 55+ Club is a busy, active club. They have taken many trips and have had potluck lunches, Halloween parties, White Elephant sales, Turkey Shoots, Christmas parties, St. Patrick's Day and St. Joseph's Day parties. They also help with the St. Joseph Table, Niles Day's Festivals, and Little City of Hope tag days. The club consists of happy, active people who believe in having a good time.

Past Presidents of St. Isaac Jogues 55+ Club:

Peter Lencioni	1977-81
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Charles Palkonar	1982-83
Stanley Zabski	1984-85
Frank Romeo	1986-87
Rudy Seifert	1988-89
Anne Romeo	1990-92
Bernice Tegeler	1993-94
Rudy Seifert	1995-98

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHAPTER 311

The Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 311 was organized in 1986 in Niles. Meetings were regularly conducted at the Trident Center for the 150 members from the northwest suburbs. Marty Passarella, the group's founder, also went to area schools to discuss Vietnam and the veterans who returned from Vietnam. A plaque was presented to the Trident Center on Veteran's Day 1987.

The Vietnam Veterans coordinated the project, which resulted in six benches being donated to the Niles Public Library. Each represented a major war in which the United States participated. Each bench was engraved indicating Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War. The benches were completed and formally dedicated on Memorial Day 1990. John Slater donated the plaque that commemorated the Veteran's Walkway.



Veteran's Walkway

Lt. Commander James F. Haris of Niles served as a chaplain in Vietnam. He joined a battalion in October 1966 and was assigned to medical aid missions.

Richard Rogala, a member of the Pueblo crew, after 11 months in a Korean prison camp, returned to Niles in 1968 and received a warm reception at Notre Dame High School and "special recognition" from the Village of Niles.

Niles residents who made the ultimate sacrifice for their nation:

World War II
Alvin Ruesch
Frank Zieka

Vietnam War
Pvt. 1st Cl. Walter Land
Capt. Larry Peters

A plaque on display in Notre Dame High school lists former Notre Dame students who were killed or were missing in action in Vietnam.

Robert L. Bodine--Class of 1961
Killed in action, March 16, 1968

Dennis J. Fries--Class of 1966
Killed in action, October 26, 1967

John A. Blanco--Class of 1961
Killed in action, December 17, 1968

Gregory J. Kasper--Class of 1966
Killed in action, September 25, 1967

Brian J. Mathison--Class of 1962
Killed in action, April 1, 1968

Kenneth E. Norris--Sept. 1958-Feb. 1961
Killed in action, January 31, 1969

James T. Donahue, Jr.--Class of 1963
Killed in action, September 22, 1967

Richard D. Kosar--Sept. 1961-June 1964
Killed in action, May 10, 1968

Walter J. Nowakowski--Class of 1965
Killed in action, October 23, 1967

Thomas H. Pilkington--Class of 1959
Missing in action, September 19, 1966

WOMAN'S CLUB OF NILES

The Woman's Club of Niles was organized on March 25, 1954. Mrs. Sterling Oakley, the retiring president of the 10th district of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs, assisted the women in Niles in launching the club. The founders of the club include Mrs. David Besser, Mrs. James W. Bialk, Mrs. Byron Ellis, Jr., Mrs. Carlyle Esser, Mrs. Medard Greenwald, Mrs. C. Richard Hanisch, Mrs. Frank L. Jacobs, Jr., Miss Emma Mamsch, Mrs. Joseph K. Mertes, Mrs. Josephine Scheel, Mrs. Helen Stec, Miss Irene Stec, Mrs. John Stieber, Mrs. Edward A. Walger, Mrs. Vincent Weber, Mrs. Ray M. Wiese, Mrs. Philip Wray, and Mrs. Henry G. Zander III.

The club's first constitution indicated, "The object of this club shall be to promote the welfare of home and community and to stimulate interest along educational, civic and cultural lines." The club adopted the motto, "Unity in diversity." Nile green and white were selected as the club's colors.

In the first year, there were approximately 100 members. Preparations began early for the philanthropy dance in April 1955. This event was to be the club's principal fund-raiser throughout its history.

During its first years, the club devoted many of its energies to establishing a public library for Niles. Books and funds were collected by club members who also set up a library structure, which provided limited library services. When a referendum vote approved a Niles Library District, the Woman's Club of Niles turned over \$1,877.31 to the district library board. During its entire history, the Woman's Club of Niles supported the library with funds, gifts, and assistance in cooperating with or encouraging the activities of such groups as the Friends of the Library.

In 1960 in a formal ceremony at the Niles Public Library, the Woman's Club of Niles presented a plaque, which read: "Niles Public Library--founded by the Woman's Club of Niles--1957."

In 1955 the club also launched home nursing, arts and crafts, and millinery classes. Sewing contests were entered and a glee club was formed.

The Niles Citizens Committee was organized in 1956 with the assistance of the Woman's Club of Niles. The purpose of this committee was "to promote unity and to solve some of the problems the community faces."

Concern for maintaining the health of the community resulted in the Woman's Club of Niles sponsoring a three-year project to administer polio serum to schoolchildren. The project concluded in 1960 with an average of 400 students benefited each year. They supplied schools with medical kits useful in detecting diseases. The Woman's Club of Niles also assisted in bringing in and staffing free mobile TB units to Niles at this time. During the late 1960s the Woman's Club of Niles expanded its work with the Niles Health Board by assisting with health screens for pre-school children. Throughout the 1970s the club worked closely with the village co-op blood program.

The Woman's Club of Niles had an active calendar of activities for its members. The program for 1959-60 is typical:

September 3	Membership Tea
September 16	How to read character in handwriting Joseph Fasulo - graphologist
October 21	Magic with silks
October 29	Card party and fashion show
November 18	Poetry in everyday life Dorothy Aldis - poet
December 16	"The Nutcracker Suite"
January 20	"A Crown and a Brim Full of Fun" Sallie Sue Williamson
March 16	Cooking demonstration Evelyn Butterworth - Northern Illinois Gas Company
April 20	Election White elephant sale Fine arts display
April 23	Philanthropy Spring Dance
May 14	Annual spring luncheon

Most of the club's activities resulted in additional funds for its treasury. As quickly as funds came in, they were spent on numerous worthy causes. In the late 1950s and early 1960s the club contributed to art scholarships, music scholarships, teacher's scholarships, the Park Ridge School for Girls, cancer research, Lutheran General Hospital, Orchard School building fund and toys for the school, and Radio Free Europe.

Club members were involved in numerous activities. In 1960 the Woman's Club of Niles glee club performed at Swedish Covenant Hospital, Lutheran General Hospital, and Golf-Mill shopping center. The glee club also formed the nucleus for a mixed chorus sponsored by the Niles Park Board. It performed at many park activities. Literature promoting a fire-prevention campaign was distributed for the Niles Fire Department and the club also assisted in selecting "Miss Fire Prevention."

The first production of the Woman's Club of Niles "Thespian Players" was "Husbands are Human." The 1961 performance "was a huge success." There were also performances of "Escape to Nowhere" and the "Pent-up Party." Several years later, there were three performances of their production of "The Merry Widow." This was billed as the club's "first major fund raising event toward obtaining an historical and cultural center" for Niles. Future productions of "Naughty Marietta," "Sweethearts," "Vagabond King," and "The King and I" also raised money for the historical and cultural center. When the center was established, it became the Niles Historical Museum. In 1976 the club co-sponsored an original musical "America We Love You or a Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Bicentennial."

The "Kitchen Kut-Ups," club members who formed an instrumental group, gave many public performances.

In 1968 a company of U.S. troops in Vietnam was "adopted" by the Woman's Club of Niles. Food, clothing, and other necessities were regularly sent to the troops.

Wherever there was a need, the Woman's Club of Niles was ever ready to respond. They sponsored receptions for newly naturalized citizens. They adopted an Amurasian child through the Pearl S. Buck Foundation. They launched an ecological recycling program. They convinced Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase to proclaim an Indian Affairs Week. In 1976 they placed a plaque at Dutchman's Point commemorating the first settlement in today's Niles. A few years later, money was provided for Niles Olympic hopeful Pat Moore. Updated listings of area nursing home facilities were published and postal alert programs for emergencies were initiated. Members would serve at Loyola University's campus in Niles for the performing arts festivals and later at Niles College for the summer concert series. Veterans at Hines Hospital were given t-shirts and socks every year. AIDS babies at Maryville received supplies of diapers.

In the late 1980s the club had its own golf league, bridge club, and pinochle club.

Frequently the district or national organization of women's clubs would recognize the efforts of the Woman's Club of Niles with citations or special awards. "Breezy Briefs," the club's newsletter, received numerous first-place awards. Other awards were for increases in membership and assistance to district offices of the women's clubs. The club also received several awards as a result of participating in Niles Day parades.

In 1997, the club voted to dissolve. There may have been a touch of irony in that final vote. One of the club's last activities was sponsoring an essay contest for elementary school students. It asked students to describe "The world in the year 2000." Holly Edison, eighth-grade winner from Our Lady of Ransom school, saw many things in the world of 2000 but, like many others, probably did not foresee a Niles without an active Woman's Club of Niles.

Presidents of the Woman's Club of Niles:

Dorothy Wiese	1954-56	Barbara Hedrich	1974-76
Bea Petritis	1956-57	JoAnn DiCicco-Hackbauer	1976-78
Nancy Koch-Johnson	1957-58	Joyce Knapp	1978-80
Vivian D. Egan	1958-60	Dorothy Robertson	1980-82
Eleanor M. Gilardon	1960-62	Elaine Heinen	1982-84
Dorothy Zarembo	1962-63	Dorothy Krause	1984
Sandie Friedman	1963-64	Ethel Garry	1984-88
Isabel Curtin	1964-66	Geri Bugarin	1988-90
Dorothy Zarembo	1966-68	Phyllis Luppino	1990-92
Marilyn Kramer	1968-70	Marjorie Pierski	1992-94
Mandy Honold	1970-72	Nancy Niemoth	1994-96
Arlene Sawicki	1972-74		

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY OF THE NILES POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Women's Auxiliary of the Niles Police Department was organized December 7, 1961. The stated purpose of the auxiliary was to provide benevolent benefits for members and their families. Life insurance policies were purchased for policemen, and families of policemen were provided for when policemen were unable to work. Membership in the auxiliary was about 40 members.

To raise funds the auxiliary would conduct bake sales, bazaars, candy sales, card parties, fashion shows, and demonstrations. A "mitten tree" and a "lollipop tree" for the youngsters were planted at the public library and income was harvested. In 1962 the bazaar featured a photo and letter from the White House signed by Jacqueline Kennedy.

Annual picnics were organized for members of the Niles Police Department and their families. The group also participated in the Niles Days and other civic programs. In 1962 the auxiliary received \$1,933.53 from Niles Days, about 45 percent of the proceeds of the activities.

After the Policeman's Benevolent Association was organized in 1962, the Women's Auxiliary of the Niles Police Department turned over most of the funds they raised to the Policeman's Benevolent Association. When the benevolent association became self-sufficient, the Ladies Auxiliary was informed their contributions were no longer necessary. The Ladies Auxiliary continued. It purchased uniforms for members and a \$500 death benefit fund was established for wives retaining membership in the auxiliary.

From time to time, the Women's Auxiliary of the Niles Police Department selected Citizens of the Year, made presentations of "Heroic Awards" or named a "Top Cop" for the month or year. Those selections included:

1962 Citizens of the Year	Mr. and Mrs. Lee Struebing
February 1963 Top Cop	Officer William Reid
March 1963 Top Cop	Officer Art Dvorak
1964 Top Cop	Captain Andy Cameron
1965 "Heroic Awards"	Vicki Jans, Jean Carfello, Davis Cantwell, Charles Tommins
1967 "Heroic Awards"	Scott Levi, Ken Berg

Presidents:

1962	Mary Jane Terpinas	1971-72	Dorothy Dennis
1963	Rosemary Wisniewski	1973-74	Bernardine Reid
1964	Lois Christie	1975-76	Gloria Baltzersen
1965	Mary Jane Terpinas	1977-78	Bernardine Reid
1966	Dorothy Dennis	1979-80	Annette Dvorak
1967	Kathy Stankowicz	1981	Dolores Olbrisch
1968	Dorothy Dennis	1982	Joanne Katsoolias
1969-70	Mary Jane Terpinas		

YMCA SENIOR CITIZEN'S CLUB

The Senior Citizen's Club of the Niles YMCA had its first meeting October 17, 1966. Interest was shown and an orientation meeting was called for October 26, 1966, to discuss activities for such an organization. It was decided that a center should be provided for seniors, activities would be planned and coordinated, isolated older persons would be visited, information and referrals would be made available to seniors, and there would be continual and regular opportunities for fellowship and recreation.

Programs were launched October 31, 1966, in the facilities at the Niles Leaning Tower YMCA. There were theme parties associated with holidays, members' birthdays or other special events. There were classes in art, fitness sessions, card games, and special Christmas programs. Members visited the Chicago Art Institute, attended the theater, and went on trips as far away as Canada.

Individual members often launched programs or activities. Within a year, "Rambling Thoughts," a newsletter sent to all members, was initiated and written by members. A group of members decided to participate in the Senior Olympics conducted by Northern Illinois University in 1982. A chorus was formed and sang for events at the YMCA. A few years later, members of the Senior Citizen's Club organized the "Tower-Tones" and began making formal appearances throughout the area singing before many other groups.

Shirley Spears became director of the Senior Adult Center in 1967. Membership quickly mushroomed from the original 18 members who organized the club in 1966. By 1970 there were 150 members, including 50 couples. The amount of men and women were equal which, according to Spears, "was unheard of at other senior centers." Membership increased to more than 500 members in 1974 with some 60 activities available. Members met four times a week at the YMCA. Usually there were six activities planned for each meeting day. In 1979, membership topped 1,000 with 200 married couples. Membership has remained constant for the past 20 years and in 1997 was approximately 1,100.

Soon after the group was established, members began several service projects. In 1969, 24 pairs of scuffies were made and sent to veterans at the Hines Hospital. Members wrote to U.S. Congressmen on various issues, took part in All-American Day events, participated in a hunger march, and prevailed on transit authorities to print and distribute bus schedules.

In 1974, the YMCA Senior Citizen Center received a \$5,000 grant for older American activities from the Suburban Cook County Area Agency. Members' annual dues and assessments for specified events generally paid for most activities. Additional funding came from the Niles Township Board, United Crusade, and Skokie Valley Kiwanees.

In 1978, the National Voluntary Organization for Independent Living for the Aging gave an award to the YMCA Senior Citizen Center for its information and referral services, health screening programs, and outreach and visiting programs.

Shirley Spears, director of the YMCA Senior Citizen Center, died in 1985. Recognized throughout the area and nation as a leading advocate for the aged, Spears helped organize the community forum for the White House Conference on Aging in 1980. The activity room at the YMCA is dedicated to the memory of Shirley Spears.

Lois Dickert served as director of the Senior Citizen Center from 1985 to 1993. Joan Hagensen became director in 1993, serving until 1996, when Evelyn Merkl, current director, was appointed.

Presidents of YMCA Senior Adult Center:

Otto Schaefer	1967-69	Florine Chambers	1980
Robert Link	1970, 1972	Harry Lastick	1981
Edward Martens	1971	Blanche Pollack	1982-84
Arthur Scharfenberg	1973-74	Joseph Bunzol	1985-87
Norman Loderhose	1975-76, 1978	Virginia Holm	1988-89
Joseph Chunowitz	1977	Betty Coken	1990-91
Herbert Gosstrom	1979	Merritt Cook, Sr.	1992-94, 1996-98
		Glen Dismang	1995

CARE FOR THE AGED

FOREST VILLA NURSING CENTER

Today's Forest Villa Nursing Center was Pleasantview Convalescent Nursing Home when ground was broken for the facility that opened in June 13, 1965. At that time Jerome M. Kasdan was administrator, Dorothy J. Matthews was director of nursing, and Dr. J. J. Podgers, Niles health commissioner, was medical director.

Pleasantview received approval from the Village of Niles to add 107 additional beds in 1970. When construction was completed in 1972 Pleasantview had a total of 206 beds available for nursing care.

Pleasantview changed its name to Forest Villa in 1981. Michael Kaplan became the new administrator, Rani Rao was appointed director of nursing, and Dr. Todd Grendon became medical director.

At the present time Forest Villa is a licensed health-care residence and maintains a six-star QUIP (Quality Incentive Program) award from the State of Illinois. Services available include 24-hour nursing care, physical, occupational and speech therapies, psychosocial workers, and pastoral care.

GEORGE J. GOLDMAN MEMORIAL HOME FOR THE AGED

The George J. Goldman Memorial Home for the Aged was established in the East Rogers Park area of Chicago in 1950. It was originally called the Northside Home for the Aged and renamed after the benefactor, George J. Goldman, in 1954. The two-level structure was developed and, by 1979, was able to accommodate 37 residents. However, additional space was required to meet anticipated future needs.

Goldman Home moved into larger quarters and better facilities at the former Gross Point Manor in Niles. Skilled-care responsibilities were added to the home's services and residency increased to 99 beds. Later, capacity was increased to 101.

In the past, the home had support from volunteers of the Hannah Goldman Chapter, named after the wife of the benefactor, and the Women's Service Guild. Today, the home is not affiliated with any federation or community agency and relies on financial support from the community. The medicaid program also funds care for many of the residents.

A staff of approximately 75 professional and administrative employees, experienced in geriatric care, provides care for residents. Kosher dietary laws are observed.

GLENBRIDGE NURSING AND REHABILITATION CENTER

GlenBridge Nursing and Rehabilitation Center was opened in 1986 with approximately 240 residents. Capacity by 1997 was set at 302 residents.

Services are provided for patients with Alzheimer's disease and post-surgical care wounds, or for patients in need of dialysis, physical-occupational speech therapy, ventilator care, respiratory services, and intravenous therapy. Specialized hospice beds are provided for patients with terminal illnesses. Long- and short-term stays under physician requirements are also available, as are short-term stays for family members needing care when their caregivers are unavailable for a few days.

The St. Vincent DePaul Society at St. Isaacs Jogues Church has worked with GlenBridge to provide patients with availability of a monthly Mass, weekly communion, and fulfills an annual "wish list." In 1997 each floor was provided with a 25-inch television set. The previous year gas grills were purchased. Since 1995, approximately 200 youngsters were registered for Project Kid Care at GlenBridge as a result of the efforts by the St. Vincent DePaul Society in cooperation with the Niles Police Department.

GlenBridge sponsors Project Achieve, a program at the facility which welcomes students from District 219 to learn and work with professionals at GlenBridge.

In 1997 GlenBridge received the outstanding award from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations since the facility exceeds federal and state requirements for national standards on nursing and rehabilitative healthcare. The Illinois Council of Long Term Care has also commended GlenBridge for Project Kid Care and its annual blood drive.

HAMPTON PLAZA HEALTH CARE CENTRE

Hampton Plaza Health Care Centre, originally designed as a nursing care facility during the early 1970s, launched an extensive growth and development program after it was purchased by new owners in 1990. The 304-bed facility provides care that ranges from lightly assisted to highly skilled. A special Medicare unit consists of 33 beds and a dementia or Alzheimer's program accommodates needs of this special group. A 24-hour-a-day professional nursing staff is assisted by trained personnel in admissions, social service activities, rehabilitation therapies, food services, beauticians, housekeeping, and maintenance.

In 1994 an outdated building was demolished and replaced by a large park with a fitness trail, park benches, trees, and flowers. A gazebo was scheduled for 1998.

Care facilities were expanded in 1997 with the construction of a 6,000-square-foot rehabilitation center for physical, occupational, speech, and respiratory therapy.

Hampton received accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations in 1997.

Hampton Plaza participates in the annual Niles 4th of July parade. Parishioners of St. Isaac Jogues regularly visit the facility to distribute Communion, a priest says Mass every week, and programs are presented during holiday seasons such as Christmas and Easter. Niles Community Church and St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church also provide religious services and programs. A "Night Owl" program, sponsored by Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation, takes 15 residents to various facilities, shopping, or to work on craft projects. The Niles Public Library bookmobile stops at Hampton once a month and residents can select a variety of printed and video materials for their personal use.

THE HUNTINGTON

The need for senior citizen housing in Niles was confirmed by the Housing and Home Financing Agency in May 1966. The village board of trustees passed rezoning for senior citizen housing in the area of Maryland and Milwaukee avenues February 9, 1967.

Groundbreaking was July 20, 1967. Michael Wozniak, president of the Senior Citizens of Niles; Dr. Herman S. Block, county commissioner; Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase; Charles L. Schrager, county commissioner; Pat J. Papadopoulos, director of the Department of Human Resources; and Paul S. Freedman, executive director of the Housing Authority of Cook County, took part.

The Chicago Housing Authority would approve the rent schedule that would govern admissions. Income limit for one individual was \$3,400; a two-person family had a limit of \$3,800. Minimum for a one-bedroom apartment was \$29 with a maximum of \$60. All 127 units were one-bedroom apartments. Although the facility was not scheduled to open until June 1968, 560 applications were received by April 18, 1968.

The grand opening was scheduled for June 22, 1968. Some 1,369 guests signed in on the date for the formal dedication of The Huntington, so named after the first mayor of Niles. Since opening, The Huntington has operated at capacity.

REGENCY NURSING CENTRE

Regency Nursing Centre opened in Niles as a skilled nursing home in 1972 licensed by the state of Illinois as a 300-bed facility. Regency received its first accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations in 1975 and has maintained that accreditation for more than 20 years.

Regency Home Health was initiated in 1982. Nurse case managers initiate and provide ongoing care which makes available registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, psychiatric nurses, certified nurses' assistants, and medical social workers to provide physical therapy, occupational therapy, or speech therapy in rehabilitation programs and other services as appropriate.

A student internship program was launched in 1984 with Northeastern University and Oakton College and community service projects began with Notre Dame High School in Niles and other schools in Chicago.

A specialized Alzheimer's unit was opened in 1986. Alzheimer's support groups were started a year later. The Alzheimer's Association Greater Chicagoland Chapter meets regularly at Regency. In 1997, the unit was named as "One of only seven Alzheimer's units in the State of Illinois to be awarded Joint Commission Accreditation."

A Parkinson's unit was opened in 1997 and a Parkinson's support group was established. Respite care and IV therapy are also regular specialized programs at Regency.

A major renovation program that began in 1988 culminated in 1995 with the opening of a new building for the adult day-care center and home health and outpatient rehabilitation services. The following year extensive landscaping was undertaken and "Riverview Park" was constructed on the facility's grounds in back of the building.

Contact with community and community groups are encouraged. Priests from St. John Brebeuf Church regularly say Mass at the facility. Numerous social activities are conducted jointly with St. Andrew Home. The Leaning Tower YMCA Senior Citizens Group visits monthly and distributes favors and small presents to patients. Maine East High School stages holiday programs for Christmas, Halloween, Valentine's Day, and Easter as well as participating in an intergenerational program once a month and a special olympics every spring. Residents enjoy shopping in Niles at Golf-Mill, the Dollar Store, and Target and frequently are also taken as a group by bus to Denny's and Old Country Buffet restaurants. In 1997 the Niles Police Department presented a program on safety concerns of seniors at Regency's adult day-care center.

In 1992, Regency received of the State of Illinois QUIP Award for Excellence in Care, a designation meriting six stars. Regency received this award for five consecutive years. In 1991, Barbara Hecht, Regency's administrator, received the "Administrator of the Year Award" at the Governor's Conference on Long-Term Care, and in 1997 the Illinois Activity Professionals Association named her "Administrator of the Year."

ST. ANDREW HOME

Monsignor Francis Rusch, administrator of the St. Hedwig Orphanage in Niles for 29 years, met with the St. Hedwig Society, September 16, 1939. At that meeting Msgr. Rusch announced that he was interested in building a home for the elderly. His words were greeted enthusiastically. The membership of the St. Hedwig Society, representatives of all Polish-American parishes, had supported St. Hedwig's Orphanage since its founding. They pledged immediate support to the project. Msgr. Rusch was delegated to present his plans for the home to George Cardinal Mundelein. The Cardinal expressed approval but suggested a waiting period because of poor economic conditions and the beginning of World War II.

In 1945, the St. Hedwig Society again met. Directors were elected, a constitution was drawn up, and application was made to the state of Illinois for authorization to form a non-profit corporation known as St. Andrew Home for the Aging. The name of St. Andrew was selected because



St. Andrew Home for the Aging

St. Andrew Bobola, a Jesuit from Poland, had recently been canonized a saint in the Catholic church.

After receiving approval from Samuel Cardinal Stritch, a 10-acre site near the orphanage was selected, and plans for the St. Andrew Home were submitted to the Illinois Department of Public Health and Safety. Construction began but was slow because shortages of materials and frequent strikes hindered progress. The Felician Sisters agreed to staff the facility. Applications came in by the hundreds.

On Memorial Day, May 30, 1952, St. Andrew Home was officially dedicated. Each resident would have a private room. There were also ten guest parlors, a candy shop, an ice cream fountain, a beauty salon, and a chapel.

Rates for room and board were kept low. Msgr. Rusch believed those who were better off would help pay for expenses through donations and bequests. Over the years, rates have been kept at modest levels.

In 1963 an auditorium was built along with an art and craft room. A new convent for the sisters was constructed adjoining the St. Andrew Home. In 1990 individual air conditioners were installed in each room.

St. Andrew Home has a current capacity for 201. The staff has a total of 104 employees, of which 13 are Felician Sisters.

The administrators of St. Andrew Home over the years were: Msgr. Francis S. Rusch, STL, 1952-59; Fr. George Gorski, STL, 1960-84; Sister M. Rosalita Witrod, RN, MA, 1984-91; and John Keane, BS, SS, 1991-97. During the 40th anniversary celebration of St. Andrew in 1992, Sister M. Aloysius Muszynski, MSW, was cited for her 29 years of service to St. Hedwig's and 38 additional years for St. Andrew Home.

ST. BENEDICT'S HOME

St. Benedict's Home, founded in 1907, was originally located in Chicago and serviced members of the Czech community from its location at 1628 South Racine Avenue. After 14 years this building proved inadequate. The Benedictine Sisters, as a result of moving their motherhouse to Lisle, Illinois, left their motherhouse vacant and available to St. Benedict's Home. The building was originally built as a schoolhouse for St. Pius Parish. After the transfer of the motherhouse, the building was prepared as a home for aged persons. Transfer to this building was made in 1921. The superintendent of the home was Rev. Edward Sladel, O.S.B. The Oblates of St. Benedict's were organized to help tend to the residents at the home.

The services of the Benedictine sisters were obtained for management of the home. Sister Matilda Chamsky, O.S.B., assumed the post of superior of the home in 1938. In a few years it was determined the building did not conform to county and state fire and health regulations. Extensive renovations had to be made or a new site had to be chosen.

A location in Niles was decided for the new St. Benedict's Home. This was made possible by the Zika, Casensky and Posedel families who donated 6 acres of land in Niles for construction of a new St. Benedict's Home, which began in 1957 on Touhy Avenue near Milwaukee Avenue. It was designed by architect Adrian Rezny and was planned to accommodate 52 residents. It quickly filled to capacity.



St. Benedict's Home

In 1961 Sister Irene Sabo, O.S.B., became the administrator of St. Benedict's Home. At the time there was an increase in governmental interest in the regulation of geriatric care. St. Benedict's was classified as a sheltered care facility licensed by the state of Illinois to "provide sheltered care with limited nursing care." Sister Irene proved to be an especially capable administrator and gained recognition for St. Benedict's in the National Conference of Catholic Charities, the American Association of Homes for the Aging, The American Nursing Home Association, The Illinois Association of Homes for the Aging, the National Geriatric Association, The National Council on Aging, and the Catholic Health Care Association.

The home was formally dedicated June 20, 1965, by Rev. Aloysius J. Wycislo, auxiliary bishop of Chicago. The mortgage was burned on the same date. Earlier in the year St. Benedict's was accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

In 1989 planning was under way for a 99-bed addition. Rooms to be included in the \$5.5 million construction included a library, beauty and barbershop, an ice cream parlor, an activities room, family rooms for special or private parties, and a chapel. All rooms were to be private or semi-private. The new home was completed in 1991.

St. Benedict's has taken an active role in the Pro-Life movement over the years. It would provide employment and residence to unwed mothers until their babies were born.■

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH

As hundreds of young couples came to Niles following World War II, thousands of young children soon went off to school a few years later and elementary school enrollment dramatically increased. A few years later, high school enrollments reflected the same pattern.

In the literature available on the history of Niles, the term "youth" in Niles seems to always refer to anyone older than 13 and younger than 20. The older age may have been somewhat more flexible because the legal age to drink alcoholic beverages in Niles was raised from 19 to 21 in 1978.

The legal framework for a Howard R. Heinze Youth Center and Foundation was announced in April 1955. It was a non-profit organization and the initial projects for the center were for a library and a gymnasium. The women's division of the foundation sold raffle books and \$3,026 was raised.

Teen dances were already being conducted in the Grennan Heights field house. The Niles Park District was organized and they also were hosting activities for teens. On September 27, 1956, *The Niles Spectator* reported that a Niles Teen-Age Dance club was organized and had 169 members.

Early in October 1956, the formation of a Niles Teen Council was announced. On October 25, 23 teens and 23 adults formed the nucleus of this council. William F. Jackson was president, Jack Meier was vice president and Barbara Berg was secretary-treasurer. Two teens were also to be appointed as other officers.

No record of Niles Teen Council activities can be found until late 1957. Connie Brodzik and Saran Schulz were to represent teens on the council and Judy Vosmic was named chairman for the group's first dance at the Bunker Hill Country Club, April 11, 1958.

Several churches hosted dances for teens during the late 1950s and Claude Grannas, minister at the Niles Bible Church, initiated a group encouraging the formation of a Young People's Fellowship. The Niles Community Church also conducted programs for and about youth; in 1964 a youth fellowship, the "Niners," began meeting at the church. St. John Brebeuf sponsored regular dances in its gym beginning in 1964.

In June 1962, Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase recommended the forming of a Niles Youth Commission. The Niles Youth Organization had a dance at Bunker Hill Country Club, December 28, 1962. The Niles Youth Commission was formed in the spring of 1963. Its original purpose was to assist youth in locating employment during the months of summer vacation. John Herley was chairman. Tentative plans were also made for a theatre presentation.

On August 23, 24, 1963, "Stage Struck" was the feature attraction at the Lawrencewood Shopping Center produced and performed by the Niles Youth Commission. In attendance were 600 guests. The performances were acclaimed to be a success. There was an outing to see the White Sox play baseball. A Frankie Avalon Dance Party was sponsored October 12. To wrap up the year, the youth conducted a Christmas toy drive and put on a Christmas production, "Many Moons."

The public was invited to a forum in May 1964 that would be conducted by the Niles Youth Commission. Commissioners heard expressions of the need for a program to aid youth in locating summer employment. A job assistance program was set up. Bernard Will, Robert Tietz, John Herley, and Michael Provenzano were youth commissioners at that time. Jacqueline Bolek and Paul Niesen were selected as the Niles Days Queen and King for 1964.

The Niles Youth Commission organized the Niles Little Theatre. The first production was "Cheaper by the Dozen." It was staged August 29 and 30, 1964. Teens were invited to participate in a talent show November 19, 1964. Prizes of \$100, \$50, and \$25 would be awarded.

The necessity for a teen center was discussed in January 1965. The Howard R. Heinze fund, which was available to build such a center 10 years earlier, had contributed all monies it had raised for this purpose to the Leaning Tower YMCA. The Niles American Legion Post 29 expressed support of a Niles Teen Center in November 1965. As part of the All-America City festivities, an essay contest for youth was conducted. Robert Raccuglia of St. John Brebeuf won a 10-day trip to Washington and was Niles' mayor for a day. The essay topic was "Why my parents should vote whenever given the opportunity." The contest proved to be popular for several years. Future winners, all of whom became mayor of Niles for a day and won prizes were: 1967, Dennis Wieszcholek; 1968, Christopher Bednarowicz; 1969, William Kemp; 1970, Caren Grantz; 1971, Michael Krok; 1973, Barbara Buck; 1974, Kevin Boyle; 1975, Bryan Walk; 1978, Barbara Daehler; and 1980, Glen Capek.

The Niles American Legion Post 29 continued to support a youth center during 1966 and said it had located a suitable site. "The Attic," a new teen club, was sponsored by the Niles Park District. Fred Davis was president. Other officers of "The Attic" were Stan Luszowiak, vice president; Barney Balasa, treasurer; Sue Kramer, recording secretary; Elaine Meyer, corresponding secretary; and Ray Peterson, sgt-at-arms. The club had a dance at the recreation center, October 22, 1966. It was announced there were to be two monthly dances beginning in December, a game room would be provided and a social club would be organized. At its December 7, 1966 meeting, Niles youth commissioners reported that a survey was taken and 900 respondents expressed an interest in building a teen center. Dances were the favorite activity of teens, with interest in roller skating and bowling also expressed. Surprisingly, teens favored having dances in a church setting rather than commercial or other settings. A week after this meeting, the Niles Days Committee awarded \$7,700 to the Niles Youth Center Committee.

A teen dance was scheduled for January 15, 1966, at Notre Dame High School. It was to pay tribute to a popular teen, Pete DiMaria, president of the Niles theatre group. Pete died in the late summer of 1965. The dance was planned to raise \$1,500 toward an altar at St. John Brebeuf Church as a memorial in Pete's name. More than 1,000 attended, paying 75 cents per ticket. Two Niles combo groups, "The Tempos" and "The Boycotts," donated their services. By 10:00 p.m. word got around at the dance, as *The Niles Bugle* reported, that the goal had been achieved. Everyone agreed the youngsters were very well-behaved.

The New Youth Center was scheduled to open with a "Grand Dance," January 14, 1967, at the Lawrencewood Shopping Center. Teens selected "The Crib" as the name for the center. Another dance was set for February 3. Linda Schwarze was appointed as adult supervisor for the center. Todd Bavaro resigned as chairman of the Niles Youth Commission and was given an award by the Niles Youth Commission for his work on behalf of the youth of Niles. Bill Sterling was appointed as the new chairman. In October 1967 "The Crib" was closed.

Confusion developed because conflicting reports circulated as to the relationship between the Niles Youth Center and the Niles Youth Commission. There were questions whether the money from Niles Days was awarded to American Legion Post 29 for a site for the Niles Youth Center or

directly to the Niles Youth Center. Apparently some \$4,000 was committed for operation and rental of "The Crib." Additional funds were "pledged" from the coming Niles Days, but some began to question whether a shopping center was the best location for a teen center.

The First Youth Congress in Niles was called to meet at the village council chamber, November 21, 1967. An open forum would discuss creating a "hot line" between youth and their peers. Others also expressed concern about job openings for teens.

Niles was Host City for the Illinois Junior Miss Pageant in December 1967. Diane Power was Niles' entry into the competition. In 1968 Stanley Sekulow was appointed chairman for the Illinois Junior Miss Pageant along with an 11-member board. Mary Siwek was selected to represent Niles. After the second pageant, Niles elected not to host future Illinois Junior Miss Pageants. However, they did continue to select representatives to attend the pageants in other cities. In 1969, Laura Kotsiris was the Niles Junior Miss; in 1970 Maureen Quinlan was the Niles Junior Miss; and in 1971 Patricia Fornall was the Junior Miss representing Niles.

The Niles Youth Congress formed a chorus and sang a Christmas program at St. Benedict's Home in 1967. The village board began taking a more active interest in the activities of the Niles Youth Commission, heard reports of their activities, and approved several proposals suggested by the commission. In May 1968 the Niles Youth Congress collected 31,000 pounds of scrap newspapers. Proceeds were used to present the Village of Niles with a state of Illinois flag. A Niles Talent Show was co-sponsored by the Niles Youth Commission and the Niles Little Theatre Group. "The Mist," a ballroom band, won first place at the show, May 19, 1968.

A second meeting of the Niles Youth Congress was called for November 1968. Nick Bavaro served as chairman for the meeting. Softball tournaments and talent shows would continue to be sponsored by the commission. Interest in softball increased. A Niles Youth Congress Softball League was launched and marathon games, lasting for 53-54 hours, were a "huge success." Money was raised by the softball marathons. In 1972, \$1,775 was donated to help in preventing muscular dystrophy. In 1974 funds were raised for the Julia Malloy Education Center in Niles.

In 1973 the Niles Park District opened a recreation center and organized some teen activities. With the opening of the Trident Center, more facilities were made available than could be utilized at the recreation center. The weekend dances for teens proved to be popular. However, concerns about all the activities taking place in the surrounding areas with many teens now driving their own cars, resulted in termination of teen dances at the Trident Center. A coffee shop for teens was opened in 1973 at 7401 Oakton Street thanks to the assistance of Rev. Michael Youngblood of the Niles Community Church and Niles Family Service.

One important function of the Niles Youth Commission was assisting teens get jobs. In its first 15 years, some 550 jobs were procured for those between 13 and 19; a year later an additional 400 teens got jobs as a result of leads from the commission, and by 1979 it was estimated a total of 1,750 were placed, thanks to the Niles Youth Commission.

The largest, or more accurately, best-attended, teen event in Niles was March 4, 1978, at the Axle Roller Rink, 9840 N. Milwaukee Avenue. A crowd of 2,500 came out to listen to John Landecker, WLS disc jockey, spin the platters for Niles' own version of Saturday Night Fever.

In 1980, "The Junction" was opened in the Ballard School gym. It was a summer center designed to provide activities for junior high school students.

A generation of "youth" had made its presence known in Niles between 1950 and 1980. After reviewing newspaper accounts of the entire period--few other records are available--one is

struck with the amount of effort and concern adults expressed to ensure that teens would not "get into trouble." No major disturbance was caused by teens during this entire period. After reading about dozens of dances, never was a word mentioned about teen drinking during the dances. Adults "permitted," then regretted, allowing teens to smoke at dances and in game rooms. Adults, while providing use of an auto with increased regularity over the years, objected to use of the Lawrencewood shopping mall for a teen center because public transportation was not readily available. Unfortunately, it was teens using the auto while drinking that caused Niles to raise the age for legal drinking of alcoholic beverages from 19 to 21.

Those professional prognosticators who projected a population of 50,000 in Niles by the year 2000 probably did not ask the teens of Niles if they had any strong attachments to remaining in Niles. After decreasing for more than a decade, school enrollments in the area, since the mid-1990s, are slowly starting to rise. Perhaps another generation, as vital and dynamic as the post World War II generation that moved into Niles with such great expectations, is preparing to make a similar move. As 1997 drew to a close, consideration was being given to establishing a teen center at the Trident Center after the Human Services Department would relocate next to the village hall in the Civic Center Plaza.■

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

NILES AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Alper and Alper made a study in 1968 for the Niles Park District. When the study was published in 1969, one of the recommendations made was that Niles build an ice rink.

After Walter Beusse became convinced that an ice rink would be built in Niles, he knew conditions were ripe for youngsters to play hockey in Niles. Beusse organized the Niles Amateur Hockey Association of eight teams with 10 members on each team. Play began at the ice rink of the Flying Carpet Motel in Rosemont. After lights were installed at Jozwiak Park in 1969, hockey games were scheduled at that facility.

The Niles Amateur Hockey Association played its early games in an independent league. After the hockey association moved into the Ballard Sports Complex in 1972, the league quickly grew and numbered 420 participants for the 1973-74 season. An all-star traveling team, the Sharks, was organized the same year. A Moms' Booster Club was launched to help in fund-raising activities. In 1976 the Niles Park District took over the administration of organizing hockey teams and scheduling games.

After a few years of declining interest in hockey, 80 youngsters signed up for programs in 1997. Squirts are accepted up to age 5. League play is available for those between 7 and 17. A figure skating program is also available.

Eddie Olczyk, who went on to play with the Chicago Blackhawks and other professional teams in the National Hockey Association, played for the Sharks in 1973-74. He scored 41 points, was credited with three hat tricks, and helped the team to a fourth-place finish in the state hockey tournament.

NILES ATHLETIC CLUB BASEBALL TEAM

The Niles Athletic Club had a baseball team around 1920. The team probably played most of its games on Sunday when Chicago business firms would sponsor a picnic and bring along a representative team for a game.

Niles residents who were members of the team included Louis Kozla, Raymond Sickinger, and John F. Calef.

NILES BASEBALL LEAGUE

The earliest records of Niles youngsters playing in regular league games not affiliated with a school was in 1951 when Chuck Giovannelli managed a team of elementary-age students. After the Niles Park District was established in 1954, a Niles Baseball League was organized and chartered in 1958 when league play began on several levels using the facilities of the park district.



John F. Calef played for the Niles Baseball Club in 1915.

The Niles Baseball League includes an instructional league, little league, bronco league, AA pony league, and AAA pony league. An adult board of directors is elected by parents in October to govern the league. The board selects a baseball commissioner, who is the highest executive authority to mediate and resolve disputes, complaints, and concerns of players, managers, and umpires. There is also a president of the league who is voted into office after the board of directors and commissioner have been determined for the upcoming season. The president presides at board meetings and determines the agenda for board meetings.

A regular season of play includes 16 games. Two to six playoff games by each team determine league champions. There is also an all-star tournament, which adds an extra two to six games for participants. Most games are played in Niles. However, each little league and bronco team gets an opportunity to "play under the lights" at Thillens Stadium once a year.

The following tabulation reflects the amount of activity in the Niles Baseball League since 1958. The second column is the number of teams, the third column indicates the number of players.

1958	27	324	1964	48	576
1959	29	348	1965	50	600
1960	36	432	1966	49	588
1961	39	468	1967	54	648
1962	36	432	1968	62	744
1963	40	480	1969	68	816

1970	69	828	1984	38	456
1971	73	876	1985	36	432
1972	70	840	1986	33	398
1973	67	804	1987	34	408
1974	67	804	1988	34	408
1975	60	720	1989	37	444
1976	55	660	1990	39	469
1977	45	540	1991	39	469
1978	44	528	1992	39	468
1979	42	504	1993	42	504
1980	40	480	1994	39	468
1981	42	504	1995	38	456
1982	39	469	1996	36	432
1983	38	456	1997	34	408

Sponsors help pay expenses for each team. When the league began, sponsors contributed about \$2,000 per year. Over the years, this figure has risen and in 1997 team sponsors donated approximately \$20,000 toward meeting the expenses of the teams. Fund-raising events also contribute to help pay team and league expenses. Over the years, team members have sold decals and other merchandise to raise funds.

"Joz Days" are fun-filled afternoons and evenings for players and parents toward the end of the season. Instructional league, little league, and bronco league teams participate. Youngsters are invited to Jozwiak Park for hot dogs, target pitching, speed pitching, dunk tanks, and unexpected "fun" surprises. Each division also plays a baseball game.

Dinner dances have been held to mark anniversaries of the league or for other special events. The most recent dinner-dance, June 26, 1998, marked the 40th anniversary of the Niles Baseball League.

A Jerry Niedermaier Memorial Award was initiated in 1983. It is presented annually "for outstanding service to Niles Baseball League in the spirit of sportsmanship demonstrated by Jerry." Recipients of the award include:

1983	Stan and Myrna Breitzman	1989	Walter M. Beusse
	Lee and Jim Newlan	1990	Bob Knuerr
1984	John Imber	1991	Terry Boffeli
1985	Ralph, Marilyn and Brad Lietz	1992	Marge Mazik
1986	John Petersen	1993	John Jekot
1987	Chuck Giovannelli	1995	Kevin O'Grady
1988	Kent Hay	1996	Julene Valle

Niles Baseball League
Chartered August 6, 1958

First Manager:
Chuck Giovannelli 1951-56

Commissioners:			
Al Weihns	1957-58	Bob Larson	1961-62
Harry Panzella	1958-59	Dan Tracy	1962-63
William Guttschow	1959-60	Cy Gradowski	1963-64
Jack Leske	1960-61	Tony DiLorenzo	1964-65

Bob Warren	1965-66
Walt Beusse	1966-67
Dick Les	1967-68
Henry Mueller	1968-69
Augie Donash	1969-70
Chuck Ellin	1970-71
Don Fergus	1971-72
Dan Kosiba	1972-73, 1983-84
Joe Booker	1973-74
Ted Kroll	1974-75
John Petersen	1975-76, 1976-77
Ron Ciek	1977-78, 1978-79
Jim Pierski	1978-79
Ralph Lietz	1979-88, 1980-81
John Imber	1981-82, 1982-83
Terry Boffeli	1984-85, 1985-86
Carlos Patterson	1986-87, 1987-88
Bob Knuerr	1988-89
John Jekot	1989-90
Tim Posedel	1990-91, 1991-92, 1992-93, 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98

Presidents:

Larry Peterson	1960-61
Ray Schroeder	1961-62
Cy Gradowski	1962-63
Art Dahlquest	1963-64
Robert Brooks	1964-65
Walt Beusse	1965-66, 1981-82, 1982-83
Henry Mueller	1966-67
Bob Miller	1967-68
George Green	1968-69
Ron Chamness	1969-70
Chuck Corrado	1970-71
Chuck Ellin	1971-72
John Shemroskie	1972-73
Don Fergus	1973-74
Tom Spino	1974-75
Dick Sieghart	1975-76, 1976-77
Frank Zangara	1977-78, 1978-79
Michael Early	1978-79
Jim Gotshall	1979-80
John Kassel	1980-81
Ralph Lietz	1980-81
John Imber	1983-84
Ed Lerner	1984-85, 1985-86
Bob Knuerr	1986-87, 1987-88
John Jekot	1988-89
Tim Posedel	1989-90
Steve Vitale	1990-91, 1991-92
Kevin O'Grady	1992-93, 1993-94
Jon Stiller	1994-95, 1995-96
Bryan Foley	1996-97, 1997-98

NILES BOXING TEAM

A Niles boxing team was formed in the late 1930s. John Boyk recalls an exercise-gym facility was made available on the second floor of a commercial business on Milwaukee Avenue near Touhy Avenue. As some of the young men worked out, they decided to test their boxing skills in a series of matches in Des Plaines. Boyk remembers that, "a tent was set up, a street was blocked off, and they sold tickets. The winner was to get \$4 and the loser \$2. All I know is I walked out into the center of the ring. That's the last thing I remember." Other members of the Niles boxing team included Chester Zamiar, Pete Chomoer, and Ed Bacher. The Niles boxing team disbanded after the matches in Des Plaines.

NILES FALCONS JR. FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The Niles Falcons Jr. Football Association affiliated with the Pop Warner League fielded three teams each year between 1974 and 1981. Players ranged in age from 8 to 14 and were assigned to teams depending on their weight. There were Junior PeeWee teams, PeeWee teams (65 to 95 pounds), and Midgets (90 to 120 pounds). Home games were played at Notre Dame High School stadium in Niles.

The Falcon PeeWees had great seasons in 1976 and 1977 which resulted in invitations to the Optimist Bowl sanctioned by National Pop Warner Headquarters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The 1976 bowl game was played in Hunstville, Alabama. Team members included James DiCicco, Mike Schoose, Mike Biede, John Vaessen, Steve Kanavos, Rob Hill, Brad Wolf, Al O'Donnell, Joe Gromala, Steve Roggeman, Ricky Compasano, Jim Wajda, Rich Mau, Marc Falleroni, Willy Flax, Lee Schaps, Billy Ott, Chuck Mierkiewicz, Danny Kozlowski, Billy Weimer, Dave Berliner, Alex Glisovich, Pat Chester, Nicky DiNapoli, and Don Kleich. Coaches were Paul Mierkiewicz, Tony DiCicco, Nick DiNapoli, Don Kleich, and Dick Schoose.



1976 Niles, Illinois Falcons - Pee Wee Div. Won 7, Lost 1

In 1977, the Falcon PeeWees were invited for a bowl appearance in Fort Meyers, Florida. Representing the team were Erik Weinberg, Bill Kleich, Jeff Dash, Steve Kanavos, Mike Compasano, Dan Kozlowski, Mike Schoose, Bill Olen, Bart Maestranzi, Jim Tudor, Brad Wolf, Pat Chester, Bill Glauner, Paul Mierkiewicz, Mike Urban, Tony Kowal, Brian Early, Adam Slutsky, Bill Weimer, Steve Roggeman, Mike Kardasz, Mike Fritze, Tom Yehl, Nick DiNapoli, Steve Bangart, Mark Paulis, and Louis DeMeo. Coaches of the PeeWees were Ron Biede, Carl Dash, Tony DeMeo, and George Olen.

Falcon cheerleaders were awarded the 1977 championship of the Northern Illinois Pop Warner League in the Junior PeeWee and Midget divisions. Leading the cheers at Falcon games were: Caryn Bromberg, Debbie Chandler, Linda Cox, Lora DiNapoli, Lisa Falleroni, Nancy Davies, Sharon Fritze, Dawn Fritze, Marci Geller, Cindy Healey, Diane Knechtel, Jean Loftus, Pat Loftus, Claire Loftus, Gine Maestranzi, Carol Mierkiewicz, Mary Mierkiewicz, Jill Mueller, Mary Mueller, Tina O'Brien, Vickie Ott, Lauren Sorce, Denize Voegelé, and Kathy Volkodav. Coaches were Rose Falleroni, Sue Kozlowski, Sharon Kozlowski, and Cathy Loftus.

NILES NUGGETS

Stan and Myrna Breitzman organized the Niles Nuggets, a semi-pro baseball team playing in the Stan Musial Division of the Greater Illinois League, in 1982. Their son, Lee, and many other young men in Niles loved to play baseball. After graduating from high school, Lee's parents discovered there was no organized baseball league for adults in Niles. Stan, baseball coach at Maine East High School, inquired how neighboring towns organized their teams. Within a matter of weeks the Niles Nuggets were playing ball.

The Nuggets played 35 games in 1982. The team had 23 players because double-headers were often scheduled for Saturdays and Sundays. Most of the players were from Niles, including Bob Knuerr, catcher; Bob Fergus, first base; Rich Shumacher, catcher; Chris Piazza, pitcher; Ken Gast, pitcher; Art Scheer, pitcher; John Gambro, infielder; Steve Danielak, catcher; Bob Heath, pitcher; Mike Walder, third baseman; Mike Veltri, utility player; Mike Ziebell, infielder; Mark Menich, pitcher; Jim Troch, utility player; and Lee Breitzman, pitcher and infielder. Breitzman is the only original Nugget still playing in 1998.

The Nuggets finished each season in first or second place in their league since they were organized. This ranking qualified the team for the national tournament playoffs in 15 of the 16 years the team has existed. Over the years, through the end of the 1997 season, the Niles Nuggets have a combined record in all games of 300 wins and 164 losses.

Several Nuggets were invited to try out for major league teams. Dave Geeve played with the Nuggets in 1988. After a year at Bradley University, the Niles resident was drafted by the Texas Rangers and played in AA baseball at Charlotte until an injury in 1996 cut short his playing days during the 1997 season. Mike Fraenhoffer, shortstop, played at Notre Dame High School, with the Nuggets, and was drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1986. He was assigned to play class A ball at Vero Beach.

From 1982 through 1989 the Nuggets played at Notre Dame High School; in 1990 they moved to Loyola Academy, and since 1993 have played their games on the Maine East High School campus.

Lee Breitzman recalls catching a game against the Hornets in Northbrook. On a particular play a runner was coming around third with little chance of scoring. When Breitzman looked up, he discovered the runner was Jose Cardenal who had played for the Chicago Cubs a few years earlier. In another game, Nuggets batters discovered they were swinging at pitches being thrown by former Cub pitcher, Bill Campbell.

The International House of Pancakes in Niles and Bennigans in Niles have sponsored the team for several years.

In 1992 the team took a trip to the "Field of Dreams." The Nuggets spent about four hours

on the field. They met the famous "Shoeless Joe" after he came out of the cornfield wearing a White Sox uniform. Each player took a picture with him. Each of the Niles Nuggets had the opportunity to take a few swings until they hit one into the cornfield. That evening they played the "Ghost Team" in a different stadium. For Stan and Myrna Breitzman and all players on the Niles Nuggets who had made the journey to Iowa, it reflected the "love affair with baseball" the team has reflected in its style of play over the years.

Stan Breitzman was the first and continues to be general manager-coach of the Niles Nuggets. Myrna Breitzman is treasurer, statistician, and handles public relations.

Team members wear their emblem proudly. Niles resident and Nugget player for five years, Nick Busija, designed the emblem for the team. At 26 Busija died as a result of a freak accident while working. Memories of Busija's efforts on behalf of the team are remembered with appreciation by all associated with the team.

NILES PANTHERS

The Niles Panthers were a semi-professional football team that played its home games at Notre Dame High School in Niles. As members of the Central States League, they traveled to West Allis, Wisconsin, for their first game in mid-August 1965 and won by the score of 25-19.

The Lake County Rivals from Waukegan were the Panthers' opponents for their home opener in Niles. *The Niles Bugle* described the game as "wild and wooly." *The Niles Spectator* explained why the Panthers protested the game won by the Rivals, 39-33. Both teams were to observe rules of the National Football League in assigning numbers to be worn by players. In their previous game against Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and in this game, it was charged by the Panthers that the Rivals were deliberately trying to confuse the defense by the numbers assigned to players eligible to catch passes. A pass thrown by a quarterback wearing a double-digit number (illegal at the time) was thrown to a player wearing number 50, a number supposedly assigned to an interior lineman, at that time usually a center, and it turned out to be an 83-yard touchdown play.

Chick Jagade, who played football for Paul Brown of the Cleveland Browns and George Halas of the Chicago Bears, was the coach of the Panthers. Jagade said the teams have only limited practice since "most of the guys have jobs and families to support." However, Jagade also added, "It's amazing how much these guys like to play football."

General manager of the team was Marty O'Connor, the only woman in professional football at that time. She said that since "Niles was voted the All-America city it is easy to see why the various industries have gotten behind the Panthers." Some 4,000 attended the Panthers' home opener.

Joe Osmanski, former Chicago Bears fullback and successful high school football coach in Chicago, took over as coach of the Panthers in 1966. Practices were conducted at Maine East High School for the 60 prospects that came out for the team. The Manitowoc Chiefs in Wisconsin were scheduled as the first game for August 27, 1966. Five of the 10 games scheduled were to be played at Notre Dame High School.

Don Lesine, a Niles resident, who played left halfback at UCLA, played for the Panthers. Other members were Arnold Galiffa, who played quarterback for West Point, and Bob Tucker, who played with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

In 1967 the Panthers were sold and announced they would be moving to South Chicago. Marty O'Connor attempted to organize a team with the Professional Football League of America to play at Notre Dame High School. The team would be similar to the Des Moines team that was signed as a minor league team for the Minnesota Vikings. That type of NFL-AFL minor league team for Niles never materialized.

NILES SAINTS

After three years of playing in other locations in the Chicagoland area, the Saints selected Niles for their home field in 1972. As members of the Chicagoland Football League, the Saints played their first game at Notre Dame High School in Niles, August 26, 1972, for the benefit of the police and firemen of Niles.

Head coach for the Niles Saints was Frank Salerno. A 10-game schedule was drawn up for the 40 players between the ages of 18 and 35. The players did not receive a salary and often had to pay approximately \$150 out of their own pockets for equipment and uniforms. Since admission was charged, the entire team would be awarded a cash prize. The Saints lost their first exhibition game 7-0 before 900 fans at Notre Dame High School.

During regular season play, the Saints were able to win six games while losing three. They beat the North Lake Lions, 20-0; the Chicago Hustlers, 27-6; the Barons of Berwyn, 23-6; the Mt. Greenwood Bulls, 15-6; the West Lawn Packers 60-6, before losing to the Chicago Gladiators 6-3 and the Chicago Colts 30-20. They finished the season beating the Chicago Bonivers 21-6 and losing to the Chicago Lions 31-14. WNUR, a Northwestern University FM radio outlet, broadcast all home games at Notre Dame High School.

Coach Ken Stone called for tryouts in May 1973 and announced he would conduct a football clinic at the Niles Park Recreation Center beginning August 11. After the Saints won their first game against the Berwyn Broncos, 48-7, the Saints indicated they would hold another clinic at Jonquil Terrace Park for youngsters between 8 and 14. In September the Saints hosted another football clinic at Jozwiak Park. The Saints went on to win six more games and were champions of the Chicagoland Football League in 1973.

Bob Beshk became the new head coach of the Niles Saints in 1974. In honor of the Diamond Jubilee celebration of the Village of Niles the Saints scheduled an exhibition game in August against the Chicago Lions. The half-time show featured a jubilee celebration showing the lifestyles in Niles during the 1950s, the 1960s, and the 1970s.

Although the Saints had a successful season in 1974 and compiled a record of 30 wins, 10 losses, and five ties during the three years they were in Niles, the *Niles Spectator* wrote, "The Niles Saints are seriously considering a move." Stadium costs rose from \$350 to \$600 a game in two years. The Saints pointed out they receive no part of the concessions and there were other restrictions.

A team spokesman was quoted in the *Niles Spectator*, "We like Niles, we brought our club here precisely because the 'All-America City' seemed the ideal location for football but we must have the cooperation of the community behind us. Without community support the team cannot exist."

More favorable terms could not be worked out at Notre Dame High School. A final attempt was made to play home games at Golf-Mill Park, but details could not be finalized.

NILES SOFTBALL TEAM

Niles Police Chief Robert Romey sponsored a Niles softball team that played throughout the area during the 1930s. Team members included John Boyk, first base; Paul Boyk, second base; Eddie Boyk, third base; Jimmy Vosmik, short stop; Joe Vosmik, left field; Pete Chombra, center field; Chester Zamier, right field; Ed Bacher, short center field; and Red Teidt, pitcher.

Not having a regular diamond they could call their home field, the team built its own diamond in a cabbage patch on Milwaukee Avenue across from today's Niles Bowl at 7333 N. Milwaukee Avenue. Some teams played with peculiar rules. John Boyk recalls playing a team on Sundays that wouldn't allow a player to have a beer until he reached second base.

Most players have retired, however, Eddie Boyk entered the 1998 softball season as the leading player on a senior citizen team in St. Petersburg, Florida. While living in Niles, Eddie was drafted by the Cleveland Indians, played in Mississippi in the Indian farm system for a year and then was assigned to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He left Harrisburg within a month, but the Indians kept sending him contracts for the next five years that he never signed.

NILES TIGERS

The Niles Tigers baseball team, a member of the Metropolitan League of the Chicago-Illinois State Amateur Association, played its games at Jozwiak Park from 1936 through 1938. Members of the team who were Niles residents included Paul Tamillo and John Boyk, first base; Hank Tamillo and Eddie Names, pitchers; Chester Zamier, catcher; Jerry Thomas, second base; Louis Smolinski, shortstop; and Mark Toepel, first base and outfield. The big game of the year was the Niles Tigers playing against the team organized by the former Chicago Cub Guy Bush and his Oilers from Chicago.■

Chet Hajduk Played in American League All-Star Game

Niles resident Chet Hajduk was signed to a contract by the Chicago White Sox in 1939. He played for a White Sox farm team in Texas and batted .329 with 25 home runs and 140 RBIs. In 1941 he was called up at the end of the season and played in a few games for the White Sox.

Hajduk joined the U.S. Navy in 1942 and played with the Armed Service All-Star team against the American League All-Stars in Cleveland before 66,000 fans. He rejoined the White Sox after the end of World War II in 1945. He continued playing in the minor leagues, never batting below .300, until 1950 when he left baseball.

Hometown Boy Scores in NBA

Jim Les, was born, raised, and began honing his basketball skills in Niles at St. John Brebeuf Grammar School and Notre Dame High School. At Bradley University, he was captain of the basketball team and Missouri Valley Conference Player of the Year. After being drafted by the Atlanta Hawks of the NBA, Jim went on to play eight seasons with the Utah Jazz, Los Angeles Clippers, and Sacramento Kings. During the 1991 season, he led the NBA with a .461 average from 3-point range. He was enshrined in the Illinois Basketball Association Hall of Fame and, in 1998, was inducted into the Bradley University Hall of Fame.

THE VILLAGE MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT

During the past century, a very significant change has been made in the administration of Niles Village Government. The full-time position of Village Manager was created on September 11, 1962. The ordinance creating the office defined its duties and responsibilities:

"The Village Manager shall be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees. He shall be chosen solely on the basis of his executive and administrative qualifications without regard to his political beliefs."

The Village Manager exercises administrative control over all departments in the village and all employees of the village, investigates all complaints concerning the administration of the village, prepares a budget for the village, and keeps an inventory of all village property. The 1962 ordinance has had one major amendment: the Village Manager is also responsible "for the establishment, implementation, and coordination of policies and procedures relating to village insurance, employees benefit insurance, and risk management."



Top left: James Pryde. Top right: Ken Scheel. Bottom left: Jack Hadge. Bottom right: Abe Selman.

The Village of Niles has had four Village Managers: James Pryde, Ken Scheel, Jack Hadge, and current Village Manager Abe Selman, appointed in 1989. Unfortunately, records and files of previous village managers were discarded by the occupants then in office. However, available newspaper accounts and the smooth transitions which have occurred when a new village manager was appointed would seem to indicate the village has continued to benefit since the office was created.

A review of the current village manager's records indicates there have been considerable refinements in the administration of the office. In all probability, adjustments will be frequently made as village departments keep abreast of the rapid changes in technology.

One of the hallmarks of Selman's approach was expressed at the April 19, 1993, budget hearing: "Niles takes pride in the quality of services provided to Niles residents," Selman explained. "The citizens of Niles will continue to receive the highest quality of services offered by any local government." At the budget hearing, April 11, 1996, Selman enumerated "the many free services enjoyed by the community...free bus, free garbage pickup, curbside recycling, our Senior Center, very efficient snow removal in the winter, and free leaf and branch pickup during the spring and fall...neighborhood walking police force, fire prevention services, a very active tree replacement program, free carbon monoxide testing...and soon...a new (Family Fitness and Senior) Center."

Selman is aware, as he expressed at the April 19, 1993, meeting, that the "budget is the most important administrative responsibility of the Village management team... and (April 11, 1996, that) the budget incorporates all the policy directives by the Mayor and Board of Trustees initiated during the past year."

The Northwest Municipal Conference has been established as a lobby to try to influence the state legislature on behalf of local municipal governments. Niles Mayor Nicholas Blase is on the Legislative Committee of the Conference. Selman says some headway has been made and legislators are becoming more aware of the financial difficulties mandated legislation often causes for local governing bodies.

The use of technology has been, and continues to be, encouraged by Selman. When he came into office, one personal computer was in use. Today there are 200 computers and everyone who has production work is attached to the village economic network and has access to the Internet.

The Village of Niles has received the "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" for 20 consecutive years. Other awards have also been presented to the Village of Niles for its presentation of the budget or for the work of the Finance Department. Selman, while not dismissing the importance of such accolades, recalls the amount of work necessary for Niles to qualify as a "Certified City" in 1985. A stack of paper--Selman holds his hand 2 feet above his desk--had to be compiled, checked, and sent off to Springfield so Niles could be one of the few cities declared "Certified" by the state of Illinois.

The Village's hard work and efforts also paid off with the renovation of the Niles Leaning Tower Plaza, of which the Mayor and the Board of Trustees were pleased. A very successful concert series was presented every Thursday during the summer of 1997 and 1998 for hundreds in attendance. Before the year ended, other groups had already been booked for all available dates in 1999.

KENNETH R. SCHEEL VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

On May 27, 1984, the Kenneth R. Scheel Village Administration Building was officially dedicated. It was the only building in the 100-year history of Niles to be named in honor of a village official.



Kenneth R. Scheel was elected a Trustee for the Village of Niles in 1961 and re-elected in 1965. He was appointed Niles Village Manager in 1967 and served in that capacity until his death in 1983.

At the dedication of the Kenneth R. Scheel Village Administration Building, Rev. Edward Duggan of St. John Brebeuf Church spoke of "the gift of Ken to our Niles community." Rev. Duggan made reference to Scheel's "complete giving of his talents to the service of our community...the inspiration he gave to village employees...his organizational leadership of all the Niles departments."

Niles Mayor Nicholas B. Blase added, "No one devoted more time, energy and dedication to this community than Ken Scheel....Niles grew well and its present solidity and future well being are a monument to his efforts."

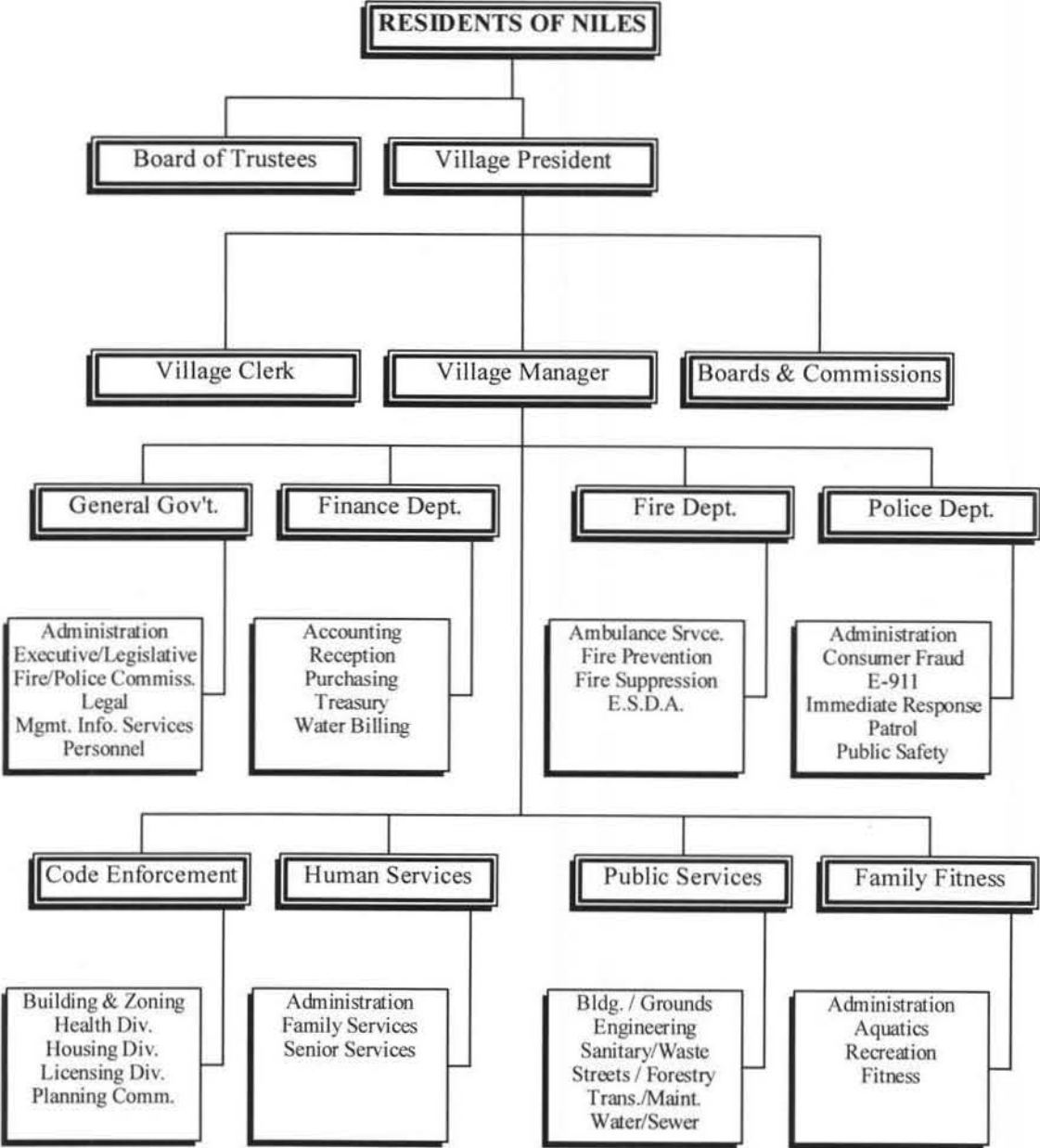
The unexpected and sudden death of Scheel on March 11, 1983, "saddened and shocked his many friends and associates," reported the Pioneer Press March 17, 1983. More than 1,000 people paid their last respects at Skaja Terrace Funeral Home and a like number attended St. John Brebeuf Church in Niles where the Mass of Resurrection was celebrated. Eulogies recalled the love, faith, and service of Ken Scheel.

The death of Scheel received extensive coverage in local newspapers. An editorial in the *Niles Spectator* commented, "Ken Scheel's first concern was always with people, which is why the Village of Niles will miss him so greatly."

This form of tribute was fitting and appropriate. The Administration Building had been originally dedicated November 23, 1969. At that time, Ken Scheel, as Village Manager, wrote in the program distributed for the ceremonies of a "priority list" that was developed by the village. He made reference to the public works building, fire stations, and police buildings that were already in place and concluded, "The priority list was finished on November 1, 1969, when the complete administration offices, Building Department, Health Department and Engineering Department moved into this Milwaukee, Howard and Harlem Avenue location. Thus, the curtain comes down on an era of Niles and we start another era that promises more convenience and efficiency for all the citizens of Niles."■



VILLAGE OF NILES ORGANIZATION CHART



VILLAGE OF NILES ELECTED OFFICIALS 1899 - 1999

October 4, 1899

Village Government Convenes

John Huntington, President
Fred Mau, Clerk
Christ Thorsen, Treasurer
Frank Whittington, Commissioner of Streets
Trustees:
Charles Anderson
Henry Thoms
Thomas Day
William G. Brown
Gust Habedank
C.F. Tarnow

April 28, 1900

Organizational Meeting

Trustees:
Two-year trustees:
C.J. Anderson
Thomas B. Day
Chas. Witt
One-year trustees:
William G. Brown
Theodor Kolb
Henry J. Thoms

April 16, 1901 election

Fred Mau, President
Henry Thoms, Clerk
Trustees:
William G. Brown
Theo Kolb
Henry Ruthenbeck

April 15, 1902 election

Charles J. Anderson, President
Fred Mau, Clerk
Trustees:
Henry Thoms
Thomas B. Day
Fred Hanold

April 21, 1903 election

Charles J. Anderson, President
Fred Mau, Clerk
Trustees:
Theodore Kolb
Henry Ruthenbeck
William G. Brown

April 19, 1904 election

Fred Mau, Clerk
Henry Bierschwale, Police Magistrate
Trustees:
Henry J. Thoms
Thomas B. Day
Fred Hanold

April 18, 1905 election

Charles J. Anderson, President
Charles F. Witt, Clerk
Trustees:
Charles Sickinger
William G. Brown
Frank Cuchna

Fred Beisswanger was elected Police Magistrate but was not given an election certificate since he "was not living long enough in the Village to hold said office. He was given an election certificate at the May 2, 1905 board meeting."

April 17, 1906 election

Charles F. Witt, Clerk
Joseph F. Stoelting, Police Magistrate
Trustees:
Thomas B. Day
Henry J. Thoms
Fred Hanold

April 16, 1907 election

Fred Mau, President
Trustees:
John S. Calef
Frank Cuchna
Christ Luth

April 28, 1908 election

Charles L. Witt, Clerk
Fred Beisswanger, Police Magistrate
Trustees:
Henry J. Thoms
Fred Hanold
Thomas B. Day

April 20, 1909 election

Fred Mau, President

Trustees:

Christ Luth

Frank Stankowicz

John Niemann

April 23, 1910 election

William Herman, Village Clerk

Trustees:

Henry J. Thoms

Fred Hanold

Thomas B. Day

April 18, 1911 election

Fred Mau, President

Trustees:

Christ Luth

John Niemann

John Iglewski

April 12, 1912 election

William Herman, Clerk

Richard Doras, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Henry J. Thoms

Thomas B. Day

Christ Luth

April 15, 1913 election

Fred Mau, President

Trustees:

John Niemann

John Iglewski

Henry Schroeder

April 21, 1914 election

William Herman, Clerk

William Goerke, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Christ Ebert

Henry J. Thoms

Arthur Wagner

April 20, 1915 election

Fred Mau, President

Nick Rohs, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

John Niemann

Henry Schroeder

Xavery Wojtkiewicz (resigned April 5, 1916)

April 12, 1916 election

William Herman, Clerk

Frank Kaslowski, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Henry J. Thoms

Christ Ebert

Fred Poggensee

April 17, 1917 election

Fred Mau, President

George Hines, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Henry Schroeder

Gust Habedank

Frank Fuhl

April 16, 1918 election

William Herman, Clerk

Trustees:

Christ Ebert (resigned March 2, 1920)

Fred Poggensee

Henry J. Thoms

April 15, 1919 election

Fred Mau, President

Trustees:

Henry Schroeder

Gust Habedank

Frank Fuhl (resigned September 2, 1919)

April 20, 1920 election

William Herman, Clerk

Trustees:

Fred Poggensee

Henry J. Thoms

Alois Krejsa

William Kulczyk (to fill vacancy)

April 19, 1921 election

Fred Mau, President

George Hines, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

William Kulczyk

John F. Lenzen

Gust Habedank

April 18, 1922 election

Harry Y. Mueller, Clerk

George Hines, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Fred Poggensee

Alois Krejsa

Henry J. Thoms

April 17, 1923 election

Fred Mau, President

(resignation accepted March 4, 1924)

George Krejsa, Clerk

Michael Heineg, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Gust Habedank

John F. Lenzen

William Kulczyk

John F. Calef (to fill vacancy)

April 15, 1924 election

John F. Calef, President

George L. Krejsa, Clerk

Conrad Stoeger, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Fred Poggensee

Jas. G. Kozak

Herman Carlson

April 25, 1925 election

John F. Calef, President

Trustees:

John F. Lenzen

Gust Habedank

Anton Zamiar

1926 election – no records available**April 19, 1927 election**

John F. Calef, President

Trustees:

Joseph Stoelting

Anton Zamiar

John F. Lenzen

April 17, 1928 election

William H. Smith, Clerk

Peter Wunderle, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

John Wolter

Frank J. Lange

William Kulczyk

April 16, 1929 election

John F. Calef, Mayor

Trustees:

E. Ruesch

A. Schroeder

Thomas J. Kadlec

April 15, 1930 election

George D. Hedlin, Clerk

Theodore Wunderle, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Frank J. Lange

William Kulczyk

Frank Schuessler

April 21, 1931 election

Edward O. Clark, President

Trustees:

Thomas J. Kadlec

Michael H. Didier

Vincent Reichel

April 19, 1932 election

Joseph J. Kozak, Clerk

Peter F. Lenzen, Police Magistrate

Trustees:

Wm. Koelpien

Henry Ahrens

Oscar Franson

April 18, 1933 election

Michael Didier, President

Trustees:

John F. Lenzen

Vincent Reichel

Arthur R. Crawford

April 17, 1934 election

Joseph J. Kozak, Clerk

Trustees:

William Koelpien

Henry Ahrens

Oscar Franson

(George Mittelstaedt, indicated as Niles Justice of the Peace, in Village Board of Trustees minutes for June 1934)

April 16, 1935 election (for two-year terms)

Michael Didier, President

Joseph J. Kozak, Clerk

Trustees:

William Koelpien

Henry Ahrens

Oscar Franson

Arthur Crawford

John C. Krzeminski

George G. Hedlin

April 20, 1937 election

Michael Didier, President
Frank J. Stankowicz, Clerk
Trustees:
George D. Hedlin
Jacob Heinz
Vincent Celmer
John Mamola
Rene Maitzen
P. A. Weinman

April 18, 1939 election

Trustees: (for 4-yr term)
Vincent Celmer
Peter J. Struck
Henry W. Fritz

April 16, 1940 election

Joseph H. Jozwiak, Police Magistrate

April 15, 1941 election

Frank J. Stankowicz, Mayor
James G. Kozak, Clerk
Trustees:
P. A. Weinman, 4-yr term
Herman A. Jesse, 4-yr term
John Bolek, 4-yr term
Alvin Kluesing, 2-yr term

April 20, 1943 election

Trustees:
Arthur N. Treutler
Peter J. Struck,
(office vacated as of July, 1946)
Alvin Kluesing

April 22, 1944 election

Joseph H. Jozwiak, Police Magistrate

April 17, 1945 election

Frank J. Stankowicz, President
James G. Kozak, Clerk
Trustees:
Philip A. Weinman
John Bolek
Fred J. Mamola

April 15, 1947 election

Trustees:
Alvin Kluesing
Arthur N. Treutler
Fred Kellerhals

April 22, 1948 election

Joseph H. Jozwiak, Police Magistrate,
4-yr term

April 19, 1949 election

Frank J. Stankowicz, Mayor
James J. Kozak, Clerk
Trustees:
John Bolek
Walter I. Craiqie
Jacob E. Toloska

April 17, 1951 election

Trustees:
Kenneth H. Coughlin
Henry Kamp
John O. Poeschl

April 15, 1952 election

Joseph H. Jozwiak, Police Magistrate,
(4-yr term)

Joseph Vosmik appointed Village Trustee
July 18, 1952. (Resigned October 15, 1952)

April 21, 1953 election

Frank J. Stankowicz, Mayor
James G. Kozak, Clerk
Trustees:
Edward Marszalek
Leonard Ramel (Died November 21, 1955)
Denis Nielsen

April 1955 election

Trustees:
John O. Poeschl
John F. Stanley
Kenneth H. Coughlin

John Trocki appointed Trustee January 18,
1956, to fill vacancy

April 17, 1956 election

Anton A. Smigiel, Police Magistrate

April 1957 election

Frank J. Stankowicz, Mayor
James G. Kozak, Clerk
Trustees:
Denis Nielsen
Edward Marszalek
John J. Trocki

April 21, 1959 election

Trustees:

John O. Poeschl

John F. Stanley

Santo S. Bruno

April 19, 1960 election

Anton A. Smigiel, Police Magistrate

April 18, 1961 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor

James G. Kozak, Clerk

Trustees:

Kenneth R. Scheel

Leonard W. Szymanski

Robert H. Wentz

April 3, 1963 election

Anton A. Smigiel,

Judge of Village Court in Niles,

6-yr term

Virginia A. Badgley,

Clerk of Village Court in Niles,

6-yr term

April 16, 1963 election

Margaret B. Lieske, Clerk

Trustees:

Santo S. Bruno

Angelo Marcheschi

Edward Berkowsky

April 20, 1965 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor

Margaret B. Lieske, Clerk

Trustees:

Kenneth Scheel

(resigned October 10, 1967)

Keith Peck

Robert H. Wentz

April 18, 1967 election

Trustees:

Angelo Marcheschi

Edward Berkowsky

Richard Harczak

Todd Bavaro appointed Trustee

October 24, 1967

April 15, 1969 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor

Frank C. Wagner, Jr., Clerk

Trustees:

Peter A. Pesole

Richard Gruenwald

Keith Peck

April 21, 1971 election

Trustees:

Richard Harczak

Ralph J. Bast

Angelo Marcheschi

April 24, 1973 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor

Frank C. Wagner, Jr., Clerk

Trustees:

Keith Peck

Peter A. Pesole

Jerome Skaja

April 15, 1975 election

Trustees:

Angelo Marcheschi, 4-yr term

Richard Harczak, 4-yr term

Ralph J. Bast, 4-yr term

Carol Panek, 2-yr term

April 19, 1977 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor

Frank C. Wagner, Jr., Clerk

Trustees:

Peter A. Pesole

Abe Selman

Carol Panek

April 5, 1979 election

Trustees:

Angelo Marcheschi

Bart T. Murphy

Orville C. Ottow

April 7, 1981 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor

Frank C. Wagner Jr., Clerk

Trustees:

Abe Selman

Peter A. Pesole

Carol Panek

April 12, 1983 election

Trustees:
Angelo Marcheschi
Bart T. Murphy
Orville C. Ottow

April 2, 1985 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor
Frank C. Wagner, Jr., Clerk
Trustees:
Louella Preston
Abe Selman
Peter A. Pesole

James A. Mahoney, Jr. appointed
Trustee February 25, 1986

April 4, 1987 elections

Trustees:
James A. Mahoney, Jr.
Angelo Marcheschi
Bart T. Murphy

April 4, 1989 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor
Frank C. Wagner, Jr., Clerk
Trustees:
Abe Selman, resigned August 22, 1989
Louella Preston
Peter A. Pesole

Andrew Przybylo appointed Trustee
August 22, 1989
Tom Bondi appointed Trustee
October 24, 1989

April 7, 1991 election

Trustees:
Bart T. Murphy
Andrew Przybylo
James A. Mahoney, Jr.
Tom Bondi

April 7, 1993 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor
Trustees:
Andrew Przybylo
Louella Preston
Jeffrey Arnold (resigned March 2, 1995)

April 4, 1995 election

Trustees:
Tom Bondi
James A. Mahoney, Jr.
Bart T. Murphy

Robert M. Callero, appointed trustee
April 25, 1995

April 1, 1997 election

Nicholas B. Blase, Mayor
Trustees:
Andrew Przybylo
Louella Preston
Robert M. Callero

NILES OFFICIALS AT THE CENTURY MARK

Nicholas B. Blase

Mayor



Mr. Blase has been a Niles resident since 1959, and a practicing attorney with offices in the Village of Niles. He has served as Mayor of Niles since first being elected in April 1961. Currently he is a Vice President of the Illinois Municipal League, which encompasses all cities in the state of Illinois. Mayor Blase is delighted with the fact that, during his 37 years in office, Niles was honored as an "All-America City" in 1965 and as one of 10 "Certified Cities" in the State of Illinois by the Illinois Department of Commerce in 1985. He is proud that Niles was recognized in a national publication as one of only four communities in Illinois chosen as one of the "Safe Places for Living in the 80s."

Tom Bondi

Chairman, Events Committee

Mr. Bondi has served as Village Trustee since his appointment in October 1989 and has been a Niles resident for 33 years. He oversees the 4th of July Parade each year and other special events planned by the Village for its residents. As an agent at Allstate Insurance Company, Trustee Bondi enjoys utilizing his skills and talents to improve the community.



Robert M. Callero

Assistant Chairman, Finance Committee



Mr. Callero was appointed as Village Trustee on April 25, 1995, and has been a Niles resident since 1958. He is a representative to the Niles Police and Fire Pension Board and a member of the Village's Cable Committee and Finance Committee. Mr. Callero has worked in Niles since 1960 when he and a brother formed Callero & Callero LLP, CPA's and Consultants. Mr. Callero feels that being a trustee allows him to give back to the Village and the community.

James A. Mahoney, Jr.
Chairman, Public Services Committee

Mr. Mahoney has served as Village Trustee since February 25, 1986, and has been a Niles resident for 38 years. He was a Niles zoning board member, and as a village board member has served as a representative on the Niles Fire and Police Pension Board. He oversees areas of Courtesy Transportation and Public Services, including street and alley improvements. Trustee Mahoney has been actively involved with the construction of the new administration building and the Family Fitness Center/Human Services Facility, scheduled to open in fall 1998. As a vice president of AON Corporation in Chicago, Trustee Mahoney enjoys making executive decisions that impact favorably on the residents of Niles.



Bart T. Murphy
Chairman, Finance Committee



Mr. Murphy has served as Village Trustee since June 13, 1978, and has been a Niles resident since 1956. Aside from his responsibilities as Village Trustee and Chairman of the Village's Finance Committee, Mr. Murphy serves on the Cable Committee and is the Niles representative on the R.E.D. Center Board of Directors (Regional Emergency Dispatch for fire/paramedic services). He retired as President and Chief Executive Officer of Bankers Life and Casualty Company in Chicago, but continues sharing his vast experiences and knowledge with a group of officials who are dedicated to improving the community. Mr. Murphy is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Retirement Research Foundation and serves on the Boards of Advisors for St. Mary of Nazareth Hospital and St. Joseph Seminary (Niles College).

Louella B. Preston
Director-Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County
Representative-Northwest Municipal Conference

Mrs. Preston has been a trustee since May 1, 1985, and has been a resident of Niles since 1975. She was the first woman appointed to the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals in 1979 and served as Commissioner until she became a Niles trustee. She is a special education administrator at Steinmetz High School in Chicago. Mrs. Preston is also an attorney and always looks forward to actively addressing community issues that affect all residents of Niles.





Andrew Przybylo
Chairman, Special Projects

Mr. Przybylo was a zoning board member before being appointed to the Village Board in August 1989, and has been a Niles resident since 1981. He serves as an alternate representative to the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County. He is part owner of White Eagle Banquets in Niles and enjoys addressing community issues and providing quality services to residents and businesses.

Abe Selman
Village Manager

Mr. Selman has been a Niles resident since 1962. He served as a village trustee for 17 years until 1989, when he resigned to become Village Manager. His excellent business acumen and knowledge were honed from a career of 35 years at Natural Gas Pipeline of America, where he started as office boy and became Director of Research and Development. Mr. Selman has enjoyed the opportunity to make a contribution to the growth of Niles and the quality of life in Niles.





NILES CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Pictured left to right, bottom row ~ Historical Society Members Dorothy Kretschmer, Marge Berles, Senior Men's Group Member Russ McAndrew, Senior Center Director Jim Stavish, young teen Daniel Marcus, Human Services Director Mary Kay Morrissey, Assistant to the Village Manager Ghida Sahyouni, 1998 Junior High School Essay Contest Winner Elizabeth Marcus, Mayor Nicholas B. Blase, Niles Chamber Member William Darling, Trustee and Centennial Committee Chair Louella Preston, Trustee and Centennial Committee Vice-chair Bart T. Murphy, Trustee Tom Bondi, Teen Mary Spidoni, Village Manager Abe Selman, Historical Society Member Marilyn Brown, Niles Park District President Charles Barbaglia.

Pictured left to right, top row ~ Niles Chamber Member Jeffrey Cardella, Senior Men's Group Member Henry Schaeffges, Senior Women's Group Members Jerri Elder, Estelle Boyk, Niles Chamber Executive Director Denise McCreery, Niles Chamber Member Joanne Cwynar, Park District Representative Diane Skrypek, Park District Executive Director Joseph LoVerde, Park District Representatives Kristine Svachula, Laurie Strzelecki, Niles Family Services Director Marty Friedman.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Since the Niles history project was launched, Mayor Nicholas B. Blase and his staff have been totally supportive. The Niles Historical Museum, home of the Niles Historical Society, was the single most important source of documented information consulted. The collections at the museum include early records of the Village Board of Trustees and courts in Niles, numerous letters, photographs, posters, maps, and other primary sources. The newspaper collection includes editions of *The Niles Bugle* (1957-1979), *Niles Spectator* (1963-1981), *The News*, (Niles edition, 1963-1981), *The Life* (Niles edition, 1963-1981) and *The Review* (Niles edition, 1964-1971). There is also an extensive newspaper clipping file of more recent events which fills several file drawers. School yearbooks, pamphlets and brochures issued by departments within the Village of Niles, organizations and businesses in Niles and thousands of other written items about Niles are also in the collection.

The newspaper collections at the office of the Pioneer Press newspapers in Park Ridge (publishers of various formats of the *Spectator*), microfilm of copies of newspapers from the area dating back to 1921 at the Skokie Public Library, the complete collection of the *Cook County Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune* at the Arlington Heights Public Library, and the complete editions of *The Bugle* at their office in Niles, made available by Bob Besser, were all reviewed. The Newberry Library and the Chicago Historical Society provided valuable information.

I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Marilyn Brown, president of the Niles Historical Museum and the Niles Historical Society. She was most helpful at every stage of this project: locating materials, indicating sources of additional information, reading the entire text and making most-welcome corrections and clarifications. Others at the Niles Museum always extended many courtesies. These include Marge Berles, Dorothy and Willis Kretschmer, and Tina Wiegand.

A special thank you to Walter Beusse, Betty Rolla, and Ray Steil, who shared with me their vast knowledge on so many topics relating to Niles and its history and providing such excellent documentation.

Dorothy Tyse's diamond jubilee history, *The Village of Niles, Illinois, 1899-1974*, was consulted. Tyse donated the working papers she developed, numerous photographs, and other source materials pertaining to the history of Niles to the Niles Historical Museum. These items were reviewed and proved valuable in the documentation of the current study.

Complete identification for specific articles from newspapers is not always listed. These articles, often pasted in scrapbooks kept by an organization, were kept intact but did not always include the name or date of publication. The title indicated for newspapers is the title which appears on the page of the article cited and may not be the cover title of the newspaper. Complete editions of newspapers were not available to check the cover title of a newspaper.

A major flood at the former Niles village hall and a fire at the Ballard Center destroyed many documents pertaining to the history of Niles and the Niles Park District.

In this day of the telephone answering and recording machines, exact dates are not listed for interviews. Most interviews were conducted on the phone and required several calls back and forth to obtain specific information.

References cited in the text are not repeated in the account that follows.

Chapter 1 – Indian Heritage

Robert W. Karrow, Jr., administrative curator of special collections and curator of maps at The Newberry Library, was most helpful in guiding me to early maps of the area of present-day Niles. Some of the more useful sources include:

Blanchard, R. *Atlas of Chicago*. Chicago: Blanchard, 1895. (Includes map of Cook County.)

Blanchard's Map of Chicago and Suburbs, (1909).

Fitch, John. *The Rare Map of the Northwest*, (1785).

Illinois Central Map, (1891).

Karpinski, Louis C. *Historical Atlas of the Great Lakes and Michigan*. Lansing: Michigan Historical Commission, 1931.

Karpinski, Louis C. *Bibliography of the Printed Maps of Michigan, 1804-1880*. Lansing: Michigan Historical Commission, 1931.

A Physical Map of Cook County, (1899).

Scharf, Albert Frederick. Original maps of areas in Cook County drawn around 1900. Available at the Chicago Historical Society.

Schwartz, Seymour I., and Ralph E. Enrenberg. *The Mapping of America*. New York: Henry N. Abrams, Inc., 1980.

Tanner, Helen Hornbeck. *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987.

Particularly useful sources on the Indian presence in Niles include:

Baeris, David A. et al, *Indians of Northeastern Illinois: Anthropological report of the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi Indians in Northeastern Illinois and the Identity of the Mascoutens*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1974.

Clifton, James A. *The Prairie People: Continuity and Change in Potawatomi Indian Culture, 1665-1965*. Lawrence, Kansas: Regents Press of Kansas, 1977. Also correspondence from Clifton in reply to specific inquiries.

Hayes, H. H. *Chicago Evening Post*, September 26, September 29, October 6, 1903. Areas in present-day Niles "showed plainly to archaeologists that (they) were occupied successively by different races and tribes reaching back to the glacial period." Available at The Newberry Library.

Jablow, Joseph. *Indians of Illinois and Indiana: Illinois, Kickapoo and Potawatomi Indians*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1974.

Chapter 2 – Dutchman's Point

Bull, Alfred. *The Township of Jefferson, Illinois*. 1911. Available at the Chicago Historical Society.

Kirk, Nina Mildred (Great-great-granddaughter of Christian F. Ebinger). "Biography of Christian F. Ebinger." Typed manuscript.

Lunde, Anne has written numerous newspaper articles on the Ebinger family. See especially, *The Review*, July 8, 1971, *The Review*, February 9, 1984, and *Chicago Suburban Times* June 29, 1994.

Chapter 3 – Niles Township

Blouin, Nancy of the Park Ridge Historical Society informed me of the large map of Cook County on display at the Northbrook Historical Society.

"Doctors of years gone by," (Typed manuscript with handwritten notation, *Park Ridge Herald*, 7/8/49.) Available at the Niles Historical Museum.

Farrell, Ilisa. Assistance in interpreting descriptions of land abstracts and maps of Maine and Niles Townships.

"Pioneer Dr. Hoffmann's 1860's ledger is indexed," *The Review*, January 14, 1982.

Steil, Ray. The land abstracts showing the history of land ownership for today's Golf-Mill area which Steil has in his possession have been copied and are available at the Niles Historical Museum. Steil has also made copies of documents which indicate interest in migration of the Steil family to the Niles area from about 1832.

Warnke, Mabel. *She Loved People: The Story of Joyce Warnke*. New York: Vantage Press, 1989. The Steil family in the area of today's Niles since 1850.

Chapter 4 – The Village of Niles

Village of Niles, Board of Trustees, Minutes of Meetings, 1899-1926. Available at the Niles Historical Museum.

Village of Niles, Court Records, 1916-1926. Available at Niles Historical Museum.

Chapter 5 – Economic Development

Bussard, Tony of the Bradford Exchange provided a variety of articles, press releases, and other items.

Jacobs, Visconti and Jacobs, 25425 Center Ridge Rd, Cleveland, Ohio 44145, maintained an extensive scrapbook on the activities related to the enclosing of the Golf-Mill Mall in 1984. It is available at the business office of General Growth Management Inc. at Golf-Mill Mall. Lori L. Inman was most helpful in making these records available.

Niles Chamber of Commerce file of newspaper clippings, program booklets, and other materials related to chamber activities and the business climate in Niles. Particularly useful were the annu-

al "Community Guides" the chamber publishes. Special thanks to Denise McCreery and Bob Wordel, current and former executive directors of the chamber staff, for making these materials available to me and for their patience with my endless questions about the economic development of Niles and their most informative replies.

Pomeraning, Denise. "History of the Niles Chamber of Commerce and Industry." Typed manuscript, 1978?

Chapter 6 – Education

Direct contact was made in writing and on the telephone to all Maine and Niles Township educational districts and private schools located in Niles, Illinois. Unfortunately, little information on the historical development of the schools in the districts was received from the offices of the educational districts. District 71 did make available some of the earlier minutes of the school board. This account is substantially based on newspaper accounts and sources available in the collections of the Niles Historical Museum.

Anderson, Anita of the Park Ridge Historical Society supplied a fragment of a newspaper that documented the required educational qualifications of teachers in Maine Township around 1850.

"Come explore Maine Township High School District 207 and discover three high schools where quality education is the Maine idea." (Published by District 207) Includes a map of the district.

East Maine School District No. 63, "History of Superintendents." Untitled. (Chronology of construction of school buildings in District 63).

"History of Maine Township School # 63," Undated, typed manuscript.

Niles College of Loyola University. "Brief History." Typed manuscript with a map of the campus supplied by Rev. Greg Sakowicz.

Niles Township High School District 219 sent a packet of information supplied by Jeff Berkwitz. Included were:

"Excellence in Education... 1995-96 Financial Report"

"High School Fact Sheet"

"Niles Reflections, 1938." A brief history of the district and a calendar of events.

"1996 School Report Card(s)" for Niles North and Niles West High Schools.

"Welcome to Your Board of Education Meeting."

Niles Township High School historical video. Development and closing of the school. Available at the Niles Historical Museum.

Northridge Prep, through the office of Luke Ferris, sent:

"Inside Northridge" Summer/Fall 1997 (published by the Development Office)

"The Northridge Curriculum"

"Profile of Northridge Preparatory School, 1996-1997"

"Tuition and Financial Aid"

Notre Dame High School supplied printed materials about the school, which were published for various school purposes.

Oakton Community College, Alliance for Lifelong Learning provided statistics on students from Niles attending.

Chapter 7 – Election of 1961

The Niles Bugle and *Niles Spectator* had extensive coverage of candidates, parties, and issues related to the campaigns and the election in many editions between February and April 1961.

Chapter 8 – All-America City

The file of materials preserved by Dr. Walter Zinn proved invaluable in writing this chapter. Dr. Zinn supplied the original application filed by the Niles Junior Chamber of Commerce nominating Niles for All-America City consideration and kept intact all correspondence between the nominating committee, officials in Niles, and *Look* Magazine and the National Municipal League. Dr. Zinn also had 8mm films of the events, which are now available on video at the office of the Niles Village Manager. Russ McAndrew, publicity director for the All-America City project, provided valuable information.

"The Pride of Niles," (45 rpm recording; music by Kenneth Bartosz, words by Rev. George Wiskirchen, C.S.C.). Available at the Niles Historical Museum.

Chapter 9 – Niles Public Services

The Department of Public Services supplied copies of the historical materials in the department's archives, which were invaluable in compiling this section. Thanks also to Jun Noriega for his assistance and to Larry Schrambeck and Betty Rolla who read the proposed text and supplied additional information.

Annual Report, Public Works Department, 1961-1962.

"Edward Joseph Bacher," Typed manuscript, August 1984.

"Long Range Planning To Satisfy the Water Demands of a Growing Community," Typed manuscript, undated.

"Niles Sewer System," Typed manuscript, September 1973.

"Niles, Illinois... All America City," *Water Journal*, September-October 1965.

"Niles Water Works System," Typed manuscript, September 1973.

Progress Report, March-April, 1964, "Water and Sewer Committee," Robert Wente, Chairman; *Progress Report*, March-April, 1965, "Water & Sewer," Robert H. Wente, Chairman; *Progress Report*, July-August, 1967, "Public Works Department," Edward Bacher, Director; *Progress Report*, May-June 1974, published in this order, "Water... Too Precious To Waste," "The Village Sewer Division," "The Street and Forestry Division"; *Progress Report*, Spring 1995, "Public Services introduces The Vactor"; *Progress Report*, Fall 1995, "Niles is improving their forestry program--you can help!"; *Progress Report*, Summer 1997, "Sewer Televising"; "Urban Forestry--alive and well in Niles"; *Progress Report*, Winter 1997, "Public Services Engineering Division."

"Public Works Brief History," Typed manuscript, 1970.

Chapter 10 – Niles Police Department

Bolek, John, personal interviews, 1997.

Giovannelli, Raymond, Niles Chief of Police, interview, 1997

Niles Police Department. "We're ready to serve you... Every Hour Every Day." Contains an organizational chart of the police department and a history. No date of publication.

Progress Report, Summer 1986, "The Niles Police Department Law Enforcement Explorer Program"; *Progress Report*, Fall 1997, "Community Service Police"

Stankowicz, Frank, Retired Niles police officer, was interviewed several times in 1997, read the chapter on the Niles Police Department, and provided valuable insights into the operations of the Niles Police Department.

Village of Niles, Board of Trustees, Minutes of Meetings, 1899-1926. Available at the Niles Historical Museum.

Village of Niles, Court Records, 1916-1926. Available at Niles Historical Museum.

Chapter 11 – Niles Fire Department

The Niles Fire Department was extremely helpful in providing access to the rich archives of the Department. Bill White also read the chapter on the Niles Fire Department and made many valuable suggestions, which were incorporated, in the final text. Chief Harry Kinowski and Betty Rolla also made valuable contributions.

Blue Boy Dedication Program and "The Story of 'Blue Boy' A Niles Heritage," May 27, 1984.

Bolek, Jack, Retired Niles fireman, interview, 1997.

Fox, Carl, Retired Niles fireman, interview, 1997.

Hoelbl, Albert, Niles Fire Chief. "Smoke Signals." Typed Manuscript

"In an emergency Dial 911." Pamphlet published by the Niles Fire Department; gives historical information on the Niles Fire Department and the RED (fire department communication) Center.

Niles Fire Department press releases, 1972-1978.

(Niles) Fire Dept Profile. 6 pp. available on the Internet. Management Information Systems Department created the Niles home page. Fire Dept Profile was created December 1, 1995; last modified October 24, 1997. Also available History, Memorial Quilt, RED Center, Activities.

"Open House and Dedication of Fire Bell and Plaque, October 11, 1980." Contains a listing of all Niles volunteer firemen who served the Village of Niles since the Niles Volunteer Fire department was established.

Progress Report, April, 1974, "Emergency Medical Services", "Smoke Detectors for the Home"; *Progress Report*, Fall 1979. "Let's Put an End to the Dangers in Tornado Alley!!"

"Public Safety Education Network." Pamphlet.

Chapter 12 – Niles Park District

Joe LoVerde, Director of the Niles Park District, made available the scrapbooks of printed information on the Niles Park District and Niles Park District records that survived the fire at the Ballard Sports Complex. Many of the newspaper articles did not contain complete bibliographical identification.

"Fall Fun Guide, 1997." Niles Park District.

Chapter 13 – Niles Public Library

Cary Czarnecki, Niles library administrator, arranged for my review of all available library board minutes, read the first draft of the chapter on the library, answered numerous questions, and provided additional leads for further sources of information about the development of the Niles Public Library District. Pam Nelson, Joe Vlach, and Diane Winberg of the library staff were helpful in providing and locating materials. The Niles Public Library maintained a modest newspaper clipping file which is particularly useful for the early history of the Niles Public Library District.

Chapter One. Published quarterly and distributed to each household in the Niles Public Library District since 1988.

Chapter 14 – Niles Department of Human Services

Mary Kay Morrissey, Director of Niles Human Services, was most cooperative in providing access to the archives maintained by her department, reading all drafts of the proposed text, and making many appropriate suggestions.

"Family Services Provides Variety of Assistance," Copy of unidentified newspaper article, probably 1987.

"Happy (13th) Anniversary," Niles Family Service, 1981.

"Niles Family Service Report." Undated, probably 1971.

"Niles Senior Center." Fold-out pamphlet.

Progress Report, September-October, 1974, "Niles Family Service; An Agency With a Heart..."; *Progress Report*, May-June 1975, "Your Senior Citizen Center"; *Progress Report*, Winter, 1978, "Niles Family Service--An Asset to Our Community."

"Ten Years of Helping You--Your Niles Family Service."

"Update," Niles Family Service, September 1979.

Contact was made with every religious congregation in present-day Niles. All responded. Many sent unsigned histories of specific congregations.

Belden Regular Baptist Church

"Belden Regular Baptist Church," Typed manuscript.

A Century of God's Faithfulness in the Midst of Change, 1888-1988; A History of Belden Avenue Baptist Church (Of Chicago, Illinois) now Belden Regular Baptist Church of Niles, Illinois. Genevieve Beverage, Ronald Duncan, Mamie Thompson, History Committee. 1988.

East Maine Baptist Church of Niles

"East Maine Baptist Church of Niles," Typed manuscript.

The First Baptist Church of Niles

"The First Baptist Church of Niles." Pamphlet.

McManus, Pastor Roger, Undated letter.

Grace Chinese Christian Church

Rev. Fook Tin Ho, interviews, 1997.

The Holy Taxiarchi and St. Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church of Niles

"The Holy Taxiarchi and Saint Haralambos Greek Orthodox Church of Niles," Typed manuscript.

Lakeview Korean Presbyterian Church

Lee, Rev. Jong Min. "Lakeview Korean Presbyterian Church Vision 2000." Typed manuscript.

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection

Correspondence with Rev. Bruce Anderson.

Maine Township Jewish Congregation Shaare Emet

"Maine Township Jewish Congregation Shaare Emet," Typed manuscript.

Niles Assembly of God Church

"Niles Assembly of God Church," Typed manuscript.

Scrapbook maintained by the church.

Niles Community Church

Boswell, Jr., Rev. Bruce, interviews, 1997.

Hirschfeld, Eileen. "At Niles community church; Korean Christians find haven,"

"On our cover" (Niles Community Church)

Our Lady of Ransom Church

Kern, Elaine. Correspondence.

"Our Lady of Ransom Church," *History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, The Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980.

"Parish History," Typed Manuscript.

"The Spirit of Our Lady of Ransom Faith Community," November 16, 1997.

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church

"The History of Saint Anselm's Church, 1958-1968." Typed manuscript.

Koppe, Paul J. Correspondence.

St. Isaac Jogues Parish

"History of St. Isaac Jogues Church," Typed manuscript.

"St. Isaac Jogues Church," History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago, The Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980.

St. John Brebeuf Church

Brief History of St. John Brebeuf Parish. Published for Silver Jubilee observance, June 25, 1978

"St. John Brebeuf Church," History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago, The Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980.

25th Anniversary; St. John Brebeuf. This booklet chronicles the first 25 years.

St. John Lutheran Church and School

Centennial of St. John Lutheran Church, Niles, Illinois, 1859-1959

"Short History of St. John Lutheran." Typed manuscript

St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church

St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church; 75 years

St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church; Walking with the Lord, 100 Years. Historical booklet prepared for centennial, May 26, 1996.

St. Michael's Orthodox Catholic Church

"St. Michael's Orthodox Catholic Church," Typed manuscript.

St. Paul's Reformed Episcopal Church

Jordan, Pat. Interviews, 1997.

Chapter 16 – Community Groups

Acting Up!

Verson, Karol, Interviews, 1997.

Friends of the Library

Bergeron, Elaine, Interview, 1997.

Biga, Sr., Frank, Interviews, 1997. Also has a scrapbook of clippings and other items.

Costello, Irene, Interview, 1997.

Shurson, Mavis, Interview, 1997.

Garden Club of Niles

Friedman, Sandy, Interview, 1997.

Homeowners Associations

Homeowners associations would frequently announce meetings in the local press and were often listed in publications issued by the Niles Chamber of Commerce. The archives at the Niles Public Services Department had the most complete listing of such associations.

Arnold, Jeffrey. Interviews, 1997.

Grennan Heights Improvement Association. *Minutes of Board Meetings, 1960-1969.* Available at Niles Historical Museum.

Knights of Columbus North American Martyrs Council 4338

Ken Lee, current financial secretary of Knights of Columbus Council 4338, has several notebooks of newspaper clippings, photos, and other documentation on Council 4338 which he made available.

Morton Grove-Niles League of Women Voters

Elizabeth Matteoni, Marilyn Kramer, and Joyce Herter were most helpful in supplying information. Also, the League approved preparing several boxes of minutes, newspaper clippings, newsletters, correspondence, and other documentation on the Morton Grove-Niles League of Women Voters and depositing these items with the Niles Historical Museum where they are available for review.

Niles Art Guild

Marge Berles prepared all the papers of the Niles Art Guild for deposit with the Niles Historical Museum where they are available for review.

Niles Concert Choir--Niles Symphony Orchestra

Etes, Gloria. Interview, 1997 and printed materials.

Harrigan, Kate. "Bringing beautiful music to the heights," *Accent*, April 13, 1995.

"Niles Concert Choir." Typed manuscript.

Niles Historical Museum, Niles Historical Society

A complete file of the minutes, newsletters, newspaper clippings, programs, correspondence, and other written documentation is available at the Niles Historical Museum.

Niles Junior Historical Society

Knights of Columbus Council 4338 notebooks.

Matuszak, John. Interview, 1997.

Niles Lioness Club of Illinois

Angus, Gloria. Interviews, 1997.

Niles Lions Club of Illinois

A series of scrapbooks compiled by Russ McAndrews on the activities of the Niles Lions Club of Illinois was placed on deposit at the Niles Historical Museum and was made available for review.

Niles Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7712

Beusse, Walter. Interviews and provided printed materials, 1997.

Niles-Northtown American Legion Post 29

"Form New Niles American Legion Post," Unidentified newspaper clipping, November 26, 1964.

Odachowski, Ted. Interview, 1997. Odachowski made available the November 26, 1964, clipping, a roster of officers for the 1997-1998 Legion year, and other written documentation on Post 29.

Niles Sister Cities

"Niles Sister Cities," *Sister Cities International*, March 1994.

Northwest Italian-American Society, Niles, Illinois

Bavaro, Todd. Interview, 1997.

"Northwest Italian-American Society, Niles, Illinois." Pamphlet, 1997.

Niles Squares

Czapar, Nancy. Provided list of presidents.

Leach, Norm and Dee. Provided list of early presidents.

Peck, Keith and Elsie. Interviews, 1997. Also provided a manuscript "History of Niles Squares," and other written materials about square dancing.

Opa Greek Folk Dance Troupe of Chicago
Kralis-Sampras, Georgia. Interview, 1997.

Optimist Club

Jekot, John. Interview, 1997. Also provided written and printed information about the Optimist Club.

Polonia Cares

Przybylo, Andrew. Interview, 1998.

Recovery, Inc.

"About Recovery, Inc.," and a series of scrapbooks maintained by Recovery, Inc., 802 N. Dearborn, Chicago were reviewed. These were made available by Shirley Saks, who was also interviewed in 1997.

"Niles Recovery, Inc. Marks Anniversary of Self-Help," Unidentified newspaper clipping, probably 1964.

Sister Cities

"Sister City Program--Introductory Meeting." Leaning Tower YMCA, September 26, 1985.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 311

Fritze, Hal. Interview, 1997.

Passarella, Marty. Interview, 1997.

Sarich, Nick. Interview, 1997.

Wilhelm, Fred. Interview, 1997.

Woman's Club of Niles

Minutes, scrapbooks, and other documentation maintained by the Woman's Club of Niles are available for review at the Niles Historical Museum. Special thanks to Nancy Niemoth, who arranged for the delivery of the records.

Women's Auxiliary of the Niles Police Department

Minutes, scrapbooks, and other documentation maintained by the Women's Auxiliary of the Niles Police Department are available for review at the Niles Historical Museum.

YMCA Senior Citizen's Club

Scrapbooks maintained by the staff at the YMCA Senior Adult Center are available for review in the office of Evelyn Merkl, director, at the Leaning Tower YMCA.

Chapter 17 – Care for the Aged

Forest Villa Nursing Center

"Forest Villa Nursing Center Celebrates 30 Years of Serving the Elderly in the Community."
Typed manuscript.

George J. Goldman Memorial Home for the Aged

Goldman Home History. Typed manuscript.

Seefurth, Pam. Correspondence and interviews, 1997.

GlenBridge Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

Markel, Diane. Correspondence and interviews, 1997.

Hampton Plaza Health Care Centre

Andersen, Dorothy. Correspondence and interviews, 1997. Also provided packet of printed information about the centre.

Sawicki, Anna. Interview, 1997.

Regency Nursing Centre

Dickson, Linda. Interviews, 1997. Also provided packet of printed and written information on the history and current operations of the centre.

St. Andrew Home

"40th Anniversary; Celebration of Love." Pamphlet.

Henning, Gerri. Interview, 1997.

"History of St. Andrew Home." Printed manuscript.

"St. Andrew Home, Niles." *Archdiocese of Chicago Institutional History*. Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980.

St. Benedict's Home

"St. Benedict Home for the Aged, Niles." *Archdiocese of Chicago Institutional History*. Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980.

Sebo, Sister Irene. Interview, 1997.

Chapter 19 – Sports Activities

Niles Amateur Hockey Association

Beusse, Walter. Interviews, 1997. Printed information.

Niles Boxing Team

Boyk, John. Interviews, 1997.

Niles Falcons Jr. Football Association

Schoose, Gert. Interview, 1997. Printed information, programs, schedules, photos, and rosters of the Niles Falcons football teams.

Niles Little League

Beusse, Walter. Interviews, 1997. Printed information and compilation of statistics on total amount of teams and players during history of Niles Little League.

Niles Nuggets

Breitzman, Myrna and Stan. Interviews, 1997.

Niles Softball Team

Boyk, John. Interviews, 1997.

Niles Tigers

Boyk, John. Interviews, 1997.

Chapter 20 – The Village Manager Form of Government

League of Women Voters of Morton Grove-Niles. "Study of the Village Manager form of government (in Niles)," 1976.

"Village of Niles organizational chart."

Selman, Abe. Interview, 1997.

Van Geem, George R., Interviews, 1997. Printed information.

Village of Niles. *Budget Hearing Minutes*. April 17, 1989, April 12, 1990, April 16, 1991, April 14, 1992, April 19, 1993, April 14, 1994, April 12, 1995, April 11, 1996, April 10, 1997.

Village of Niles Ordinance (1962-41) creating the office of Village Manager and defining the duties and responsibilities thereof; and amendments as stated in Village Code, 1965, 2-61.

Elections in Niles

Results as reported in the minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Niles and as recorded in the office of the Village Clerk of Niles. Village records are not available for 1926 to 1930. Election results for 1927, 1928, 1929, and 1930 were obtained from the *Cook County Herald* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Essays

Hospital movement in Niles

Village of Niles, Board of Trustees, minutes of meetings, 1946-1968.

Leaning Tower

"Robert Alexander Ilg, 1879-1964, a report; One man and a dream fulfilled." Typed manuscript.

Milwaukee Avenue

Wnek, Sandra. "A Path Through Progress: Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago." Typed manuscript, 1986.

St. Adalbert's Cemetery

Baumruk, Robert. Interview, 1997. Printed information.

Dziennik Chicagoski, June 21, 1945.

Janda, Rudolf. *Sedmdesatipetilete Jubileum Ceskeho Narodniho Hrbtova v Chicagu, Ill. 1952*. Dagmar Bradac of the Czechoslovak Heritage Museum, Library and Archives, not only provided the appropriate passages relating to St. Adalbert's Cemetery in the above work, but was kind enough to add translations and explanations of the historical context in the Czech community.

Galach, Alicja and Ewa Hobrzyk. "Cmentarz sw. Wojciecha; Ludzie i pomniki," *Dziennik Zwiazkowy*, May 26-29, 1995.

Iwicki, John, C.R. *The First One Hundred Years: A Study of the the United States, 1966-1966*. Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1966.

Janas, Edward T. *Dictionary of American Resurrectionists, 1865-1965*. Rome: 1967.

Kruszka, Wacław. *Historia Polska W. Ameryce*. Vol. IX, Milwaukee: 1912.

McClure, Diane. "The Bohemian Polish Catholic Cemetery Society of Chicago," *Chicago Genealogist*, Fall, 1989

Minogue, John, St. Adalbert cemetery manager, Interviews, 1997, 1998.

"Saint Adalbert Cemetery," *Archdiocese of Chicago Institutional History*, Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980.

Satzik, Julie A., assistant research archivist, Archdiocese of Chicago. Interviews, 1997. Materials and assistance in locating and making items available at the Archdiocesan Archives of Chicago.

Wachtel, Karol. *Z.P.R.K. Dzieje Zjednoczenia Polskiego Rzym.-Kat. w Ameryce*. Chicago: 1913.

St. Hedwig's Orphanage

Killips, Rose Marie, editor of "Hedwigian II," Interviews, 1997, and 10 years of issues of "Hedwigian II."

Malolepszy, S. M. Dulcissima, O.S.F., "An Historical Study of St. Hedwig's Home; an institution for the care of dependent children in the Archdiocese of Chicago." Loyola University Master's thesis, 1945.

Tam O'Shanter Country Club

Karen Nickerson has received printed materials and other items related to Tam O'Shanter Country Club from Dale May and Dottie Campell that are now on permanent deposit at the Niles Historical Museum.

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HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

By Elizabeth Marcus

Over the years Niles has invited representatives of the youth to serve for one day as the government of Niles. Elizabeth Marcus, selected as Mayor in 1998, wrote an essay about the past and future of Niles. The Village Board of Trustees believed it worthy to share with all in this Centennial History of Niles.

NILES 1899-1999 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE PAST AND HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

Niles is a village with many accomplishments. It is hard to believe that a community that looks so beautiful, clean and modern will be 100 years old on August 24, 1999. In that period, we have achieved many things. The three achievements which seem to be the most prominent are: 1) receiving the "All-America City Award," 2) the "Free Bus," and 3) the Leaning Tower. As for the future, there are two points that should be addressed – more promotion of living in Niles and an expansion of the Niles Youth Council.

The greatest accomplishment for Niles has been receiving the "All-America City Award" on March 4, 1965. This recognition was bestowed on our Village for such accomplishments as: eliminating gambling, reorganizing and modernizing our Police and Fire Departments, improvements in the Park District, improved library facilities, and a Public Works Department that maintains the beauty and cleanliness of Niles. This award honors Niles for establishing such an organized town and preparing for the future.

Another major accomplishment for Niles is that we were the first in the nation to offer "Free Bus." We are progressive in taking good care of people. The Niles "Free Bus" offers people a way to safely get around and learn about our great town. It is also an advantage for people who need a little extra help going to and from places. This system is valuable to all citizens of Niles.

Furthermore, we should recognize the Leaning Tower YMCA, which represents our Sister City – Pisa, Italy. In April of 1991, Niles entered into a pact with Pisa to share cultural, educational, athletic, artistic and technical expertise. In order for us to develop a better relationship with our friends in Pisa, Niles has implemented the Student Exchange Program. This is a major achievement because in addition to the excellent education offered in Niles schools, we are expanding our knowledge to encompass the world.

Niles is on the right course of progress for the next 100 years. However, some areas could be improved. We need to get the word out that Niles is a great place to work and raise a family. In order to continue our growth and prosperity, we need to encourage young families to live here. In addition, Niles Youth Service Providers are trying to establish a Niles Youth Council consisting of sixth- through 12th-graders. This program needs to be aggressively expanded. The young have many good ideas. If they feel they are respected and listened to, there is a better chance of them wanting to stay here as adults. Therefore, the present will remain secure and the future will be promising.

Niles has had many accomplishments over the past 100 years. Our village has been honored as an "All America City," giving Niles pride and promise. Also, the "Free Bus" has been a great help to people through the years. Lastly, the Leaning Tower represents our educational international connection. Over the next 100 years, Niles can look forward to more young families moving in and a strong youth council. With the progress we have made to date, the next 100 years are sure to be the best yet.