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CHASKA HERALD

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PHOTOS BY AMY FELEGY

Founding member Tracy Swanson conducts research at the Chaska Historical Society behind the current display.

CLICKING THROUGH HISTORY

Virtual exhibit answers 'Why Chaska?'

BY AMY FELEGY
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Lights on, doors closed, learning engaged.

That's the Chaska Historical Society's motto these days with its ready-to-go exhibit and volunteers, but no visitors.

Though COVID put a stop to exhibit-goers, the "Why Chaska?" show itself went on.

It's set up on Fourth Street with display boards and pictures, artifacts and plain-old-facts, as it has been in the past. However, now people can see it all on the society's website, where its first major online exhibit lives.

They can scroll through videos and demonstrations, or as the local historians say, "stories from the present and the past coming to Chaska from across the Twin Cities, the state, the country and the world!"

WHY THE 'WHY CHASKA' EXHIBIT?

Every year there's usually an exhibit.



A pioneer outfit made by volunteer Jeanette McGillicuddy sits in the Chaska Historical Society.

It typically lasts for, say, six months and includes the yearly Christmas display, "followed by a minor combination of archived, quirky things," said Chaska Historical Society President Lisa Oberski.

This year, two things have changed. There won't be a Christmas exhibit. And the current "Why Chaska?" physical exhibit (not yet open to the public) will

be standing for at least a couple of years.

The idea for "Why Chaska," which focuses on the influx of immigrants and settlers to the area, was born this past winter. People threw out theme ideas, threw in others. The end project was a compilation of them all.

Partially, the idea stemmed from a recent library-sponsored project that invited recent immigrants to share their stories. (Oberski said the public will hear those stories as part of the exhibit.)

So the committee nailed down the topic, volunteers pursued it, and eight months later it was video-ready.

With the help of Ellen Goodrich, local video guru and law student, volunteers and members were filmed for the website's YouTube series. She edited the video and added captions for the final touches.

"We were thinking it was just going to be a couple of videos. It turned out to be 10," Oberski said.

Historical topics include the Jonathan

History to 5 ►



PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF CHASKA

A 164,000-square-foot Costco store could come to Chaska in the spring. An application is expected to be submitted in the fall.

Costco may be coming

BY AMY FELEGY
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A Costco may come to Chaska next spring, located east of Lake Jonathan, off of Highway 41, according to developer Robert Atkinson with Atkinson Investments.

"It's all going forward," he said, noting construction could begin as soon as spring 2021 at the site.

The 164,000-square-foot retail building would sit on 17 acres, Atkinson said. It would include a parking lot and gas station.

Kevin Ringwald, Chaska's planning and development director, said Oak Ridge Hotel & Conference Center has made an application for redevelopment, which includes the Costco. Nothing is official yet.

"As we have just received the application, we are still in the process of reviewing the application and understanding the potential impacts of the project as proposed," Ringwald said.

In the same area would be senior living homes, a hotel, and 56 acres of future

Costco to 5 ►

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