



The Westbrook Chatterbox

September has come and gone and with it - our Fall Festival. It was so much fun doing something that felt so normal. We had a great day weather-wise. And the food was in abundance. I don't think anyone went home hungry!

October gave a party; the leaves by hundreds came –
The Chestnuts, Oaks and Maples, and leaves of every name.
The Sunshine spread a carpet, and everything was grand,
Miss Weather led the dancing, Professor Wind the band.
The Chestnuts came in yellow, the Oaks in crimson dressed;
The lovely Misses Maple in scarlet looked their best.

I love autumn and October is my favorite month. The leaves are so beautiful in their yellows, oranges and reds; they create a brightness to the browns and faded greens. The mums in colors so vibrant – rust, gold, purples, burgundy and crimson. The crisp morning air is so perfect for snuggling up on my deck with a cup of coffee. But the breezes! October breezes are so refreshing and so unpredictable. I love the unpredictability of October. Rain, snow, wind, leaves blowing everywhere, you just never know what October will bring.

October is the month of Halloween. As a kid, I loved going trick-o-treating. My mom would make us costumes. Over the years, I was a cat, a baby, a leopard, a hobo, a gypsy and a pilgrim. We would head out right about six and go all around the neighborhood. Then we'd get in the car and go to the "special" peoples' houses. Mom's best friend, Billye, was always the first stop. Then we would go to Verne and Margaret Pickens. They were honorary grandparents and always had amazing treats for us. They also always had warm apple cider and fresh from the oven chocolate chip cookies. It was the perfect ending to Halloween.

And of course, it's also FOOTBALL season. SO far our Chiefs have not done as well as they should have or as well as we had hoped. But the good thing about being in last place.... We can only go up! At least that's what I'm telling myself. The games we've lost have been close games and could have gone either way but unfortunately not our way. But I have FAITH. Our boys will get it together and we WILL be in the SUPERBOWL!!!! Just watch 'em....

Until Next Month –
Janelle

Orson Welles's "War of the Worlds" radio play is broadcast

Welles was only 23 years old when his Mercury Theater company decided to update H.G. Wells's 19th-century science fiction novel *The War of the Worlds* for national radio. Despite his age, Welles had been in radio for several years, most notably as the voice of "The Shadow" in the hit mystery program of the same name. "War of the Worlds" was not planned as a radio hoax, and Welles had little idea of how legendary it would eventually become.

The show began on Sunday, October 30, at 8 p.m. A voice announced: "The Columbia Broadcasting System and its affiliated stations present Orson Welles and the Mercury Theater on the air in 'War of the Worlds' by H.G. Wells."

Sunday evening in 1938 was prime-time in the golden age of radio, and millions of Americans had their radios turned on. But most of these Americans were listening to ventriloquist Edgar Bergen and his dummy "Charlie McCarthy" on NBC and only turned to CBS at 8:12 p.m. after the comedy sketch ended and a little-known singer went on. By then, the story of the Martian invasion was well underway.

Welles introduced his radio play with a spoken introduction, followed by an announcer reading a weather report. Then, seemingly abandoning the storyline, the announcer took listeners to "the Meridian Room in the Hotel Park Plaza in downtown New York, where you will be entertained by the music of Ramon Raquello and his orchestra." Putrid dance music played for some time, and then the scare began. An announcer broke in to report that "Professor Farrell of the Mount Jenning Observatory" had detected explosions on the planet Mars. Then the dance music came back on, followed by another interruption in which listeners were informed that a large meteor had crashed into a farmer's field in Grovers Mills, New Jersey.

Soon, an announcer was at the crash site describing a Martian emerging from a large metallic cylinder. "Good heavens," he declared, "something's wriggling out of the shadow like a gray snake. Now here's another and another one and another one. They look like tentacles to me ... I can see the thing's body now. It's large, large as a bear. It glistens like wet leather. But that face, it... it ... ladies and gentlemen, it's indescribable. I can hardly force myself to keep looking at it, it's so awful. The eyes are black and gleam like a serpent. The mouth is kind of V-shaped with saliva dripping from its rimless lips that seem to quiver and pulsate."

The Martians mounted walking war machines and fired "heat-ray" weapons at the puny humans gathered around the crash site. They annihilated a force of 7,000 National Guardsmen, and after being attacked by artillery and bombers the Martians released a poisonous gas into the air. Soon "Martian cylinders" landed in Chicago and St. Louis. The radio play was extremely realistic, with Welles employing sophisticated sound effects and his actors doing an excellent job portraying terrified announcers and other characters. An announcer reported that widespread panic had broken out in the vicinity of the landing sites, with thousands desperately trying to flee.

The Federal Communications Commission investigated the unorthodox program but found no law was broken. Networks did agree to be more cautious in their programming in the future. The broadcast helped Orson Welles land a contract with a Hollywood studio, and in 1941 he directed, wrote, produced, and starred in *Citizen Kane* — a movie that many have called the greatest American film ever made.

Fire-fighters' Halloween Story

At 8.00pm on October 31st two fire-fighters could see a fire raging in the back yard. I was clearly in breach of the rule on burning leaves after dark. One of the fireman knocked on the door, and they both waited each holding their helmet in their hand. The little old woman opened the door and promptly dropping a bar of candy into each helmet. She then told them, 'Aren't you boys are a little old for trick and treat, and closed the door'. The fire-fighters left open mouthed.

A Creepy Tale from a Vienna Graveyard

Chris Cross, a tourist in Vienna, is going passed Vienna's Zentralfriedhof graveyard on October 31st. All of a sudden he hears some music. No one is around, so he starts searching for the source. Chris finally locates the origin and finds it is coming from a grave with a headstone that reads: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827. Then he realizes that the music is the Ninth Symphony and it is being played backward! Puzzled, he leaves the graveyard and persuades Tim Burr, a friend, to return with him. By the time they arrive back at the grave, the music has changed. This time it is the Seventh Symphony, but like the previous piece, it is being played backward. Curious, the men agree to consult a music scholar. When they return with the expert, the Fifth Symphony is playing, again backward. The expert notices that the symphonies are being played in the reverse order in which they were composed, the 9th, then the 7th, then the 5th. By the next day the word has spread and a throng has gathered around the grave. They are all listening to the Second Symphony being played backward. Just then the graveyard's caretaker ambles up to the group. Someone in the crowd asks him if he has an explanation for the music. "Oh, it's nothing to worry about" says the caretaker. "He's just decomposing!"

A Mother's Love: A Soulful and Uplifting Story

One Halloween night, a couple was travelling by car through Epping Forest when, in the far distance, they saw a woman in the middle of the road, waving frantically. Cynthia told her husband, Charles to keep on driving because it might be too dangerous, but the husband decided to pass by slowly in case the person was in genuine trouble. As they drove closer, they noticed that the woman was bleeding from cuts and bruises on her face as well as on her arms. Cynthia and Charles then decide to stop and see if they could be of any assistance. The cut and bruised woman was begging for help telling them that she had already been in a car accident and that her husband and son, a new born baby, were still inside the car which was in a deep ditch. She told them that the husband was already dead but that her baby was still alive. Charles decided to walk to the crash and try to rescue the baby and he asked the hurt woman to stay with Cynthia inside their car. When Charles arrived at the crash he noticed two people in the front seats of the car but he didn't pay any attention to them and quickly grabbed the live baby and got up to take it to the mother. He straightened up carrying the baby and couldn't see the mother anywhere so he asked his wife where she had gone. Cynthia told him that the woman followed him back to the crashed car. When Charles returned to the crash to look for her, he noticed that clearly the couple in the front seats were dead, one of whom was unmistakably the woman who had flagged them down.

OCTOBER

Autumn Wind



When autumn wind goes running,
 It does some magic things.
 It gives the shadows dancing shoes,
 It gives the bright leaves wings -
 When autumn wind goes running.
 It curls the bonfire's tail of smoke
 And shares a little whispered joke
 With cornstalks who delight to prattle.
 It turns a seed pod into a rattle -
 When autumn wind goes running.



Haunted House

I think there's something moving
 over by that chair
 But when I take a closer look,
 there's really nothing there.
 Oh look! What shot across the room
 that gave me such a fright.
 I hate being at home alone
 especially at night.
 Now there's something creaking,
 it's the bedroom door
 Oh I really hate this house,
 I'm not staying anymore
 I know I'm really nervous
 but the thing I hate the most.
 I shouldn't be so frightened
 'cos I'm the resident GHOST!



October

Autumn leaves of red and gold
 That crunch beneath your feet.
 Pumpkins on front porches,
 Candy corn and trick-or-treat,
 Tart and tangy cider
 Apples ripened on the trees
 A hint of winter coming
 On a chilly autumn breeze.



**AND WHEN THE CLOCK STRIKES
 MIDNIGHT, HALLOWEEN WILL END**

**THEN BAM CHRISTMAS
 CAROLS EVERYWHERE**



MY LOVE LIFE BITES!
 I'M NOT THE MAN I USED TO BE!
 I FEEL HOLLOW INSIDE!
 I CURSE EVERYTHING!
 I HAVEN'T FELT ALIVE IN YEARS!
 I JUST FEEL DISCONNECTED!

HAPPY HALLOWEEN



Edmund Fitzgerald

The legend of the Edmund Fitzgerald remains the most mysterious and controversial of all shipwreck tales heard around the Great Lakes. Her story is surpassed in books, film and media only by that of the Titanic. Canadian folksinger Gordon Lightfoot inspired popular interest in this vessel with his 1976 ballad, "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald."

The S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald was launched June 8, 1958 at River Rouge, Michigan.

The Fateful Journey - by Sean Ley, Development Officer

The final voyage of the Edmund Fitzgerald began November 9, 1975 at the Burlington Northern Railroad Dock No.1, Superior, Wisconsin. Captain Ernest M. McSorley had loaded her with 26,116 long tons of taconite pellets, made of processed iron ore, heated and rolled into marble-size balls. Departing Superior about 2:30 pm, she was soon joined by the Arthur M. Anderson, which had departed Two Harbors, Minnesota under Captain Bernie Cooper. The two ships were in radio contact. The Fitzgerald being the faster took the lead, with the distance between the vessels ranging from 10 to 15 miles.

Aware of a building November storm entering the Great Lakes from the great plains, Captain McSorley and Captain Cooper agreed to take the northerly course across Lake Superior, where they would be protected by highlands on the Canadian shore. This took them between Isle Royale and the Keweenaw Peninsula. They would later make a turn to the south-east to eventually reach the shelter of Whitefish Point.

Weather conditions continued to deteriorate. Gale warnings had been issued at 7 pm on November 9, upgraded to storm warnings early in the morning of November 10. While conditions were bad, with winds gusting to 50 knots and seas 12 to 16 feet, both Captains had often piloted their vessels in similar conditions. In the early afternoon of November 10, the Fitzgerald had passed Michipicoten Island and was approaching Caribou Island. The Anderson was just approaching Michipicoten, about three miles off the West End Light.

Captain Cooper maintained that he watched the Edmund Fitzgerald pass far too close to Six Fathom Shoal to the north of Caribou Island. He could clearly see the ship and the beacon on Caribou on his radar set and could measure the distance between them. He and his officers watched the Fitzgerald pass right over the dangerous area of shallow water. By this time, snow and rising spray had obscured the Fitzgerald from sight, visible 17 miles ahead on radar.

At 3:30 pm that afternoon, Captain McSorley radioed Captain Cooper and said: "Anderson, this is the Fitzgerald. I have a fence rail down, two vents lost or damaged, and a list. I'm checking down. Will you stay by me till I get to Whitefish?"

McSorley was checking down his speed to allow the Anderson to close the distance for safety. Captain Cooper asked McSorley if he had his pumps going, and McSorley said, "Yes, both of them."

As the afternoon wore on, radio communications with the Fitzgerald concerned navigational information but no extraordinarily alarming reports were offered by Captain McSorley. At about 5:20 pm the crest of a wave smashed the Anderson's starboard lifeboat, making it unusable. Captain Cooper reported winds from the NW x W (305) at a steady 58 knots with gusts to 70 knots, and seas of 18 to 25 feet.

According to Captain Cooper, about 6:55 pm, he and the men in the Anderson's pilothouse felt a "bump", felt the ship lurch, and then turned to see a monstrous wave engulfing their entire vessel from astern. The wave worked its way along the deck, crashing on the back of the pilothouse, driving the bow of the Anderson down into the sea.

"Then the Anderson just raised up and shook herself off of all that water – barrooff – just like a big dog. Another wave just like the first one or bigger hit us again. I watched those two waves head down the lake towards the Fitzgerald, and I think those were the two that sent him under."

Keeping Watch

Morgan Clark, first mate of the Anderson, kept watching the Fitzgerald on the radar set to calculate her distance from some other vessels near Whitefish Point. He kept losing sight of the Fitzgerald on the radar from sea return, meaning that seas were so high they interfered with the radar reflection. First mate Clark spoke to the Fitzgerald one last time, about 7:10 pm:

"Fitzgerald, this is the Anderson. Have you checked down?" "Yes, we have."

"Fitzgerald, we are about 10 miles behind you, and gaining about 1 1/2 miles per hour. Fitzgerald, there is a target 19 miles ahead of us. So the target would be 9 miles on ahead of you." "Well," answered Captain McSorley, "Am I going to clear?"

"Yes, he is going to pass to the west of you." "Well, fine."

"By the way, Fitzgerald, how are you making out with your problems?" asked Clark. "We are holding our own."

"Okay, fine, I'll be talking to you later." Clark signed off.

The radar signal, or "pip" of the Fitzgerald kept getting obscured by sea return. And around 7:15 pm, the pip was lost again, but this time, did not reappear. Clark called the Fitzgerald again at about 7:22 pm. There was no answer.

Captain Cooper contacted the other ships in the area by radio asking if anyone had seen or heard from the Fitzgerald. The weather had cleared dramatically. His written report states:

“At this time I became very concerned about the Fitzgerald – couldn’t see his lights when we should have. I then called the William Clay Ford to ask him if my phone was putting out a good signal and also if perhaps the Fitzgerald had rounded the point and was in shelter, after a negative report I called the Soo Coast Guard because I was sure something had happened to the Fitzgerald. The Coast Guard were at this time trying to locate a 16-foot boat that was overdue.”

With mounting apprehension, Captain Cooper called the Coast Guard once again, about 8:00 pm, and firmly expressed his concern for the welfare of the Fitzgerald. The Coast Guard then initiated its search for the missing ship. By that time the Anderson had reached the safety of Whitefish Bay to the relief of all aboard. But the Coast Guard called Captain Cooper back at 9:00 pm:

“Anderson, this is Group Soo. What is your present position?” “We’re down here, about two miles off Parisienne Island right now...the wind is northwest forty to forty-five miles here in the bay.”

“Is it calming down at all, do you think?” “In the bay it is, but I heard a couple of the salties talking up there, and they wish they hadn’t gone out.”

“Do you think there is any possibility and you could...ah...come about and go back there and do any searching?”

“Ah...God, I don’t know...ah...that...that sea out there is tremendously large. Ah...if you want me to, I can, but I’m not going to be making any time; I’ll be lucky to make two or three miles an hour going back out that way.”

“Well, you’ll have to make a decision as to whether you will be hazarding your vessel or not, but you’re probably one of the only vessels right now that can get to the scene. We’re going to try to contact those saltwater vessels and see if they can’t possibly come about and possibly come back also...things look pretty bad right now; it looks like she may have split apart at the seams like the Morrell did a few years back.”

“Well, that’s what I been thinking. But we were talking to him about seven and he said that everything was going fine. He said that he was going along like an old shoe; no problems at all.”

“Well, again, do you think you could come about and go back and have a look in the area?”

“Well, I’ll go back and take a look, but God, I’m afraid I’m going to take a hell of a beating out there... I’ll turn around and give ‘er a whirl, but God, I don’t know. I’ll give it a try.”

“That would be good.”

“Do you realize what the conditions are out there?”

No reply from the Coast Guard. Captain Cooper tries again.

“Affirmative. From what your reports are I can appreciate the conditions. Again, though, I have to leave that decision up to you as to whether it would be hazarding your vessel or not. If you think you can safely go back up to the area, I would request that you do so. But I have to leave the decision up to you.”

“I’ll give it a try, but that’s all I can do.”

The Anderson turned out to be the primary vessel in the search, taking the lead. With the ship pounding and rolling badly, the crew of the Anderson discovered the Fitzgerald’s two lifeboats and other debris but no sign of survivors. Only one other vessel, the William Clay Ford, was able to leave the safety of Whitefish Bay to join in the search at the time. The Coast Guard launched a fixed-wing HU-16 aircraft at 10 pm and dispatched two cutters, the Naugatuck and the Woodrush. The Naugatuck arrived at 12:45 pm on November 11, and the Woodrush arrived on November 14, having journeyed all the way from Duluth, Minnesota.

The Coast Guard conducted an extensive and thorough search. On November 14, a U.S. Navy plane equipped with a magnetic anomaly detector located a strong contact 17 miles north-northwest of Whitefish Point. During the following three days, the Coast Guard cutter Woodrush, using a sidescan sonar, located two large pieces of wreckage in the same area. Another sonar survey was conducted November 22-25.

Conflicting theories about the cause of the tragedy remain active today. Three expeditions to the wreck revealed that it is likely she “submarined” bow first into an enormous sea, as damage forward is indicative of a powerful, quick force to the superstructure. But what caused the ship to take on water, enough to lose buoyancy and dive to the bottom so quickly, without a single cry for help, cannot be determined. However, Captain Cooper said that he always believed McSorley knew something serious had happened to Fitzgerald as the ship passed over Caribou Shoal. Cooper believes that from that point on, McSorley knew he was sinking.

Twenty-nine men were lost when the Fitzgerald went down. There is absolutely no conclusive evidence to determine the cause of the sinking. The bell of the ship is now on display in the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum as a memorial to her lost crew.

Featured Staff – Janelle Simoneau

I have been writing these biographies in the Chatterbox since August of 2008. Every month, I get to learn about someone new. In all of these years, I have never written about myself. So after 22 years of working here, here is my story.

I was born in Kansas City North to Andy and Judy Andersen. I was their third child and the only girl. When I was 13 months old, we moved to Gladstone. And three years later, my younger brother was born. I was still the only daughter, the only granddaughter and the only niece on both sides of the family. And yes, I was most definitely spoiled.

I attended Linden East and Linden West elementary schools. My first grade teacher told my mother that she had never had a student that talked as much as I did. But I was an inquisitive child. I wanted to know everything. How else was I supposed to learn if I didn't talk and ask questions.

I went to New Mark Middle School and then Oak Park High School. I was very active in school. I was on the debate team and the extemporaneous speaking team. I was a member of the German Club having taken German all four years. I was a teacher's assistant my junior and senior year for my English teacher. And I was very involved in Youth For Christ, attending rallies, club meetings and their camps.

After graduating from Oak Park, I went to Maple Woods Community College. I basically flunked out due to the inability and desire to study. I never studied in high school but that wasn't how college worked.

So I went to work for La Petite teaching four year olds. I loved this job but the pay wasn't great. I had moved to my own apartment in NKC and needed a better paying job. I went to work for ABC Farmline taking customer order for farm equipment. I did this for several years until they downsized and I was a casualty.

I then went to work for Pizza Hut as a delivery driver. I also worked seasonally for the IRS. There were some days that I only got two hours of sleep. Many evenings my dog and I would split a pizza for dinner.

In 1989, I was introduced to a new gentleman at church. His name was Jerome Simoneau. He was a single father of two kids. We hit it off and spent quite a bit of time together with the kids and with other people. In August of 1993, he finally gave up and proposed. We were married in April 1994.

I moved to Kearney after we were married. I went from single with a dog to married with two kids and two dogs. I was quite a shock to my system. That first year was rough. So many adjustments.

My father got me involved with AARP in 1995. I started working as a volunteer preparing taxes. I love doing taxes and being able to help other people out. I just completed my 27th years with AARP Tax Aide.

I ran an in home child care for a few years. Then I went to work for Aunt Ann's Day Care. I taught four year olds. I would bring my class to Westbrook to entertain the residents. It was here that I met Winnie Kimsey, the activity director. She was having some health problems and so I ended up leaving Aunt Ann's and started working at Westbrook in February 1999. I loved it right off the bat and still do. I became the Activity Director upon the passing of Winnie in 2008.

In February 2001, our daughter, Chloe, was born. In May, I officially adopted Jon and Desire'e. It was definitely a God thing. There's more of a story there than I can fit on this page.

One of my greatest and hardest experiences was taking care of my mother as she battled cancer. We lost Dad to cancer in 2006. We were all there to help mom. In 2010, Mom was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. The next three years were such a blessing and yet, so very hard. She passed away seven years and one day after Dad. I feel so privileged to have been able to take care of her. She was an amazing woman and I have no regrets about being there for her like she had been there for me all my life.

All my children are now grown. Jon and Pam have four daughters, the oldest will be sixteen in December. They live in Golden, CO. Mark and Desire'e live in Dacono, CO, but they are looking to move back to Missouri. They have no children. Chloe still lives at home and is attending college.

Over the years, we have been involved in many things. Chloe was in ACT One, a musical theater group, and we were in charge of the tech team. My husband smokes meat and cooks for City Union Mission and our church. We are still actively involved in Antioch Bible Baptist Church.

Every October, we go to Osage Beach for a week. We have a condo down there that is right on the lake. It is our favorite thing next to camping, which we love to do in our trailer.

This is just a brief snapshot of my life. Maybe it will explain a little of why I am the way I am. LOL I have lived a very full life - family, work, church, friends and so much more. I am truly blessed.

Debunking the Myths of Older Adult Falls

Key Takeaways

- Many people think falls are a normal part of aging. The truth is, they're not. Most falls can be prevented—and you have the power to reduce your risk.
- Exercising, managing your medications, having your vision checked, and making your living environment safer are all steps you can take to prevent a fall.
- To promote greater awareness and understanding here are 10 common myths—and the reality—about older adult falls.

Myth 1: Falling happens to other people, not to me.

Reality: Many people think, "It won't happen to me." But the truth is that 1 in 4 older adults fall every year in the U.S.

Myth 2: Falling is something normal that happens as you get older.

Reality: Falling is not a normal part of aging. Strength and balance exercises, managing your medications, having your vision checked and making your living environment safer are all steps you can take to prevent a fall.

Myth 3: If I limit my activity, I won't fall.

Reality: Some people believe that the best way to prevent falls is to stay at home and limit activity. Not true. Performing physical activities will actually help you stay independent, as your strength and range of motion benefit from remaining active. Social activities are also good for your overall health.

Myth 4: As long as I stay at home, I can avoid falling.

Reality: Over half of all falls take place at home. Inspect your home for fall risks. Fix simple but serious hazards such as clutter, throw rugs, and poor lighting. Make simple home modifications, such as adding grab bars in the bathroom, a second handrail on stairs, and non-slip paint on outdoor steps.

Myth 5: Muscle strength and flexibility can't be regained.

Reality: While we do lose muscle as we age, exercise can partially restore strength and flexibility. It's never too late to start an exercise program. Even if you've been a "couch potato" your whole life, becoming active now will benefit you in many ways—including protection from falls.

Myth 6: Taking medication doesn't increase my risk of falling.

Reality: Taking any medication may increase your risk of falling. Medications affect people in many different ways and can sometimes make you dizzy or sleepy. Be careful when starting a new medication. Talk to your health care provider about potential side effects or interactions of your medications.

Myth 7: I don't need to get my vision checked every year.

Reality: Vision is another key risk factor for falls. Aging is associated with some forms of vision loss that increase risk of falling and injury. People with vision problems are more than twice as likely to fall as those without visual impairment. Have your eyes checked at least once a year and update your eyeglasses. For those with low vision there are programs and assistive devices that can help. Ask your optometrist for a referral.

Myth 8: Using a walker or cane will make me more dependent.

Reality: Walking aids are very important in helping many older adults maintain or improve their mobility. However, make sure you use these devices safely. Have a physical therapist fit the walker or cane to you and instruct you in its safe use.

Myth 9: I don't need to talk to family members or my health care provider if I'm concerned about my risk of falling. I don't want to alarm them, and I want to keep my independence.

Reality: Fall prevention is a team effort. Bring it up with your doctor, family, and anyone else who is in a position to help. They want to help you maintain your mobility and reduce your risk of falling..