

Hinckley Historical Society News

2026, volume 2

The Museum Reopens April 4.....

After being closed for the winter, the museum reopens Saturday April 4 from 10 until noon. Stop by and see what's new and enjoy treats and conversation. The museum hours are every Saturday from 10 to noon and at other times by calling for an appointment (815-761-4058).

There are new exhibits and seven more oral histories to see that were recorded by HBR students. The high school history class with teacher Nick Sullivan have interviewed dozens of present and former community members about their experiences. Come view these interesting stories. You can also quickly read the transcripts of these interviews.

Remember the Historical Society will also assist you in working on family genealogy and the history of your home. We can help navigate local newspaper articles, cemetery records, Ancestry.com software, and government documents. It's another way HHS helps bring history to life.

.... April 19 We Celebrate Our Freedom

Everyone is invited to the HBR High School at 2 p.m. on Sunday afternoon April 19 as high school students and the Historical Society celebrate the start of America's journey for freedom 250 years ago. This special program will discuss how Americans gathered at Lexington and Concord to resist the British on April 19, 1775, at the start of the Revolutionary War. Speakers will provide



background on the different views about the revolution, and highlight what unified our country then and might still today.

The resulting Declaration of Independence listed self-evident truths that provided a national goal to seek and ideals to realize. Students will also share "what America means to me" and ask the audience to add their views. The April 19 program begins at 2 p.m. in the HBR High School, Hinckley. This program is one of many planned by the HHS to draw attention to the people, places and stories which have shaped our country for 250 years.

May 7 is a Good Day to Help Our Community

If you've been thinking about supporting some of the nonprofit organizations serving DeKalb County, there's a good reason to do it on May 7. "Give DeKalb County" is a 24-hour fundraising event on May 7 that matches every donation with a percentage of a general fund that usually totals over \$200,000.

Organized by the DeKalb County Community Foundation since 2014, the event is a way to encourage charitable giving, raise awareness for the work of local nonprofits, and build stronger communities. Three of the organizations you can help are from Hinckley: the Food Pantry, the Festival Association, and the Historical Society.



These local nonprofits serve important missions in our community. The Mission of the Hinckley Area Food Pantry is to help our neighbors who need assistance with food. The Hinckley Festival Association connects, supports, and partners with others to enrich the community with cultural, artistic, and our Fireworks Fest events. The Hinckley Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the history of the Hinckley area and bringing it to life for future generations. Donations help support a museum, summer band concerts, newsletters, and historical programs.

Make your donation go farther on "Give DeKalb County" Day.

Give DeKalb County 2026 Mail-In Donation Form

INSTRUCTIONS 1) Go the website GiveDeKalbCounty.org to view participating organizations • 2) Complete the form • 3) Write **one check** for the total donation amount **payable to: DCCF** • 4) Mail completed donation form and check **between April 23 and May 7** to: DeKalb County Community Foundation, 475 DeKalb Avenue, Sycamore, IL 60178 • **THANK YOU!**

Organization or Fund Name – Please Write Legibly	Donation Amount	Anonymous? <i>Check here if you do not want to reveal you name publicly</i>
1. Hinckley Area Food Pantry		
2. Hinckley Festival Association		
3. Hinckley Historical Society		
4.		
5.		
6.		
Total Donation to be paid by check		

*You can pay by credit card at the website **GiveDeKalbCounty.org** and complete the form there*

Your Name _____

Email Address _____

A tax receipt will be emailed to you. Thank you.

Pigs in History and Popular Culture

You're invited for a Saturday afternoon on the Marvel Davis Farm in Big Rock to learn about how pigs have had a worldwide impact on our culture, foods, and health. The Big Rock Historical Society will host a presentation about pork at 2 p.m. on May 9 from one of the Illinois Humanities' favorite Road Scholars.



Author Cynthia Clampitt will probably not talk about “political pork” but she will explore the topic of Wild Boars to Baconfest. Once pigs were introduced into the Americas, Clampitt says they became an almost instant success, raised by settlers but also valued by Native Americans. As the Midwest opened, pigs moved west and numbers grew rapidly. Poet Carl Sanburg would call “Chicago ‘Hog butcher for the world.’”

The Marvel Davis Farm is located at 47W066 Jericho Road, Big Rock. Marvel Davis and her husband Harley lived in Big Rock their entire lives. One of Harley's ancestors, John Pierce, settled the family's Big Rock farm back in 1836. Marvel has always been aware of what a treasure her pastoral acres are, so sold some of her land to the Forest Preserve District of Kane County in 2006.

Illinois History in 10 Objects

In commemoration of America 250, the Hinckley Historical Society presents a program to look at Illinois history through the lens of ten objects from the collection of the Illinois State Museum. The program will be presented Tuesday May 26 at 6:30 in the Community Building, 100 Maple St., Hinckley, IL

Explaining the objects will be Erika Holst, Curator of History at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield. Her themes will include the first Indigenous peoples of Illinois; Illinois at the time of the Revolutionary War; women's history; the Civil War; immigration; forgotten Illinoisans; the Great Depression; and World War II.

Attendees are encouraged to bring an object or photo of an object of personal or family significance. At the end of the presentation, attendees will be invited to give voice to their own family and personal stories by sharing the stories associated with these objects. This presentation hopes to convey that history is actively being created every day and our own objects and experiences are vital parts of it.



Erika has worked in the public history field for more than 20 years and is passionate about sharing stories of people and history through material culture. She enjoys sharing new information with people, helping them to consider things in a new way, and seeing people make connections between historical events and objects, and their own experiences and histories.

He Loves the Outdoors

Story by Janet Lagerloef

When Victor Viland's parents house burned down, they remodeled their chicken house, his mom hung curtains, and the parents moved in. "My sister, brother, and I were born there. We didn't have much; except their love," he says.



In 1961, when Victor was ten years old, his parents moved from Newark to Hinckley to work a 320-acre farm with dairy cows, pigs, chickens, and the occasional goat. Victor was worried about making new friends but his mom and dad told him to be kind, do his best, and he would soon fit in. And he did.



Once a week he and his mom went to town to sell their eggs to the two grocery stores. Hinckley bustled with family stores back then. "We could barely find a place to park," he says. According to Vic, a lady could buy a dress for Saturday night in the boutique, stop at the meat market for a Sunday roast, look for a lamp in the furniture store, and pick up donuts at the bakery. Her husband might dash across the street to one of the two barbershops, price a tractor in town, or shop for a car. Friends met up at the three bars.

"And we kids had fun," Victor adds. During a snow storm, he and his friends hitched a junk car hood to a pickup truck and gave sled rides around town. "Everyone knew we didn't have a license. Heck, I drove myself to driver's ed training." After high school, Victor married Barb Boget; they had two boys, Josh and Nathan, and settled on a farmette south of the tracks on East Sandwich Road.

He landed a solid job at Caterpillar with a good salary and benefits. But Victor needed to figure out a new career because he hated working indoors. "So, I gave my notice at Caterpillar, bought a backhoe, because I had been around them on the farm, and went to work."

Victor made connections with a few friends in town and began putting in sewer and water lines, installing farm drainage tile, digging graves, and providing landscaping. Since he had the equipment, he graded the school's soccer and baseball fields. "We worked on the big soccer field that the kids play on to this day. We helped when they were going to put lights on it," he adds. Victor believes when you reach out and do things for others, that's the thing you have to pass on. He ran a snow plowing business to help the school system and for homes all over the town.

He joined the Hinckley Fire Department and was willing to stand on the back of the fire truck racing to a fire. He served on the Village Board; knocked on doors to find out what was important to people.



Victor is still involved in the United Methodist Church and loves to cook biscuits and gravy for church breakfasts.

He and his sons had fun on the farm digging a track for their go-carts and renovating retired school buses to take to NASCAR races in Chicago and Michigan. Victor and his family planted trees in the park when his parents passed away. "Dad always said when it comes to trees, you look ahead."

(continued on page 5)

(Outdoors, continued from page 4)



But Victor is slowing down now, so he passed his snow plowing business on to Brandon Bish, a younger HBR grad and a father.

To celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary, Victor and Barb packed lunches and drove to Glacier National Park. They booked a nice hotel room with a wonderful meal. But when they arrived, it was closed due to

Covid. So they sat together on a bench overlooking Lake McDonald sharing a brown bag lunch.



Now-a-days, the grandkids drive the NASCAR buses around the farm. And they help Grandpa plant trees and sow patches of wildflower seeds. “When I see them pick wildflowers, I think I’m the richest man alive.” Victor Viland.



Board Members:

President - Bob Pritchard

Vice Pres. – Cathy Bartels

Secretary – Jennifer Klambauer

Treasurer – Barry Morsch

Other members –Shawn McCrea, Rebecca Nickels, Stephanie Shelton, Ardith Trumpy, and Jay Yaggie

Newsletter published by Bob and Mary Pritchard

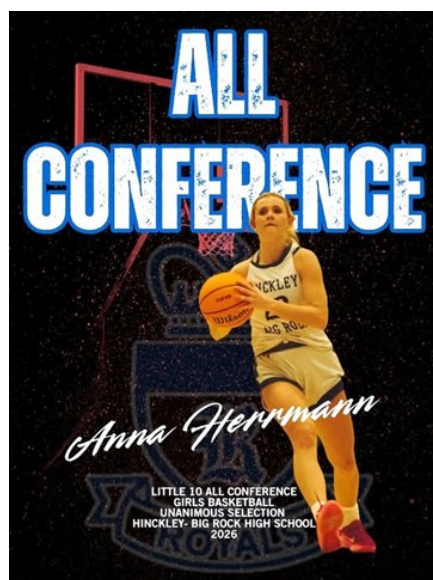
We Celebrate the Success of HBR Students



Varsity Boys Regional Champions



Team wins 4th in Regional Special Olympics Tournament



Anna Herrmann was voted All Conference for the 4th year and is listed in the state top 20 for career three point goals.

Senior Luke Badal and Junior Marshall Ledbetter were unanimous selections for All Conference in Boys Basketball; Marshall was also an All State mention.

(continued on page 7)

(HBR, continued from page 6)



Matt Badal served as FFA Chapter President and received the State FFA Degree.



Savanna McMurtrie earned a first place rating in the IHSA Solo Contest.



Matilda Simon enlisted in the Illinois National Guard and earned a college tuition scholarship.

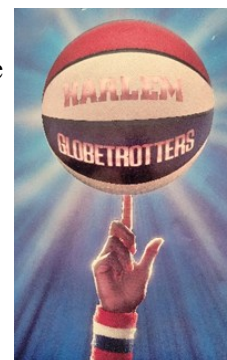
Why the First Globetrotter Road Game was Here

Hinckley is known for hosting the Harlem Globetrotters on their first road game nearly a century ago. Over the years, many have asked why they chose Hinckley but the answer was only recently revealed.

Two high school students from the Illinois Math and Science Academy in Aurora donated to the HHS their 1991 video taped interview with the last living member of the historic Hinckley Merchants team. Edward H. King was living in Maple Park at the time and the students were preparing an entry for the Chicago Historical Society History Fair. Matthew Pritchard, Hinckley, and Karl Hammond, Decatur, were researching the start of the Globetrotters team. Matthew had seen them play in



Hinckley in 1987 at the start of their Diamond Anniversary year and Ed King centered the tipoff.



King explained that in 1927, Merwin Strever--a recent Hinckley graduate and star basketball player--and a Mr. Erdinger were scheduling the games for the Hinckley Merchants basketball team. "Erdinger was a bridge engineer for the Illinois Highway Department that was building Rt 30 from Aurora to Big Rock. He was staying in a Hinckley hotel at the time."

Pritchard and Hammond visited with King

"Erdinger was friends with Abe Saperstein who was organizing a basketball team of all black players called the Harlem New York Globe Trotters. They were looking to make some money playing teams outside of Chicago," King recalled.

King remembers the Globe Trotters arrived on the train and stayed so long visiting with people after the game that they missed the train back home. "They played a good game of basketball; not much horsing around like later years." The Merchants would play the Globetrotters four more times in the next three years. The Merchants team broke up after a few years, but the original players got to scrimmage with the Globetrotters in 1949 on one of many return visits to Hinckley.



141 East Lincoln Ave., Hinckley, IL 60520
HinckleyHistoricalSociety@gmail.com
Facebook: Hinckley Historical Society Group
Website: Hinckleyhistoricalsociety.com
Phone: 815-761-4058

- ⇒ Museum is open on Saturdays
- ⇒ Have you renewed your membership in the HHS?
- ⇒ Attend our April 19 Salute to America
- ⇒ May 7: Help nonprofits, Give DeKalb County

Don't Miss These Enjoyable Programs in 2026.

Circle these dates and plan to join the Hinckley Historical Society for a variety of enjoyable programs this year.

- ♦ **April 4**, Museum reopens. Open each Saturday 10 to noon.
- ♦ **April 19** at 2 p.m., the Patriot's Day program celebrating the start of the Revolutionary War will feature speakers and student presentations in the HBR High School, Hinckley.
- ♦ **May 7**, all day, GiveDeKalbCounty.org will match your donations to local non profits.
- ♦ **May 9** at 2 p.m., hear about the role of pork in our country...not political payoffs but "Wild Boar to Bacon Fest" at the Marvel Davis farm (47W066 Jericho Road, Big Rock) .
- ♦ **May 26**, 6:30 p.m., share your important objects in the history of Illinois with State Museum Curator Erika Holst in the Hinckley Community Building (120 N Maple St, Hinckley).
- ♦ **June 18**, 6:30 p.m., enjoy music by the Shade Tree Music Company, our first summer band concert in the Community Park (100 N Maple Street, Hinckley).
- ♦ **July 8**, 5 p.m., join with citizens across the country in reading the Declaration of Independence. Meet at the Hinckley Community Building (100 N Maple Street, Hinckley).
- ♦ **July 16**, 6:30 p.m., enjoy our summer concert featuring the Misty River Music Makers- Ladies Barbershop in the Hinckley Community Building (120 N Maple Street, Hinckley).
- ♦ **August 5**, 6:30 p.m., enjoy the Power of Songs in our democracy with Chris Vallillo in the Community Building (120 N Maple Street, Hinckley) .
- ♦ **October 4** join our Cemetery Walk with stories from our ancestors. Watch for details.