

Museum Notes

for the week of August 16 – 22, 2026

by Kristen Parrott, curator

August is a busy month as summer winds down, and we have lots of activities going on.

The Military Mascots travelling exhibit from the Wisconsin Veterans Museum continues to be on display at the history center in Viroqua through Thursday, August 27. Come learn about the rooster that was adopted as a mascot by the 30th Wisconsin during the Civil War, and the rabbit named Billy “the Candy Eater” who served as a Wisconsin soldier’s mascot while training in Texas during World War I.

There are several stories in the exhibit about dogs serving as mascots for the U.S. military in WWII. More unusual animal stories include Charlie the monkey, adopted by the 23rd Infantry, 2nd Division, during the Korean War, and Leaky the lion, adopted by the 32nd “Red Arrow” Division during the Berlin Crisis of 1961.

All of the museum’s exhibits can be visited during regular public hours of Monday through Friday, 11AM to 4PM, and Saturday, 10AM to 2PM. These hours last through the end of August. Beginning in September, we will be closed on Saturdays except by appointment.

A cemetery walk will be held at the South West Prairie Lutheran Church’s cemetery in rural Viroqua this Sunday, August 23, from 4 to 6PM. Guided tours will begin every 30 minutes. Seven costumed interpreters representing residents from the past will await you at their gravesites where they will share their life stories.

This local history event is a partnership between the Vernon County Historical Society and South West Prairie Lutheran Church. Suggested donation of \$5 per person to attend. Lemonade and water will be served, and there will be a bake sale of Norwegian treats. In case of bad weather, the event will move inside the church. The address of the church and cemetery is S8466 Prairie Road. The location is west of Hwy. 27 where it connects Fargo to the north and Rising Sun to the south.

Our annual pork chop dinner will be held on Saturday, August 29, from 4 to 7PM or until the food is gone. This is a drive-through, carry-out event, with the meals picked up in the parking lot of the Vernon County Museum and History Center at the corner of S. Main and E. South Streets in Viroqua.

For \$18, you will receive a meal of pork chop, baked potato, beans, coleslaw, roll, applesauce, and cookie. The pork chops are grilled fresh on-site, and all the food is prepared by local volunteers. All proceeds will help us to preserve and promote Vernon County history.