

*View of Sagers, Valparaiso in the distance.*



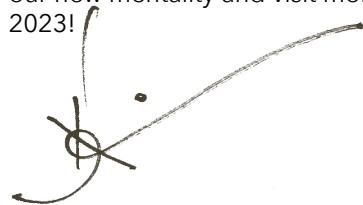


## from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"Out with the old and in with the new," is a familiar idiom this time of year. We are certainly taking that phrase to heart at the PoCo Muse. If you haven't noticed, our new home at 20 Indiana Avenue has presented opportunities to prioritize quality over quantity. Our ability to tell meaningful stories has changed the way we operate as a museum.

Simply put, we don't need to dominate your schedule to accomplish our mission. Our newest strength is being a minor part of your day instead of all of it. Spend forty-five minutes viewing *Connections*, the *Prehistoric Pop-Up*, works of historical Porter County art in the Cain Gallery, and then carry on with your day. The possibilities are endless.

The greatest part of this change is knowing you can do it over again in six months and learn a completely new set of local stories. I hope you will embrace our new mentality and visit more often in 2023!



**Kevin Matthew Pazour**

*Executive Director • PoCo Muse*

P. S.—Our members-only publications and events are other great ways to add local history to your itinerary. Become a member or renew your support at [pocomuse.org/membership](http://pocomuse.org/membership).

## ABOUT THE IMAGES

**Cover** • *Sager's Lake, circa 1920s*

This hand-tinted, photographic postcard depicts the ice storage house on the shore of Sager's Lake. The original Porter County courthouse tower in downtown Valparaiso can be seen in the background. Notice the multi-tiered, conveyor ramp for loading ice into the ice house.

**Right** • *Sager's Lake, circa 1920s*

In this image from the Mockler Collection, two men cut ice from Sager's Lake with a hand saw, while John Hisgen, a local photographer, looks on. Notice Hisgen's photography equipment in the center of the image and the sled on the right used for transporting freshly cut blocks of ice. To learn more about the ice industry on Sager's Lake, read Steven Shook's story on pages 8-11.







**PORTER COUNTY ART**

*Robert Cain Gallery*

The Robert Cain Gallery honors M. Robert "Rob" Cain (1930-2022), a lifelong Valparaiso resident and beloved Valparaiso High School art teacher. Like his classroom of years past, the gallery features Cain's work and a revolving display of other artists' works from our permanent collection.



**CONNECTIONS**

*Eunice Slagle Gallery*

Take a closer look. Gathered throughout the PoCo Muse are pairs of objects that speak to each other in surprising ways. The objects may appear different at first glance, but after closer consideration, they reveal an important relationship.



**PREHISTORIC POP-UP**

*Montague/Urschel Gallery*

Our award-winning *Prehistoric Pop-up* exhibit from the 2022 Porter County Fair is now on display at the PoCo Muse. Stop by to learn about the American mastodon remains that Myron Benedict found on his Porter Township farm in 1949.



*Image • Executive Director Kevin Matthew Pazour leads a tour of Connections, November 2022. Albert Photographic.*



## JANUARY

### LIVING HISTORY: SHOW AND TELL WITH IAN BAKER

**Saturday, January 21 at 10a**

*PoCo Muse, 20 Indiana Avenue*

Normally, Ian Baker and his fellow living history reenactors pitch their tents on the front lawn of the former Sheriff's Residence across the street. During the cold winter months, however, they will bring their rotating collection of immersive historical displays indoors. Stop by the Eunice Slagle Gallery of the PoCo Muse for a hands-on, interactive show-and-tell of historical objects. Kids are welcome and encouraged to attend!

## FEBRUARY

### HISTORY TALK: JOHN DECROW DIARIES

**Saturday, February 11 at 10a**

*PoCo Muse, 20 Indiana Avenue*

For the past few years, PoCo Muse volunteer and supporter Pam Murrow has been hard at work reading and transcribing the diaries of Morgan Township farmer, John B. DeCrow (1834-1923). The diaries in the PoCo Muse Collection span from 1866 to 1890 and document DeCrow's daily chores and business records. Join Pam at this History Talk for a marvelous peek into the day-to-day life of a Porter County farmer.

## MARCH

### FIELD TRIP: BRAUER MUSEUM OF ART

**Saturday, March 25 at 4p**

*Brauer Museum of Art, Valparaiso University Center for the Arts, 1709 Chapel Drive*

After a two-year hiatus, the Brauer Museum of Art at Valparaiso University reopened to the public in the fall of 2022. Join us for a field trip to the Brauer to welcome its new director, Jonathan Canning, and view the exhibition featuring 130 works of art from its rich collection of American art, world religious art, and Midwest regional art.



*Image • John B. DeCrow and his family on his Morgan Township property, taken after 1879.*



## ICE INDUSTRY OF PORTER COUNTY

By Steven Shook

Prior to the wide adoption of electric refrigerators during the 1920s, households maintained their perishable products using ice boxes. Generally, block ice was delivered to homes within town limits, while outlying farms often maintained their own separate ice cellars.

The history of the ice industry in Porter County is quite fragmented. In 1841, a grist mill was erected south of Valparaiso along Salt Creek by William Cheney. Cheney sold the mill to Morgan B. Crosby, and Crosby sold the operation to William H. Sager and John N. Skinner in 1854. Though William Sager owned the grist mill and adjacent reservoir (Sager's Lake), it was his son, Chauncey A. Sager, who became heavily involved in the ice industry.

The exact year that ice was first commercially removed from Sager's Lake

is unknown, but it is believed that it was quite early in Porter County's history.

Chauncey Sager was born prior to the Civil War, and he found a bit of fame in developing technology to automate ice cutting and to cut blocks to a standardized size. In 1882, Chauncey received patents in the United States and Canada for a steam-powered ice-cutting machine. Sager's machine seems to have generated substantial interest, as *Scientific American* published an engraving of his invention on the cover of its July 22, 1882, issue. (The lake shown in the engraving is obviously not Sager's Lake.)

The Consumers Company of Chicago operated an ice business at Sager's Lake as early as February 1914, probably purchasing the Sager business. The Consumers Company stored their ice at an ice house located along the

shore of Sager's Lake; this ice house could inventory approximately 5,000 tons of ice. The company also shipped ice from Wisconsin to its Valparaiso storage facility by rail.

Aaron Wesley "A. W." Lytle began his ice business in 1868 on Bullseye Lake. When he retired in March 1903, he leased his ice house and wagons to George W. Norman of the Springwater Ice Company. Lytle apparently came out of retirement to reenter the business; he constructed an ice house at Sheridan Beach on Flint Lake with a capacity of 3,000 tons in October 1915. The new ice house competed directly with the Consumers Company, which had been experiencing numerous consumer complaints about perceived high prices.

In July 1919, members of the Valparaiso Chamber of Commerce, motivated by the high price of ice and the poor service associated with its delivery from the Consumers Company, met to discuss the construction of a new ice house in Valparaiso and an

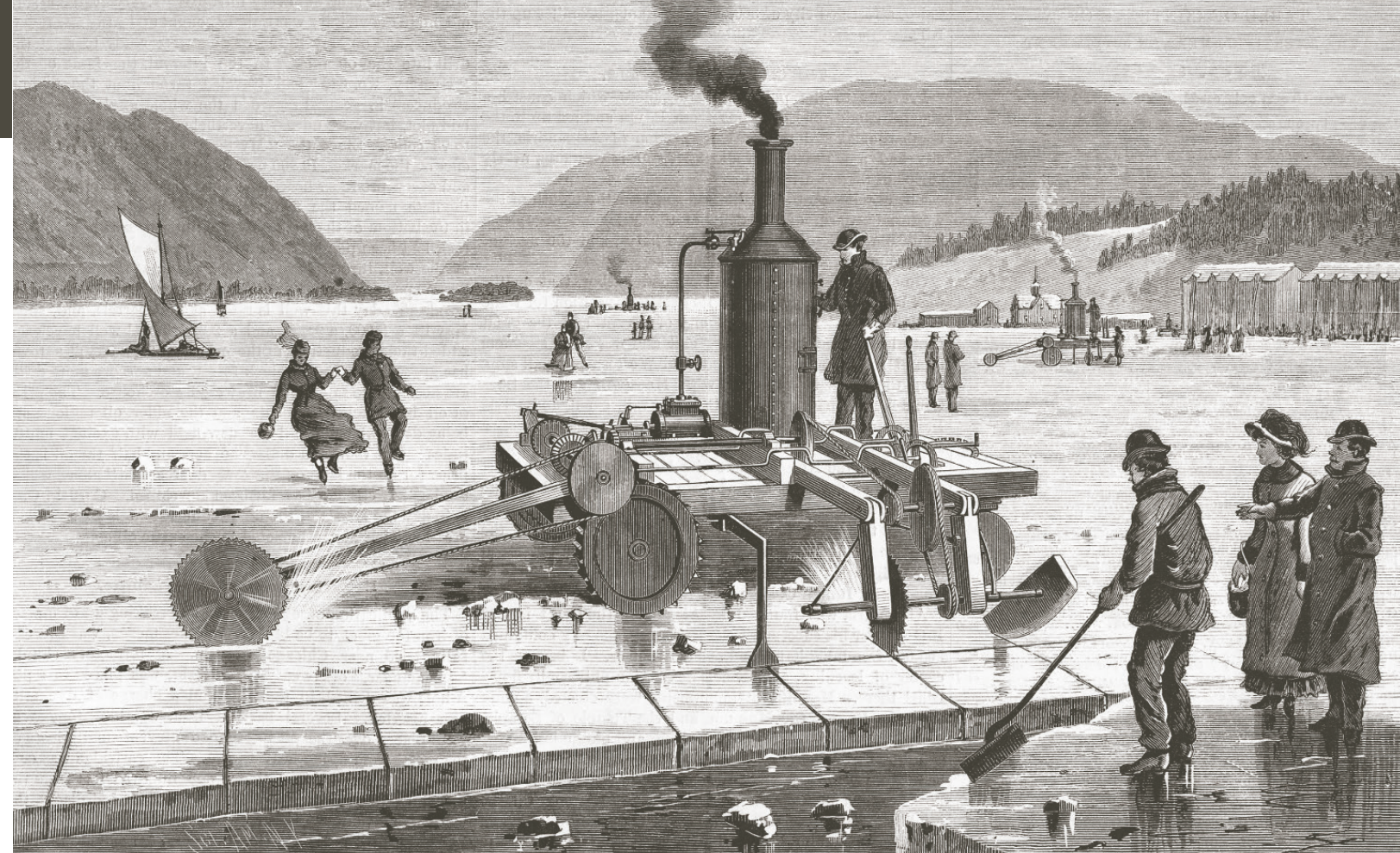


Image • Engraving depicting the Sager ice-cutting machine, from the cover of *Scientific American*, July 22, 1882. Courtesy of Steven Shook.





**Image** • Cleo Hughart and Truman Lenberg of the Lytle Ice Company deliver ice on a summer day. Date unknown.

artificial ice plant that would supply it. The meeting may have provided the incentive for the Valparaiso Springwater Ice Company to purchase the Consumers Company ice operation on Sager's Lake in 1919. Two years later, they purchased an artificial ice-making plant and installed it in their ice house at Sager's Lake.

Improvements in artificial ice production soon led to a rapid decline in the traditional harvesting of lake and river ice, as did the increasing availability of electric refrigerators after World War I. Since early models were expensive and not particularly reliable, consumers adopted the new technology somewhat slowly. As a result, home delivery of ice in Porter County continued through the 1930s.

*This article has been adapted from Steven Shook's August 31, 2017, blog post at [porterhistory.org](http://porterhistory.org).*



**Image** • A view of Sager's Ice House looking north, with the Porter County Courthouse visible in the distance. From the Mockler Collection.





## DIGITAL IMAGE OF JOSEPH OGNOVICH

Our newest exhibit, *Connections*, features a small ring with an engraved heart and the word "Korea" (seen at left). It was owned, but not created, by U.S. Marine Sergeant Joseph Ognovich (1930-1994) of Portage who was stationed in Korea during 1952 as a private first class. He brought home nine beautiful examples of trench art, all rings made of scrap metal and other detritus from the conflict.

The ring shown here was donated to the PoCo Muse in 2014 by Joseph's daughter, Laura Lynn Ognovich. She later also provided the photograph of her father seen at right, which was taken sometime between 1951 and 1958.





## MEMBERSHIP

### UPCOMING MEMBERS-ONLY PUBLICATIONS

One of the main benefits of becoming a PoCo Muse Member is receiving print copies of our publications directly in your mailbox. These publications include the quarterly *Muse News* newsletter, the biannual *PoCo Muse Magazine*, and the special editions like the *Fire History Tour* of the courthouse square. Let the PoCo Muse come to you by becoming a member.

#### **PoCo Muse Magazine**

During the first quarter of 2023, look for the arrival of Issue No. 5 of the *PoCo Muse Magazine*. In conjunction with the brand new *Connections* exhibition, the *Magazine* will dive deeper into a few of the objects and stories currently on display, including the remarkable diaries of John B. DeCrow, the handmade violin of farmer and philanthropist Fred Smoke, and the autographed embroidery quilt created by the Morrison Community Club in Kouts.

#### **Connections Exhibition Catalog**

We are excited to introduce an exhibition catalog of *Connections*, our newest exhibition in the Eunice Slagle Gallery.

Didn't have enough time to read all the labels at your recent visit? No worries! Spend more time with the exhibit in the comfort of your own home. The fully-illustrated *Connections Exhibition Catalog* will feature expanded exhibit labels and short supplementary essays from exhibition curators and museum supporters.

## MARCH

### MEMBERS-ONLY GUIDED TOUR WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Saturday, March 4 at 10a**

**PoCo Muse, 20 Indiana Avenue**

Join Executive Director Kevin Matthew Pazour for this special guided tour of the PoCo Muse galleries and collection storage facilities.

*This tour is only for PoCo Muse Members. Email or call the museum to reserve your spot. Become a member at [pocomuse.org/membership](http://pocomuse.org/membership).*

## MEMBERSHIP *benefits*

<i>Individual</i>	<i>Dual</i>	<i>Household</i>
<b>\$40/yr</b>	<b>\$75/yr</b>	<b>\$125/yr</b>

<p><b>WHY BECOME A MEMBER?</b></p> <p>Membership presents a wide array of opportunities that spotlight great local stories and give you the chance to interact with our award-winning team.</p> <p>Join hundreds of other members who appreciate the impact of local history and art.</p> <p><b>Please consider joining the Friends of the PoCo Muse by making a gift of \$500 or more to our annual fund.</b></p>	Subscription to biannual <i>PoCo Muse Magazine</i>
	Quarterly print issues of the <i>Muse News</i> newsletter
	Monthly <i>Musings</i> e-mail reminders
	Discounts on select events, programs, tours, and merchandise
	Invitation to members-only exhibit receptions
	Access to information in the collection
Free admission to hundreds of other museums through the <i>Time Travelers</i> reciprocal membership network	



# general INFORMATION

## POCO MUSE

[pocomuse.org](http://pocomuse.org)

The award-winning PoCo Muse maintains free general admission as this area's oldest institution devoted to the history and culture of Porter County.

**20 Indiana Ave, Valparaiso, IN 46383  
(219) 510.1836**

Visit our newly-imagined and fully-accessible building, the fourth home of the Porter County Museum since 1916.

**Hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 11a-4p**

## STAFF

Kevin Matthew Pazour, *Executive Director*  
[kevin@pocomuse.org](mailto:kevin@pocomuse.org)

Sarah Berndt, *Collection Manager*  
[sarah@pocomuse.org](mailto:sarah@pocomuse.org)

Kae Eberhart, *Collection Assistant*  
[kae@pocomuse.org](mailto:kae@pocomuse.org)

Quinn Albert, *Visitor Experience Associate*  
[quinn@pocomuse.org](mailto:quinn@pocomuse.org)

Jake Just, *Director of Exhibits & Publications*  
[jake@pocomuse.org](mailto:jake@pocomuse.org)

## MISSION

We engage Porter County's rich past with its evolving present to educate, enrich, and inspire our communities.

## VISION

We believe our work of interpreting this area's history and culture empowers Porter County residents to form a strong and purposeful sense of place, identity, and community.

## POCO MUSE FOUNDATION

**(219) 510.1916, [mypoco.org/about](http://mypoco.org/about)**

The PoCo Muse Foundation is a recognized 501(c)(3) organization that supports the operation of the PoCo Muse.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Joanne Urschel, *Chair*; Kathryn McMillan, *Vice Chair*; Ellen Kapitan, *Secretary*; Brandi Anstine; Patricia Crise; Kathleen Evans; Ruth Johnston; Kevin Kerr; Jeffrey Lewis; Carlos Rivero; and Ronald Trigg

## RECOGNITION OF SUPPORT

The PoCo Muse is generously supported by its Board of Trustees; Porter County Government; members and donors; private and family foundations, including the John W. Anderson Foundation; and by Indiana Dunes Tourism.

## DONATE AN ARTIFACT

Start the process of donating an artifact by visiting [pocomuse.org/donate-an-artifact](http://pocomuse.org/donate-an-artifact). Email Sarah Berndt at [sarah@pocomuse.org](mailto:sarah@pocomuse.org) with any questions.

## WHY CONTRIBUTE?

Monetary gifts made to the PoCo Muse Foundation enable our employees to create mission-driven programs and exhibits, preserve our vast collection of artifacts, and engage the public in ways that make the PoCo Muse an award-winning institution.

