



Brown Deer Historical Society, Inc.

NEWSLETTER



Upcoming Meeting

Date:

Thursday, October 27, 2016

Time:

6:30 p.m.

Where:

Lois & Tom Dolan
Community Room
4355 West Bradley Road
Brown Deer, WI

**Open To the Public and
Society Membership**

Brown Deer

Historical Society

Board of Directors

Officers

Traci Schnell Acting President/
Secretary/Newsletter Editor
Open Vice President
Robert Moranski Treasurer

Directors-at-Large

Barbara Bechtel
Barry Godshaw
Richard Kihslinger
Barbara Kostuch
Frank Kostuch
Dennis Lowder
Brian Williams-Van Klooster

TAPCO CELEBRATES 60 YEARS OF SAFE TRAVELS

Although the company has only been headquartered in Brown Deer since 2009, TAPCO (Traffic and Parking Control Co., Inc.) was first established in 1956 by Raymond (Ray) Bergholz. Begun in his basement on Wauwatosa's west side, it was originally established as Parking Equipment and Maintenance Company. The fledgling business changed its name two years later and is, today, referred to by the acronym, TAPCO.

As the company website relates, Bergholz was on the leading edge of the nation's evolving transportation system. Although President Franklin D. Roosevelt had the vision for its creation, it was not until 1956 that the interstate highway system with which we are familiar today was formally established. On June 29, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed into the law the Federal-Aid Highway Act, which began a thirteen-year program for the completion of an interstate highway system.

Born in Milwaukee in 1919, Bergholz served in the U.S. Army and saw active duty during World War II. Following his employment as a national sales manager for Graybar Electric, Bergholz began selling the "X-Barrier," a parking stop for parking lots. The specific career change stemmed from a Toastmasters International speech he gave on traffic and parking, entitled, "Parking: The Nation's New Number One Problem." Soon thereafter, parking stop sales expanded to include additional products and services including traffic signs and signals, as well as other parking management equipment. Recognizing its potential, Bergholz began selling in 1957 what was the first parking gate with coin mechanism—the start of automated revenue collection. **Continued on page 3**



Above: TAPCO Headquarters at 5100 W. Brown Deer Road.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Please join me in congratulating TAPCO on their 60th Anniversary! I would like to thank TAPCO staff for providing us with company history information, as well as the photos included in the feature article of this issue.

On a less celebratory note, and on behalf of the BDHS Board, it is with great regret that I announce the Board resignations of both Joe and Rose Klucarich. We will miss them both and we wish them all the best in what is finally true retirement for them. Per their request, their letter of resignation is included below, in its entirety.

Thank you,

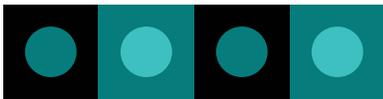
Traci

Traci E. Schnell, Acting President

Please join us for another year!

2017 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Renewal Form & Envelope Enclosed



October 27, 2016 Meeting Agenda

1. Attendance
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Persons Desiring to be Heard
4. Approval of July 2016 Minutes
5. Treasurer's Report
6. President's Report
Election of Board of Directors
(4 positions)
7. Old Business
 - a. BDHS Display at the Library
 - b. Fundraising
8. Other Business/Announcements
9. Adjourn

Special Meeting Agenda

1. Attendance
2. Election of Officers

President	Secretary
Vice President	Treasurer
3. Adjourn



Date: September 20th, 2016
 To: Brown Deer Historical Society
 Board of Directors
 From: Joseph & Rose Klucarich
 RE: Officer Positions

Dear Fellow Members:

It has been an honor and a privilege for myself and Rose to serve as President and Vice-President, respectively, of the Brown Deer Historical Society for the past several years. Through everyone's combined efforts we successfully completed a number of projects that were identified as necessities for the Brown Deer Schoolhouse.

The furniture, desks, display cases, stove, and historical items were rearranged for better public accessibility;

New display cases and storage cabinets were purchased;

The attic was cleared of all unnecessary items;

The front and east steps were repaired;

The east door was replaced and the exterior was painted;

Copies of the Brown Deer Herald newspaper were arranged by week, month, and year;

The complete set of Historical Society Newsletters have been digitized and are readily accessible (see the July 2016 issue.)

We joyfully extend a wholehearted thanks for the consistent cooperation of the Board of Directors in seeing these projects to completion.

And with that said, Rose and I, with regret, do hereby submit our resignations from the Board of Directors of the Brown Deer Historical Society effective this date, September 20th, 2016. We are grateful for the trust you all have placed in us during our tenure as Officers.

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to serve both you at the Historical Society and the entire Village of Brown Deer in this capacity. We both will miss your camaraderie!

Sincerely:

Joseph G. Klucarich, President
Rose A. Klucarich, Vice President
 6020 W. Creekside Drive
 Brown Deer, WI 53223
 414-354-6453



Above: Ray Bergholz (1909-2008) at his desk, circa 1965.

TAPCO TURNS 60

Continued from page 1

Expansion of business product resulted in the 1962 purchase of an industrial building at present-day 120-136 N. 120th Street and the subsequent relocation of the company from the family home basement. As business grew, so did the building. In turn, products that were previously only sold or distributed by Bergholz, were now actually manufactured by the firm.

Business increased in the early 1970s with the Federal Highway Act of 1973, at which time Congress mandated the use of reflective traffic signage for increased visibility. That same year, Ray hired his son Rick to serve as the company's Marketing Director. One year later, John Kugel, company employee number six was hired (as a traffic signal tech). In 1984, Rick Bergholz and Kugel acquired

the company from Ray, who would ultimately retire in 1989. The firm remained in Wauwatosa until moving in 1998 to 800 Wall Street (building no longer extant) in Elm Grove, where they remained until their 2009 relocation to Brown Deer. The move nearly doubled the company's square footage—from 57,000 to 128,000. Immediately following the move, the company launched Tapconet.com. Over the last four years, TAPCO has won a number of industry innovation awards for LED enhanced activated warning systems.

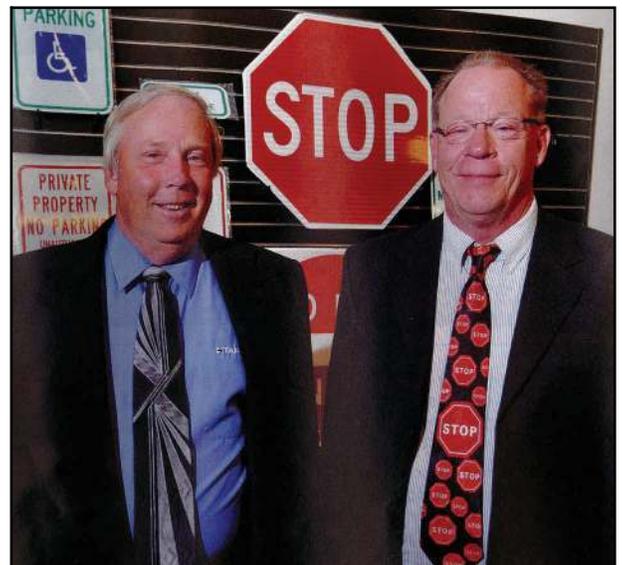
Begun in 1956 by just one man, the firm employed forty persons in 2003 and, today, TAPCO employs approximately 200. The company, which conducts business in all fifty states, "offers virtually anything you can think if in traffic, safety and parking control products and systems...". Aside from the Brown Deer Headquarters, TAPCO sales offices are located in Minnesota, Georgia, Virginia, Florida, Texas, Arizona and California.



Right center: Marquette Interchange curve warning signs manufactured by TAPCO.

Right corner: Company President John Kugel and CEO Rick Bergholz, TAPCO co-owners since 1984.

Below: TAPCO Executive VP of Sales and co-owner, Andrew Bergholz; John McGivern, Host of MPTV's *Around the Corner*, and TAPCO Manufacturing Director and co-owner, Jason Kugel.



BUILDING HISTORY: 5100 W. Brown Deer Road

Longtime residents of Brown Deer will, no doubt, recall the original owner and occupant of the building at 5100 W. Brown Deer Road: Gugler Lithographic Company. When the business relocated from downtown Milwaukee to Brown Deer, the firm was just five years short of celebrating its 100th Anniversary. Gugler Lithographic was established by German-born Henry Gugler who immigrated to the United States in 1853 with twenty-two years of metal engraving experience. After working at what would eventually become known as the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington, D.C. (where he made bank notes), Gugler moved in 1871 to Milwaukee to join his son Julius—who had also trained in lithography and engraving—and work at the firm of Seifert & Lawton, lithographers. The following year, the firm had reorganized as Seifert, Gugler & Co., but in 1878, the Guglers left the concern and established Henry Gugler & Sons, along with sons Robert and Henry Jr. Henry Sr. died in 1880. In 1896, construction of the first “unit”—of what had by then been renamed Gugler Lithographic Company—began at 1333-1339 N. Milwaukee Street. Notably, by the early 1880s, the firm had been handling all of the advertising for the Pabst Brewing Company. Additions were made to the printing facility in 1905, 1908, 1919, 1921 and 1927, resulting in the building (see photo below) that stood at that location until its demolition in 2006.



Above: Gugler Lithographic Company, 1333-1339 N. Milwaukee Street, Milwaukee. Slide image taken by John N. Vogel, 2003.

Groundbreaking for the Brown Deer facility occurred in 1973. In 1978, the firm celebrated its 100th Anniversary; an exhibition of its work was held at the Milwaukee Public Library, which has, in its collection, Gugler product sample books, among other items. On a significantly smaller scale, the Brown Deer Historical Society included a few Gugler company items in one of its display cases. Shortly after its centennial celebration, the Gugler concern was acquired by NorthStar Print Group, Inc. Identified as the fifth largest, Milwaukee-area printing company as of 1999, the successor firm remained in the building until circa 2005. The building was, thereafter, sold to Concours Motors, which planned a Mercedes-Benz dealership for that location. That plan was abandoned and the property was sold in 2008 to TAPCO. \$2.5 million in building renovations were completed by Phillip Katz Project Development and TAPCO moved into their improved space, which includes a showroom that is open to the public, in July 2009. On January 12, 2010, TAPCO was the site for the State of the County Address, which was made by then Milwaukee County Executive, Scott Walker. On October 19, 2016, the company will officially mark its sixty-year history with an open house and anniversary celebration.

Information for this article was compiled by Traci E. Schnell from research largely completed previously by Schnell in 2000.

The Brown Deer Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization and all donations are considered tax deductible.