

INKLINGS and IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

313 East Third Street • P. O. Box 108 • Galesburg, Illinois 61402 • (309) 342-2361 • www.sandburg.org

Summer, 2011

"I see America, not in the setting sun of a black night of despair ahead of us, I see America in the crimson light of a rising sun fresh from the burning, creative hand of God. I see great days ahead, great days possible to men and women of will and vision"

Carl Sandburg

"There are dreams stronger than death. Men and women die holding these dreams."

Carl Sandburg

NORM WINICK REMEMBERED

Norm Winick passed away on December 10, 2010. At that time he was president of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association (CSHSA). Following are some reminiscences of Norm from those who worked with him at the Site.



Norm Winick, Steve Holden

Photo by Karen Lynch

Martha Downey, Carl Sandburg State Historic Site Superintendent:

In February, 2009 I met Norm Winick. Steve Holden had retired as the Site Superintendent of the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site, and I was attending my first meeting of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association. Fortunately, Steve also attended to help introduce me to the Association's board members. At that time the Site was closed to the public, and the Association was focused on working to get the Site reopened.

Since that time I have been amazed at Norm's curiosity. He was tenacious in asking questions. Even if the response was, "I do not know," he continued to ask questions, hoping for information or insight.

He led the CSHSA for fourteen years. He took his leadership position seriously, missing few meetings and attending most of the Site events. He brought others to the Association's board who were not only knowledgeable about Sandburg but had specific talents that the Association needed. Writers, historians, educators, and more are now part of the Association.

Not having known Norm for long, I cannot summarize his time as the Association's president, but I do know he will be missed.

Steve Holden, former Carl Sandburg State Historic Site Superintendent:

Even before I began working as site interpreter at the Carl Sandburg State Historic

Site in Galesburg, I knew Norm Winick—mainly through his thought-provoking weekly publication of the *Zephyr*. At that time (January, 1990) my dear friend Carol Nelson was the site manager. The Sandburg Historic Site, like most state historic sites, had a support group. Our group, the CSHSA, was then a branch of the Galesburg Historical Society. Eventually this group became its own entity, and eventually the elected chairman was Norm Winick. That's when I became personally acquainted with Norm.

I found that Norm was quite an interesting guy. I could never be sure from which direction or slant his viewpoint would be launched. As carefully as Carol or I prepared proposals for the Association's consideration, it seems that there would always be something which we had not thought of but was very obvious in Norm's thinking. Also, it was at about this time that Carol and I discovered how conscientious he was about expenditures of the Association's funds.

During Norm's tenure as president of the CSHSA there were many improvements at the Site. Physical improvements include landscape plantings, brick paths, landscape lighting, and interior lighting. Among the qualitative improvements are an expanded Songbag Concert series., the addition of a Sunday lecture series, the hosting of an outdoor music festival, and additions to the Sandburg Days Festival.

Now that Carol is gone, and I have retired as the Site's manager, it is my sincerest wish that the CSHSA will be able to find a leader as strong as Norm Winick was. He will be missed.

Marge Krueger, former CSHSA president:

The news about Norm Winick came as a tremendous shock. I must say that it took me quite awhile before I was able to fully comprehend the loss of this complex, dynamic man to the people (including myself) and to the Galesburg area. As I write this, I am trying to

compose my thoughts to when I first met Norm.

It was 1992, and we had recently moved to Galesburg from Elgin, IL. Of course, we wanted to become acquainted with our new home and community at large. We subscribed to the local newspaper, *The Register-Mail*. Very quickly I realized that there was more going on in the community than what was being reported in the paper. One day when I was out and about, I saw a copy of another paper at a newsstand. It was the *Zephyr*. I bought a copy and immediately decided to check this out further. I was downtown and stopped in the Sav-A-Buk store and met Norm Winick for the first time. I complimented him on the newspaper and bought a subscription. From then on, from time to time, if something was in the paper that I had a question about, I would stop in and check it out with Norm.

During these visits I found out that there wasn't much that Norm wasn't interested in. By this time I had also gotten involved over at the Carl Sandburg Site. Norm gave us good PR for that. He would come and take pictures when we had the Penny Parade or some other event. Before I knew it, I was involved on the board, and we were always looking for fresh ideas and input that could be implemented at the Site. I invited Norm to be on the Board. He found time in his hectic schedule to come to board meetings and eventually to become president of the board.

In addition to those things he still kept up his busy schedule with the store, the Knox County Democratic organization, regular attendance at sports events, school board meetings, events at Knox College, and, of course, the *Zephyr*. When Norm participated in these events, while he may have been harried, he always made you feel as though nothing was more important at that given moment than talking with you.

I feel very fortunate that I was able to share many hours and minutes with Norm. If I needed to have another perspective on a

situation at the Site, etc., Norm would ponder for a moment or two and share his thoughts. Time is our most precious possession, and Norm was always willing to share his. Thank you, Norm!

Barbara Schock, former editor of *Inklings and Idlings*:

During the decade (1999-2009) in which I served as editor of *Inklings and Idlings*, I became acquainted with Norm Winick. He printed the newsletter and found illustrations or photographs to go with the articles I wrote.

We had many conversations about Carl Sandburg and Galesburg history. We shared items found on the Internet and gossiped a little.

Eventually I began taking my home-baked cookies to Norm. He enjoyed them and looked forward to the next contribution. I thought a little inducement never hurt when dealing with one's printer and photographer.

Our talks often bounced from one topic to another and usually led to more interesting articles for *Inklings and Idlings*.

Norm Winick was like a deep, clear stream. He was always moving and there was more under the surface than most people realized. He was well versed in the writings and life of Carl Sandburg. He knew the past and present of Galesburg from every vantage point. I will miss him a great deal.

Rex Cherrington, CSHSA Acting President:

The loss of a good friend is a tough experience. Norm Winick is much missed. He was more than our organization's president; he was our good friend. The picture of his smile will be burned indelibly in my memory. It is good to smile as it does good for yourself as well as others. When you are gone from this earth, and your are remembered with a smile, it says something of how you have lived life correctly. There was always a joy about Norm. Even when he was faced with adversity and

confronted with something distasteful, Norm could set aside his emotions, though never his principles.

Norm identified with Carl Sandburg and the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site in so many ways. Carl Sandburg was a populist extraordinaire who went out about proclaiming his belief in the people. Norm shared this populist view. More than believing in any philosophy both Norm and Carl believed in the people. It was the belief that the people, when given truthful information, make good choices. Norm was an innovator in journalism as Carl was in poetry. They did not bring the same message but messages that reinforced each other.

In such sad experiences it is difficult to be positive. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to get to know Norm as well as I did. He was a sounding board for many ideas, and we could always discuss a wide array of topics. More than a few times I was amazed when I brought up a topic that Norm did not know much about, but the next time I saw him it was apparent he had studied the matter and was now wanting to visit some more about it.

Norm brought wonderful leadership to the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site. He was open and yet could direct a meeting when it was time to bring discussion to a close. He was analytical yet very human. He had a vast knowledge of government and the areas of life most influenced by government. We have lost so much in Norm's passing, but there will always be a feeling of warmth when I see Norm's smiling face in my mind. When I think of Norm, I think of the good times and know that Norm would rather have us focused on the memories that give us joy than to dwell upon our sorrow.

Christian Schock, CSHSA Board Member:

My first meeting with Norm Winick took place more than twenty-five years ago. I had driven to this area from my home in Elgin to meet with a prospective client for my political

consulting practice. The candidate and I met with Winick in his capacity of Chairman of the Knox County Democratic Central Committee. The meeting was inconclusive but amicable. I returned to Elgin.

In 1996, my wife Barbara and I moved to Galesburg. Margaret and Helmut Krueger, whom we had known in Elgin, had come here several years earlier. We had worked with Mrs. Krueger in the Elgin Area Historical Society. Because of that, Mrs. Krueger, who was the president of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association, thought we would be useful additions to the board of the Association. With the approval of the board we were added to its number. At the time Winick was the vice-president of the organization. A few months later he succeeded Mrs. Krueger as president. He continued in the office until December 10th. In all of the years we worked together in the Association, he never alluded to our first meeting years before, nor did I. Doubtless he had forgotten it. After all, it was not a major event in his busy life.

In any case, we cooperated on a number of projects over the years. Barbara edited the Association's newsletter, *Inklings and Idlings*, for ten of them. Never did he interject himself in her work other than to make suggestions for possible articles to be included in the publication. It was clear they were suggestions, not orders or directives. Usually, they were of merit, and Barbara was happy to receive them.

During the almost fourteen years of his presidency Winick encountered many obstacles, most of which he was able to overcome. Because the Site is owned by the State of Illinois, the Association is limited in what it is able to do. While the Association is permitted to raise money for improvements, those must be approved by the State which exercises oversight of them.

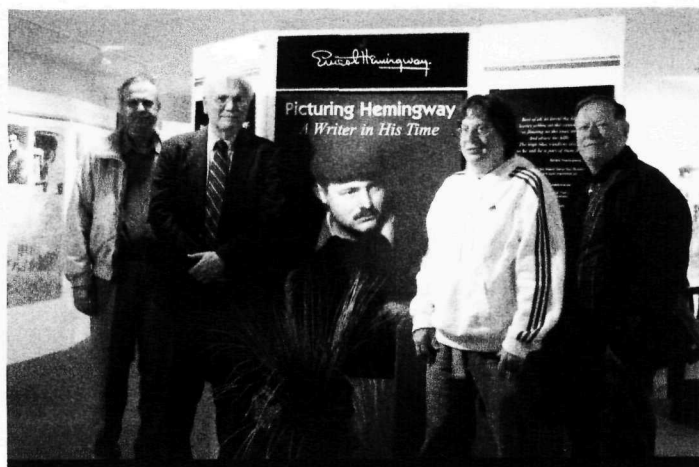
Even with those impediments the Association can claim credit for the brick sidewalks, a walk made of stones inscribed with

quotations from Carl Sandburg's writings, as well as various trees and other plantings. The Association also contributed substantially to the renovation of an old garage on the property into a venue for exhibitions, lectures, and similar events. It has been named The Barn.

Additionally, when the State's straitened circumstances forced the closing of the Site, Winick led the successful effort to install a broadcasting device inside the Birthplace, which transmits information about Sandburg and the Site. The information can be received on the FM radio of automobiles parked at the Site.

Perhaps most important was an acquisition a few years ago. Some papers of Sandburg's, the existence of which had largely been unknown, were found almost literally on their way to a landfill. They were intercepted and put up for sale. Hearing of it, Winick acquired some of the papers of particular relevance to the Site. The remainder in large part went to the University of Illinois' Sandburg collection.

Winick did an enormous number of lesser things which fall under the heading of organizational housekeeping. At the December 14 meeting of the Association one of the directors, Mike Hobbs, said with deep feeling that we were just learning how much Norm Winick had done.



Mike Hobbs, Redd Griffin, Norm Winick, Rex Cherrington

Photo by Karen Lynch

Karen Lynch, CSHSA Board Member:

He loved reading and writing—history, fine literature, poetry and prose—collecting treasured books by the hundreds. Participation in politics and writing for the newspaper consumed much of his time. Days fully consumed when writing often went well into the dawn of the next morning. A few cherished diversions came from the enjoyment of the arts or listening to folk music. No, I am not just referring to Carl Sandburg but the man we came to know as a trusted friend, Norm Winick.

In multiple attempts to find the right words to describe a man of words, I found many unexpected similarities between Carl Sandburg and Norm Winick. Both had a keen interest in politics in which they both participated. Both wrote about politics and injustices in several newspapers. Sandburg began at a tender age as a Republican (as Sandburg said, "Just like his old man.") but switched as a young adult to the American Socialist movement. Winick was all Democrat, both in offices held and as the Chairman of the Knox County Democratic Party at the time of his unexpected cancer diagnosis.

Both men knew and befriended public figures and celebrities. Simply reviewing Norm's extensive photographic gallery is just a glimpse of how full his life had been. From local officials to state, federal, and several Presidents of the United States, Norm had helped candidates win elections while documenting their campaigns. I believe some of Norm's best works were the articles and photographs of Barack Obama and his family. Norm stood for hours in sub-zero bitter cold on the steps of the Old Capitol Building in Springfield. There Norm captured a tender moment of the Obama family when he announced his run for the Presidency. The weather was similarly cold when Norm attended the inauguration of President Obama, closer than most with coveted seated tickets.

But these are the things Norm did, not who he was as a person. Those who really came to know Norm saw beyond what some

believed at times to be a gruff demeanor. His closest friends found Norm was actually very kindhearted and giving. It was not easy to crack through that "get-to-the-point" shell to know the soft side of Norm. Perhaps it was just the news editor in him, knowing the economy of words which cost by the square inch. No one will deny Norm was just a very busy man, one who multi-tasked like no one I have ever known.

Norm's life was full of activities, and he lived his entire life full out. Our community has lost a great leader who had unfinished business, wanting to make this community a better place to live. His friends have lost a generous friend who always gave great advice. To Norm's family, who knew him best, they will miss him painfully. In some respects Norm's premature death is like reading a book with the final chapter missing. Who knows what the ending of his book could have been if we had not lost this wonderful friend too soon?

We will miss you, Norm. Rest well, my friend. Rest well.

Chuck Bednar, CSHSA Board Member, and Marilyn Bednar from a letter to Chris and Ben Winick, Norm's wife and son:

Our thoughts are with you at this time of Norm's death.

The life he led is remarkable. Indeed, to leave during his most productive years is a great loss. His departure leaves much undone in his pursuit of life. The community will really miss him.

I especially appreciated Norm for his humanitarian outlook. This was very evident by his publishing work and the diversified content of the *Zephyr*. He never shied away from issues and furnished his readers with a good dose of balanced opinions.

As a member of the Sandburg board, I knew him as a man of unique character, possessing values of intellectual curiosity and creative vision. He was a good listener and

often encouraged new ideas and concepts.

With his passing we hope you find comfort and peace for all the joys that his life has brought to so many.

P.S. A fond recollection: A visit to his shop on Main St. was a sight to behold. It seemed like organized disarray as I picked my way through a safe pass to reach his desk among the various projects and work assignments he had on tap. He projected an image of a man in a hurry, someone who could keep track of all his projects in a juggling act of the first order. Indeed, it was a portrait of his personality, his can-do zest for a productive life.

Stan Shover, CSHSA Board Member, from a letter to Chris and Ben Winick:

Most old men in their 80's are not usually seeking a mentor, nor do they believe a wise one exists. When I became a CSHSA board member, I found a mentor in NORM who surpassed any I had ever chosen!

He evidenced "thought diversity" and inclusion, passion for compassion, and leadership skills more than any professor at the University of Iowa (or 83 years of life) had ever presented me.

Norm showed respect and a gentle kindness not always encountered in the human species. I truly found a brother, a friend, and a mentor that he probably never realized.

Chris and Ben, YOU HAVE BEEN and ARE tributes to my mentor. Thank you for sharing such a man!

Laurie Muelder, CSHSA Board Member:

When I think of Norm, I think first of the *Zephyr* which I will miss every week for some time, and second of him coming into meetings of the CSHSA board fresh from his bicycle with a three-by-five card or small piece of paper in his hand. This *aide-de-memoire* assured him of not forgetting the points he wished to cover and was typical of Norm in his quiet, inconspicuous

efficiency. He not only presided effectively over the meetings of a board composed of fairly disparate personalities, he made sure what needed to be done between the meetings was done and was ever alert to possibilities which could benefit the Site. In the wake of the State's defaulting on its responsibilities to the Site he was quick to figure out ways to adapt, like the recording which can be heard by visitors who come when the Site is closed. His premature death is a loss not only to his family but also to the many *Zephyr* readers, the Knox County Democrats of whom he was chairman, the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site, and the community as a whole, which benefited greatly from his various efforts on its behalf. He was one of the good guys, and he will surely be sorely missed.

Mike Hobbs, CSHSA Board Member:

I liked Norm Winick for many reasons. He was fun to be around. He had a sense of humor. On a couple occasions while I was visiting with him at Sav-A-Buk, I said to him, "Norm, whenever I get down on myself for my slovenly housekeeping, I can come here and immediately feel better about myself." He would grin and then move on to a discussion of some other topic. Many, varied topics. He was interested in so many things and was well versed on them. He loved life. He wanted to explore it and experience it. I liked the way he talked with people, using them as sounding boards to get different perspectives on things. He loved to talk about local politics. I liked the way he spoke respectfully of local people with whom he disagreed politically. I recall him saying that a local Republican was a "reasonable" man. He thought that government should be there to afford every citizen the opportunity to improve his life.

He admired Lincoln and Sandburg. Like them, he loved America. He saw our land as a place where all citizens have the right to live their lives as they choose, to achieve what they want to achieve. He worked to guarantee those rights to everyone, even those from the

humblest origins. Like Lincoln and Sandburg, he was fascinated by life. He dedicated himself to studying it. Like Lincoln and Sandburg, he understood the power of the written word in communicating to his fellow citizens his vision of a better tomorrow.

I liked the way Norm helped others. When I decided to run for a Knox County office in the 1994 primary, Norm encouraged me and offered me advice. His motivation was that he wanted to see citizens get involved in the political process. He encouraged and advised many candidates over the years, and our political system is better for his efforts. When I became editor of *Inklings and Idlings*, he encouraged me and helped me. I saw that he encouraged and helped so many people over the years in their endeavors to make our community better. We were indeed lucky to have him among us.

I liked Norm's leadership abilities which I witnessed as a CSHSA board member and attendee at Knox County Democratic meetings. Though meetings can sometimes be boring and dry, I actually enjoyed attending meetings over which Norm presided. I knew that I would learn something from what he said. I knew that if I wanted to say something or if anyone else wanted to say something, Norm would give us the opportunity. He encouraged discussion as a way to find truth. He was so devoted to Sandburg's legacy, Democratic Party ideals, and community projects that you just wanted to hop on board and pitch in to help pursue his dreams, our dreams. He was an extraordinarily community-minded man, the likes of whom don't come along often. It is up to us who survive him to continue his efforts to improve our community.

CSHSA DUES

Please pay your 2011 Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association dues by July 15. We have gone to a calendar year dues billing system, which will greatly simplify record keeping both for the Association and for members. We apologize for the lateness of this dues notice.

Membership categories remain the same with all members receiving a 10% discount in the Museum store, *Inklings and Idlings*, and free admission to concerts and special events.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Membership Categories (please check):

\$10	Individual	_____
\$20	Family	_____
\$50	Donor	_____
\$250	Sponsor	_____

Please detach and mail this form to:

Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association
PO Box 108
Galesburg, IL 61402-0108

Laurie Muelder, Membership Director

Lecture Series

On Sunday, June 12 at 1 pm Barbara and Christian Schock and Mike Hobbs will present the lecture "America-Whither?" in the Barn at the Carl Sandburg State Historic Site. The lecture will be based on the first chapter of Sandburg's Pulitzer Prize-winning Lincoln biography *The War Years* about the unsettled

state of America in 1861 before Lincoln left Springfield for his inauguration. The lecturers will talk about how fire-eaters like William Lloyd Garrison and Robert Barnwell Rhett ratcheted up tension with their rhetoric and what was going on in Galesburg at this time. You will hear some of the rich prose Sandburg used to describe the gathering storm of war. The talk is open to the public. A \$3 donation would be appreciated. Refreshments will be served.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association
P.O. Box 108
Galesburg, Illinois 61402-0108