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November 2021

Issue #183



**Thanksgiving Thoughts
By Ruby Jourdan Hilix**

The Pilgrims had so little,
Yet they humbly gave their
 thanks
For food and warmth and
 shelter
And for peace within their
 ranks.
We take these things for
 granted
And enjoy them every day—
Our freedom and our families
And the chance to work and
 play.
So as our prayers are offered,
May we look into our hearts
 And thank God for the
 blessings
That have set this day apart.

~ Taken from *Ideals
Thanksgiving*, Vol. 54, No.5,
September 1997



Library Happenings

“The richest person in the world, in fact, all the riches in the world couldn’t provide you with anything like the endless, incredible loot available at your local library.” ~ Malcolm Forbes, American Publisher

Library Happenings are written and submitted by Brenda Knox, Director of the Donnellson Public Library, unless otherwise noted.

News from the Library

We thank the following generous donors:

Family and Friends of Barbara Holtkamp; Family and Friends of Nadine Lindner; Adopt-A-book: Barb Schau, Lori Griswold, Carol Tull, Amber DeRosear, Evan Blankenburg.

As your Library Director, I will take this opportunity to express gratitude for all of the help I receive throughout the year from our volunteers, and supporters, from the Friends of Donnellson Library and our Trustees. From helping us purchase needed equipment and furniture, helping with genealogical inquiries, and for helping us with displays, the Richard Proenneke Museum, or for serving on our Board of Trustees, or committees, I thank you kindly. May you have a peaceful and blessed holiday season.

Preschool Story Hour

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have faced challenges hosting in-person programming. At the current time, we have not been able to attract families with young children to visit the library for Story Hour, although we had some successful programming outdoors this summer. Another challenge is that the local daycare is short-staffed at this time. We are asking any interested families, or family daycares to give us a call, to tell us when a convenient time would be to bring young children to a library program. Would an after lunch/before nap-time work? Would you like to bring kids in their p.j.'s for an evening program, around 6:30? Please give us a call at 319/835-5545. We will be able to socially distance but will probably have limited numbers should we get enough kids to host a program once again.

Senior Crafternoon

Our successful program for seniors resumed in October, with numbers limited to 10 registered patrons at a time. Victoria Matlock taught a fall floral arrangement to the class. Senior Crafternoons are sponsored by Sunnybrook. We filled the class with the maximum number of seniors, and their arrangements turned out beautifully:



In December, our class will meet again on the second Wednesday of the month, and will be a holiday gnome craft. The class is already full but call the library at 319/835-5545 to inquire about the January meeting!

The Donnellson Book Core

The Donnellson Book core met on October 18 to discuss *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* by Agatha Christie. Many of the members had not read anything by the prolific author in the past, and were surprised by the number of clues and red herrings the author used to cleverly deflect them from figuring out the murderer. They enjoyed reading some biographical information about Agatha Christie, including the famous episode when she went missing for over two weeks, and claimed to have suffered from amnesia, at the beginning of her successful career, in 1926.

Our December book is aptly entitled *Winter Sisters* by Robin Oliveira. She was the author of *My Name is Mary Sutter*, a book about a female 19th century doctor in the Civil War era, which the book club read in 2015. **Here is what GoodReads has to say about *The Winter Sisters*:**

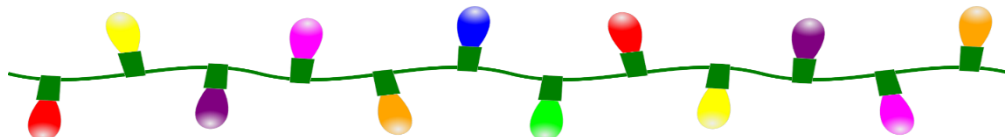
New York, 1879: An epic blizzard descends on Albany, devastating the city. When the snow finally settles, two newly orphaned girls are missing. Determined not to give up hope, Dr. Mary Sutter, a former Civil War surgeon, searches for the two sisters. When what happened to them is finally revealed, Dr. Sutter must fight the most powerful of Albany's citizens, risking personal and public danger as she seeks to protect the fragile, putting at risk loves and lives in her quest to right unimaginable wrongs.

As contemporary as it is historic, Winter Sisters is part gripping thriller, part family saga, and ultimately a story of trauma and resilience that explores the tremendous good and unspeakable evil of which humans are capable.

The Donnellson Book Core will have a holiday party on their next meeting, December 20. Everyone is to bring a wrapped book, (gently used is fine,) and some kind of finger food to share. The meeting will begin at 7:00.

Christmas Décor Contest

The Friends of Donnellson Public Library have registered eight entries for the Christmas décor contest. Anyone is invited to pick up a map showing the addresses and vote for their favorite festive residence. This would be a wonderful holiday activity for families! All votes will be tallied on December 15, and hand-painted signs will be placed in the winners' yards. The lighted displays will remain up until December 31.



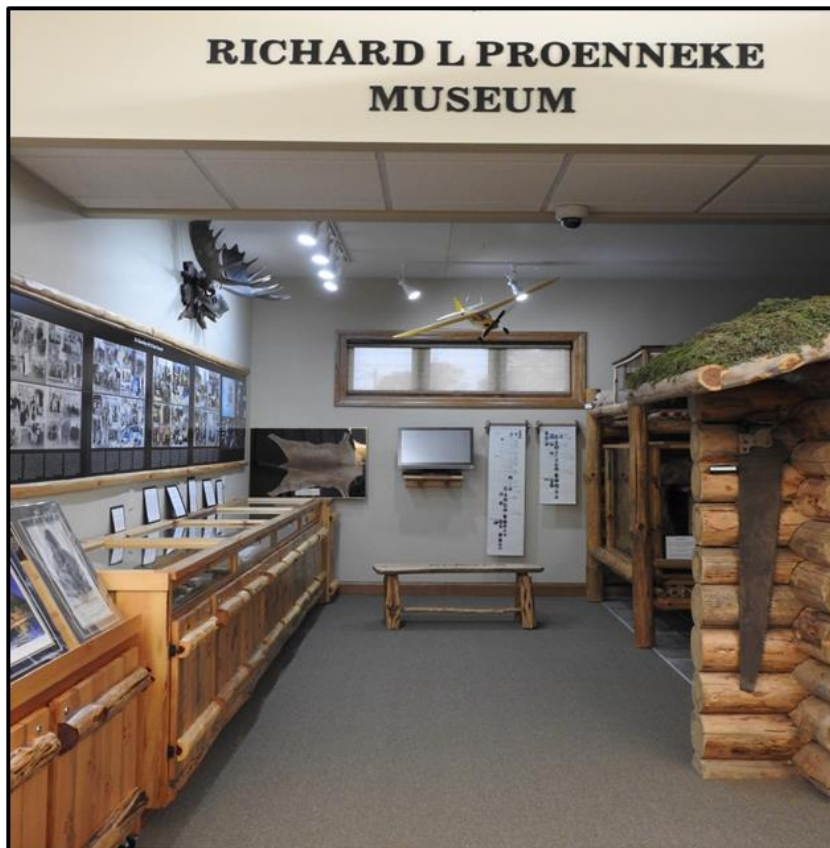
Writers' Bloc



The November meeting of the Writers' Bloc was held at 1:00 p.m., 17 November, in the Local & Family History Department of the Donnellson Public Library. Attending were Jan Blankenberg, and Diane and Aaron Kruse.

Jan read three poems written for the Lyrical Poetry Society Contest for 2022 for the Humorous category. The three poems were "I Do", "Over Achiever", and "What Goes Around, Comes Around". Since it was a hard decision to make on her own, she was asking for input from her two colleagues. The one which got the most laughs was "I Do" so we will see next year in the Lyrical Iowa Poetry Book if it was the right choice. **Written and submitted by Diane and Aaron Kruse**

Richard L. Proenneke Museum



Raymond "Jake" Proenneke

We have become very familiar with Richard Proenneke and his life's story, but not a great deal is known about Richard's younger brother Raymond "Jake" Proenneke. "Jake" played an integral role in Richard's life at Twin Lakes. Without the support of "Jake" Richard would not have been able to attain his dream of living at such a remote place. Raymond would supply and have the film, slides and photos developed, a variety of camera equipment, lenses, etc., and when visiting would help with the filming.

He was the youngest of the Proenneke siblings. He had served in the US Army Air Corp during WWII. Jake was a mechanical inspector of machine shops and in the aerospace industry and aircraft instrument repair. He was a private pilot and glider pilot who rebuilt small aircraft as a hobby. He built a 1947 Luscombe 8-E, with 85 hp.

Raymond got his nickname from an old bachelor by the name of “Jake Halbasch” who lived a few miles from the Proenneke homestead. He would follow Ole’ Jake around everywhere almost like his shadow and because of that people started calling him “Jake.” He wanted to learn how the old bachelor made these toy wooden whistles from short pieces of straight grained maple branch wood.

After WWII, Raymond “Jake” settled in Southern California. In an email from Norma Jean Contreas, she writes:

I met Dick Proenneke in the late 1940’s when he came to visit his brother, Jake. We called Jake Ray. Ray lived in a trailer on our property with my uncle, Browning Leeson, and took his meals with us. He developed his films in my mother’s kitchen. I wonder if it was some of the work he got from Richard.

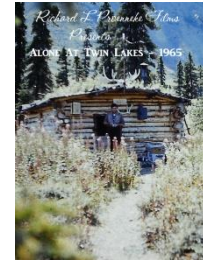
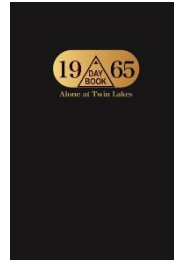
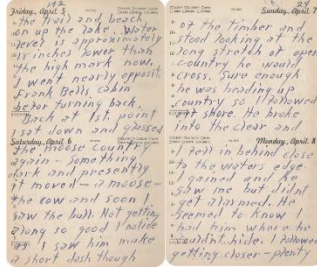
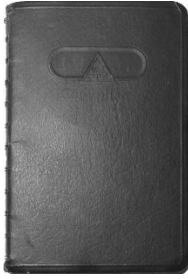
My understanding was that the men were part of a family who lived in Iowa and none of the children had married. Last I heard of Ray, he had sold the apartment building he was living in and moved to the San Jacinto, Hemet, CA area. I moved to Arizona and lost track of him.

My favorite picture of me and my brother is one Ray took in our backyard, he got tired of tying my shoelaces and sat down under clothesline and taught me to do it myself.



Raymond “Jake” Proenneke holding a nice “Arctic Char” while on a fishing trip with Richard on Kodiak Island, AK, circa 1952.

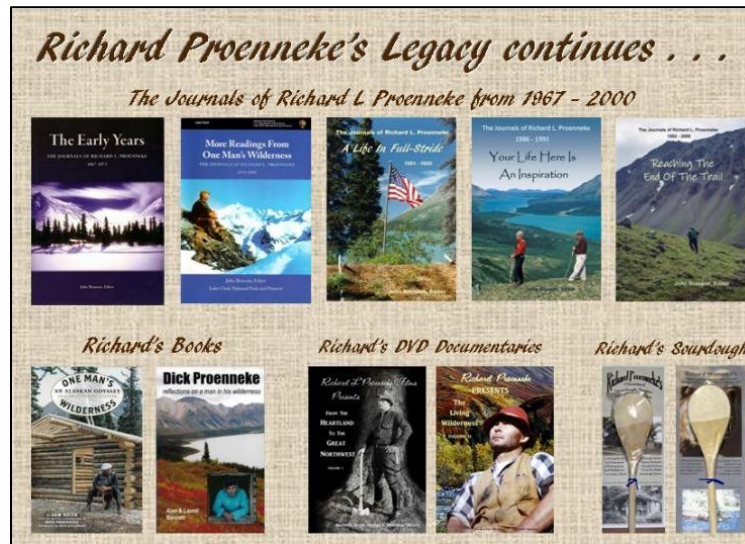
Don’t forget to pre-register for your copy of the upcoming new Richard Proenneke Journal “Alone at Twin Lakes – 1965” and the accompanying DVD Documentary to be released on Richard’s 106th Birthday, May 4, 2022.



The original 1957 Caterpillar Daybook & two pages from the Journal Published Journal and DVD Documentary “Alone At Twin Lakes - 1965”

To pre-register for your copy of the Journal, or DVD Documentary, or a copy of both please contact: brie@richardproenneke.com

Christmas is coming, and what better gift than something from the Richard L Proenneke Museum collection, a great and unique gift for those Proenneke fans, or that special hard to by for person on your list. And, 100% of the proceeds goes to support the Richard L Proenneke Museum. We hope you will stop by and visit!



The complete set of the Journals of Richard L Proenneke and the book “One Man’s Wilderness;” the “Reflections on a man in his wilderness; DVD Documentaries, “From the Heartland To The Great Northwest” and “The Living Wilderness;” The Homeland and Kodiak Sourdough Starter Spoons are all available at the Donnellson Library or at our website: richardproenneke.com

Are you a Richard Proenneke fan? Would you like to learn more about this incredible man who grew up in our backyard? Consider joining us and lending a helping hand. Drop us a line at: Brie Anderson, Richard Proenneke Museum Curator: brie@richardproenneke.com or Brenda Knox, Librarian bknox@donnellson.lib.ia.us

A November Suggested Reading

Regular followers of political news will immediately recognize *Beyond Biden*. The author is the former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives – historian, analyst, politician, chairman of Gingrich 360 (a multimedia production and consulting company), author of 41 books, and husband of Callista Gingrich, former ambassador to the Holy See.

As the title suggests, the book focuses on the political and economic path of the United States beginning now, including the elections of 2022 and 2024. The summary reads “*Beyond Biden* is dedicated to the millions of Americans who suffered, endured, and prevailed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It was their courage and patriotism that carried our country through one of the worst crises in our nation’s history. Because of their triumph, we look forward to an exciting and prosperous future.”

Along the way, the author spends entire chapters offering explanations of the impact of Big Tech on our elections and culture through social media platforms and political activism, the definition of what ‘woke’ means and how it is impacting our nation, ‘cancel culture’ vs. free speech, and an examination of the state of human rights in our country, the need for energy independence, our jobs and supply chain, and an in-depth examination of the threat of cyber war today.~ **Written and submitted by Aaron Kruse**



Local & Family History Department

The month of November proved to be a little slower than usual for our Local and Family History volunteers due to fewer requests for family research and donations but allowed time to catch up on other projects and have a completed Veterans’ display for the entire month.

~ Lee County as well as local Illinois, Missouri, and Van Buren obits were alphabetized and ready to be filed in the appropriate binders and files for continued easy location of information.

~ The Local & Family History Department is still looking to add more family album information on the shelves. If you have a family album you would like to donate it, we will be happy to accept your copy or make a copy and return the original to you.

~ The scroll donated by Mary Ann Hasse Engle and written by Leonard Haase on Iowa’s first school was turned over to Dodd’s Printing to have it enlarged so it would become a permanent reference for research and presentations of the history of the Galland School building project.

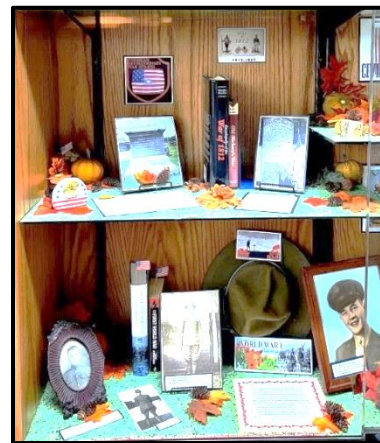
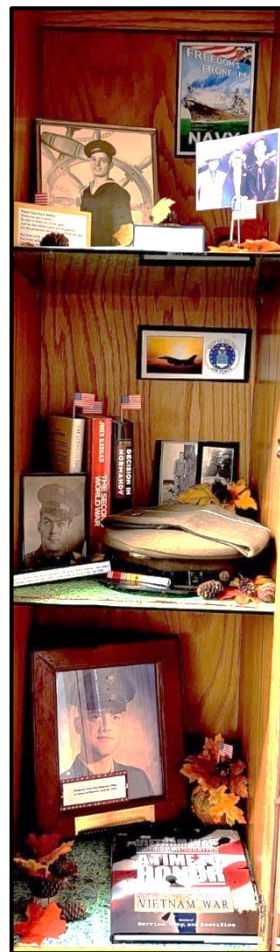
~ Diane visited the McKeehan and Acklam cemeteries with Barbara Schau, a Harrison Township clerk working with the Lee County Trustees. Since the Local & Family History Department

maintains records for all cemeteries in Lee County, the tour was helpful to hear about what the Trustees do to maintain the cemeteries, including pioneer cemeteries (those where there have been twelve or fewer burials in the last 50 years). It was noted a recently established Pioneer Cemetery Commission was established to maintain those cemeteries but may ask for assistance from the County Trustees. The Henkle Cemetery was also visited even though it is located in Van Buren Township because it is a unique cemetery because of its location.

Local and Family History November Veteran's Display

The Veteran's display turned out to be outstanding thanks to the American Legion Post #474 and many residents in the Donnellson area for the contributions of photographs and other military memorabilia. The display was also in place for almost the entire month of November. Photographs and items of interest covered the Revolutionary War, The War of 1812, Civil War, WWI, WWII and Vietnam. Books of historical military background were also on display with each war covered. If you have information about family veterans and would like to share their story along with a photograph, please contact Diane Kruse or Sharon Meierotto.

Below are photos from the display.



Upcoming December Display

Although all the displays are of interest to our patrons, the final display of the year was hailed as their favorite. Below is a “sneak peek” from the colorful, fun-filled Christmas display for 2021. As a special note, this year there are 19 elegant White house ornaments donated to the Local & Family History Department by David and Pat Lau in addition to items on loan from Sharon Meierotto, Carole Elston, and Diane Kruse.

We invite you to stop by to view this special display.



Newsletter Editor, Diane P. Kruse, Retirees4Now@aol.com

