



# The Heritage

www.goesselmuseum.com

Summer 2026

## Celebrate America 250 with a State Trivia Scavenger Hunt!

This summer, the Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum invites visitors of all ages to celebrate America's 250th anniversary with a special **State Trivia Scavenger Hunt**, available June through August.

Explore the museum's historic buildings and exhibits as you search for trivia questions representing all 50 states. Along the way, you'll discover fascinating facts about our nation while learning more about the rich Mennonite and agricultural heritage preserved at the museum.

As we commemorate America 250, we also reflect on the contributions Mennonites have made to the American story. Seeking religious freedom and opportunity, Mennonite immigrants helped shape communities through farming, faith, education, craftsmanship, and service. Their experiences are an important part of the nation's history and are woven into the story of America.

Pick up a scavenger hunt sheet during your visit and test your knowledge of the states while celebrating the values that have helped build both our nation and our local community.

The scavenger hunt is included with museum admission and is fun for the whole family. Visit the Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum at 200 N. Poplar in Goessel and join us as we honor America's past and celebrate its future.

## Possum Revival to Entertain at Country Threshing Days

The Possum Revival band will entertain on Friday, July 31, at 7:00 pm in the Goessel High School auditorium. The group features a 16-year-old fiddler from Marion County, Caleb Klingenberg, his father Brett, and friends Aaron and Maria Billings. Caleb recently took first place at the Tallgrass Prairie Fiddle Festival in



Threshing Days, continued on page 4

## Low German Saying

*Fal' Henj Moake schwinn en Enj.*  
Many hands make quick work.

## Upcoming Events:

### Museum Hours

See page 4.  
Open July 4th

### Fourth Monday Genealogy Group

Goessel City Building  
No meeting in July.  
August 24, 7:00 pm

### Kansas Sunflower Summer

July 9-30, 2026  
at the museum.

### State Trivia Scavenger Hunt

June - August

### Country Threshing Days

July 31- Aug. 1  
See pages 1 and 4.

### 2026 Art Show

LEGO Works of Art

## Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum Board Members:

Pat Penner, President; Gregg Schroeder, Vice-President; Sandy Duerksen, Secretary; Aileen Esau, Treasurer;\* Fern Bartel, Museum Director;\* Roger Bartel, Lenora Duerksen, Kris Schmucker, Dennis Unruh, Nelson Voth.

\*non-voting members

## Ditt unt Daut (this and that) by Fern Bartel, Museum Director

I, as Director of the museum, totally enjoy meeting guests from all over the United States. In May, when the Kansas Wheat Quality Council Tour came through this area, there were individuals from Australia, Mexico, and even Ukraine!

Two weeks before Easter, I got a call from a food writer who lives in Kansas City; *The New York Times* had called him to find someone to do an article on Pluma Moos! He was familiar with the dish, and assigned me to find someone who would make Pluma Moos in the maker's kitchen while he recorded and interviewed them. Was I ever shaking in my boots? So at the Goessel Grocery and Deli where I work some evenings, I would ask anyone who came in if they knew of anyone who would take on this assignment. Well, I got the name of Carol Abrahams, and she agreed to the project. She makes an updated version. I was so excited that she would do this! The museum's website has information about how to connect with *The New York Times* article: [www.goesselmuseum.com](http://www.goesselmuseum.com).

The Liberty Wheat Bell has been a topic for the 250th anniversary of the United States. Wendy Nugent wrote an article about it for *Harvey County Now*, that came out on May 7. Also, Becky Tanner, from the public radio station Wichita KMUW 89.1, came a couple of weeks ago to do a radio segment about the bell. Imagine talking about a bell that your listening audience can't see, that was woven to celebrate the Bicentennial of the United States. I don't know when that will air.



### MH&AM is part of Kansas Sunflower Summer July 9-Aug. 2, 2026.

The Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum in Goessel is pleased to participate in the 2026 Sunflower Summer program, offering Kansas families an opportunity to explore the rich history and heritage of central Kansas from July 9 through August 2. (Does not apply for Country Threshing Days July 31- Aug. 1.)

Sunflower Summer provides free admission for eligible Kansas students and an accompanying adult, encouraging them to discover educational attractions across Kansas.

Families planning a Kansas adventure are encouraged to include the Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum on their Sunflower Summer itinerary and discover the stories, artifacts, and traditions that continue to make Goessel a special destination.



**Visit the Art Show in the Immigrant House, featuring LEGO builders Tom Hiebert and Pam Schroeder.**

**Museum Receives Goessel Community Grant**  
The Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum is pleased to announce that it has received a **Goessel Community Foundation Grant** to support the preservation of the Plautdietsch language and local Mennonite history.

The grant will fund a project to record oral histories from alumni and community members who are native and heritage Plautdietsch speakers. These recordings will help preserve pronunciation, vocabulary, personal memories, and cultural traditions that are in danger of being lost as the generations pass.

As part of the Goessel High School 100th anniversary celebration in October, the museum will also collect and share stories that reflect the experiences of students, families, and community members across generations. These oral histories will be made available through interactive QR codes, educational resources, and museum programming, helping connect current and future generations with this important part of our shared heritage.

The Museum is grateful to the Goessel Community Foundation for its support and looks forward to preserving these voices, memories, and stories for years to come.



**The Schroeder Barn got a new cedar shingle roof!  
Thank you to the donors who made this project possible!**

## The "4-6 Tornado" That Hit Goessel

"It was at 6 o'clock in the evening, the sixth day of the month, the sixth month of the year, the sixth year of the century, in other words: June 6, 1906, at 6 o'clock in the evening, when that "4-6 tornado" struck Goessel, Kansas, and several farm homes," remembered Henry H. Lehrman in his writings "My Memories from 1894-1967."

This story was told to Olga Schmidt Dyck (Mrs. Ervin) by her mother Lena Schmidt Schmidt (Mrs. D.L. Schmidt). Their farm was on the northwest corner of Hwy-15 and the street that turns into Goessel's Main Street.

"The Goessel tornado was remembered by Mother very well because they were all at home and in the middle of it. She said that their big clock on the wall stopped ticking at 6 o'clock that day. Grandfather had sent them all to their basement storm cellar. But then he stood on the basement steps and watched the storm approach. Only when he saw their straw stack one-fourth of a mile west, lifted up into the air, did he



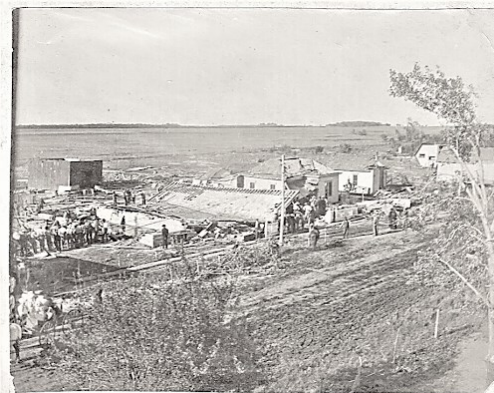
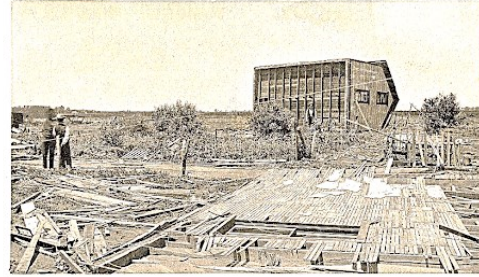
back up and shut the door behind him. When it was all over, their house was shoved off its foundation and the west end which was a new kitchen addition, then recently built, was ripped open. The henhouse and all the chickens were destroyed. All the other buildings were so badly wrecked and scattered about."

The family decided to rebuild across the road. (Jerry and Leann Toews live there now.)

The path of destruction was about 200 yards wide. The Peter Frey house was blown away; the Henry Brandt house turned around two or three times and then was crushed. The George Reimer house was picked up and carried 50 feet. The B.B. Reimer house was carried upside down and landed on the Henry Unruh house. B.B. Unruh's store was moved off its foundation and the roof collapsed. Frank Klassen's mill was lifted off the foundation and their house had lots of damage. The Franzen Bros. store was torn from its foundation. The newly started Prep School building was destroyed. The wooden Bethesda Hospital and

Old-Folks Home (on the north side of Main Street back then) had largely escaped the fury, but a large windmill standing near the building was overturned.

No one died, but several were injured in the "four sixes tornado."



Looking down on Goessel's Main Street to the northeast.



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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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**Museum Hours:**

March, April, October,  
& November:

Tues - Sat: 12 pm - 4 pm  
Closed Sundays & Mondays

Open by appointment  
December through February

May - September:  
Tues - Sat: 10 am - 5 pm

*The Heritage*

Written & edited by:

Fern Bartel, Director

Aileen Esau, Treasurer

Museum Board Members

Anne Harvey

## Country Threshing Days, July 31 and August 1, 2026

### Threshing Days, continued from page 1

Beatrice, Nebraska! The Possum Revival plays regularly at the Whitestone Mennonite Church, and recently played at the Flint Hills Counterpoint Music, Art, & Conservation Festival. We look forward to a variety of music including bluegrass, country, and worship songs. Admission is by donation. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Tabor Church Food Pantry. Come enjoy a family evening of fun and good music!

### Parade and Good Eats

Bring your lawn chair for the parade on Main Street Saturday morning at 9:30. When the parade ends, enjoy the traditional Low German Meal in Goessel Elementary School. Food will also be served in the Preparatory School (including vegetarian and gluten-free options) and various other locations on the grounds.

### Community Worship Service and Potluck

To conclude the weekend, a community worship service sponsored by the Goessel Ministerial Alliance

will be held at Tabor Mennonite Church on Sunday, August 2, at 10 am. A potluck meal will follow.

### Admission

Gates open at noon on Friday. Purchase of a \$7 button allows entrance to the exhibits and events for both days! Children 12 and younger are free.

On the museum grounds, check out the displays of antique farm equipment, demonstrations of old-time farming practices, and activities for children at Uncle Milt's shed. This year, stationary engines and lawn and garden equipment are featured.

### Volunteers Needed!

A huge event like Country Threshing Days takes a lot of effort! Since many hands make work light, volunteers are needed for short shifts with food service on Saturday. If you can help, please contact the museum. Thank you!