

# Splash -- Summer 2009

The newsletter of the Alden Volunteers

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"Splash", the official newsletter of the Alden Volunteers, is published by the Communications Committee.

The Alden Volunteers is a registered 501c3 not-for-profit corporation.

**New AV Web site!**

<http://visitalden.com/aldenvolunteers.html>

Alden Volunteers  
P.O. 55  
Alden, MI 49612



## **A Short Life of Riley**

by Jack Findlay

Few have labored in the Alden Volunteers' vineyard of good works with the ingenuity, intensity and productivity that Herb Riley has.

Formatively, the importance of hard work and education were the bedrock lessons Herb's parents instilled in him and his sister. He grew up in Flint where his dad was a manager with the Grand Trunk Western Railway for 48 years and his mom a school teacher. The values of honesty and the golden rule were stressed in the Riley household. "It was a caring, loving environment," Herb says, "a heckuva home to grow up in."

Herb's business career began at age 10 with neighborhood snow shoveling and delivering papers. His eyes twinkle when he recounts that his *Detroit Free Press* route, the largest in Flint with 122 customers, was always completed by 6 a.m.

After graduating from Flint Southwestern, Herb earned a B.A. in management from Eastern Michigan University and a M.B.A. from Wayne State, where he encountered Robert Francis Widmer, that proud Purdue grad, who denies his very presence at WSU.

Herb met, wooed and married Sue, a Detroit, in 1972. Her degree from Wayne State is in secondary education and she shares Herb's twin passions for learning and teaching by example. Sue directed AV's Social Committee for 2 years and initiated the annual Beach Bums excursion. She is no less a hard worker than her husband.



*Herb and Sue Riley*

Herb remains firm in his belief that education is paramount in living life well and he relishes challenges. So, it's easy to see why he was drawn to a career in higher education, spending 32 years as an administrator at Wayne State University and the State University of New York (SUNY) system, the last 18 of which he was the University Registrar at SUNY-Binghamton. It was his favorite job.

*(continued on p. 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> column)*



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### President's Report

#### Batter Up! Team AV needs you

Jim Leyland knows the value of fresh arms and legs. He is well aware that his starters cannot carry the whole load over the course of a 162-game season. Fortunately for the Tigers' manager, he has the options of his bench, the Tigers' minor league players and trades as potential sources from which help can come.

The Alden Volunteers have no such feeder system.

As our community service organization begins its tenth year, we believe a revitalization of our work force is imperative. That business truism - - the old 80-20 Rule - - is valid with AV too; 80 % of the work is and has been done by 20% of our members.

Make no mistake, those few have done an absolutely splendid job - - from the sign planters that bracket Alden to the shoreline reclamation project to the caboose restoration to Mrs. Smith's Posey Patch and the hanging baskets. The imprint of AV's work is everywhere and it's made an enormous difference in the "look and feel" of the area. AV has made Alden a better place to be.

Our needs in 2009 span the breadth of our project portfolio . . . from committee chairpersons (Education and Social) to workers for the annual Golf Tournament (call Herb Riley, 331-7034) and the Art Fair (call Bob Widmer, 377-6305) - - the 2 events that provide a large share of the funds that underwrite AV's work. There isn't a single project or program that has a full complement of workers.

It seems ironic, doesn't it, that we may not even be able to live up to our name - - that's right, the Alden Volunteers rely on folks volunteering. AV can't do what should be done for the community without its members on the line, participating in the work that needs to be done.

So, don't hesitate. Pick up the phone call Richard Milock (377-6005), Patti Findlay (331-6424) or Gloria Kilian (322-2577). We'll provide plenty of info for you to make a decision about where your talents would best be utilized for the good of our community. If, on the other hand, we call you and ask for an hour of your time or even to take the lead on a project, say "yes." Your community needs you.

Get out of the on-deck circle and get into the batter's box. AV can't do it without you.

Richard Milock & Patti Findlay  
AV Co-Presidents

*Riley - (cont'd from p. 1)*

The multiplex opportunities of bringing academia into the digital age were right up Herb's alley. He gained a national reputation for innovation and still, a decade after retiring, is sought out frequently for his professional advice. Herb served as President and Chairman of the 2,500+ member College & University Administrative Computing Conference from 1991 to 1994.

As President of the Alden Volunteers from 2004 to 2008, Herb expanded the scope of AV's commitments and, more importantly, established a significant new focus. He is extremely proud of brokering vibrant collaborative working relationships with the Helena Township Board and DABA (Downtown Alden Business Association). Herb built bridges where chasms had existed.

As a leader, Herb is tireless, seemingly everywhere. As a communicator, he is simply indefatigable. "Herb is the emperor of e-mail," one former board member remarked. "If you didn't know what was shaking, it was your own fault because you knew that Herb had put the information out there - - and sometimes more than once."

Herb Riley's commitment to AV has been enormous, his accomplishments significant and widespread. Thank you, Herb, our community is so much the better because of your unwavering good will and leadership. We're proud of you and your mom and dad would be too.



## The True Value of Leveraging Your Financial Contributions to the Alden Volunteers

As you know, the Alden Volunteers are a registered 501c3 corporation with the State of Michigan and the Internal Revenue Service of the federal government. I think you are all familiar (at tax time) that you may deduct financial contributions to our not-for-profit organization up to the limits permitted by your personal income tax filings. This is an **obvious** advantage of contributing to the Alden Volunteers since your contributions directly go back to our community with no administrative overhead associated with the running of this volunteer organization. It's probably important to reiterate our **Mission Statement**, just as a reminder, of what we do and what the **Alden Volunteers** are all about:

*"Our mission is to preserve the spirit of Alden and its environs by enhancing and expanding the aesthetic, cultural, social and educational aspects of the community through the talents and energies of both year-round and seasonal residents."*

The **not-so-obvious** advantage of your financial contributions is the leveraging and compounding impact of the use of your financial contributions. In two recent articles in the weekly Antrim County newspapers there were stories which informed the readers that the local governmental entities of two communities (not Alden) had hired commercial companies to water one community's hanging floral baskets at a figure of over \$20,000 for the summer. In another article, it was reported that a community government had hired a commercial contractor to put an addition onto a public facility at a cost of over \$150,000. Business as usual, eh? Typically, the total cost of projects and services is a combination of materials and labor. For those two cost factors, the traditional ratio of labor to materials is 85% to 15%. When added together, the total cost of such projects is "inflated" by a factor of 4 to 5 for labor costs vs. what the materials are for the project.

Now, how does this effect the leveraging of your financial contributions to a not-for-profit (tax exempt) organization such as the Alden Volunteers. Well, because we have **volunteer members** with talents, skills and experiences for almost ALL projects we do for our community we are able to eliminate the cost

of contracted labor or about 80 to 85% of total cost for our enhancement programs.

Let's cite a few examples (and there are more):

1. Community Gazebo
  - Materials: \$3,000
  - Labor: 0
  - If privately contracted: \$21,500
  - AV "cost avoidance": \$18,500
2. Hanging Lamp Post Floral Baskets:
  - Annual Basket Costs: \$2,000
  - Labor for Watering: 0
  - Watering if contracted: \$10,000
  - AV "cost avoidance": \$8,000
3. Soil Erosion Control Projects at the Depot Park and the Ball Diamond:
  - Materials (steps and plants): \$1,500
  - Labor: 0
  - Project if contracted: \$15,000
  - AV "cost avoidance": \$13,500
4. Construction of Depot Storage Building:
  - Materials: \$8,000
  - Labor (for foundation) \$5,000
  - Labor to construct bldg. 0
  - AV "cost avoidance" \$32,500
5. The Caboose and Train at the Depot:
  - Materials: \$7,000
  - Labor: 0
  - Value: >\$200,000
  - AV "cost avoidance" -- LARGE

The five (5) projects listed above have a "cost avoidance" figure of over \$275,000.00. The AVs have completed over 66 projects of significance.

OK, you're getting the picture of the "value" of your leveraged financial contributions which support these great initiatives for our community. The "compounding" effect mentioned earlier – twofold: 1) tax deductible and 2) little or no labor costs (up to 85% of contracted projects) because of the talents and energies of the Alden Volunteers.

**SO** – when you **write your annual check** to support the AV's this year, please **KNOW** you're helping your community.

## PERE MARQUETTE CABOOSE A 1903, ALDEN, MI



Before



During



After

This caboose was built in **1903** by the Grand Trunk Western Railroad's car shop in Port Huron, MI. It was originally equipped with a coal burning stove and kerosene lamps. Aladdin mantle lamps were installed over the conductor's desk. During restoration in **2007** a note was found written on the exterior planking, stating that it had been repaired in **August, 1936**. The caboose's final trip to the car shop for general repairs was made in **1958**. It was then assigned to freight service on the Chicago-Port Huron line of the Grand Trunk Western Railroad.

Rodger Dewey purchased the caboose from Detroit attorney, Earl Langlous in **1973** and moved it two blocks north from the Mancelona, MI Train Depot. He renamed it "RD" and it became the office of Rodger Dewey and Associates, Inc. Real Estate and Insurance. In August **1989**, Mr. Dewey donated the caboose to the Helena Township Historical Society.

It was moved to its present location at the Alden Depot and placed on four sections of rail mounted in cement. It sat vacant for several years where time, weather and vandalism took its toll. In **2006** the Alden Volunteers (a not-for-profit community organization) with the financial support of Roger Dewey of Alden and Richard and Diana Milock of Bellaire, started renovation of the caboose. Photos show areas of deterioration. The roof, exterior wood siding, the copula and sections of interior flooring were replaced. Windows and interior were restored to near original condition. The exterior was painted OSHA red.

In **October of 2007**, the Guy Barber family, Alden, donated 100 feet of track from the original rail installed in **1892** by the Chicago and North Michigan Railroad. The track had been removed in **1984-85** when tracks were removed from the non-operating railbed. The caboose was turned around and track installed to make way for a vintage **1920's** flat car and a 25 ton General Electric Switch engine built in **1944** at Schenectady, NY and donated by William Shannon of Alden, MI. These pieces were trucked from Grelickville, MI where both had been stored for several years and were in a very deteriorated state.

Today, the Caboose carries the branding (name) of the **Pere Marquette Railroad**, which once ran through Alden for many years on its way between Grand Rapids, MI and Bay View, MI.

(June 28, 2009)

Note: The above sign is mounted and on display in the new Caboose Museum at the Depot.

**New AV Web Site**

As many of you know, the Internet web site for the Alden Volunteers has been outdated for some time. It's been difficult for any one member to properly maintain the old site. The new community web site <http://visitalden.com> has a tremendous amount of community information, including the new site for the Alden Volunteers. You can go to [visitalden.com](http://visitalden.com) and click on the "Alden Volunteers" name in the left hand column OR you can go directly to the AV web site by going to

<http://visitalden.com/aldenvolunteers.html>

Also, on the home page of [visitalden.com](http://visitalden.com) there are links and photos of our two main fund raising events of the year, 1) the Art Festival and 2) the Golf Outing. Click on the photos of each to find out more detailed information.

This community web site was developed and is maintained by Gary and Jill Scheitler.

**New Engraved Bluestones**

It's always exciting when we can add new engraved bluestones to the Alden Volunteer's Community Gazebo in downtown Alden. The bluestones are ordered on an annual basis when an individual has reached the \$1,000 giving level to the Alden Volunteers. New bluestones will be added to the Community Gazebo this year for:

Winnie & Dick Moored  
The Rodger Dewey Family  
Bill & Bonnie Shannon



**Please Drop Helen Brown a Brief Note or Call Her**

For all of us who know and love Helen Brown and her true caring for our community, you're probably aware that for the first time in modern memory that Helen was not able to be with us and celebrate all the wonderful summer events in our community. Helen would love to hear from you in a brief note (write LARGE) and it may be sent to her at:

Mrs. Helen Brown

6128 S. Iola Way  
Englewood, CO 80111  
phone: 303-250-8165

**In Memoriam**

Mrs. Winifred "Winnie" Moored of Grand Rapids and Terrace St., Alden passed away this past winter. Winnie is survived by her husband, Richard ("Dick") and a loving family. Winnie was a founding member of the Alden Volunteers who had a helping, caring heart and was found supporting and assisting in many of our events and activities. It was a goal of Winnie's to reach the giving level for obtaining an engraved bluestone at the Community Gazebo as a remembrance of the support they held for the Alden Volunteers and our community and with the last contribution, her goal was achieved.

**Keep Michigan Beautiful Awards**

In the late Fall of 2008, the Alden Volunteers received the prestigious Michigan Plaque (very beautiful) from the Keep Michigan Beautiful Foundation at their annual Awards Ceremony in Frankenmuth. The award is a highly competitive one and we were one of the few organizations of many applicants to receive the award for the work we've accomplished on Mrs. Smith's Posy Patch. Another application will be prepared for this year's KMB Awards for the work we've done on the Depot storage building and the train restoration work.



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(Following, is the remainder of the 2009 Alden Volunteers Events Calendar for the year. The complete Community Calendar may be viewed by going to the Internet at <http://visitalden.com> and clicking on the "Community Calendar" tab on the left hand column of the home page.

Please plan to join and participate in these events:

### **Alden Volunteers**

#### **Schedule of Events and Activities for 2009**

<u>Day/Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Committee</u>
<b>Alden Days Events:</b> (comprehensive listing of all events is posted on the Community Calendar at <a href="http://visitalden.com">visitalden.com</a> )			
Fri., July 25	6:00 – 7:30	Cake Walk (tent at Alden Bar)	Patti Findlay
Sat., July 26	10:00 – Noon	Kids Carnival (tent at Depot Park)	Gloria Kilian
Sat., July 26	1:00	Parade	Bill Bockstahler Dick Milock
Fri., Aug. 7		Golf Outing 8:00 a.m. - Registration and Breakfast 9:00 a.m. - "Shotgun" Start After completion of golf: luncheon, prizes and awards	Herb and Sue Riley
Fri., Aug. 14	6:00 – Social Hr. 7:15 – Dinner	Annual Potluck "Bring a Dish to Pass" Dinner at Depot Park	AV Board
Sat., Aug. 29	10:00 – 6:00	Alden Depot Arts Festival	Bob and Barb Widmer
<b>Heritage Days Weekend</b> (comprehensive listing of all events will be announced in the Community Calendar)			
Sat., Oct. 3	noon – 2:00	Kid's Pumpkin Painting Award Ceremony And children's games (Mrs. Smith's Pumpkin Patch)	Gloria Kilian/Vito Poma
Sat., Oct. 3	10:00 – 3:00	Dog Days (hot dog sale – location TBD)	Hod and Sally Hunt
Sun., Oct. 4	1:00 - ?	Road Rallye (start – Depot Park)	Davie and Joyce Looman
Sat., Nov. 28	6:15 p.m.	Holiday Illumination at the Community Gazebo (other community illumination events on the Community Calendar)	Social



Kids LOVE the "caterpillar" at the Depot during Alden Days



AV Event Signs on the train



Ken and Marge Geohegan enjoy the Beach Bums game with the AVs

**Spirit of Alden Scholarship**

For the 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive year the Alden Volunteers have made a \$1,000 Spirit of Alden Scholarship available to a deserving student from Antrim County. The scholarship is administered by the Foundation Office of Northwest Michigan College (NMC) in Traverse City. This year, the Board voted to award two (2) \$1,000 Spirit of Alden Scholarships to selected students for the 2009-10 academic year. This brings the total scholarship monies to \$8,000 the AVs have provided to deserving students to attend NMC. From all the feedback we've received from both the students and the Foundation Office of NMC, the SoA Scholarship has been a very welcome addition which has permitted students from Antrim County an opportunity to attend college without some of the financial burdens normally associated with college enrollment.

**9<sup>th</sup> Annual AV Golf Outing**

The Alden Volunteers will again be sponsoring our annual Golf Outing on Friday, August 7<sup>th</sup> at the Farm Golf Course in Bellaire. This is a major fund raiser for our organization and we'd love to have you consider playing, sponsoring a hole or assisting with the activities during the day at the outing. There will be a homemade gourmet breakfast and registration between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. The shot gun start for all teams will start at 9:00 a.m. After golf, there will be a luncheon, awards and prizes. There will be three "team" classifications based by gender: all male teams, all female teams and mixed gender teams. Each category will be awarded great prizes based on low gross scores. There will be awards for long drive (men and women), "closest to the pin" (men and women), longest putt, a "Nifty Fifty" contest and a chance at a \$5,000 hole-in-one prize. All profit from the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual AV Golf Outing goes to support our programs, events and projects.

You know summer has arrived in Alden when our community hosts Alden Days. This year's events will take place on Friday and Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. Again, the Alden Volunteers will sponsor the Friday evening Cake Walk at the Alden Bar and Grille. This is a great, fun event and if you'd like to contribute a cake, cookies or a pie, please call Patti Findlay at 331-6424.

The VERY popular Kids Carnival takes place on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until noon at Depot Park. Games, "prizes" and a "tour" through the giant "caterpillar" are highlights of this event for kids of all ages. We'll have a "big tent" set up for everyone's enjoyment. If you'd like to help assist us by "running" a kids game, please contact Gloria Kilian at 322-2577.

The crowning event and highlight of Alden Days is the annual Parade. The hosts of this year's parade, Bill Bockstahler and Dick Milock have promised this will be the BEST parade EVER. Again, the AV's will enter our world-famous AV Mighty Marching Kazoo Band. If you'd like to play a kazoo and march in the "band", please contact Sue Acord at 331-4550. ALSO, we'll once again have an Alden Volunteers float in the parade with a whole "new" look and theme. If you'd like to march with the float or help assist with the construction of this award-winner, please contact Meredith Grider at 331-4717.

**Alden Art Festival**

Great art, great exhibitors, great food – a showpiece for everyone! On August 29th from 10:00 – 6:00 the Alden Art Festival will have a line-up of some of the best and most creative artists from around the country right here at the Alden Depot! ! ! Please call Bob or Barbara Widmer at 377-6305 if you can assist with a shift at our Hospitality Tent. Make sure to attend – it's FREE. Invite friends and neighbors.

*Splash - Summer 2009 - p. 8*  
*A Few Interesting Photos*  
 (provided from the Alden Volunteers Photo Library)



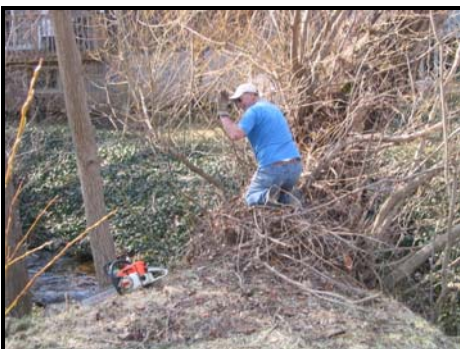
Mrs. Smith's demolished lot before the AV's made it into



Mrs. Smith's Posy Patch



Great Halloween pumpkins from the children at Rapid City Elementary School at the Pumpkin Patch during Heritage Days



Alden Volunteer Bill Miller doing some serious brush clearing at Spencer Creek for the Rain Garden



Military Color Guard at the Depot for the Memorial Day Parade



Alden Volunteers Dick Milock, Gerry Kilian and Hod Hunt putting finishing touches on the flat car "stage" at the AV train at Depot Park



AV's Linda Spice, Helen Brown and Bill Weltyk enjoy the AV bus trip to a Beach Bums baseball game.



Everyone loves Alden Days



AV's Bill Weltyk, Hod Hunt, Bill Miller and Paul Delange smooth concrete at the Depot. Check it out!



Lamp post inserts – before and after



AV members Rick Teague and Dale Henry place stone on the Bell Tower at the Community Center



This is really what it's all about!