

The History of Mokena



A Journey Through Time *1831 - 2010*

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The History of Mokena A Journey Through Time

“We live in the present, we dream of the future and we learn eternal truths from the past.” Written by former mayor, Richard Quinn. (1981 – 1983)

1831

- First settled by John McGovney who was the first permanent non-native resident of Frankfort Township. He squatted on the land until he was able to purchase it from the federal government in 1838. John was originally from Adams County, Ohio and the son of James and Nancy (Crockett). Nancy was of the Davy Crockett clan.
- Other settlers who followed were William Moore, William Rice, and Allen Denny.

1832

- Spring. Black Hawk War breaks out. The few white settlers in the area flee east to Indiana to wait out the conflict.
- John McGovney Jr. is the first white child born in this area.

1834

- Spring. John McGovney and William Rice return to this area.
- McGovney discovers that the local Pottawatomie Indians cared for his homestead.
- Among the first settlers after the Black Hawk War were Eliphalet and John Atkins of Vermont, Tilford Duncan, Foster Kane, Archibald Crowl and John Weir. The brothers Allen and Lysander Denny of Chautauqua County, New York also arrive.
- Lysander Denny builds a sawmill on the north side of Hickory Creek.
- Mrs. Hiram and Mrs. Knight are the first teachers in the area. They conduct classes in the first school, a log house located in what is now section 19 of Frankfort Township near what is now Route 30 near the boundary of New Lenox Township.

1836

- The sawmill is converted to a gristmill.
- Will County is formed on January 12th. It is named after businessman and politician, Dr. Conrad Will.
- The Hickory Creek voting Precinct of Will County is created. Part of which encompasses the future site of Frankfort Township.

1837

- Chelsea post office is established with Levi M. Clayes as postmaster. It was situated in the area east of Rt. 45 and south of Hickory Creek. The actual village of Chelsea wasn't platted until 1847/48. This is before the villages of Mokena and Frankfort were established. It disappeared soon after the Michigan Central and Rock Island Railroads were built through the area.
- A Methodist class is formed. The congregation meets at the home of Ambrose Doty, located near what would later be the border of Frankfort and New Lenox Township.

1838

- On November 23rd John McGovney purchases the north 80 acres of his farm from the federal government for \$100.

1839

- On January 31st John McGovney purchases the south 80 acres of his farm from Allen Denny for \$1,000.
- Allen Denny establishes an area on Wolf Road now known as the Pioneer Memorial Cemetery as a family burial plot. Its first known internments were his parents, Charles Denny, a Revolutionary War Veteran and his wife, Lucinda (Allen) Denny. Lucinda is a cousin of General Ethan Allen. It should be noted that Veteran John Atkins II from the War of 1812 is also interred here having died in 1864.

1840

- After having discovered the body of a murder victim near New Lenox, early settlers Allen Denny along with Lysander Denny, John Atkins, and William Rice testify at the inquest.

1842

- The first Europeans, principally of German and Swiss origin, settle in Mokena. In their native countries most were members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

1845

- Wolves have presented such a nuisance in Will County that residents have organized hunts, which are netting more than 60 animals per day.

1847

- There are now at the least 7 school districts in what would become Frankfort Township. The District 7 school is located in the vicinity of 10414 La Porte Road. There are 26 students from 14 families. District 7 would later be recognized as Mokena's School District.

1848

- Gold is discovered in California.

1849

- The California Gold Rush begins. Before the end of the boom, at least four local men left to seek their fortunes in California, those being George Marshall, Thomas Moriarty, and 2 brothers, Noble and Wright Jones. Only the Joneses return alive.

1850

- Frankfort Township is named. The name is suggested by landowner/farmer Friedrich Cappel, who would later become a resident of Mokena. Before this the township was recognized only by its legal description: Township 35 North, Range 12 East or T.35N.R.12E.
- The U.S. Census results show a population of 844 residents in Frankfort Township.

1851

- Baptist Society is founded.
- Knapp & Smith erect the first building in Mokena, which is a residence/store. This is the first commercial establishment in Mokena.
- Between 1851 and 1858 Rev. C. Haas, Rev. Colb, Rev. Gradmann and others helped lay the foundation and roots of what would later become St. John's German Evangelical Church.

1852

- The village is platted to parallel the Rock Island Railroad right-of-way. Allen Denny, who had owned the land at the time, paid the surveyor to plot 37 town lots.
- The first run of the wood burning *Rock Island Rocket* comes through Mokena on October 10th.
- The telegraph and train station are completed. Mokena's station is the only one along the Rock Island line between Blue Island and Joliet.
- Mokena's first paper, *The Mokena Star*, is in print. There is only one issue and it is hand written by Julia Atkins. Julia is the granddaughter of John Atkins who was a veteran from the War of 1812 and whose family first settled here in 1834.

1853

- John McGovney doubles the size of the town by platting his addition east of Division Street.
- The first blacksmith shop operated by William McCoy, post office with Warren Knapp as Postmaster, and hotel kept by Charles Gall are built.
- James Ducker establishes a dry goods store in Mokena. His success eventually leads him to build a much larger establishment in nearby Joliet.
- Dr. Newton P. Holden, MD becomes the first practicing physician in Mokena.

1855

- Cyrus Cross and Noble Jones build a steam-powered saw mill in the village. It is located on the site of what is now the abandoned grain elevator, behind 19709 Mokena Street.
- On July 3, 1855, Alan Denny donates "public ground" for the "erection of churches and other public buildings." This public ground is located on the west side of Union Street between Second and Third Streets.
- The first school built in the town of Mokena and the second in District 7, is constructed on "public ground" donated by Allan Denny. It is built at a cost of \$1,000. The teacher is local man James Pierce. It is located approx. 200 ft. north of Second Street and 75 ft. west of Union St. The original 1847 school located on La Porte Road, is abandoned.
- A carpenter named Bernard Folman arrives from Luxembourg and begins building frame homes.

1858

- On October 1st St. John's congregation is formed. There are 45 members. Rev. Edward Colb is the pastor. No official name is taken by the congregation at this time.

1859

- John McGovney dies at the age of 62. John's youngest son, Elijah, takes over the farmstead.

1860

- Mathias and Margaret Enders, who had emigrated from Germany, deed land to the diocese as a future site for the first Catholic church in the area (St. Mary's).
- Local farmer Dietrich Brumund ships the first can of milk from Mokena to Chicago. It is brought to the city in a wagon pulled by a large Newfoundland dog.
- Election of 1860. Abraham Lincoln carries Frankfort Township with 255 votes, in contrast to Stephan A. Douglas, with 104 votes.

1861

- The Civil War (1861 – 1865), also known as the War Between the States, begins on April 12th. Thirty-four men from the Mokena area join the ranks of the 100th Illinois. Many others volunteer in the 20th Illinois, 39th Illinois, and the 64th Illinois Infantry regiments. Pvt. Wilbur S. Emory is Mokena's first casualty. He dies of disease at Mound City, Illinois on November 1, 1861. At least 15 other men from the Mokena area die on the battlefield or to disease before the war's end.
- Marti School is built at the southeast corner of 187th and Wolf Road. It is a one room school house.

1862

- On January 1st Rev. William Meyers takes charge of the St. John's congregation. On March 1st, after 3 years of research and planning, St. John's passes a constitution and officially becomes "The German United Evangelical St. John's Church." This is considered St. John's anniversary date. In the summer of 1862, at what is presently the corner of Second and Union Streets and where part of St. John's Christian Community Center is now standing, a frame church building was constructed for \$1,500. On September of this same year the new edifice was dedicated to the glory of God. Prior to its completion services were held in the schoolhouse.

1863

- St. John's small congregation begins immediately to provide for the needs of its members by purchasing a five acre parcel of land for a church cemetery. This is currently the southern half of the present cemetery located on the east side of Wolf Road. The land cost \$300. In May, Philipina Lauffer is the first burial, even though there are earlier dated stones on the property.

1864

- St. Mary's (German) Catholic Church is built for 9 families at the cost of \$1,400. Known as the smallest church in Will County, services are held every other week. The Enders family donate the churchyard, with the understanding that the land be used as a cemetery.
- In August, a group of Irish excursionists from Chicago and the local Germans start a riot at the saloon of John Schiek. It is said that the riot started because the Irish were refused service. The building is nearly destroyed. Two Union soldiers on furlough, fire shots and drive the rioters out of town. Several are killed. Neighboring homes and businesses are also plundered of valuables and money.

1865

- The steam powered saw mill owned by Cyrus Cross and Noble Jones, is now engaged in flour and grain milling.
- With the end of the Civil War, the slaves are freed. Prior to this time, Allen Denny kept a station on the Underground Railroad and served as a "conductor".
- The first confirmation class of the German United Evangelical St. John's Church is confirmed on April 9th.
- On September 12th John Schmidt becomes the first internment in St. Mary's Cemetery.

1866

- The Methodist congregation is organized.

1867

- The Methodist Episcopal Church is completed and dedicated on December 15th. Located on the north side of Second St. between Union and Mokena St., it is shared on alternate Sundays with the Baptists. Today it is known as the Mokena United Methodist Church.

1871

- On January 2nd, after nine years of service, Rev. Meyer resigned from his pastorate at the German United Evangelical St. John's Church. He is succeeded by Rev. A. Schoenhuth who assumes his duties on July 2nd.

1872

- A two-story school building, located at the northwest corner of Front Street & Schoolhouse Road is completed and ready for occupancy. The cost was \$10,000 which includes the furnishings. It is acclaimed to be one of the finest in Will County.
- During Rev. A. Schoenhuth's short pastorate of less than two years, the German United Evangelical St. John's Church congregation decides to purchase its first parsonage. On May 29th, the home on one-half acre of land, located at what is now 11121 and 11125 Third St., is purchased from Mr. Michael Weber for the sum of \$1,000.
- There are 10 school districts and 9 schoolhouses in Will County. Only Mokena and Frankfort are "graded" schools. All other schools in the area are known as "common" schools, meaning all grades in one room. There are 652 pupils enrolled, and 15 teachers employed. The teachers are paid \$2,724.90.

1873

- Rev. Carl Schaub begins his 34-year tenure as pastor at St. John's Church. His record as longest serving spiritual leader in Mokena remains unbroken.
- The German United Evangelical St. John's Church organizes a Ladies Aid group.
- In March St. John's Church purchases the old school located in the "public ground" for \$470 plus 10% interest.

1874

- A major disaster is narrowly averted on April 13th when Constable Nic Schuberth discovers and extinguishes a fire in the basement of Hirsch's grain elevator. Constable Schuberth arrested two 18 year-old suspects but they both escape before their names could be taken. A strong southeast wind was blowing that night, and had the fire been left unchecked, it probably would have engulfed most of Front St.
- The *Mokena Advertiser* newspaper is first published by editor Charles A. Jones. It remains in circulation thru 1877.
- The Methodist parsonage is dedicated. It is built for \$1,000 and is adjacent to the church.

1875

- Residents overwhelmingly vote down a referendum that would have lead to the incorporation of the village of Mokena.
- Allen Denny dies in Cassadaga, New York on October 29th. He is 85 years old.
- The St. John's Church loan for the purchase of the old school is paid in full.

1877

- Charles H. Jones, young editor of the *Mokena Advertiser*, dies at age 20 of tuberculosis (then referred to as consumption).
- A Turnverein, or German gymnastic club, is incorporated in Mokena.

1878

- Mokena's population reaches 500.
- The village consists of 5 general stores, 2 hardware stores, 2 drug stores, 2 blacksmith shops, 2 wagon shops, 2 harness shops, 3 hotels, 1 furniture store, 3 millinery stores, 2 butcher shops and 7 beer saloons.
- St. Mary's Church membership increases to 30 families.

1880

- Mokena's population is 522.
- The village is incorporated by a vote of 50 in favor and 22 opposed. (refer to 1890)
- On June 16th the people elect the first village board consisting of six members: Ozias McGovney, John Capple, John Zahn, George Smith, Valentine Sheer, and John Ulrich. They in turn appoint Ozias McGovney as the first village president, or mayor. The son of the first settlers, John and Nancy (Graham) McGovney, Ozias was also the first Justice of the Peace serving the village in that capacity for 21 years. He was also the postmaster of Mokena for 3 years. In 1846 Ozias married Mathilda Jane Elsworth. They had 8 children. Mathilda was the cousin of Col. Elmer E. Elsworth who was the first Union officer to have been killed in the Civil War. To date, the McGoveny home still stands on the NE corner of Front and Midland.
- One of the village's first acts is to build a calaboose, or jail. In November local carpenter, Wilhelm Stermer, is given the contract to build a small structure for \$120.00.

1881

- The jail is completed in January. It is located in the vicinity of Elijah McGovney's farm, near today's LaPorte Road. The village ordinance states that any inmate is entitled to "a supply of good and wholesome food three times a day."
- On April 21st Mintz Wiess is elected as Mokena's first Police Magistrate.

1882

- Late night heist at the Mokena Exchange Bank is foiled after an explosion set by burglars fails to crack the bank's burglar-proof chest.

1883

- Julius Mavis is appointed Fire Marshall. On May 4th 75 feet of rubber fire hose, one 28 foot and one 24 foot ladder, two pike poles and two axes are purchased to assist townspeople with fighting fires.

1884

- On April 16th Noble Jones is elected mayor.
- St John's Church purchases its church bell, which is manufactured by Henry McShane & Co. of Baltimore, Maryland.
- The grain elevator of Charles Hirsch burns to the ground in a fire likely set by an arsonist. About five railcar loads of grain are lost in the blaze. Through the valiant efforts of the Mokena Fire Company and a bucket brigade of village ladies, neighboring buildings were saved.
- The jail is moved to Front Street on village owned land shared with the fire company's engine house.

1885

- Kerosene street lamps are installed. The lamplighters are paid \$150 per year for lighting and maintaining the lamps.

1891

- On April 22nd Noble Jones was elected mayor.

1890

- Mokena's population drops to 364.
- Ozias Erwin McGovney is elected mayor. Ozias E. is the son of Mokena's first Mayor, Ozias McGovney, and grandson to the first settlers, John and Nancy McGovney.
- On May 22nd the Certificate of the Incorporation for the Village of Mokena is filed with Secretary of State, I.W. Pearson. The village had failed to file in 1880.

1892

- On February 7th, the German United Evangelical St. John's Church Ladies Aid reorganizes as Frauen Verein, which is German for Women's Guild.
- Just hours after a disastrous fire destroyed two buildings on Front St. a riot erupts. During the melee the post office, located in the store of John A. Hatch, is stormed. A message is relayed to Chicago via the Rock Island Depot that Mokena is in the hands of a mob. The 4 men who started the riot are brought to Chicago on charges of damaging government property.

1893

- During the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the homes of Mokena residents are swarmed with relatives visiting the fair.
- The "Panic of 93" begins. Up to this date, it is considered the worst economic depression the U.S. has experienced.

1895

- On October 5th, John and Marie Liess donate land to the village at what would become 10940 Front St. for the construction of a proposed water tower.

1896

- Noble Jones resigns as mayor on August 5th. Christ Bechstein is elected on August 29th.

1897

- The country's economic depression, which begun in 1893, comes to an end.

1898

- The first telephone exchange is installed.
- Gasoline lit lamps replace kerosene street lamps.
- The first village water tower is built by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company at a cost of \$3,100. It has a capacity of 60,000 gallons and is located on the north half of the lot at what is now 10940 Front St. The village water system is inaugurated with a 160-foot well on Front Street just east of Division Street. Originally a windmill is used to pump water into the tank. The original purpose of the system is to protect businesses on Front Street in the event of fire. It would be several years before it was utilized for drinking water.

1899

- President William McKinley's train passes through Mokena. Many residents gather at a patriotically decorated Rock Island depot to cheer the President.
- In December, Mokena's first telephone connection is completed after many delays. An exchange cannot be immediately formed, as there is a lack of subscribers.
- A ten-year controversy between the local Methodist and Baptist congregations as to who was the rightful owner of their church building is settled on December 28th with the court ruling in favor of the Methodists.

1900

- Mokena's population is 281. The population continues to drop and many businesses close their doors and move to more profitable areas. The decline was precipitated by two principal factors: the nation wide economic crisis of the 1890s and the completion of the Wabash railroad lines in 1880 that ran through, Marley, Orland, Worth and into Chicago. This took much of the farm trade to these communities.
- Will County's population is 74,764.
- Mokena Mineral Spring Water Company is established. Each week 4,000 gallons are shipped to Chicago and 1,000 gallons to Joliet by rail tank cars. The water, with its reported medicinal properties, is sold as being "good for various kinds of human ailments such as stomach trouble, rheumatism, etc." The artisan well was located behind what is now 19839 Mokena Street.
- It is decided by the village board that Mokena homes could tap into the town water line for domestic service. There are 11 subscribers, most of which are businesses on Front St.

1901

- All school districts are assigned new numbers. Mokena School is changed from District 7 to District 159. The boundaries are 191st St. to the north, Townline Road to the west, 203rd St. to the south, and just short of U.S. 45 to the east.

1903

- On April 22nd Ozias E. McGovney is elected mayor.

1904

- St. Mary's Ladies Aid Society is started.
- The Mokena Cornet Band is formed. Concerts are performed at the village park near St. John's Church.
- The Methodist Ladies' Aid Society is formed by Rev. Griswold. It is instrumental in supporting the church.

1907

- The businessmen of the village form the Men's Club with "pleasure as the object." They lease 5 acres along Wolf Road at what is now North Woodland Circle. They name it Cappel's Grove. Friedrich Cappel had originally named "Frankfort Township" in 1850. His son, John, became a prominent local businessman. John and his wife owned the land where the grove is located.
- The Bowman Dairy plant is constructed on the southwest corner of the railroad tracks and Wolf Road costing \$30,000. The plant is the largest single industry in Mokena and handles 12,500 pounds of milk daily.
- St Mary's Church increases its membership to 50 families.
- St. John's Church conducts once a month evening services in English for the first time. Prior to this, the predominant language of the church was German.

1908

- An interurban trolley service is established running from Joliet to Chicago Heights. Leaving from the trolley barn in downtown Frankfort, it parallels the Michigan Central Railroad, now known today as the Old Plank Trail. It makes its way east to Chicago Heights and west to Owens St. (116th) heading north to what is known today as Route 30 and into New Lenox ending its route in Joliet.
- By selling shares, the Mokena Men's Club acquire the funding to erect a 5000 square foot dance pavilion at Cappel's Grove, (now N. Woodland Circle). It is opened on July 4th.

1909

- Mokena State Bank is organized with a capital stock of \$25,000. The building with furnishings is completed at a cost of \$5,000. It is located approx. 75 ft. west of Mokena St. on the north side of Front St.

1910

- On April 20th Mayor Ozias E. McGovney passes away. (1855 – 1910) A special election is held on May 11th and Ozias's son, Ona, is elected to fill the position.
- Mokena's population is 357.
- Will County's population is 84,371.

1911

- The first concrete sidewalks are laid by Julius Oswald. They replace the wooden sidewalks.
- Mokena gets its first automobile, which is owned by the grain elevator operator.
- Mokena Camp Fire Girls organization is formed.

1912

- The first Boy Scout troop is organized.
- A business structure at 11020 Front Street which had a meeting hall on the second floor for social events burns down.

1913

- In January, construction on the Mokena Hall is completed on the site where the previous store/hall had burn in 1912. This is made possible as the result of a business partnership formed between George Hacker and Emil Krapp. The building contains a stage, dressing rooms, a dining room, and kitchen. This social hall is host to Mokena's first “moving pictures” with the help of Emil's sons, Roy and Milton.
- First electric lights are installed in the village.
- An electric pump is installed at the village well to replace the windmill.
- A two-year high school program is initiated.
- On July 1st the first proposed coast-to-coast roadway running from New York to San Francisco is officially named the Lincoln Highway. The 3,389 mile route is plotted; it runs through Frankfort township just a few miles south of Mokena.

1914

- On December 30th Ona E. McGovney resigns as mayor and on the same day George J. Hacker is appointed.
- Mokena's population is 359.
- The Great War (later referred to as World War I) begins in Europe on July 28th. (1914 - 1918)

1915

- On April 21st George J. Hacker is elected mayor.
- The Mokena Woman's Club is formed in order to promote culture.
- On July 7th, at 1:20 in the morning, the Liberty Bell passes by rail through Mokena on its way to the Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco (popularly known as the World's Fair). Patriotic citizens braved the rain in order to get a glimpse of the bell as it passed in the brilliantly lighted car. This is the last time the bell leaves Philadelphia.

1916

- The Immanuel Lutheran Church is completed. It is located on the west side of Union St. at the end of Cross St. It was first organized in 1850 by a group of German immigrants who had settled near Frankfort.
- A Village Hall is completed at the base of the water tower at what is now 10940 Front St. The building also houses the village fire department and the jail.
- The original jail, completed in 1881, is sold to Walter (Dick) McGovney for \$20. Dick relocates the former jail to the McGovney farm, or presently known as the south side of LaPorte Road at the eastern boundary of the Mokena Park District. Born in 1862, Dick is the son of Elijah and grandson of first settlers John and Nancy McGovney. Of the two jail cells, one becomes his living space and the other is eventually converted into a chicken coop.
- In September, brothers-in-law, Elmer Cooper and Barney Hostert, open a garage on First St. just behind the Mokena Hall. They do repairs and sell Ford products such as cars, trucks, and tractors. The vehicles are delivered from the factory in knocked-down condition via railroad, and the pieces are assembled at their garage.

1917

- The United States enters World War I. Barney Hostert, Fred Steinhagen, Martin Mau, Alfred Hatch, Arthur G. Zumstein, and Ernest Tonn serve in the war, along with many others from Mokena.
- Mokena's Volunteer Fire Department is formed with 30 members. Their equipment consists of 6 rubber buckets, 2 red flags, 2 red lights, 4 white lights and a wooden hose cart with 300 feet of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch hose mounted on a wooden hose cart which is then pulled by 6 firemen.
- The Spanish Flu epidemic hits the village.
- On September 16th the German United Evangelical St. John's Church Brotherhood was organized with 21 charter members. This is the forerunner to their Men's Club.

1918

- On January 2nd the German United Evangelical St. John's Church changes its name to St. John's German Evangelical Church.
- The Great War ends on November 11th.

1919

- Enforcement of the 18th Amendment (Prohibition) begins on January 16th making it unlawful to manufacture, transport, or sell alcoholic beverages.
- In order to offset the loss of revenue due to the Prohibition Act closing the saloons, the Village Board passes a special tax for the licensing and sale of items such as candy and ice cream.
- *Mokena News-Bulletin* begins publication on August 21st. Bill Semmler started his newspaper with \$75, which he borrowed, and a five by eight hand press.
- In November, Arthur G. Zumstein, the last of the Mokena men to have served in The Great War, returns home.

1920

- Mokena's population is 475.
- Will County's population is 92,911.
- Scarlet Fever quarantine placed on several homes in February and in November Whooping Cough hits the village.
- On January 2nd St. John's Church appoints a building committee to make preliminary plans and get estimates for the cost of a new church building. The old Noble Jones property, located at the north end of Mokena St. where it meets Second St., currently known as 11100 Second St, is chosen as the building site and purchased for \$4,000 on August 11th.
- In the spring, Fred Hentsch and Albert Hellmuth purchase Mokena Hall located at 11020 Front St. They rip out the stage and concrete the floor in order to make a garage for their business named Hentsch & Hellmuth.
- Hatch Hall, located at what is now 19711 Mokena St., is opened to the public in November. It remains a focal point of Mokena social life for at least 30 years.

1922

- Walter Fisher opens a general store in Mokena. He becomes well known for the modern radio he installs in the store. Deputized by Will County and made a sheriff's deputy, he takes on the responsibility of police enforcement in Mokena.
- A freight carload of illegal beer is discovered on a railroad sidetrack near the stockyards, which is located on the southwest corner of the railroad track and School House Road. The origin of the beer cannot be ascertained.
- St. John's Church has 170 members in its congregation.
- In April, Albert Hellmuth dissolves his partnership with Fred Hentsch which had been started in 1920. Albert continues his business as a harness maker. Fred forms a partnership with his brother Albert and the firm becomes Hentsch Brothers Garage, which is located elsewhere in the village.
- Barney Hostert and Elmer Cooper purchase the garage of the former Hentsch & Hellmuth. This garage is located at what is now 11020 Front St. and is directly south of their original building. The Cooper Hostert Ford Agency moves into their new building and the old garage on First St. is kept for storage and later used as a body shop.

1923

- Herman Schweser is elected Mokena's first Fire Chief.
- Albert Hellmuth moves his shop out of the Cooper & Hostert garage building and leases the old drug store building, which some sources say was located on the southeast corner of Front and Mokena St. Albert has expanded his business to include auto top repair and making side curtains for roadsters and open top touring cars.
- In March a truck load of illegal beer is intercepted at the corner of Front St. and Wolf Road by Will County Deputies Walter Fisher and John Frisch. During questioning, Deputy Fisher saves the life of Deputy Frisch when the truck driver attempts to shoot him. The shipment had come from Gary, Indiana.
- Under the direction of Rev. William Kreis and with the assistance of numerous committees and sub-committees, St. John's congregation completes construction of a new church on its property at what is now 11100 Second St. at a cost of \$60,000. It is because of this accomplishment as well as the 60th Anniversary of St. John's congregation that the year 1923 is declared the church's Jubilee Year. On April 15th the new church dedication and the 60th Anniversary celebration is one of the biggest events to occur in Mokena up to this time.

1924

- Mokena State Bank is robbed of over \$4,000. The perpetrators are never apprehended.
- Fred and Carrie Yunker purchase the McGovney farm from the Estate of Elijah McGovney who was the youngest son of first settlers, John and Nancy McGovney.

1925

- The property owned by Trustee John Wannemacher on Front St. is raided by county authorities. A speakeasy is discovered.
- The original St. John Church is moved to 11001 First St. by Milton and Roy Krapp who convert the building into a duplex dwelling.
- St. Mary's church erects a hall west of their church on Wolf Road. This location is currently the parking lot of St. Mary's Cemetery.
- The Parent Teachers Association (PTA) is formed.
- The first Girl Scout Troop is formed replacing the Camp Fire Girls which were active from 1911 – 1920.
- St. John's Church sells its parsonage and hall on Third St. but retains the east portion of the property for what would become its current north parking lot. The hall was the original school from 1855. It is converted into a residence at 11121 Third St.
- In March, the American Association of State Highway Officials begin forming an organized system of numbered highways. Under the new system, nearly two-thirds of the Lincoln Highway's length is designated U.S. Route 30.
- A third year high school program is added to the school curriculum.

1926

- Albert Hellmuth who has conducted an auto top repair and harness shop in the old drug store building, located on the southeast corner of Front and Mokena St., moves his shop into a portion of the Cooper & Hostert garage.
- Bowman Dairy closes down because local farmers refuse to have their cattle tested for tuberculosis. Chicago passed a city ordinance requiring the test. If the cattle are not tested Chicago will refuse the milk. Bowman Dairy was the largest single industry in Mokena handling 12,500 pounds of milk each day.
- Will County Deputy Walter Fisher of Mokena is murdered by a car thief who had stolen the local physician, Dr. McMahan's, car at gun-point. The shooting was the result of a car chase, which ended in the small town of Orland Park at the intersection of 143rd and LaGrange Road. Will County Deputy Fisher is Mokena's only law enforcement official to die in the line of duty. His alleged assailant was found dead near Chicago later that day.
- St. John's Church purchases a home for its parsonage, located at 19531 Union Avenue.
- On August 20th St. John's Church purchases 5 1/2 acres, or the north half of the cemetery at the cost of \$2,750.

1927

- St. John's German Evangelical Church changes its name to St. John's Evangelical Church.
- The third year high school program is dropped but the 2-year high school program continues.
- Natural gas line extends to Mokena and is completed on June 30th.

1928

- After 20 years of service, the interurban trolley, which operated three miles south of Mokena (south of Route 30), is discontinued due to the increase in popularity and ownerships of automobiles.

1929

- On April 17th Harry Mall is elected mayor.
- Carpenter Street School completed at a cost of \$29,000.
- The first Garden Club is formed.
- October 29th, or Black Tuesday the day Wall Street crashed, marks the official beginning of the Great Depression.
- For many years it was not uncommon in Mokena to see the boys on their way to school setting traps in order to catch mink, muskrat, and skunk. Selling the pelts earned them spending money.

1930

- Mokena's population is 562.
- Will County's population is 110,732.
- The meat market of Martin Muehler is twice raided by authorities, where batches of homebrew, moonshine, and wine are discovered. Muehler is arrested and the alcohol dumped on the railroad right of way.
- The ice cream parlor/pool hall owned by Walter Homerding and Willard Martie is searched by county officials, whereupon moonshine and beer are discovered. It is located on the northeast corner of Front and Mokena Street.
- Once a month St. John's Church conducts services in German.
- Wolf Road is the first paved road in Mokena however it stops short of Route 30 due to right-of-way disputes with Clarence Cleveland. Wolf Road gets its name from a branch of the Algonquin tribe called "Mechchaooh" (wolf) who settled along the south bank of the Kankakee River in 1670. That portage point became known as "The Wolf." The trail continued north into Green Bay, Wisconsin and became known as "Wolf Trail" or "Wolf Road." The Jesuit Missionaries, early explorers, fur traders, and pioneers had all used the trail.

1931

- On April 22nd John Nielsen is elected mayor.

1932

- President Herbert Hoover's train passes through Mokena.
- On December 15th the Mokena Volunteer Fire Department is reorganized with 25 active members.

1933

- On April 19th Edward Martie is elected mayor.
- A 1929 Model AA Ford chassis, previously used as a coal truck, is purchased by Fire Chief Herman Schweser. By July 15th Mokena's first fire engine is complete with extinguishers and a pump. The total price comes to \$283.35 and is paid for by Fire Chief Herman Schweser. He is later reimbursed by the fire department.
- 4-H for boys comes to Mokena.
- Prohibition ends. The C.A. Mitchel Malt Syrup Co. opens a brewery in the old Bowman Dairy building. During remodeling, the 2 night watchmen are tied up by gunmen and beer barrels are stolen by the bandits.
- Mokena resident, Don C. Hall, represents the town at the Century of Progress in Chicago. He is a part of the exhibit "The Days of '49" which replicates a mining camp during the California Gold Rush.

1934

- The Evangelical Synod of North America merge with the German Reformed Church in the United States which changes the name of St. John's Evangelical Church to St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church.

1935

- On March 7th the Mokena High School basketball team is defeated 136 to 5 by Joliet High School in the Illinois High School Association District Playoff. The 131-point spread still stands in the record books as the most lopsided loss in state history. At the time Mokena had only a two-year high school with fewer than 10 boys in the class.

1936

- Veterans of the Great War form a Veterans of Foreign Wars post. It is known as William Martin Post 725 in Lincoln Estates, which is located east of Frankfort in Frankfort Township on Route 30. It is later moved to Mokena.
- In October, the final section of Wolf Road is paved to Route 30.
- The first school band is formed and sponsored by the Band Parents Association. It lasts for 8 years.

1937

- On April 23rd Harry Mall is elected mayor.
- In March the 800 lb. safe is stolen out of the Mokena Post Office. A few days later it is discovered alongside a road near Chicago Heights. Four Hundred Dollars in stamps and \$198 in cash were stolen.
- Shortly before Christmas, an outbreak of Scarlet Fever hits town. The local churches and Mokena Public School close, and public meetings and Christmas celebrations are canceled. Despite town physician Dr. E.G. McMahon declaring most cases to be mild, wild rumors reach as far as Chicago that Mokena has been completely quarantined.

1938

- On May 19th at 4:30 p.m., in celebration of National Air Mail Week, about 240 letters from the residents of Mokena, Frankfort, and New Lenox are sent by airmail from a temporary air field south of the C.H. Warning farm located on Rt. 30 just east of Wolf Road.
- The Frankfort-Mokena Unit of Will County Homemakers Extension Association is organized.
- The Civic Association is organized. They sponsor the first village homecoming celebration and many that follow. They are also sponsors of the Boy Scouts and the Community Park project.

1939

- World War II begins in Europe on September 1st (1939 – 1945).
- The first book club is formed. The club begins to purchase recommended books for what would become the Mokena Library. One of the first locations of this community library was in one room of the private residence of what is now 11124 Front St. It was staffed by volunteer members of the club and the heat and rent were paid through the courtesy of the local Lions Club.
- The Mokena Garden Club erects a flagpole in the old Denny Cemetery on Wolf Road. It is officially renamed Pioneer Memorial Cemetery. Shortly thereafter, the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicate a new granite marker over the grave of Charles Denny.

1940

- Mokena's population is 657.
- On Sunday, May 19th there is a gasoline range explosion at the Nelson home. Francis Nelson, 45, along with her son, Raymond, 24, are killed at the scene. Francis's other son, Russell, 19, dies within days. To date, this fire caused the most fatalities on record.
- Will County's population is 114,210.

1941

- Japanese attack Pearl Harbor on December 7th resulting in the deaths of 2,403. In the next 4 years 125 men and women with Mokena mailing addresses enter military service.

1942

- The Woman's Service Club is formed by the mothers, wives, and sisters of the men in the Armed Forces.
- Woodland Circle Subdivision is established and lots are sold by the Bartlett Company. The Mokena Men's Club dance pavilion was formerly located here.

1943

- Lt. Oliver S. Lauffer of Mokena is lost with his plane over the North Sea. He was returning from a bombing run over Hannover, Germany.
- The girls' 4H group known as the Jolly Troopers is formed. It later became known as the Busy Hour Club.

1944

- Lt. Berle Needham is killed in action at Brest, France.
- In Spring the two-year high school program is discontinued. Most students choose to attend either Joliet Township or Blue Island High Schools.
- September. Automatic gates are installed at the Mokena Street and Wolf Road railroad crossings. This is much needed protection as both crossing are unprotected during the night hours since flagmen are only on duty during the day time.

1945

- On April 18th Everett J. Cooper is elected mayor.
- The fire department reorganizes and is renamed the Mokena Community Volunteer Fire Department.
- The fire department purchases a new Ford pumper truck for \$4,967.
- World War II ends on September 2nd.

1946

- Bartlett's Sunny Acres Subdivision is established northwest of the village along Wolf Road in unincorporated Frankfort Township.

1947

- Mineral Springs Subdivision is annexed to village. Its location is between Denny St. and LaPorte Road with McGovney's farm to the east and Center St. to the west. The original artesian well made famous by the Mokena Mineral Spring Water Company, is located in the subdivision.

1948

- The V.F.W., originally from Lincoln Estates in Frankfort Township, relocates and constructs a hall at what is now 19852 Wolf Road.

1949

- On April 22nd Harold Spiess is elected mayor.
- A new train depot is completed on the south side of the tracks in April. The railroad sold the old depot to Howard M. Frogge, an agent-operator for the Chicago Rock Island since 1926. Mr. Frogge relocates the building, by railroad and truck, to a bluff overlooking the Illinois River in Spring Valley. With some renovations Howard plans to pattern the building after a California ranch type home where he and his wife will reside.

1950

- Mokena's population is 903.
- Will County's population is 134,336.
- The Businessmen's Association is formed.
- Henry Clark forms the first Little League Team.
- The Korean War begins (1950 – 1953). Several Mokena boys serve in the conflict.

1951

- Amvets Post 183 is organized.
- Carpenter Street School gets an addition at the cost of \$52,000.
- Lincoln-Way High School District is organized by voters residing in a 90-mile square area.

1952

- The Mokena Lions Club is organized.

1953

- On April 22nd John Scarth is elected mayor.
- On July 14th, Corporal Richard G. Kreml of Mokena is reported missing in action and presumed dead after fighting near Kumsong, North Korea.
- The Korea conflict ends in a stalemate in July.

1954

- Parkview Baptist Church is organized.
- Kohlwood, Brightwood and Duncan Subdivisions are established in unincorporated Mokena.
- Lincoln-Way High School, located on Route 30, opens with 290 students.
- St. Mary's parish has 50 registered families.
- The Methodist Church construct a large new chapel attached to the east side of their existing sanctuary. The former sanctuary is converted into a Sunday school and fellowship hall.

1955

- Glennell Heights Subdivision is established.

1956

- The Parkview Baptist Church is built.
- The current Mokena School Band begins. Glenn Myers teaches both band and choir before school hours.

1957

- Willowcrest School opens its doors in January. It is completed at a cost of \$90,000.
- On April 17th James Marti is elected mayor.
- The Businessmen's Association is renamed to the Chamber of Commerce.
- With the merger of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian churches, St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church changes its name to St. John's United Church of Christ.

1958

- Dick McGovney passes away at age of 96. He had lived in Mokena's original jail for over 4 decades.

1959

- Mokena's population is 1,083.
- The Mokena Park District is formed with a 28-acre parcel located on LaPorte Road donated by the Mokena Civic Association.
- The sewer treatment plant is completed at 19004 Wolf Road.
- Willowcrest School gets an additional 6 rooms at the cost of \$84,000.

1960

- Mokena's population reaches 1,332.
- Will County's population is 191,617.
- A second Mokena Women's Club is started with the purpose of promoting worthy causes, such as sponsoring a non-profit kindergarten.
- A new firehouse is completed at 10907 Front St.
- St. John's Church new education wing is dedicated.
- Futuristic Homes, Inc. of Chicago obtains 135 residential permits for \$1.5 million worth of proposed construction for the new Arbury Hills subdivision. It is located on the east side of US Rt. 45 just south of 191st St. in unincorporated Frankfort Township. The builders plan to eventually build 1,000 new homes.

1961

- On April 19th Charles J. Swanberg is elected mayor.
- On May 13th the first free standing post office is dedicated. It is located at 11134 Front St.

1962

- On July 19th an election is held and the creation of the Mokena Fire Protection District is passed almost unanimously.
- A new Garden Club is formed.
- Mokena changes its street addresses to coincide with the Chicago grid system.

1963

- Mokena's population is 1100.
- Five acres of land at 10901 W. LaPorte Road are purchased for the site of a new Methodist church at the cost of \$12,500.
- Mokena Grade School District 159 purchases its first bus. This action was needed as both the Weitendorf School and the Marley School Districts are dissolved adding more students. Most of these students are not within practical commuting distance to the Mokena schools.

1964

- Mokena Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary is formed.
- Mokena Keenettes 4-H Club is organized.
- Lincoln-Way High School Board of Education purchases additional school site north of Frankfort on Colorado.
- Willowcrest School gets an addition, which includes a kitchen and a gymnasium with a stage.

1965

- On April 22nd Eric Book is elected mayor.
- U.S. combat units are deployed in Vietnam. Military involvement continues until August 15, 1973.

1966

- The former Women's Book Club, which was originally formed in 1939, becomes the "Friends of the Library" organization. Its purpose is to support the operations of the library through volunteers.
- On August 6th, a tax-supported Mokena Library District is created by a referendum.
- In September a staffed library, located in the basement of the old Lutheran church, located on the west side of Union St. at Cross St., opens and is connected to the Burr Oak Library System. It contains about 12,000 volumes on shelves and racks donated by the Mokena Pharmacy. This location is currently the parking lot of St. John's Church.
- A tornado skirts the village to the north and west in November missing the downtown area but completely destroying a house in the Arby Hills subdivision south of 187th Street.

1967

- Willowcrest School gets an addition.
- On April 23rd an open house is held for the Mokena Public Library.

1968

- Corp. Robert L. Stanek of Mokena, is killed in South Vietnam.
- Interstate 80 is opened along the village's north boundary.
- Mokena's 8th grade basketball team, coached by Richard Quinn, finishes the season with a perfect 23 - 0 record winning 2 major tournaments.
- A new elementary school is completed just north of Willowcrest at a cost of \$250,000.

1969

- On April 16th William T. Tuttle is elected mayor.

1970

- Mokena's population is 1,643.
- Will County's population is 249,498.
- Brightwood Subdivision is annexed to village.
- The Klic Klacs 4-H Club is organized.

1971

- Mokena, Frankfort, and New Lenox join together to establish the Lincoln Way Police Communication Center.
- A 24-hour police patrol is put into effect.

1972

- In August the Mokena Public Library acquires 2½ acres of property on 195th from the Mokena School District.
- Boyer's Vista Heights, Parkview Acres, and Istel Subdivisions are established.

1973

- Senior Citizen's Club is formed.
- Mokena's original jail, built in 1881, and converted into Dick McGovney's home in 1916 until 1958, is relocated to Lockport by the Will County Historical Society.

1974

- Willowcrest Elementary School gets an addition at a cost of \$642,000.
- Mokena Volunteer Fire Department purchases a rescue vehicle.
- The Post Office initiates motorized mail delivery. Residents were not required to take home delivery.

1975

- Mokena School District passes a \$477,000 bond issue to build a junior high school on 195th St.
- Mokena's first specially trained rescue squad is formed.
- The new Mokena Elementary School just north of Willowcrest School opens.
- The Mokena Independent Baptist Church is organized by 14 adults.

1976

- Mokena's population is 2,210.
- Carpenter Street School is sold to the village for a municipal building.
- Ordman's supermarket, located at 19906 Wolf Road, is partially gutted by fire. Ordman's moves and rebuilds renaming their store to "Park & Shop" which later becomes "Berkots."
- Tomahawk Trails and Plattner Subdivisions are established.
- The Mokena Police Department has 4 full-time officers, 6 part-time officers, 10 auxiliary, and 3 squad cars.
- The village celebrates the country's Bicentennial with the presentation, "Glimpse into the Past."

1977

- On April 25th Robert L. Teske is elected mayor.
- The Lincoln-Way High School Freshman/Sophomore building is opened on Colorado Street in Frankfort.

1978

- Mokena Jr. High School located on 195th St. is completed and dedicated.
- A ribbon cutting ceremony is held on June 4th for the new Mokena Public Library on 195th St. The building measures 7,000 square feet and contains approximately 26,750 books.
- Green Meadows Subdivision Unit 1 located south of the RI tracks on Schoolhouse Road is established.

1979

- Mayor Robert L. Teske takes a Leave of Absence on April 14th. Richard Quinn is appointed pro-tem April 14th – May 27th.
- Mokena gets its first stop light, which is located at 191st and US 45.
- Marilyn Estates Subdivision is established and annexed to the village. It is located about ½ mile south of Rt. 30 on Wolf Road.

1980

- Mokena's population is 4,578.
- Will County's population is 324,460.
- Elementary Dist. 159 enrollment is 1,055.
- A new municipal water tower is completed and dedicated It is located, at the west end of Bonness Ave. behind the current fire house on Wolf Road.
- St. John's Christian Preschool begins.
- St. John's Church rebuilt pipe organ is dedicated.
- The Mokena United Methodist Church, located at 10901 W. LaPorte Road, is constructed.
- Mokena celebrates its 100th Anniversary of Incorporation with numerous activities. On July 2nd the *Mokena Centennial Players* present "Save Us Again, Sam", a musical comedy by Allen D. Palmer. The performance is held at the Willowcrest Gymnasium.
- Delbert Yunker becomes Mokena's first full-time paid fire chief.

1981

- On April 13th Richard T. Quinn is elected mayor.
- The original Mokena United Methodist Church, built in 1867, is sold to St. John's United Church of Christ, which uses the building as a hall.
- On June 13th Mokena and the surrounding area experiences one of the biggest floods in its history. No damage amount is known in Mokena but reportedly \$16 million in Joliet. It is referred to as a 100-year rainfall.
- By November Community Cable Vision completes the laying of 36 miles of underground cable in the village. Customers begin signing up shortly thereafter.

1982

- The first Mokena Area Historical Society is formed.
- Mokena beats out nine other communities in its population category to win the *Governor's Hometown Award*. A plaque commemorating the accomplishment is presented by Governor James Thompson in a ceremony in Springfield.

1983

- On April 25th Mayor Richard Quinn resigns and on the same day Michael Everett is appointed to fill term.
- The Tri-village 911 emergency phone system goes on-line on April 10th.
- On April 12th voters approve a \$1 million referendum to pay for the village's share of the cost of a new waste water treatment facility that was eventually completed on West 191st Street.
- Deerbrook Subdivision is established.

1984

- Mokena's original 86 year-old water tower is dismantled.
- Pioneer Meadows Subdivision is established.

1985

- On April 8th Michael D. Everett is elected mayor.

1986

- Mokena's population is 4,959.
- Weber Wills #4 & #6 Subdivisions are established.

1987

- The new waste water treatment facility on west 191st Street is completed. The original treatment facility located on Wolf Road, which was opened in 1959, is no longer used.
- On March 29th the new Mokena Post Office at 19934 Wolf Road is dedicated.
- Creekview and Old Castle Woods Subdivisions are established.
- In November a referendum is passed to create an ambulance service.

1988

- In June Mokena Fire District hires 6 full-time fire fighter/paramedics to work 24/48 hour shifts.
- The original section of Countryview Estates, Avenue, John Lee Ridge, Barrington (Weber Wills #5), and Marley Creek Subdivisions are established.

1989

- On April 17th Ron Grotovsky is elected mayor.
- Elementary School Dist. 159 enrollment is 1,063.
- Stonegate Subdivision is established.

1990

- Mokena's population is 6,128.
- Population of Will County is 337,313.
- Grasmere, Emerald, and Saint Mark Subdivisions are established.

1991

- Krisview, Sarkis Estates, and Sandrock Ridge Subdivisions are established.

1992

- Completed construction of 750,000-gallon water tower located on 191st east of U.S. 45.
- Townhome Units in Grasmere (Cambridge Place) and Greenmeadows Addition (Weber's) Subdivisions are established.

1993

- Mokena's population is 8,450.
- The widening LaGrange Road to 4 lanes from 191st to Route 30 is completed.
- On April 4th a fire completely destroys the building at 11020 Front Street. It was inhabited by the G.B. Feld Company at the time and had previously been the home of the Cooper & Hostert Ford Agency.
- Townhome units in Grasmere (Lakeview I & II) and Prestancia Subdivisions are established.

1994

- Mokena's population is 10,058.
- The widening of LaPorte Road to 4 lanes from the “S” curve to U.S. Route 45 is completed.
- The new fire station at 19853 Wolf Road is completed.
- Townhome units in Prairie Crossing and Quails Crossing/McCarthy's, and Old Castle Woods South Subdivision, are established.

1995

- The expansion of the Mokena Jr. High on 195th St. is completed. A second gym and additional classrooms are added.
- Mokena Police Department moves to their new police station at 10907 Front St., which was the former fire department headquarters.
- An addition to Mokena's Village Hall on Carpenter Street is completed.
- The citizens of Mokena pass a referendum in April approving \$3.4 million for the building of an addition to the Mokena Public Library.
- Townhome units in Burnside Station, Country Pond, Creekview West, and Pine Grove Subdivisions are established.

1996

- Construction of new fire station at 10000 191st Street is completed.
- The Wolf Road project is completed. It is widened to 3 lanes through village.
- Tightwads Tavern located on the northeast corner of Wolf and LaPorte Roads, John's Church Annex on Second St., along with the homes along Midland Ave. and First St. are used in filming the horror movie, *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer, Part 2*. The movie is directed by Chuck Parello and released on Oct. 1st.
- Townhome units in Grasmere (Willowalk Condos), Tall Grass, and Tara Hills I & II Subdivisions are established.

1997

- On April 14th Robert Chiszar is elected mayor.
- Downtown revitalization begins.
- The Mokena Park District purchases the 110-acre McGovney-Yunker Farmstead from Edwin Yunker. Edwin helped form the Park District in 1959.
- On April 13th, the expanded and renovated Mokena Public Library is officially dedicated. The new structure is 25,000 square feet.
- Townhome units in Hamilton Crossing, and Barrington Square Addition Subdivision are established.

1998

- Mokena's population is 12,613.
- The widening of 191st St. from U.S. Route 45 to Harlem Ave. begins.
- Duplexes in Old Castle Woods South Subdivision is established.

1999

- St. John's Church Hall, which was the original Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1867, is demolished. St. John's begins construction of their Christian Community Center.
- Forestview Subdivision is established.
- On December 31st Mokena brings in the new millennium with a town celebration held at the Mokena Junior High School, known today at Mokena Intermediate School, located on 195th St.

2000

- Mokena's population is 14,583.
- Population of Will County is 502,266.
- Elementary Dist. 159 enrollment is 2,267.
- A referendum is approved that will bring Lake Michigan water to Mokena.
- St. John's Christian Community Center is dedicated. It is located at 11046 Second St.
- White Pines Subdivision is established.
- Mokena Area Historical Society is reestablished.

2001

- The “Streetscape” project is completed on Front St. This includes the replacement of underground utilities that had dated back to the early 1900’s.
- On September 11th a series of coordinated suicide attacks by al-Qaeda are launched on U.S. soil resulting in the loss of 2,977 lives. Mokena firefighters, Mark Seliga and Pete Tomczak, travel to New York to help with the emergency efforts at Ground Zero. In response to the attack of 9/11 an international military campaign against terrorism is led by the U.S. and the United Kingdom with the support of other NATO and non-NATO countries. Numerous men and women from the area enter the military to fight for our cause. To date the *War on Terrorism* continues, which marks the longest war in U.S. history.
- Blackthorne and Crystal Creek Subdivisions are established.

2002

- Lake Michigan Water is delivered to Mokena residents.
- A new Mokena newspaper, *Independent News*, is started by local journalist, Robert H. Baker. It is in print for 3 years.
- Townhome units in Grasmere (Grasmere Meadows), Ronspies, Highland Sub/Manchester, Woodhaven, and Tara Hills III & IV Subdivisions are established.

2003

- Townhome units in Jeny Glenn, Old Mill Pond, and Sunset Lakes Subdivisions are established.

2004

- The old Wallpaper/Dairy/Brewery building, located at 19806 Wolf Road just south of the tracks, is torn down and replaced by a 4-story mixed-use building with 24 condominiums above 8 retail spaces.
- Townhome units in Boulder Ridge & Marley Creek Addition, Marley Creek Addition, Boulder Ridge, The Oaks Subdivisions are established.

2005

- On April 25th Joseph Werner is elected mayor.
- Berkots begins the expansion and renovation to their supermarket at 20005 S. Wolf Road.
- Bridges of Mokena, Prairie Ridge, Foxborough, and Country View West Subdivisions are established.

2006

- The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead on LaPorte Road is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Savannah Landing's and Whisper Creek Subdivisions are established.

2007

- Parts of Mokena are used in the making of the movie, *Berrymore's Dream*, by Writer/Director, Robert Alaniz. The thriller is released the same year.

2008

- The 55-acre, *Mokena Marketplace*, opens at the southwest corner of Wolf road and U.S. Route 30. JC Penny is the anchor store.

2009

- Mokena's population is 18,700.
- A Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) is approved for downtown Mokena.
- Parts of Mokena are used in the making of the movie, *The Vision*, by Writer/Director, Robert Alaniz. The thriller is released the same year.

2010

- Mokena's population reaches 18,740.
- Will County population is 677,560. U. S. Census show Will County leads the state in population growth.
- Mokena School District 159 asks voters to approve a proposed property tax rate increase to help alleviate a \$2.7 million budget deficit. The referendum is defeated.

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MOKENA BY DEFINITION

Legend has it that "Mokena" was a great Indian chief. Others say it was a name of an Indian Princess who enthralled the early white settlers with her beauty and charm. What we do know is the word is Algonquin for "turtle." The Kankakee translation is "mud hole."

In 1878 a Will County historian described Mokena as "A neat and tasty little town." During WWII Mokena, with its beauty and serenity, was perceived as a "peaceful valley in a maelstrom of world-wide disorder."

Today Mokena is recognized for its small-town historic atmosphere. A friendly community which strives to preserve its past and at the same time invests for its future.