



The Little White Paper

The Monthly Newsletter of the Golden Valley Historical Society
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SPRING IS WELCOMED IN WITH TALES ABOUT LIFE IN MINNESNOWTA

Ole and Lena are a husband and wife team that has been performing together for over 30 years. Dressed in traditional Scandinavian outfits, they sing songs in Norwegian, Swedish and good 'old fashioned American.

In addition, funny stories and jokes about life in MinneSnowta are told with refreshingly clean humor! Don't miss Ole and Lena at the Thursday, April 9th, general membership meeting, 7:00 p.m. held at the historic church, 6731 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55427. Refreshments will be served following the program.



Ole and Lena

RUBBER CLAD HEROES – A POEM WRITTEN ESPECIALLY FOR THE FIRE FIGHTING SERVICE:

He might be the neighbor next door or live just across the hall,
He might be a friend, a lodge member, or you know him not at all.

He might be the man you see as fat or thin or short or tall.

One thing is certain, he is the man awaiting your emergency call.

For this man you see is a Fire Fighter, Volunteer or City Paid.

If you call during the day or the middle of the night he answers unafraid.

Being highly trained, he is ready to face smoke or a flaming hell,
To save the trapped and the hungry devouring flames repel.

These rubber clad heroes known as the men in blue,
Perform a very thankless job, and do it just for you.

So when you hear a siren and the fire engines have passed,
Say a prayer for his safety, as this ride might be his last.

(Editor's note: Poem published in the "Constitution and By-Laws of the Golden Valley Fire Department Relief Association", author J.R.Reiser, October, 1962)

IN REVIEW:

The March 11 general membership meeting program was Marshall Tanick, a law historian, Golden Valley resident and member of the Golden Valley

Historical Society, who's presentation was about how World War 1 changed the existing laws in Minnesota. The presentation was well fortified by a power point presentation and a several page handout showing the legal changes and the various law suits resulting in Supreme Court rulings. The 18 members and guests in attendance enjoyed the education and some added their own research to the discussion.

SECOND GENERATION GOLDEN VALLEY STREET SIGNS ARE A POPULAR GIFT. YOU CAN STILL GET ONE FOR YOUR PARENTS, SIBLINGS OR FRIENDS. CONTACT DON ANDERSON – 763-588-8578.

DID YOU KNOW?

...**THAT** engineer Fredrich Graeser, who was raised in Germany, designed Minnesota State Highway 100 similar to the German Autobahn with very wide right of way and large green area between the two roadways. ...**THAT** two of the first three interchanges were built in Golden Valley – Highway 55 and Highway 100, Highway 12 (Wayzata Boulevard – now I-394) and Highway 100. The third was at Highway 7 and Highway 100. ...**THAT** in 1920 the “Beltline” Highway 100 was far out in the country and that the planners believed that the City of Minneapolis would not grow out even to Highway 100. (Source: James Unrah, PE Consultant to MN Department of Highways.) ... **THAT** the first fire truck that the Village of Golden Valley acquired was a 1923 Oshkosh fire truck purchased in 1943 for \$450.00. The Oshkosh was later determined to be too slow when kids on their bicycles got to the fire before the firemen in the Oshkosh arrived at the fire. The Oshkosh is still used in local parades and is on display during city events.

...**THAT** the establishment of the Village of Golden Valley fire department was sparked by a roof fire? In 1940 there was a roof fire on a home on the northwest corner of Glenwood and Xerxes Avenues, now part of Theodore Wirth Park. The owner called the Minneapolis Fire Department which responded promptly. A ladder was set up against the house but before a fireman could climb up to the roof the Minneapolis Fire Chief arrived and ordered the ladder removed. Since the house was not located in Minneapolis he advised that the St. Louis Park Fire Department be called. When they refused to

come, Robbinsdale was called. Before Robbinsdale would send out a truck, \$35.00 had to be deposited at the Robbinsdale City Hall. Meantime, neighbors formed a bucket brigade and extinguished the blaze. That incident heightened the concern of all the residents of the Village of Golden Valley and helped establish the Golden Valley Fire Department. Credit for spearheading the initial organization is generally given to Fletcher Olson, owner of the local lumber yard that was located on the corner of Winnetka and Sixth Avenue North next to the first village hall. Golden Valley’s only equipment consisted of several fire extinguishers that were kept in the basement of the old village hall which had a dirt floor in the basement. The extinguishers were buried in the dirt floor to keep the water in them from freezing during the winter. When called to a fire, the firemen had to dig out the extinguishers from the floor and then head to the location of the fire. Later, the department became more accessible with a 24-hour switchboard in the village which was located at the Glenwood Hills Hospital which had agreed to accept fire calls. This number was given to the village residents. When a call was received, the switchboard operator called the fire chief or the next man on the list. It was then the duty of the fireman’s wife to call the other firemen. (Source: “Golden Valley 1886-1986 Minnesota”; This history of Golden Valley is out of print. The Golden Valley Library has copies in their reference section. If you have a copy of this book please consider donating it to the Golden Valley Historical Society.)

GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL CUB SCOUTS LEARN ABOUT GOLDEN VALLEY HISTORY:

Ten cub scouts together with their parents or guardians attended a program on March 17th at the historic church. Society’s vice president, Jim Hera, and secretary, Don Anderson, team taught the group with the history and past uses of an authentic buffalo robe, the “old fashioned” land line phone, the history of the Society’s historic church, and a slide show about the history of Golden Valley using the “old fashioned” slide projector. Following the program, the cub scouts were treated to juice and cookies. The cub scouts meet regularly on Tuesday evenings at the Good Shepherd Church in Golden Valley.

ACCESSIONS TO THE SOCIETY:

The trust of Kathyleen Reiser donated one book – “Constitution and By-Laws of the Golden Valley Fire Department Relief Association” by J. R. Reiser, October, 1962, and, one medallion “Twin City Federal 35th Anniversary 1923 – 1958”.

Nyla Mengal donated one Golden Valley Baseball jacket. A mystery donor left on the door step a handcrafted small church complete with stain glass windows, chimes, and the inside lighted with an electric bulb. Another mystery donor left a new 4’x6’ United States American flag, presumably to replace the faded flag flying on the Bill Varner memorial flag pole in the church’s front yard.