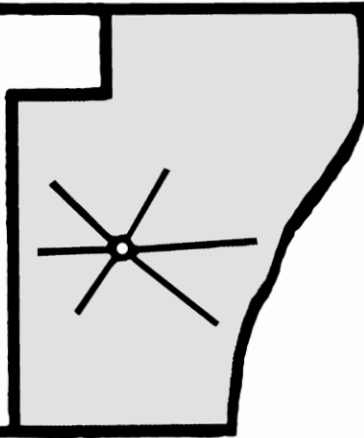


# the Valders Journal

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## Tourism sets records in 2022

Wisconsin tourism generated a record-breaking \$23.7 billion in economic impact in 2022, including \$216 million from Manitowoc County. The state total surpassed the statewide record of \$22.2 and Manitowoc County broke its record of \$204 million, both set in 2019. Locally, direct visitor spending increased to over \$127 million. Manitowoc County tourism supported 1,740 part-time and full-time jobs and generated \$14 million in local tax revenue, part of \$1.5 billion in state and local tax revenue. The state Department of Tourism and Visit Manitowoc provided the numbers

## Breakfast offers more than a meal

By Todd S. Bergmann

Clarissa Ulness turned over the crown of the Manitowoc County dairy princess to her roommate—Jenna Gries—at the Manitowoc County Breakfast on the Farm on Sunday.

“I am very excited,” Gries said. “It is definitely something I always wanted to do.”

“Both my mom and my aunt were Manitowoc County dairy princess. I have always been looking forward to my time to run.”

Ulness and Gries, who both grew up on farms near Valders, are studying dairy science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where they are roommates and best friends.

While attending Manitowoc Lutheran High School, Gries participated in the Valders FFA Chapter, as did Ulness, who attended Valders High School.

Ulness could not predict which of two contestants would succeed her as dairy princess.

“Whoever gets it will do a wonderful job for next year,” she said before the announcement.

Joanna Strzyzewski, chairman of the dairy princess program, said both Gries and runner-up Kaitlyn Fischer, a 2023 VHS graduate, have a strong dairy background.

The announcement was made during the breakfast, held at Twin Cities Vue Dairy Farm in rural Manitowoc, which Jim Lepich and his family operate.

“We had a very hard time, making the decision,” Strzyzewski said.

Gries, daughter of Greg Gries and Lori Edwards, said she will use her background growing up on her family’s farm and looks forward to her year promoting the dairy industry in Manitowoc County.

“I will share my love and passion for the industry,” the new dairy princess said.

Gries said she will do anything the dairy industry calls upon her to do and will have Ulness around in case she has any questions.

“I know what I am getting into, seeing all the duties she had last year,” Gries added.

Ulness said that the dairy princess has a busy summer including Breakfast on the Farm, parades and the Manitowoc County Fair.

“Throughout the year, you volunteer,” she said. “This is volunteering at Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center, reading to kids and serving ice cream.”

Ulness said she had a great year in the position.

“I had to advocate for the 150 dairy-producing farms that house 57,000 dairy cows,” she said.

Both Gries and Ulness said they enjoy school at UW-Madison, even though some of their classes have more students than the entire enrollment of their high schools.

Also at Breakfast on the Farm, Nevaeh Krepline, daughter of Larry and Amanda Krepline of rural Reedsville, became the new Miss Farm Bureau.

“I was very excited about it,” she said. “I was looking forward to it for many years. I just waited for the age when I could be Miss Farm Bureau.”

The only applicant for the position, Krepline said she looks forward to meeting new people.

See Breakfast p. 8



## So Long, Farewell

Teachers line up to wave goodbye to Valders students as they leave on

buses on the last day of school on June 7. The sendoff has been a tradition at the school for several years. —Journal Photo

## Taking a road trip down Highway 10

History comes and goes along route since trip to Fox Valley became a major event

By Todd S. Bergmann

*This is the first of a two-part series tracing the history of two federal highways that cross through this area of Wisconsin. This week, we focus on U.S. Highway 10, with U.S. Highway 151 to be explored next week.*

On a summer day in 1904, three couples attempted and completed a round trip from Manitowoc to Appleton, prompting a large sendoff for the unusual journey.

The early road trip is recorded in John Harmon’s “Early Manitowoc County History.”

Attired in duster coats and goggles, William Rahr Jr. and Dr. A.C. Fraser each drove a car for the trip, as a large crowd gathered in Manitowoc to wish them luck.

Hot, dusty, weary and happy, the six people returned just after dark. They spoke of the many interesting sites along the country roads.

“We had only four tire explosions along the entire route,” Fraser said.

The route, predecessor of the current U.S. Highway 10, traces its roots to a bridge over the Branch River, which Edward Lenaville constructed in the middle of the 19th century, according to the Manitowoc County History website.

The community, called Branch, Branch Mills or Lenaville, had about 2,000 people in 1910, the website said.

The road has a much longer history, starting with American Indians who used trails to travel between lakes Winnebago and Michigan, Philip Groll of the Manitowoc County Historical Society said.

By using these trails, highway and railroad builders did not have to cut through virgin forest to connect the two lakes, he explained.

The predecessor to U.S. Highway 10 ran through Reedsville as a widened American Indian trail, wide enough for crude oxcarts. Farmers returning home at night sometimes



## Highway Rest Stop

A group of men stand outside the Kellner Saloon & Hotel in the late 1800s. The tavern was at Four Corners or Kellner’s Corners, where Menasha Avenue meets Rapids Road today.

had to abandon their carts and return the next day with neighbors to get their carts out of the mud.

In February 1847, the territorial legislature appointed commissioners to lay out a territorial road from Manitowoc to Winnebago Rapids, later known as Menasha, Ralph G. Plumb wrote in his 1904 “History of Manitowoc County.” That enterprise lapsed, however.

In July 1848, the first session of the Wisconsin State Legislature petitioned Congress for a road connecting Manitowoc and Neenah.

The petition stated that Manitowoc is the “nearest and most convenient point of access to Lake Michigan” for Calumet, Winnebago, Marquette and Portage counties.

In 1850, the state Legislature chartered the Neenah and Manitowoc Plank Road Co. to build a road between the two cities.

Also that year, Congress approved construction of a plank road from Manitowoc to Neenah. The charter permitted use of other building materials, such as gravel, charcoal and timber.

Builders started at 11th Street and Waldo Boulevard in Manitowoc, following what is now Menasha Avenue, but ran out of money at Four Corners, the intersection with the

current County Road R.

This was a toll road: People had to pay a dime to use it.

Louis Falge described the construction in his 1912 “History of Manitowoc County.”

“In November 1850, it had been planked across the swamp, graded as far as the bluff, the ravine bridge had been completed and the river bridge considerably advanced,” he wrote.

Builders normally used oak planks for these roads, expecting them to last many years. But many of the roads needed to be rebuilt because of problems with planks.

Like many plank roads, this one was not successful. In 1858, Manitowoc County stepped in to complete construction.

Also in 1858, the state Legislature approved a commission to improve the Manitowoc and Menasha Road from Zalesburg in the Town of Manitowoc Rapids through Reedsville to the Manitowoc-Calumet County line.

In 1860, the Legislature authorized a road from Manitowoc Rapids to Menasha, according to “A History of Wisconsin Highway Development 1835-1945,” which the state highway commission published in 1947.

An 1859 newspaper article states, “Preparations are being made to extend the Menasha Plank Road from McAllister’s at the Green Bay Road to Branch Mills.”

The reference is to the McAllister House, which now sits at the historical society’s Pinecrest Historical Village and once stood along the plank road near Four Corners, Groll said. He added that the Menasha Plank Road is now Menasha Avenue, the Green Bay Road is now County Road R and that Branch Mills is Branch, also called Lenaville.

The part of U.S. Highway 10 on Menasha Avenue from 11th Street and Waldo Boulevard to Four Corners saw several milestones, Ed- See Highway p. 10



# Highway

Continued from p. 1

It was the county's first plank road as well as the state's last toll road, as the tolls came off in 1899.

Later, it became a corduroy road. Corduroy roads were a series of logs laid parallel across a roadbed to allow passage of wagons, horses and foot traffic.

The log arrangements resembled corduroy clothing, unlike the flat plank roads of the 19th century.

In the early 20th century, Berkedal wrote, automobiles required hard-surface roads. One early form was a macadam road, and Manitowoc County's first happened to be Menasha Avenue.

Invented in 1820 by John McAdam, Berkedal wrote that macadam roads had two levels of crushed stone, each compacted by a roller, and then topped by sand.

Roadbuilding in the early 20th century was difficult, Groll said.

"The original graders were pulled by horses," he said.

"The original dump trucks were pulled by horses."

Construction trucks had steel tires, similar to tractor tires, Groll said.

"They probably did not go much faster than 10 or 15 miles an hour," he said. "How many miles of road can they do in a day? It was awfully labor intensive."

A 1911 Manitowoc County map shows more turns and curves than the current U.S. Highway 10 has. At that time, highways had different letters or numbers than they do today.

In 1917, the Legislature directed a 5,000-mile state trunk highway system. The state produced a map of this system in 1918, according to "A History of Wisconsin Highway Development 1835-1945."

The map includes a Highway 18 from Manitowoc to Brillion close to the current Highway 10, but with a more direct route from Manitowoc to Branch.

From Brillion, the road went southwest to Potter and Hilbert and then northwest

around the north side of Lake Winnebago to Menasha.

In 1926, U.S. Highway 10 got its current name. However, the highway had a different routing between Humbird and Minneapolis.

U.S. Highway 10 ran in conjunction with U.S. Highway 12, through Eau Claire. Later, it took a route to the south, through Osseo and Prescott, previously called State Highway 34.

In 1928, local workers built a concrete U.S. Highway 10 through Manitowoc County. In 1929, the state built a railroad underpass at Grimms.

In 1930s, the state built two railroad overpasses for Highway 10 in the Forest Junction area. The overpass west of the community had a length of 452 feet. These railroads have since been abandoned and the overpasses and underpass no longer exist.

Also, the state built an overpass for the highway on Waldo Boulevard in 1932. Although the tracks are seldom used, a bridge still takes the highway over the tracks there.

In 1945, U.S. Highway 10 stretched for 290 miles statewide, including 22 in Manitowoc County and 20 in Calumet County.

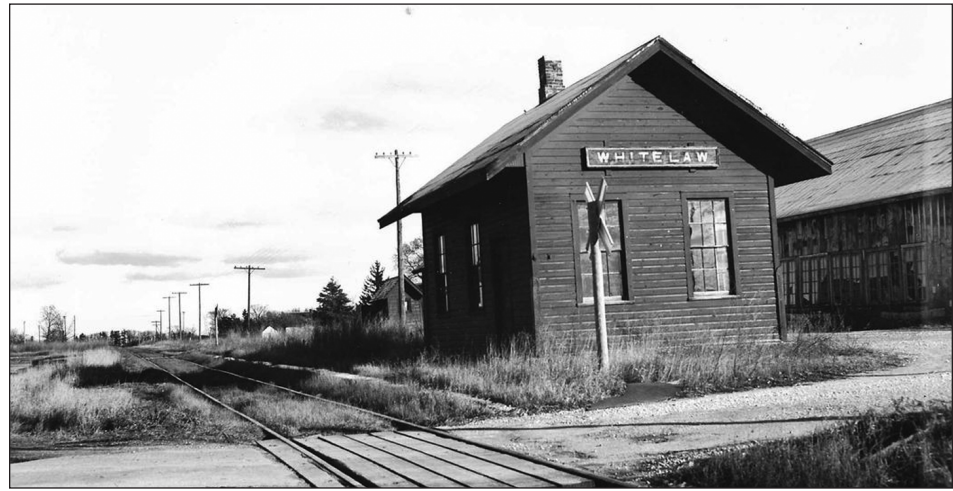
Today, the highway has 293 miles within Wisconsin. Reasons for lengthening are decommissioning of the angled Menasha Avenue and building a bypass in the Appleton area.

In the mid-20th century, Highway 10 ran from Detroit, Mich., to Seattle, Wash., a distance of 2,128 miles, according to the US Ends website.

With decommissioning of the east and west ends of the road, U.S. Highway 10 now only runs from Bay City, Mich., to Fargo, N.D., a distance of 710 miles.

The listed miles do not include a 60-mile car ferry trip from Manitowoc to Ludington, Mich.

U.S. Highway 10 is one of only two existing U.S. highways that include a ferry segment. The other is U.S. Highway 9, which has a ferry crossing between Lewes, Del.,



## Along the Route

The Whitelaw railroad depot used to stand near the tracks along U.S. Highway 10, which still cuts through the village.

and North Cape May, N.J.

The "WPA Guide to Wisconsin," published in 1940, tells of the first Wisconsin part of U.S. Highway 10, the Pere Marquette Auto Ferry: "Passengers, \$3 each; cars, \$5 each." The S.S. Badger now runs the same route, but fares are much higher.

"U.S. 10 turns right on Eighth Street and crosses the dirt-brown Manitowoc River," the book says. "As the route passes through residential Manitowoc, the scenery shifts from city to prosperous countryside. Farms, barns and silos are large.

"The highway passes dairy and row-crop farms, interrupted by occasional plum and cherry orchards."

In Manitowoc County, U.S. Highway 10 connects several places with their own histories.

Members of the Kellner family built two taverns at Four Corners, also called Kellner's Corners.

On the northeast corner, Charles Kellner opened Kellner Saloon & Hotel in the 1880s, according to the Manitowoc County Tavern History website.

Bonin's Buffet operated there in the 1930s. An advertisement shows that Emil Bonin also sold cigars, cigarettes and light lunches.

Schuette's Corner operated there until 1949, serving chicken plate lunches on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

It later became the Backus

Inn, Todl's Inn, the Manitou Bar and Club Manitou. A 1981 advertisement shows an adjacent Manitou Motel, with Beauty Rest beds and sound-proof walls.

The building was torn down in 1986 or 1987.

On the southeast corner, William J. Kellner opened and built a tavern, called South Tavern in 1898, according to the Manitowoc County Tavern History website.

Through the years the property had several owners, including Gary and Darlene Herrmann who operated it as the Coach-Lite Inn from 1971 to 1988. The last listed business in the now empty building is Denny's Pizza Garden, 2008-2014.

To the northwest, Branch was originally called Lenaville, in honor of one of the first settlers, Falge wrote.

"Pierce and Slye built a saw mill in the early days and Gottfried Kunz a brewery in 1858," Falge wrote.

A few miles west of Branch is Whitelaw or Pine Grove.

Richard Olsenius and Judy A. Zerby, in their 1983, "Wisconsin Travel Companion," wrote that Pine Grove developed around 1872 and later changed its name to Whitelaw, reportedly to honor a railroad officer.

"The village originally included a large flour mill, a lumber yard, creamery, Catholic church and school, cigar factory, cement factory and various shops," they wrote.

A few miles west, Cato, at the intersection of U.S. Highway 10 and County Road J, once had three doctors, two dentists, two taverns and five barbers.

When the state widened

Highway 10 in the early 1990s, it tore down two taverns and many of Cato's historic buildings.

Cato is one of three former communities along the highway, each about a mile apart. Heading west are the sites of Noonan's Corners, also called old Maple Grove, and Grimms. Reedsville, originally called Mud Creek, is two miles west of Grimms.

U.S. Highway 10 now bypasses much of Reedsville. The original route is now Manitowoc Street in the village and the road later ran northwest on Sunny Slope Road.

Reedsville had cattle fairs on the last Wednesday of the month, Olsenius and Zerby wrote.

"On fair days, all roads leading to town were choked for miles with pedestrians, vehicles and livestock," they wrote.

From booths on the main street, merchants sold clothing, boots, shows, cookware and fruits.

"Everyone wanted a piece of the action: patent medicine peddlers, gamblers, horse jockeys, gypsies and even pickpockets," Olsenius and Zerby wrote. "Local merchants protested in vain, except for the saloon keepers who reportedly did a thriving business."

Reedsville may be best known for its 1946 state champion basketball team, when schools of all sizes competed against each other in the state tournament.

After a 45-39 victory over Eau Claire, people filled the streets of Reedsville to celebrate a "David vs. Goliath" victory.



## Stop a While

Schuette's Corner tavern offered poultry dinners in its building along Highway 141 and U.S. Highway 10, which was then four miles north of Manitowoc.

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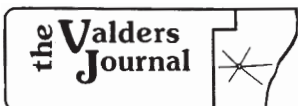
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