

# Twenty divine years for Angel Museum

By Jason Francis  
Special to the Lakes Edition

While there really is no such thing as heaven on earth, this Beloit museum, which is celebrating its 20th year in operation in 2018, comes close.

The Angel Museum, located quite appropriately on Pleasant Avenue, features more than 11,000 angels and angel artifacts on display in bright, inspiring glory.

Created to showcase Joyce and Lowell Berg's massive, angelic collection, the museum is one of Beloit's most popular tourist attractions. All told, more than 185,000 regional, national and international visitors have headed "towards the light" of the museum over the past two decades.

Angels on exhibit range in

size from 1/8 inch to life size made from more than 100 different materials from fine porcelain to macaroni. The artisans and crafters with items on display at the museum represent more than 60 countries.

A special feature of the museum is an exhibit featuring more than 600 "Black Angels" donated by superstar media personality Oprah Winfrey. Also on display are original stained glass windows and lanterns showcasing the pre-Renaissance architecture typical of churches in small Italian villages.

The site of the Angel Museum was first chartered by the Diocese of Milwaukee to St. Paul's Catholic Church as a mission to serve Italian immigrants in the Beloit, Wisconsin area.

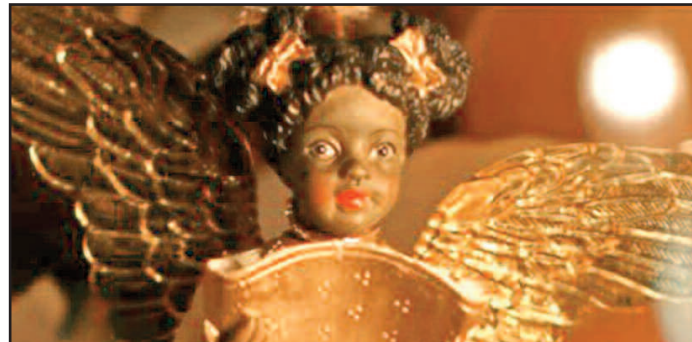
The idea of an Angel Mu-

seum began when husband and wife angel collectors Joyce and Lowell Berg wanted to find a home for their extensive angel collection. At the same time, former parishioners of St. Paul's Catholic Church wanted to find a good use for the historic facility so it wouldn't be torn down.

It took more than 15,000 volunteer hours by individuals and service organizations along with City Block Grant Funds to renovate the building. The Angel Museum officially opened on May 1, 1998.

When asked why she wanted an Angel Museum, Joyce simply said, "I want to see a place in Beloit where goodness prevails and I can share my angels with the masses."

The museum, the only one of its kind in America and pos-



One of the angels from the Oprah Winfrey-donated "Black Angels" collection on display at the Angel Museum. (Photo from www.angelmuseum.org)

sibly the world, has received many accolades and considerable press coverage over the years.

In 2001, the Berg Angel Collection was verified and documented by the Guinness Book of World Records as being the world's largest angel collections.

Last year, the museum was featured on a Beloit-themed episode of Emmy Award-win-

ning host John McGivern's PBS program, "Around the Corner." The program can be viewed on YouTube.

Museum hours are Thursday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The museum also features a gift shop and hosts banquets, receptions and parties in its banquet room landscaped gardens.

For more info, visit [www.angelmuseum.org](http://www.angelmuseum.org).

# Main Street Monroe concert series kicks off June 7

Submitted by Green County Tourism

Drummers drumming, pipers piping, and mascots dancing. And that's just intermission. Main Street Monroe is bringing in a top-notch lineup of talent for the 2018 Concerts on the Square series. Below is the schedule.

•Thursday, June 7: "Smile – You're in Cheese Country"

Bella Cain kicks things off with high-energy top country hits. This band has shared the stage with Nashville legends Brad Paisley, Miranda Lambert and Little Big Town. The Cheese Days Ambass-

ador and Green County Fairest of the Fair will share cheese samples with the audience to celebrate June Dairy month and the local cheese industry.

•Friday, June 22: "Mascot Night"

*The Mascot Theory* brings their high-energy, toe-tapping Americana folk-country rock to the Square for the second show of the season. In honor of the band's name, Main Street Monroe has invited some mascots to join the fun.

•Friday, July 13: "Space Landing 2018"

The band *Reloaded* will be rocking the Square – to infinity and beyond.

Audience members are invited to dress in costume (aliens, astronauts, etc.) to reflect the summer theme, and theme sponsors will be recognized on stage.

•Friday, July 27: "Mad for Plaid"

Pop singer/songwriter Gabe Burdulis plays the show. He's young, he's talented, and he's busy – with big gigs from New York to Chicago to Nashville. In honor of Bagpipe Appreciation Day, look for three pipers piping at intermission. Show your spirit by wearing anything plaid. Bonus points for kilts.

•Friday, Aug. 17:

"Dance Party"

Madison's favorite disco superstars are guaranteed to fill the floor for an epic dance party in downtown Monroe. The band *V05* has as much staying power as the hairspray they were named after. Get ready to shake your booty for a throwback to the 70s. Kids are invited to wear princess or super hero costumes in conjunction with Monroe Park and Rec's "Princesses Have Landed on the Square" event.

All shows run from 6:30-9 p.m. A variety of food booths will be available, and the Main Street Beer Garden will be open for business.

But there's more! A special bonus concert is also planned for 2018. Join friends and neighbors on Thursday, Sept. 13, for a "Community Night" kick-off to the Cheese Days Festival. *Cookie and the Real Deal* will funk it up on the main stage on the south side of the Square from 6-9 p.m. The Cheese Days Beer Stand and select food vendors will be open.

For the latest updates follow Downtown Monroe Events and News on Facebook, and for more information about the concert series or Main Street Monroe, visit [MainStreetMonroe.org](http://MainStreetMonroe.org).



Main Street Monroe's Concerts on the Square series kicks off June 7, and Dave Mosher and his granddaughter Julia Keehn will be there to dance. Theme nights, special guests and a variety of musical genres will be showcased. (Submitted photo)



# Moments in Time: Beloit's Club Pop House

This collage of images and corresponding text (sometimes edited) from Club Pop House's past are from the book, "Images of America: Beloit's Club Pop House," by Joseph J. Accardi. These photos represent but a small sampling of the offerings of the book, which is part of Arcadia Publishing's "Images of America" series. Visit [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com) for more information.

**Introduction:** In the 1940s-



60s, Club Pop House was a teen gathering spot like no other. Friday and Saturday nights were reserved for record jams, dancing and live music performed by countless bands and solo acts. Food, sports and special events rounded out the activities. The club's founder and proprietor, Russell Stankewitz, a Beloit native, was a friend, father figure and sometimes boss to hundreds of Beloit teens.

1. Of all the national acts that appeared at the Pop House, Stankewitz would say years later that Bobby Vinton (left) was the finest entertainer among them. (Photo from Pop House collection)

2. A lunch counter and kitchen was added to the Pop House in 1946 following Stankewitz's return from serving in the U.S. Army. (Photo from Pop House collection by I.R. Andreoni)

3. Parade queen Linda Walsh throws out the first ball to kick off the opening game of the 1971 Club Pop House Slow-Pitch League. (Photo from Pop House collection)

4. Annual chili festivals always proved to be can't-miss events at

the Pop House. Here, Stankewitz, in his customary sombrero, presents the first bowl to 1963 chili queen Maureen Griffin. (Photo from Pop House collection)

5. Beloit radio personality Bob Gregory reveals who will be queen for one of the chili festivals. (Photo from Pop House collection)

6. One of the highlights of a 1956 variety show was an Elvis impersonator. (Photo from Pop House collection)

