



# MILWAUKEE ETHNIC NEWS

PUBLISHED BY URBAN ANTHROPOLOGY, INC.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

## Local ethnic events in November & December

### *About Milwaukee Ethnic News*

*Milwaukee Ethnic News* is published bimonthly by Urban Anthropology Inc. and is managed by volunteer anthropologists. The purpose of the newsletter is to offer ethnic organizations and individuals the opportunities to share news and information about their cultures. The newsletter does not receive funds from any external source. See more information on last page.

*Most \$10 and under; many free*

## Oral history of Milwaukee's ethnic groups

### *10-part series on study findings*



Over a period of 12 years, anthropologists from Urban Anthropology, Inc. conducted 435 in-depth interviews with key informants from 65 Milwaukee area eth-

nic groups. In a 10-part series, *Milwaukee Ethnic News* presents the findings.

### Part four: Religion

When most members of an ethnic group share the same religion, the bonds of ethnicity strengthen significantly. In many cases, the church, synagogue, mosque, temple, and spiritual

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# Ethnic events in November & December

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## African American

### AMERICA'S BLACK HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

*When?* Tue.'s through Sat.'s, 10am-5pm; Sat.'s noon to 5pm. *Where?* 401 W. North Ave. *Description:* Seven history galleries that tell the story of the Black Holocaust in chronological order from life in Africa before captivity to African American life today. *Admission:* Free to \$5.

### GROUP TOUR WISCONSIN BLACK HISTORICAL CENTER

*When?* Mornings beginning at 9am, reserve at website. *Where?* Wisconsin Black Historical Center, 2620 W. Center St. *Description:* Opportunity to see exhibits on African American history in Wisconsin. [www.wbhs.org/Home.htm](http://www.wbhs.org/Home.htm). *Admission:* 0-\$5.

## American Indian

**LECTURE ON INDIGENOUS GROUPS** *When?* Nov. 9, 6:30. *Where?* Virtual only, register at [Returning to the People | Milwaukee Public Museum \(mpm.edu\)](http://Returning to the People | Milwaukee Public Museum (mpm.edu)). *Description:* How the MPM works with Indigenous groups to bring their history and ancestors home. *Admission:* Free.

See more on this later in the newsletter.

## Egyptian

**EGYPTIAN CHRISTMAS COOKIE SALE** *When?* Dec. 9, 10, 11am to 6pm. *Where?* St. Mary and St. Antonious Coptic Orthodox Church, 1521 W. Drexel Ave., Oak Creek. *Description:* Various varieties of cookies and bakery for sale. *Admission:* Free to look.

## German

**GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKET OF OCONOMOWOC** *When?* Opening Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5pm (through Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>). *Where?* 100 E. Wisconsin Ave., Oconomowoc. *Description:* European food and drink; live polka music, Big Al and the Hi Fi's play, Santa Claus. *Admission:* Free to attend.

## Hmong

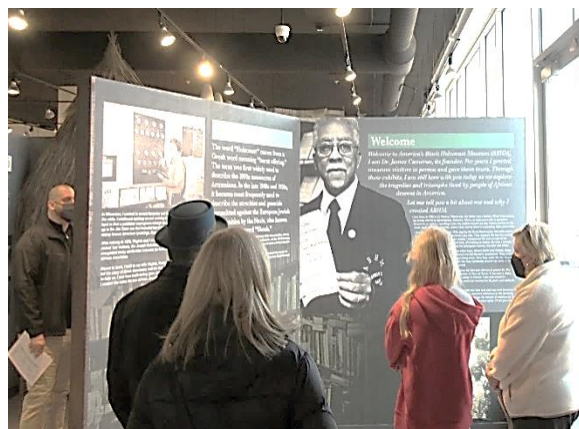
**HMONG NEW YEAR** *When?* Sat., Sun., Dec. 9, 10. *Where?* Wisconsin Expo Center, Wisconsin State Fair, 8200 W. Greenfield Ave. *Description:* Celebration of thousands of years tradition. *Admission:* Unk.

## International

**HOLIDAY FOLK FAIR INTERNATIONAL** *When?* Fri., Nov. 17 to Sun., Nov. 19. *Where?* State Fair Park Expo Center; 8200 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis. *Description:* Multicultural festival of music, food, dance, and the arts. Access at [www.folkfair.org](http://www.folkfair.org) *Admission:* Unk.

## Irish

**CELTIC CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE** *When?* Nov. 18, 9am to 3:30pm. *Where?* 1532 N. Wauwatosa Ave. *Description:* Show with large number of arts and crafts vendors marketing Irish gifts for the holiday season. *Admission:* Free to look.



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## Ethnic events in November & December

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### Italian

**CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT THE ICC** *When?* Dec. 8, 6 to 7pm. *Where?* Italian Community Center, 631 E. Chicago. *Description:* Live caroling. *Admission:* Unk.



### Jewish

**COMMUNITY FREE DAY** *When?* Nov. 6, 10am to 5pm. *Where?* Jewish Museum Milwaukee, 1360 N. Prospect Ave. *Description:* Women Pulling the Threads exhibition. *Admission:* Free.

### Latino

#### WALK THROUGH MILWAUKEE'S LATINO HISTORY

*When?* Daily, 10-4pm. *Where?* United Community Center, 1028 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St. *Description:* Opportunity to learn about Latino history by visiting tannery and foundry exhibits (see below), photos, and art inside the UCC building, and historical murals on two sides of Bruce Guadalupe School next door (see to the right). *Admission:* Free.



**NOCHE DE ALTARES** *When?* Nov. 2. *Where?* Urban Ecology Center, Menomonee Valley. *Description:* Celebrate the rich traditions of Dia de los Muertos. *Admission:* Unk.

**DIA DE LOS MUERTOS CONCERT** *When?* Nov. 3, 7pm. *Where?* Latino Arts, 1028 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St. *Description:* Tres Souls performs revitalized sounds and songs of the 1940s-1960s, stylized during the Golden Era of Mexican cinema. *Admission:* \$20 to \$25.

### Polish

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT AT THE BASILICA** *When?* Dec. 9, 12pm. *Where?* Basilica of St. Josaphat, 2323 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St. *Description:* Musical concert, holiday and other music, live performances *Admission:* Unk.





# Oral history of Milwaukee ethnic groups

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meeting hall serve as community centers for immigrant groups. In the case of African Americans, Baptist, Methodist, and (in Milwaukee) Catholic churches also helped by playing strong roles in advancing causes in the civil rights movements of the 1960s.

While having benefits, the identification of religion with ethnicity can also present a dilemma for some. Most immigrants travel with the same faith they acquired in some former homeland, but they might also feel pressure during migration that favors a more secular life.

## Ethnicity and the seculars

When a religion is identified closely with an ethnic group, it can have confounding results. Take the Jews. Is a person practicing the Jewish faith but having no ethnic Jews as ancestors, considered a Jew? How does a person with Jewish genetic ancestry, but does not practice the Jewish religion, have Jewish *culture*? Data suggest that only a little over half of American Jews have synagogue affiliations.

To many participants in the Milwaukee study, Jewish culture had become closely identified with orthodoxy, a concern expressed by less conservative Jews. This was particularly problematic at the time the Milwaukee interviews were conducted, as orthodoxy had been on the rise in Milwaukee County. An Orthodox individual described the movement.

*Jewish:* There were two specific movements that happened in Judaism which happened since the late 1960s. What you had in the 1960s in Milwaukee was a very strong periphery and a very weak core. You had a lot of Jews with an erosion of religiosity. One of the things that happened is that Jews gained greater freedom in America, which turned out to be the curse of intermarriage and assimilation which occurred at that time. We were insulated from the factors of anti-Semitism. Today you have a weak periphery and that core is very strong. The core is a dramatic growth of orthodoxy.



Beth Jehudah Synagogue of Sherman Park's Orthodox community

With Jewish history, holidays, and rites of passage intensely infused with religion, some secular Jews questioned their identity.

*Jewish:* Most of the Orthodox keep their own version of Jewish culture by isolating themselves from others. The secular [Jews] struggle with this. If we are not particularly spiritual, where do we have culture?

*Jewish:* Maybe we secular Jews need to decide exactly what *our* culture is. If we are not religious, in what ways are we Jews? What are our common denominators?

*Jewish:* Take the religion completely out of the equation and we're left with just the negative stereotypes—Jews as tradesmen, wanderers, outsiders, whatever.

Some Russian Jews described another issue. Those who emigrated from the former Soviet Union had been denied the right to practice Judaism. Lacking the religion, often for generations, some preferred the ethnic designation of Russian.

*Russian:* I am not a Jew. I was a Jew in the USSR because my grandparents were Jews. Here I say I am a Russian speaking person—a Russian. I don't practice the Jewish religion.

*Russian:* Some of the Russian speaking here in Milwaukee are practicing [the] Jewish religion. They attend synagogue. I know Lithuanians have their own church and Ukrainians also have their own church. I don't believe in God so I believe in judicial democracy . . . But remember, back in the USSR in order to get a college degree, in order to graduate from college, you have to take two courses in [the] history of communism and the theory of agnostic thought.

But for most study participants from other groups, religion and ethnicity could be decoupled without the risk of ambiguous identities. In some instances, individuals withdrew from the religion of their past homeland and became secular; at other times they changed religious practices; in other situations, their homeland sects were too diverse to be considered ethnic religions. But in any case, the study participants still identified with their ethnic groups.

*French:* I know some who go to church. I know some who are absolute atheists. Basically, the French people don't think much of the Church. Most of the French people I know, for them, church is not a consideration. But there are a lot, and also in this Francophone community that I mentioned, a lot of our Francophone Africans are very religious people . . . I go to a church sometimes with a cousin of my husband's. Everyone

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who comes to me speaks French. It's a kind of gathering place for the Francophone community. They say that the French here go to church for baptism, marriage, and death—and nothing in between.

*German:* Most of the Germans I happen to know well aren't very religious. My *Oma* [grandmother] is Catholic, and her husband, a Serb, converted to Catholicism from the Serbian Orthodox Church when they married in the forties. They were more frequent in their church attendance when they still lived in Germany up to 1955. After they moved to the US, I don't recall hearing about an active church presence. That being said, my *Oma* still self-identifies as a Catholic and would probably describe religion as an important part of her life. My mom and her sister were raised Catholic, but both left the church for the most part when they reached their teens. The Germans I know well enjoy going to church for the main masses at Christmas and Easter, but not much else.

*Hmong:* We were animists. Christianity was introduced in the 1950s in Laos—late 1950s. It's fairly new to us. About 65 percent here are Christian and 35 percent practice a belief in ancestor worship. They believe that when ancestors die, they become good spirits and come back to help others. People offer to ancestors, offer incense, a small meal to ask good spirits to share meal with them. [They] burn special paper from way back in Chinese history, will transfer this into money to good spirit to have a means of purchasing things. [It's] very popular in this group. Hmong culture has different ways of marriage ceremonies and funerals. Even though some are Christian, they practice cultural parts of celebrations.



Table setting for ancestor worship (photo courtesy of Flickr)

*German:* There are the strongest elements of the retention of the German culture to be found in German Catholicism and German Lutheran religions. The North Germans who were Calvinists have more or less become assimilated in the United Church of Christ . . . Then there was the German freethinking society of which there are a few remnants left in Milwaukee.

However, the majority of ethnic informants in the Milwaukee area claimed that religious practices helped them retain their ethnicity. The ethnic-enhancing practices took place both

in private through symbols and in public through faith communities.

## Private amalgamation of religion and ethnicity

Study participants discussed the religious practices they observed alone or with family. In most cases these practices were ones they carried over from their homelands (including reservations).

*Greek:* In their homes we have special areas with shelves where they have their family altar with icons, like of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and patron saints or members of the family. We light it with lights and keep their holy water from the church on special occasions. This is another place for the family to pray. It is a family-based worship. And we follow certain traditions like baking a special bread to be used in divine liturgies. We make boiled wheat with some sweet stuff in it like raisins. If we have someone buried here in Milwaukee, we take some of that wheat and throw it on the grave.

*Italian:* But today, if you look at it and try and find a trend, and try to understand the power of the relationship of religion to Italian culture, it's always been at the center of Italian culture. From the naming of children after Italian saints to very traditional events, holidays, methods by which you conduct your life.

*Palestinian:* I have a mix of religious family and friends. And I also have secular Arab friends too. It's a personal decision for Arabs living in America or in Palestine. But even those who don't pray five times per day as required, we all mostly fast during the holy month of Ramadan.

*North American Indian Oneida:* Its most important practice is staying connected with my creator, and the connection to mother earth. I see that every day we're here is a gift. I am happy every day I get up. I acknowledge that each morning to our grandmothers and our creator. We smudge, and burn cedar and sage grass . . . We want our creator to see this. We appreciate the medicines they give us.

*Slovak:* We do not have Slovak services at our Lutheran church anymore, but I do make the *oplatky* or Christmas wafers for the Slovaks that still attend there. They are eaten on Christmas Eve with honey before we eat our meal.

## Public amalgamation of religion and ethnicity

But most practices that consolidated religion and ethnicity occurred in public, most often in faith communities. In some instances,

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events focused on ethnic-specific ways to celebrate religious holidays, such as what is described below in field notes.

## Field notes: April, 2012

In late afternoon, the day before Easter, a group of several hundred mainly Polish worshippers began entering the [Catholic church] on Milwaukee's south side to assemble in a lower-level sanctuary. Nearly everyone was carrying a large basket, lined with white linens, and covered with a cloth. In the baskets were food and drink for their Easter breakfast and treats for the children's Easter baskets. As the services ensued, the priest began his annual blessing of the Easter baskets, systematically blessing each food and drink item by category, and walking down the aisle sprinkling holy water from a wand in the direction of the baskets.

I was told that the custom of blessing the baskets, called *swieconka* in Polish, is one of the most enduring customs brought over from Poland, and goes back to medieval times in Europe.



Informants from the Milwaukee study described ethnic-specific ways they celebrated religious holidays.

*Nepali:* Last couple of *Dashains* [Hindu religious festival], I have had my parents here with us, so we did all the rituals and regular *pujas* [offerings] during the entire period of *Dashain* . . . My family then visits my in-laws elsewhere in the US. So, at family scale, it is much like what we used to have back in Nepal.

*Filipino:* During Holy Week there are a number of special services that the [name of organization] offers in our language. We do have a Filipino center on [name of street]. That is where we host the most events. In the Filipino tradition, on the nine days before Christmas we go to mass every single day. It's called night mass or *Simbang Gabi*. That's the one I wouldn't miss. It's a big deal back home. The events are centered around religion. We have some Muslims, Protestants, but mostly Catholics.

*Polish:* The Catholic Church is involved in all parts of our lives. It's life centered on the parish. We had sixteen to eighteen Polish parishes then in the city, and still have several. Food traditions are big. Mom was [a] great cook. We'd have kielbasa at holidays. We'd have manger straw and have some shafts of straw under the table cloth, and an empty place. The idea was open hospitality for people. And there was the Feast of Corpus Christi. We'd have an outdoor altar and processions from altar to altar. And there was Fat Tuesday—the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday—the day where all families baked *paczki*, jelly-filled donuts where we'd use up all the lard and flour and sugar and so on.



*Paczki* (photo courtesy of Flickr)

*Lithuanian:* My favorite and most important cultural practice is Christmas Eve. I actually thought every Catholic country practiced the same Christmas, only when I came to the United States did I realize this wasn't true. Christmas Eve, every Lithuanian cleans their house in and out, have to give "all the debts away"—pay your debts. At the end of the day, you shower and put on clean clothes, and put down a white table cloth for family dinner, and extra plates are put out for family who is no longer with us, before the meal there is prayer. We get communion and eat bread with each other, and wish the best and give kisses to each other around the table. We all say "Happy Christmas" to each other. Then, some food is left on the table for the ones who have passed away. Because, they say that the souls come at midnight or after midnight to visit and eat the food. Grandma used to say "that's the only night animals speak, but if you hear them, you will die."

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*Puerto Rican:* For Puerto Ricans here, Holy Week, which is between Palm Sunday and Easter [is important]. Palm Sunday is the day Christ enters Jerusalem, and he has the last supper and is crucified. Forty days before resurrection, or lent, there are traditions that are kept. We don't dance, and eat only certain things. People say if you dance during that week your legs will become thin, and so on. The day before the feast of Saint John, people in Puerto Rico go to the beach and take a dip at midnight. It goes back to the Spanish traditions of Saint John the Baptist—it's like you are getting baptized. But it really is a combination with the African, because it's not totally a Christian tradition. It's taking St. John the Baptist, but at the same time you're throwing yourself in the water seven times for good luck, which is more of the African tradition.

In other cases, the faith communities also acted as gathering places for families of the same ethnic background—with a focus on the social.

*Puerto Rican:* Most of our cultural practices come through the church. It is the primary way. I think most social organizations stem from there in terms of who knows who, and who belongs to which clique. The church is the meeting place for a lot of families and their extended families.

*Indian:* We do have a temple. I can see how church is important for Christians, right? Temple is important for Hindus. There's a temple in [town outside of Milwaukee]. There are loads of Indians staying there and [another nearby town], so it's convenient for them to just come. We used to go mostly weekends, every weekend, for no reason. "Let's just go, and if they need help, we will go help, if they need volunteers. If they are doing some functions there, we can just go and help make their function better." So, it's not just religious necessarily—maybe social. There are loads of religions in India, but once you are out of India, everything is the same. Here I celebrate all Indian festivals, not just the ones from my state. In India each state is very different. Each one has its own language and it will be totally different. You can't understand a word. It's like if I went to Texas and I couldn't understand one word. Yes, food, religion, gods are different. Every state will have their [sic] own kind of stuff. What I realized once I was out of India is I am just Indian. I will celebrate everything.

*Italian:* Italians will go to Sunday mass and everything. They don't treat it just as a Sunday mass. It more as a gathering place to meet people afterwards, so it's part religious, part social. I've also been asked to help with the church festival at [name of church], to resurrect it. There's also a society called the [name] club that I am involved with.

*Mexican:* There is a huge difference between black, Anglo and Latino celebrations. We are very strong with the church. We live around the church. Much of the strength of our community comes from faith and practicing our religion. I live at the church; it is my home. We go more than five times a week.

*Jewish:* We have over one hundred Jewish families that came together in this neighborhood, that are members of [name of synagogue]. A lot are young with lots of kids. It's a conglomerate of people from all over the country.

*African American:* We are evangelicals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, Catholic, Muslims, Methodists, Baptists, you name it. When we are in the church, we are *really* in the church. We aren't like Caucasians where we go to church for form, because it looks good. If we feel that way, we leave the

church. When we are in it, we are really in it. Our services last until they are done. We don't keep set times. We get into it and the preacher can preach as long as it suits him or the choir can sing as long as they want.



In other instances, the faith communities initiated events that were secular.

*Italian:* Religious groups were primarily responsible for providing assistance to new immigrants with socializing, general skill building, learning the English language, and becoming citizens. Most of the festivals and societies that were present in the past, and may have carried on until today, are religious-based.

*Greek:* Both churches have Greek festivals. [Name of church] has a huge Greek fest. They had to move it to the state fairgrounds because the area was getting bad and it got rowdy. They had to shut down the midway. [Another church] has its fair. One year they transported it to a park in [Milwaukee suburb] but that wasn't economically feasible. There was [name of organization] and some women's groups. There's one group of people that came from the same areas where my folks were born and they meet periodically. Both churches have young children do Greek dances and have Greek food.

While no informants suggested that the faith communities ignored their sacred duties, some implied that the ethnic spotlight was sometimes more important to members than religion.

*Greek:* Well, I think they love the Orthodox Church, but I don't know how serious many are. One archbishop told me this: "Some only go on Easter and Good Friday. Sometimes we worship the Greek language rather than God." . . . People love the Greek Orthodox religion though. We have the right doctrine from the apostles, but we aren't that serious about it.

*Serbian:* It is a *Serbian* church. You listen to what I said. I didn't say it was a *church*. We think that a church tends to the will of God. But if you have an ethnic church, well . . . [informant raises arms].

The next issue of *Milwaukee Ethnic News* will feature Part Four of study findings, "Ethnic practices: Food."



## Poetry book on Milwaukee is on the horizon

*Author Sienna Jacks' work expected to be out in early 2024*

The work will include poetry on topics such as:

- Milwaukee neighborhoods
- Major historical events
- City streets and parks
- Milwaukee heroes and villains
- City "characters"
- Milwaukee special events
- Lost communities
- City businesses, churches, organizations, past and present
- Major sports
- Area ethnic groups

See sample page to the right

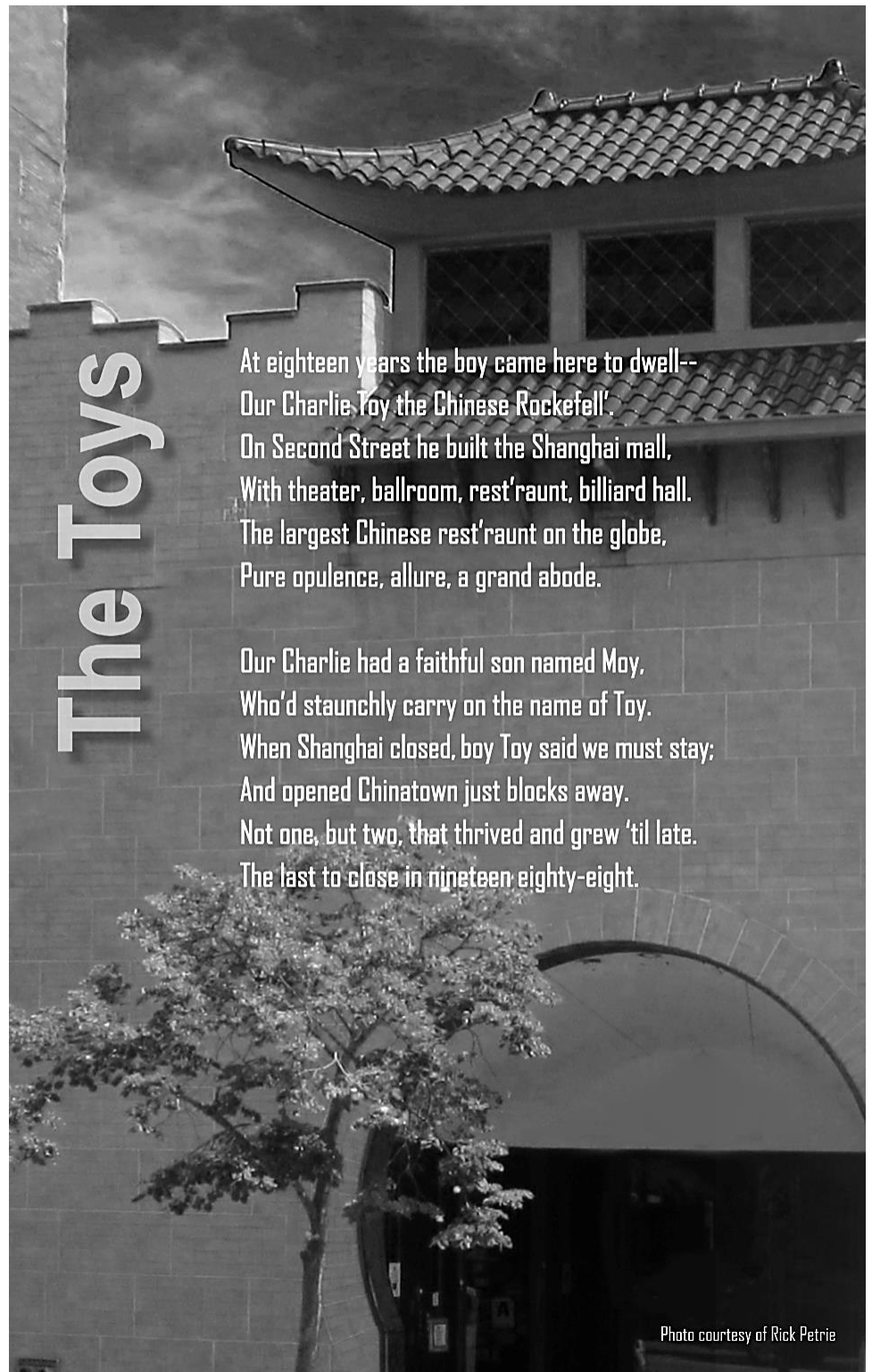


Photo courtesy of Rick Petrie





## Beaujolais Nouveau 2023

### When

Thursday, November 16, 2023 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM CST



**Join us to celebrate vingt-six ans de vin, the 26th Annual Beaujolais Nouveau!**

Our most popular party celebrating the 2023 harvest

\$15 for AF Members  
\$20 for nonmembers

Festive music, cuisine, and dancing. Cash bar.  
Contact [annel@afmilwaukee.org](mailto:annel@afmilwaukee.org)

### Rive Gauche Radio Show

The Alliance's own radio show every Tuesday from 6 to 6:30pm on 104.1 FM or online at [www.riverstradio.com/show/rive-gauche](http://www.riverstradio.com/show/rive-gauche)

*Returning to the People:  
How the MPM works with  
Indigenous groups to bring their  
history and ancestors home*



*Presented by Dawn Scher Thomae, MPM  
Curator of Anthropology Collections*

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), passed in 1990, has forever changed the way museums collect, interpret, and care for Native American items. One of the most controversial aspects of this federal law relates to the process used by museums, repositories, and federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items and ancestral remains to tribes. This presentation will provide an overview of the law, how MPM works with the U.S. government and Native groups, and the ways that NAGPRA has impacted MPM's collections, exhibits, and programs.

### DATE AND TIME

Wednesday, November 9, 2023 6:30 - 8 p.m.

### COST AND RESERVATIONS

Free! Virtual Only.

Register at [Returning to the People | Milwaukee Public Museum \(mpm.edu\)](https://www.mpm.edu/Returning-to-the-People)

## *Women Pulling at the Threads of Social Discourse*

**Jewish  
Museum Milwaukee**



**September 8 to December 31, 2013**



### **Jewish Museum Milwaukee**

1316 N. Prospect Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

**HOURS:**  
Monday through Thursday,  
10am to 5pm  
Closed Saturday

Sunday 12pm to 4pm

### **ABOUT THE EXHIBIT**

Explore how female artists, using textiles as their medium, subvert the social expectations of crafting by lambasting this soft medium with social and political awareness. A powerful vehicle for fostering discussion, this exhibit centers female voices as they reflect on subjects like the right to vote, reproductive rights, and the intersection of femininity, race, history and feminist socio-politics.

Featuring artists from the Contemporary Art Modern Project (CAMP) show in 2020, and in partnership with Fiber Arts Miami Association (FAMA) this exhibit incorporates art by national and local artists who are at the forefront of social discourse.

**Get tickets at** [Jewish Museum Milwaukee Online Registration System](#)



# Ethnic activities for families to do at home

## *Ethnic stories/games/meals*

This featured website delivers stories for the entire family on ethnic groups across space and time. Spend a day (or ten) with any of the offerings summarized in the following pages. Each story (appropriate for children 8 to 14), is accompanied by a recipe of the featured group and a game and art project associated with the story. The narratives were created over a 20-year period by the cultural anthropologists at Urban Anthropology Inc. and are based on scholarly research. Families can learn while being entertained.

Go to <http://teacheraidsforkidsmilwaukee.com/> then click on Kids Across Time & Space or Holidays Across the Globe

### The Stories: Summaries

#### Africa

**Berbers of Morocco:** A tale of a Berber girl living in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, how her family members worked to support the household, and the near crisis that developed when her brother wanted to move permanently to Spain.

**South Africa:** A fictionalized account of the decade when the segregated system of apartheid ended in South Africa and how the time is commemorated by the nation's Day of Reconciliation (story presents much food for discussion and is designed for more mature children).

**African Turkana:** The tribulations of an African boy reaching manhood who needed to acquire sufficient bride wealth in order to marry in the future, the pastoralist society he lived in, and the unexpected ways that his education came to his aid. A story about the benefits of learning.

**African Ibo:** A story of a ten-year-old boy living in Africa around 1800, his vibrant village life, his age grade activity, and the constant threat he faced of being kidnapped into slavery.

**Nubia/Kush:** The tale of a fifteen-year-old girl living in the black African Kingdom of Kush in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, her trip into Egypt, her cultural shock in seeing the Egyptian transformation of an old friend, and her eventual acceptance of difference.

#### Europe

**Greece:** A story of a spoiled teenage boy living in Greece in ancient times, his Olympian experiences, and how a performance of the great Greek drama *Antigone* helped him come to his senses.

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# Ethnic stories (summaries)

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**Wales:** A fictionalized account of a self-involved American youth who goes to witness the youth national cultural festival in Wales and comes away thinking he might be able to use his gifts in more community-serving ways.

**Germany:** A tale of a German family struggling to keep the Christmas spirit and German Christmas customs while the family children misbehave. German Christmas customs solve the family problem. A good story for the very young.

**Spain:** A fictionalized account of a Romani (“gypsy”) girl living in Madrid, Spain, the cultural values and problems she faced, and her secret life as a criminal with her older brothers. A story that asks when or if the ends justify the means.

**Rome:** The experience of a teenage boy living in a Roman province in 64 AD, his ancestors’ enslavement, the introduction of Christianity to the area, and the deeds of Emperor Nero.

**Jews of Poland:** The account of a young Jewish girl on the eve of the Holocaust, her daily life in the shtetl, the family’s religious traditions, and their eventual demise.

**England:** The tribulations of a young boy in Medieval England from a mixed ethnic family who must leave his home at an early age to be trained for the knighthood.

**Italy:** A story of a teenage orphan girl living in Florence Italy at the height of the Renaissance, her experiences growing up in a humane orphanage, and the choice (among three options) she must make for her future. (Very interactive.)

## Eurasia

**Soviet:** A fictionalized account of a teenage girl living under Communism in the USSR in the 1930s, her daily life, and the conflict she faced over loyalty to her family vis-a-vis loyalty to the Communist government.

**Ottoman:** A tale a teenage boy living in the Ottoman Empire in the late seventeenth century, his cultural environment, his opportunities, his yearnings, and how he achieved balance between his own desires and helping his family.

## Asia/Oceania

**Hmong:** A story about a young Hmong boy in a refugee camp in the 1970s, his people’s involvement in the Vietnam War and its aftermath, how he and his people recorded their history on story cloths, and his eventual immigration to the US.

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# Ethnic stories (summaries)

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**Siberia:** A tale of a college-bound girl living in a reindeer-herding family in Siberia, the changes that took place when her environment was no longer under Soviet control, the options that the girl was considering for her future career, and the ways that each of these options might impact her traditional people.

**Burma/Myanmar:** A fictionalized account of a young boy of the Mon ethnic group living in war-torn Burma (now Myanmar) in the late 1940s, the school that villagers organized to teach Mon culture, ethnic strife, the boy's attempts to convince his uncle to return from his refugee status in Thailand, and what eventually happened to his village and school. A story about ethnic intolerance.

**China:** A poignant story about the life of a young girl in China in the early Middle Ages, Confucian values, and the role of filial piety in the household.

**India:** A tale of an eight-year-old girl living in India in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, her world under the Mughals, her family's involvement with the British East India Company, and her dread of being married off at a very young age.

**Iran:** A fictionalized account of a young Iranian man in a Shi'a Muslim family who is about to learn the spirit of Ramadan.

**Japan:** The story of a Japanese teenager in the 1920s whose life is charted out for him as a family heir within his lineage—an "other-oriented" role that creates a family link between the past and the future. He experiences culture shock when he visits the United States with his father and makes friends with an American sailor who takes him out for a night of 1920s frolicking and questions the young man's Japanese values.

**Bali:** A fictionalized account of a Balinese boy in the early 1950s, his struggle with hyperactivity, the Balinese culture of performance, and the way the boy's mother helped her son by involving him in performance art.

**Trobriand Islands:** The tale of a teenage girl living in the Trobriand Islands in 1918, her islands' culture, and how she attempted to attract the man of her dreams through "beauty magic."

## Latin America

**Brazil:** A story of a Brazilian teenager, his slave ancestry, life in a Rio *favela*, and the sacrifices he made to restore his mother's pride. A story about poverty, pride, and family love.

**Costa Rica:** A fictionalized account of a young boy in the 1820s whose family had immigrated to Costa Rica from Spain, the

Continued on page fourteen





# Ethnic stories (summaries)

Continued from page thirteen

family's adoption of a young Indian/African orphan, the boys' adventures visiting the rainforest, and their ultimate adventure in search of purported treasures left behind by (now extinct) indigenous people.

**Maya:** The story of a Maya boy living in the seventh century, his trip into a forbidden cave, the myth of the Hero Twins, and the boy's eventual rite of passage into manhood.

**Mexico:** A tale of a teenage Nahua Indian girl living in Tepoztlan, Mexico in 1948, the expectations placed on her by her culture, her dreams of living in the United States, and how all this changed when she was befriended by young woman archaeologist from the Great Plains of America. This is a story of "the grass is always greener" turned on its head.

**Puerto Rico:** A fictionalized account of twin girls living in Puerto Rico, the circular migration of their family between their village in Puerto Rico and New York City, and the ultimate decision the family would have to make about permanent residence in New York or their home village. A story of tension between upward mobility and home and family.

## North America

**Muskogee Creeks:** A tale of a teenage Muskogee Creek girl living through the era of Indian Removal, her village life and matrilineage, Creek spirituality, and her family's decision to avoid the Trail of Tears by emigrating to Texas.

**Appalachia:** The story of a ten-year-old girl living in the Appalachian Mountains in 1790, the migration of populations following the Revolutionary War, the plight of mixed-race populations, and a look back at the colonial experience.

**U.S. Slavery:** The fictional account of a young girl born into slavery, how she and her family members made themselves too valuable to their slave overseers to be separated by a slave auction, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the girl's later career as a free woman.

**Acadia:** A tale of a teenage Metis girl living in Acadia, her community's expulsion from their land, and her family's second home.

**Inuit:** A fictionalized account of a young Inuit girl living a nomadic life with her family in the Arctic Circle in the 1970s, her life at seasonal sites, the cultural expectations she lived with, and how she overcame jealousy of a younger sibling.

Continued on page fifteen





# Ethnic stories (summaries)

*Continued from page fourteen*

**U.S. Great Depression:** A story of a young girl living in Nebraska during the dust bowl years of the Great Depression, her steadfast support for her poor family, her daily work load, and an older brother who'd left home for world travel in the abundant 1920s and his reaction to finding his family in dire circumstances.

**Hopi:** A fictionalized account of a Hopi boy who welcomes his ancestral spirits back to his reservation town.

**American Puritans:** A story of a boy living in a strict 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritan household, how he overcame his idleness in order to use Puritan reason to fight slavery in the Colonies.

**Northwest Coast:** The tale of a twelve-year-old Native boy living in the Northwest Coast of North America in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, his world of art, the cultural tradition of the potlatch, and his antics trying to outsmart his ceremonial roles.

## Milwaukee

**African America Milwaukee:** A fictionalized account of an African American girl living in Milwaukee, the loss of her Bronzeville community, her migration to and from Milwaukee, her movement into the Civil Rights Movement and local fair housing marches, and her struggles to keep her new home in Sherman Park.

**Irish in Milwaukee:** A fictionalized account of a young Irish boy whose family settled in the Third Ward in the late 1800s, his aspirations to become a fireman, the scorn he faced from friends for setting his hopes too low, and his ultimate redemption when a fireman from the Ward saves the city of Milwaukee from burning down.

**1950s Milwaukee:** A story of a girl living in Milwaukee in the prosperous 1950s and how she and her age mates were influenced by the growing material culture of the day. A story about the influences of popular culture on gender roles.

**Polish Milwaukee:** A fictionalized account of a young Polish boy living on Milwaukee's south side in the early 1940s, his daily life in a Polish flat, his faith community at the Basilica of St. Josaphat, and what he learned one month about how his meals were prepared.

Go to <http://teacheraidsforkidsmilwaukee.com/> then click on Kids Across Time & Space or Holidays Across the Globe



*Kids across Time & Space (KaTS)*  
**Online cultural stories for  
youth**



Over 30 stories, written by cultural anthropologists, of less than 15 minutes each in length, are featured in the KaTS program, and are written for children aged 8 to 14. The stories take place between 700 BC to current times and span all global areas. Each story includes notes for parents or teachers, a game, art projects, recipes, and pre/post test questions. The free website is at [www.teacheraidsforkidsmilwaukee.com/KaTS\\_main.html](http://www.teacheraidsforkidsmilwaukee.com/KaTS_main.html)

### List of stories (presented chronologically)

Nubia/Kush: The cultural pride of Khikhy. **Greece: Kyros' love of power.** Roman Empire (Lazicum): Rufus and world of change. **China: The dilemma of Pang.** Maya classical: Can Pacal become a man? **England Medieval: The tribulations of William.** North-west Coast: The foolishness of Sa'laLEla. **India: The dread of Elina.** Italy Renaissance: Francesca's difficult decision. **American Puritans: The reason of Jeremiah.** Ottoman Empire: The Yearning of Yusuf. Acadians: **The relocation of Alma.** Appalachian Me-lungeons: Martha's family secret. **African Igbo: The dangerous life of Ngozi.** Costa Rica: The great adventure of Tomas. **Creek Indians: Sehoy's fate.** US slaves: The education of Dori. **Milwaukee Irish: Patrick's dream.** Trobriand Islands: Ilabova's transformation. **Japan: The culture shock of Ichiro.** Soviet Union: Natasha's predicament. **US Depression: The devotion of Barbara.** Poland Jews: Rachel's last days. **Milwaukee Polish America: Stefan's goose.** Mexico (Tepoztlan): The dissatisfaction of Zaniyah. **Bali: The hyperactivity of Nyoman.** US Milwaukee: Beverly, the first "material girl." **Burmese Mon: Zeya's school.** Inuit: Allaq's jealousy. **Milwaukee African American: Ruby's lost childhood.** Hmong: Moua Lia's assignment. **Brazil: The dignity of Manoel.** Siberia: Tonya's future. **Gitanos/Spain: Nina's secret life.** Puerto Rico: The twins must decide. **Moroccan Berbers: Aisha's household.** African Turkana: Ekwee's transaction.

*Milwaukee's Cultural Connect online*  
**Ethnic education for  
youth**



The Cultural Connect program (CC) began as a series of documentaries based on the 12-year ethnic study conducted by 70 cultural anthropologists in Milwaukee. The documentaries appeared locally on television on PBS and and/or on the MATA channel.

Later these documentaries were included in an 8-unit youth program in over 20 schools and each unit was conducted by anthropologists of the same ethnic background as the unit being presented. Over the years, more components of this program were developed.

**Now the program is available at no charge at**  
[www.teacheraidsforkidsmilwaukee.com/CC\\_main.html](http://www.teacheraidsforkidsmilwaukee.com/CC_main.html)

### Program description

Cultural Connect is designed for middle and high school age youth and their teachers (or program coordinators) who want to learn more about Milwaukee ethnic groups. The units include documentaries of approximately a half-hour in duration, teachers' guides, games, pre/post surveys, and talking point resources. Groups featured include Milwaukee (1) African Americans, (2) Puerto Ricans, (3) Irish, (4) Germans, (5) Hmong, (6) American Indians, (7) Mexicans, and (8) Poles. Each video documentary is hosted by an anthropologist of the ethnic group featured and includes the voices of key informants of each group.

A bonus unit is provided on the Milwaukee homeless population.



**Now live**  
**Website on 191 Milwaukee neighborhoods**



***Links on each neighborhood include:***

- *6 to 35 pages of information*
- *Brief neighborhood description*
- *Population-focused history (including ethnic roots)*
- *Snapshots of commercial districts of the past*
- *Quotes from residents*
- *Quotes from oral histories (where available)*
- *Low cost nearby outings for families*
- *Demographics of current neighborhood*
- *Photos of neighborhood*

*The website currently includes ALL 191 of the neighborhoods. Each week two new information will be added.*

**<http://neighborhoodsinmilwaukee.org/>**

**The website is  
participatory inviting you  
to add more information  
on your own neighborhood**

**Website on over 50  
Milwaukee ethnic  
groups  
has launched**



Between 2000 and 2012, anthropologists at Urban Anthropology Inc. conducted a rigorous study of over 65 ethnic groups in the Greater Milwaukee area. This study resulted in two books—one academic and one for lay audiences. Now it has become a website.

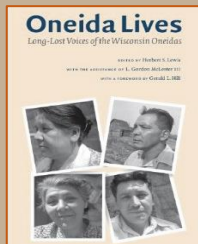
***Links on most ethnic groups includes:***

- *Local history in the Greater Milwaukee area*
- *Major practices*
- *Quotes from the 2012 ethnic study*
- *“Meet your ethnic neighbors” feature*
- *Ethnic businesses*
- *Ethnic events and holidays*

**[www.ethnicmilwaukee.com](http://www.ethnicmilwaukee.com)**

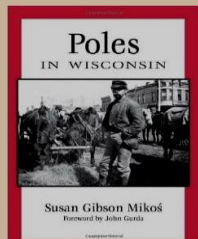
# Ethnic Wisconsin in books

## NON-FICTION



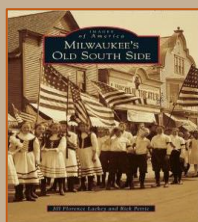
In this intimate volume edited by Herbert Lewis, the long-lost voices of Wisconsin Oneida men and women speak of all aspects of life: growing up, work and economic struggles, family relations, belief and religious practice, boarding-school life, love, sex, sports, and politics. These voices are drawn from a collection of handwritten accounts recently rediscovered after more than fifty years, the result of a WPA Federal Writers' Project undertaking called the Oneida Ethnological Study (1940–42) in which a dozen Oneida men and women were hired to interview their families and friends and record their own experiences and observations.

[www.nebraskapress.unl.edu](http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu)



In this all-new addition to the People of Wisconsin series, author Susan Mikos traces the history of Polish immigrants as they settled in America's northern heartland. The second largest immigrant population after Germans, Poles put down roots in all corners of the state, from the industrial center of Milwaukee to the farmland around Stevens Point, in the Cutover, and beyond. In each locale, they brought with them a hunger to own land, a willingness to work hard, and a passion for building churches.

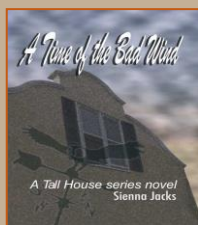
[www.wisconsinhistory.org/whspress](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/whspress)



The Old South Side has always welcomed ethnic groups. In the late 1800s, the area was developed by immigrant Poles who became the dominant population for over 100 years. While other Milwaukee ethnic neighborhoods gradually dissipated in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century because of assimilation pressures, freeway building, or urban renewal, the Old South Side remained solidly Polish. A survey nearly a half century later revealed that people of 110 national backgrounds now lived in the area.

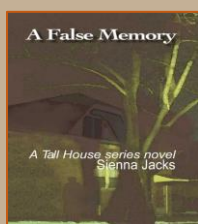
[www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com)

## FICTION

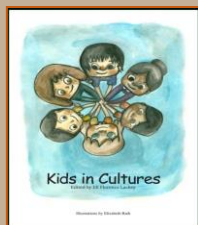


"My dear Meyer," chided the old historian, "why should anyone be surprised by shootings at the Tall House? Have you looked into its past?"

The young anthropology intern was more than willing to look. Meyer Hoffmann's voracious curiosity led him on a course of inquiry about the Tall House, those who'd lived there, and the neighborhood itself. As zealous Meyer uncovered information about the Tall House's history, he blundered to false conclusions as often as he stumbled onto correct ones. The only thing Meyer knew for certain was that everything about these shootings connected to forced ethnic migrations of the past. Yet no one—not the guests, not the neighbors—acted very concerned about these shootings. After all, weren't they designed to be victimless? Perhaps, initially. But that changed. [www.MECAHMilwaukee.com](http://www.MECAHMilwaukee.com)



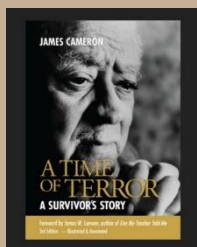
When the family of Leroy Cyrus decided to board him at the sumptuous Tall House, the resident social justice workers didn't know how to respond. Cyrus, now demented, was once a person of interest in the murder of the best friend of the Tall House's proprietor, Sherilyn Riddle. She questioned whether it was ethical to interrogate a man with Alzheimer's disease. One boarder that had no problems with the ethics of this investigation was anthropology student, Meyer Hoffmann. He'd do whatever was necessary to solve this and possibly related murders. But the question was—how can he know if the information he gleaned from Cyrus was true, fabricated, or based on false memories? [www.MECAHMilwaukee.com](http://www.MECAHMilwaukee.com)



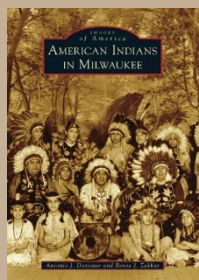
*Kids in Cultures* educates (while entertaining) children on key concepts of diversity, including culture, ethnicity, and multicultural societies. Kids learn about these concepts through stories of children in various eras and cultural settings in SE Wisconsin. The authors are authorities in their fields. Stories include "Mammoth meat," "Barbara Smith is German?" "Showing up is important: A Hmong virtue," "Firefly nights: An urban Oneida story," "Snow falls in Bronzeville," and "The Braves take the World Series: A Polish and Mexican story." [www.MECAHmilwaukee.com](http://www.MECAHmilwaukee.com)



## Ethnic Wisconsin in books, continued

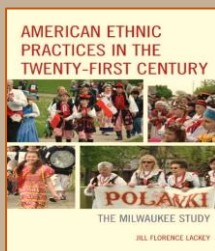


*A Time of Terror: A Survivor's Story* by James Cameron is the *only* account ever written by a survivor of a lynching. Thanks to America's Black Holocaust Museum and its parent organization, the Dr. James Cameron Legacy Foundation, the book is now available again to a general audience. This new edition includes five never-before-published chapters, photographs, and information for students and teachers. The Foundation will also properly preserve and store Dr. Cameron's original manuscript. [www.atimeofterror.info](http://www.atimeofterror.info); get book at <https://tinyurl.com/timeofterror>



*American Indians in Milwaukee* tells the story of tribes in Milwaukee from the time of its 'founding mother' through Indian removal in the 1830s through Indian return through years of activism and the development of the Indian Community School, Potawatomi Bingo and Casino, and Indian Summer Festival. *American Indians in Milwaukee* by Antonio J. Doxtator and Renee J. Zakhar | Arcadia Publishing Books

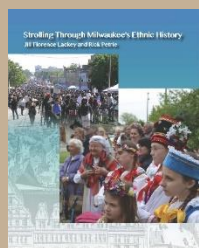
RECOMMENDED BY CHOICE JOURNAL! \_\_\_\_\_



*American Ethnic Practices in the Early Twenty-first Century: The Milwaukee Study* is a work based on a twelve-year research project conducted by Urban Anthropology, Inc. The qualitative study examined current strength of ethnicity and the contributions that ethnic practices have made to the wider society. The work takes a new approach by focusing on ethnic practices. The most prominent findings in the book were the ways that community-building activities of ethnic groups contributed to the wider society, and how this, in turn can help restore a needed balance between individualism and collectivism in the United States. [www.lexingtonbooks.com](http://www.lexingtonbooks.com)

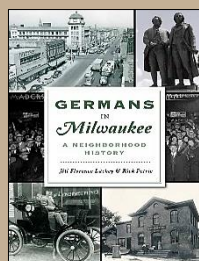
[ingtonbooks.com](http://www.lexingtonbooks.com)

NEWEST \_\_\_\_\_



*Strolling Through Milwaukee's Ethnic History* is the follow-up book to the academic text above, but is written for a lay audience. The book takes readers on actual "strolls" through Milwaukee streets and neighborhoods where each ethnic group left their marks. They are fun and educational tours for families and classrooms.

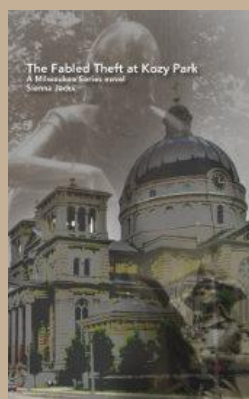
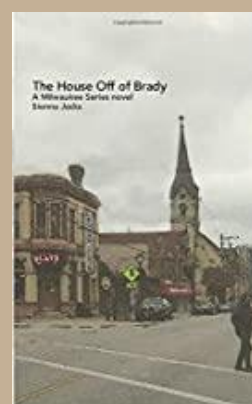
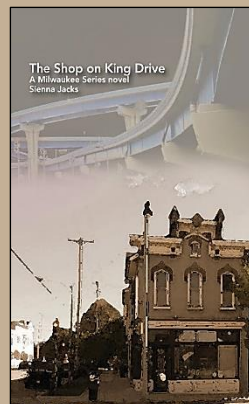
<http://mecamilwaukee.com/>



*Germans in Milwaukee: A neighborhood history*, by Jill Florence Lackey and Rick Petrie documents the German presence that still exists in Milwaukee neighborhoods, including place names to parklands to statuary, and through the memories of local residents—some 1,200 who contributed interviews to the authors' organization, Urban Anthropology, Inc.

[www.arcadiapublishing.com/Products/9781467147286](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com/Products/9781467147286)

## Mystery novels to support ongoing work of Urban Anthropology Inc.



The author of the Tall House mystery series, Sienna Jacks, has created a series of novels that take place in Milwaukee neighborhoods. The first offering takes place on Brady Street, the second in the original Bronzeville neighborhood, and the third in Lincoln Village.

As a former resident in numerous Milwaukee neighborhoods, Dr. Jacks will be donating most of her royalties for the ongoing work of Urban Anthropology Inc.

Order at

<http://mecamilwaukee.com/Fiction.html>

*Work of Urban Anthropology (UrbAn):*

Milwaukee neighborhood website  
Milwaukee ethnic website  
Milwaukee educational website  
*Milwaukee Ethnic News*  
*Milwaukee Neighborhood Forum*  
15 Milwaukee documentaries

*UrbAn is an all-volunteer organization*

# Publisher focuses on ethnic Milwaukee

*Presents opportunities for local writers*



*Milwaukee Ethnic Collection of Arts and Humanities (MECAH Publishing) recently opened in Milwaukee. Its goals are to:*

- Interest readers in the cultural diversity of Milwaukee and its surrounding communities.
- Produce products that fit one or more of these arts and humanities: history, anthropology/archaeology, folk art, art history, museums, literature (including poetry and fiction), language, architecture, and religion.
- Target the products to lay audiences of all ages (e.g., non academic).

*Products that relate to urban centers of southeast Wisconsin and highlight cultural diversity will be considered, and can include any of the following:*

- Nonfiction books (e.g., small museums in southeastern Wisconsin, the history of Pentecostal churches in Milwaukee).
- Fiction books (e.g., a mystery set in Milwaukee, a book for young people with a local immigration theme).
- Documentaries (e.g., the Irish of southeastern Wisconsin; a reproduction of a play with a Milwaukee theme).

## MECAH Publishing

*Milwaukee Ethnic Collection of  
Arts and Humanities*

**MECAHMilwaukee.com**

# The work of Urban Anthropology



Urban Anthropology Inc. (UrbAn), the publisher of this newsletter, is an organization of cultural anthropologists dedicated to the celebration of cultural diversity and developing assets in Milwaukee neighborhoods. Among its accomplishments in the past two decades are the following:

- 12-year study of 65 ethnic groups in the Greater Milwaukee area, resulting in multiple youth and adult programs and two books.
- Oral history of 29 Milwaukee neighborhoods, resulting in website, multiple programs, and two books.
- 15 documentaries, based on the above studies.
- 100 life histories of the Milwaukee homeless, resulting in Marquette curriculum and documentaries
- Over 30 programs to beautify and improve Milwaukee neighborhoods
- Training of over 120 anthropology interns in grassroots research
- Publication of bimonthly, *Milwaukee Ethnic News*.
- Website of 191 Milwaukee neighborhoods (see page 11).
- Website of aids for teaching cultural diversity to students, based on past UrbAn youth programs (see page 7).
- Currently working with three neighborhoods to develop block museums
- Three plays on Milwaukee history
- Study on immigration and work ethics.



## *Milwaukee Ethnic News*

*Milwaukee Ethnic News* is published bimonthly by Urban Anthropology Inc. and is managed by volunteer anthropologists. The purpose of the newsletter is to offer ethnic organizations and individuals opportunities to share news and information about their cultures. The newsletter does not receive funds from any external source. The editor is Dr. Jill Florence Lackey.

### Subscriptions

The newsletter is emailed to anyone wishing to receive it. People subscribing themselves and their friends went from 48 in June, 2012 to over 1,000 currently. If you wish your email or that of a friend to be added to the subscriber list, send the email addresses to [JFLanthropologist@currently.com](mailto:JFLanthropologist@currently.com).

### Submitting stories

*Milwaukee Ethnic News* is interested in stories from individuals, businesses, and organizations that have an ethnic appeal. These can be stories about an immigrant family, special ethnic events, or ethnic issues that need to be aired as guest editorials. Stories that show interethnic cooperation are most welcome.

Stories must be between 100 and 400 words. Some editing will be done to match our style guidelines and spatial constraints. We will write the stories for you if you simply send us a list of the information that you want included. A photo of less than 2 MBs is always required for a story to be published. Please do not refer us to websites to collect information or photos. If we write your story from the general information you send, we do not send proofs for approval.

Stories are always due on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding a publication month. At times later submissions may be allowed (ask first). Publication months are July, September, November, January, March, and May. Please send your stories to [JFLanthropologist@currently.com](mailto:JFLanthropologist@currently.com).

### Editorials

*Milwaukee Ethnic News* occasionally prints editorials or opinion pieces that deal with ethnic topics. Guest editorials are also welcome, but need prior approval to be published.



## Ethnic Documentaries from Urban Anthropology Inc.

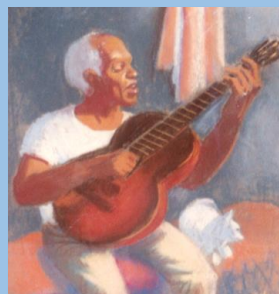
### **The Kaszubs of Jones Island: The People That Nobody Knew**

*Story of a fishing community that once thrived in the middle of an urban center, and then disappeared.*

### **Urban Indians and the Culture of Collective Action**

*The cultural practices and local contributions of North American Indians in Milwaukee.*

### **African Americans and the Culture of Contribution**



*The fall of Bronzeville and the contributions of African Americans in the city of Milwaukee.*

### **The Amazing Adaptation of the Urban Hmong**

*When thousands of Hmong came to the United States, they made an incredible adaptation to a complex society, while keeping their own cultural practices alive.*

### **The Varieties of Latino Experience**



*This documentary focuses on the diversity (as well as similarities) among various Latino groups in Milwaukee.*

DVDs are \$25.00 each. All are based on studies done by cultural anthropologists. To order go to [www.urban-anthropology.org/Paypalorders.html](http://www.urban-anthropology.org/Paypalorders.html)