ORGANIZATIONS

Masonic Lodge

Albany Lodge No. 36 A. F. and A. M. is one of the oldest Masonic lodges in the state, having been organized in 1851. All early records were destroyed in the fire of 1883, but it is known that Hiram Brown was the first Worshipful Master. The lodge has met continuously in the rooms on Water Street that were built to their specifications after the fire. Their previous rooms had been at the same location.

The present officers are: Worshipful Master, William Pryce; Senior Warden, Richard Detra; Junior Warden, Dwight Bump, Jr; Secretary, Robert Atkinson; Treasurer, John Schmid.

Eastern Star

Chapter 86, Order of the Eastern Star was organized in Albany in 1896. The first Worthy Matron was Anna B. Sutherland; the Worthy Patron was Dr. G. H. Webster. In 1975 the lodge affiliated with Brodhead and turned in its charter.

The Past Matron's Club was organized in 1949 with Greta Eldred, president, and Beulah Broughton, secretary, and is still active today.

In 1946 when the order celebrated its 50th anniversary, three charter members were present: Minnie Eldred, Jessie Pryce and Andrew Christopher. Greta Eldred was Worthy Matron at that time and Francis Atkinson, Worthy Patron.

Odd Fellows

The Albany Lodge No. 75, I. O. O. F. was organized in 1854. By 1861 the lodge had nearly 90 members. So many of these enlisted to fight in the Civil War that meetings were discontinued until 1865. The fire of 1883 destroyed the Lodge Hall and all records, so names of the first officers are not known, but many leading citizens were among the early members. The lodge celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in 1930. There has been no I. O. O. F. in Albany for many years.

Rebekahs

Juanita Rebekah Lodge No. 145 was organized in 1901 with 42 members. Mrs. Maria Tibbets was a charter member. They contribute to many worthy causes: the World Eye Bank, disaster relief, scholarships and youth camps. They maintain the old I. O. O. F. Hall which they took over when the I. O. O. F. ceased to exist in Albany.

Present officers are: Noble Grand, Mary Striker; Vice Grand, Ruth McCulley; Secretary, Josie Hansen; Treasurer, Phyllis Bennett; Chaplain, Ethel Schultz; Warden, Lydia Jones; Conductor, Norma Blumber; Inside Guardian, Betty Coole; Right Supporter to Noble Grand, Ruth Malkow; Right Supporter to Vice Grand, Rose Crabtree; Outside Guardian, Patricia Lyle, The 50th Anniversary of the lodge was celebrated in 1976.

Royal Neighbors

Pearl Camp No. 407 was organized in 1896 with 23 charter members. It is an organization of fellowship which also offers insurance to members. First officers were: Oracle, Esther Flint; Vice Oracle, Clara Comstock; Recorder, Grace Tilley; Receiver, Nellie Wessel; Chancellor, Ella Bennett: Marshall, Lillian Eldred.

Officers in 1983 are: Oracle, Helen Phillips; Past Oracle, Irene Blumer; Vice Oracle, Jessie Rendall; Receiver, Greta Eldred; Recorder, Helen Killingstad; Chancellor, Marie Oberholzer; Marshall, Bertha Blumer.

Modern Woodmen

Sugar River Camp No. 1022 of the Modern Woodmen of America was organized in 1896. It has been out of existence in Albany for many years. There are memories of its "goat" constructed of wood and covered with a goat skin, which new members had to ride. This animal and its tradition were passed along to the Royal Neighbors.

American Legion

Thomas McDermott Post No. 144 of the American Legion was organized in 1920 with 35 charter members. Officers were: Commander, G. Roy Phelps; Vice Commander, Paul Stewart; Post Adjutant, Cliffe H. Gelbach; Finance Officer, Thomas B. Draper; Post Chaplain, Robert Goslyn; Sergeant-at-Arms, Emil Steindorf; Service Officer, G. Roy Phelps.

In 1927 the Legion moved into its new building on North Water Street (now Albany Senior Center). In 1976 they built a large building across the street and to the north.

After World War II the name was changed to McDermott-Steindorf Post in honor of Gordon Steindorf.

Present officers are: Commander, Michael Alexander; Vice Commander, Dennis Parker; Adjutant, Charles Briggs; Finance Officer, Larry Ommodt; Agent, Harry Reasa.

American Legion Auxiliary

The Albany American Legion Auxiliary was organized in 1922. A special concern is service to veterans' hospitals, as well as service to the community of Albany and support of Legion projects.
No record of the officers in 1922 is available. The officers in 1925 were: President, Lucille Atkinson; Secretary, Barbra Wescott; Treasurer, Frances Gelbach.

The present officers are: President, Rosella Briggs; Secretary, Shirley Alexander; Treasurer, Hazel Ommodt.

**Lions Club**

The Albany Lions Club was organized in 1968 with 50 charter members. The first officers were: President, Melvin Ingwell; First Vice President, Fred Baertschi; Second Vice President, Leon Marty; Third Vice President, Walter Reasa; Secretary Daniel Weber; Treasurer, Gerald Heitzman.

The goals of the group are to support Lions International, to help those in need and to make Albany a better place in which to live. These goals have been admirably carried out. Space does not permit a list of all their many worthy projects. A recent important gift was $1,627 toward the purchase of the “Jaws of Life” for the Fire Department and EMS. A yearly $500 scholarship is given, many local groups are sponsored, and the Lions Camp for the blind and the Leader Dog Project are supported generously.

The current officers are: President, James Sterri; Past President, Darrell Clark; First Vice President, James Haddinger; Second Vice President, Walter Althaus, Jr.; Third Vice President, Larry Marti; Treasurer, Gerald Heitzman; Secretary, Dan Weber.

**Other Groups**

There have been at least three businesses’ organizations, all having the aims of improving the business climate and promoting the general welfare of the village. In the 1890’s there was the Albany Improvement Association. The Commercial Club was active from the 1920’s to 1951, and the Community Club was in existence in the 1950’s.

**Go-Getters**

The Go-Getters Club was organized in September, 1949, at the home of Ida Smout. It is a social and service organization, helping the sick and the needy and sending Christmas cheer boxes. Officers for 1983 are: President, Rose Crabtree; Vice President, Norma Blumer; Secretary, Betty Coole; Treasurer, Jessie Rendall; Sunshine, Mary Striker.

**Winnette Homemakers**

The Winnette Homemakers club was organized in 1964, and is now affiliated with Green County Homemakers. They have made many contributions to a wide variety of worthy causes. Present officers are: President, Gloria Glass; Vice President, Marion Sperry; Secretary, Betty Brugger; Treasurer, Margaret Holtsapple.

**Sugar River Homemakers**

This group, which was affiliated with the University Extension, was one of the oldest homemakers clubs in Green County. It disbanded in 1982.

**A. A. R. P.**

The Albany chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons was organized in October, 1973. First officers were: President, Islona Gaulke Gardner; Vice President, Francis Atkinson; Second Vice President, Ann Hlavacheck; Secretary, Isabelle Sharer Hixon. Meetings are now held jointly with Brodhead. This organization is concerned with matters affecting older citizens, as well as being social in nature.

Officers for 1983 are: President, Beatrice North; First Vice President, Bertha Brace; Second Vice President, Betty Coole; Secretary, Zelma Klossner; Treasurer, Jessie Rendall.

**Albany Women’s League**

The Albany Women’s League held its first meeting in June, 1971. The officers elected were: President, Sherry Hlavacheck; Vice President, Patty Zurfleh; Secretary, Nancy Krueger; Treasurer, Shirley Jones; Historian, Mary Jo Dunphy.

Among their activities of benefit to the community are: the Christmas Stocking Project, which provides gifts for the needy families; sponsorship of the Girl Scouts; sponsorship of a Badger Girl to go to Girls’ State; scholarships; and purchase of park equipment. This year they published the Albany Centennial Cookbook.

The current officers are: President, Janet Richards; Vice President, Julie Lesler; Secretary, Kathy Lobeck; Treasurer, Sharon Pryce; Sunshine, Debby Houlberg.

**Other Groups**

Former women’s service organizations were the Albany Women’s Club, which was active in the late 1920’s and the 1930’s, and the Albany Civic Club which existed in the 1960’s. Both had as their aims to work toward the betterment of the village and to encourage personal growth.

The Albany Jaycettes were chartered in 1980. They sponsored many worthwhile activities, before disbanding (because there was not a Jaycees group here) in 1982.

The Albany Equal Suffrage and Literary Association was organized in the 1880’s, and met for several years. In 1885 they forwarded a petition with 245 names to the
State Legislature asking for women's suffrage. Names prominent in Albany's early history are found in the membership of this group; Tibbets, Maynard, Jobes, Warren.

Senior Citizens

The Albany Senior Citizens group was organized in 1978. First officers were: Chairperson, Mary Striker; Second Chairperson, Gretta Eldred; Secretary, Ruth Whalen; Treasurer, Helen Killingstad. The club occupies the former American Legion building, which serves as a Green County nutrition site twice a week.

Current officers are: President, Helen Graves; Vice President, Julia Broughton; Secretary, Marion Mabie; Treasurer, Zelma Klossner.

Sugar River Association, Inc.

In 1975 Helen Zimmerli urged interested people to form an organization which would promote recreational activities in the community as well as make contributions to general village betterment. The first officers were: President, Ewald Zwickey; Secretary, Lita Sutherland; Treasurer, John Macke; Board members, Bill Hein and Helen Zimmerli.

This club sponsors Yesteryear Days, owns a canoe rental service and makes financial contributions to various groups.

Current officers are: President, Colleen Brewer; Vice President, Jan Albertson; Secretary and Treasurer, Lita Sutherland; Board members, Maxine Kjorness, Ron Larson and Florence Atkinson.

There was great interest in the temperance cause for many years in Albany. The earliest organization was the Sons (and Daughters) of Temperance, the Albany Division No. 198, named The Drunkard's Friend. The group pictured here is the Women's Christian Temperance Association, which was a strong and active group for many years. This group of temperance ladies meeting at home of Mrs. J. F. Maynard are: (1) Mary Comstock, (2) Jessie Humes, (3) Anna Sutherland, (4) Clara Warren, (5) Ella Warren, (6) not identified, (7) Maria Tibbetts, (8) Sarah Lewis, (9) Mrs. Dr. Hill, (10) Martha Wessel, (11) not identified, (12) Mrs. J. F. Maynard, (13) Eva Warren, (14) Mrs. Van Patten, (15) Grace Maynard, (16) Martha Warren.

Boy Scouts

There was an organizational meeting for a Boy Scout Troop in Albany in 1919. C. W. Whitcomb and Cliffe Gelbach were involved and Max Murrey was the Scoutmaster.

In 1938 a troop was again formed, with E. O. Osborne as Scoutmaster and John Christopher, assistant. The troop met at the Legion Hall. Other former leaders were: Duane Gaarder, Russell Fletcher and Boyd Atkinson.

Today Boy Scout Troop 107, Winnisheik District of the Blackhawk Area Council has a membership of 30 boys age 11 to 15. Phil Jones is the Scoutmaster; Assistant Scoutmaster is Larry Hansen. The troop has been an Honor Troop for the past three years and has received a National Camping Award for the past two years. They camp locally on the Crabtree property on
the Sugar River and attend the Apple River Canyon Scout Camp one week each summer.

Richard Cleaveland became an Eagle Scout in 1981. Previous Eagle Scouts were: Dick Killingsstad, Keith Albright, Greg Jones, Eric Runaa and John Hlavachek.

Cub Scouts in Albany are led by Sherry Hlavachek. Webelos leaders are John Hlavachek and Mike Alexander; den leaders are Jerri Leitschuck and Linda Fiske. Membership consists of 16 boys age 8 to 10 years, who are involved in service projects for the community, as well as personal attainments leading to becoming Boy Scouts.

Dan and Beth Sobacki lead a Tiger Cub Pack of 7 year old boys.

Girl Scouts

The history of Girl Scouting in Albany—like that of many organizations—is one of alternating active and inactive periods.

One of the earliest leaders, Esther Osborne, recalls being a leader in the 1930's, along with Bea Kahl and Lottie Burt for about 25 girls of junior high school age. These leaders have outlived many of their troop members. Meetings were held in a building owned by George and Ann Hlavachek and at other locations. Hikes to Reuben's Cave and camping on the shores of Lake Kegonsa were the troop's summer time activities. Indoors they learned homemaking skills and handicrafts that were displayed in a yearly exhibit.

Organizing local troops into the present form, known as Badger Council of Girl Scouts, occurred in 1957 when "lone troops" from Green, Rock and Walworth counties joined.

In the 1950's the program was active here with Ann Borgiorno, Pearl Minder, Elaine Reasa and Kay Zwickel as leaders. The meeting place was the old Village Hall. Leaders remember accompanying the girls to day camp in Evansville.

During the 1960's and 1970's, Girl Scouts were led by Eva Farberg, Carol Gohike, Helen Killingsstad, Pat Lyle and Tommie Mabie. More recently the leaders were Ethel Anderson, Janet Beck, Charlotte Hamilton and Sandy Koebler. Activities continued in developing the Scouts' love of the out-of-doors and personal skill through badge work.

Presently there are about 50 girls and six leaders, Linda Carolan, Jane Hahn, Janice Jenkins and June Schneider for the Juniors; Linda Dieter and Janet Richards are Brownie leaders. Activities are focused on service, skill development, careers, self-sufficiency and troop camping at New Glarus Woods. Individual members participate in day camp at Monroe and resident camp in northern Wisconsin.

FARMING

In the spring of 1840, James Campbell, Albany's first settler, planted a crop of wheat on the land he had claimed the previous year. And for the next 30 years, this crop was the main income producer in the area.

The land was productive, and wheat was one crop that could be planted, harvested, and marketed with a minimum of effort and cost.

Yields of 30 bushels to the acre were common, and on many farms were as high as 40 bushels. But as production grew, finding markets became a major problem. Except for the wheat that was consumed locally, the rest had to be transported to market in wagons. Before the railroads came, that often meant a four or five day trip to the lake ports of Milwaukee and Racine. With prices of 40 to 50 cents a bushel—and often less—profits were slim.

Around 1870, the picture changed. Disastrous prices, combined with the invasion of the chinch bug, doomed the production of wheat.

Big orphan lamb still enjoys its bottle of milk, being fed by a sober-faced young man by the well-known name of John Wood.