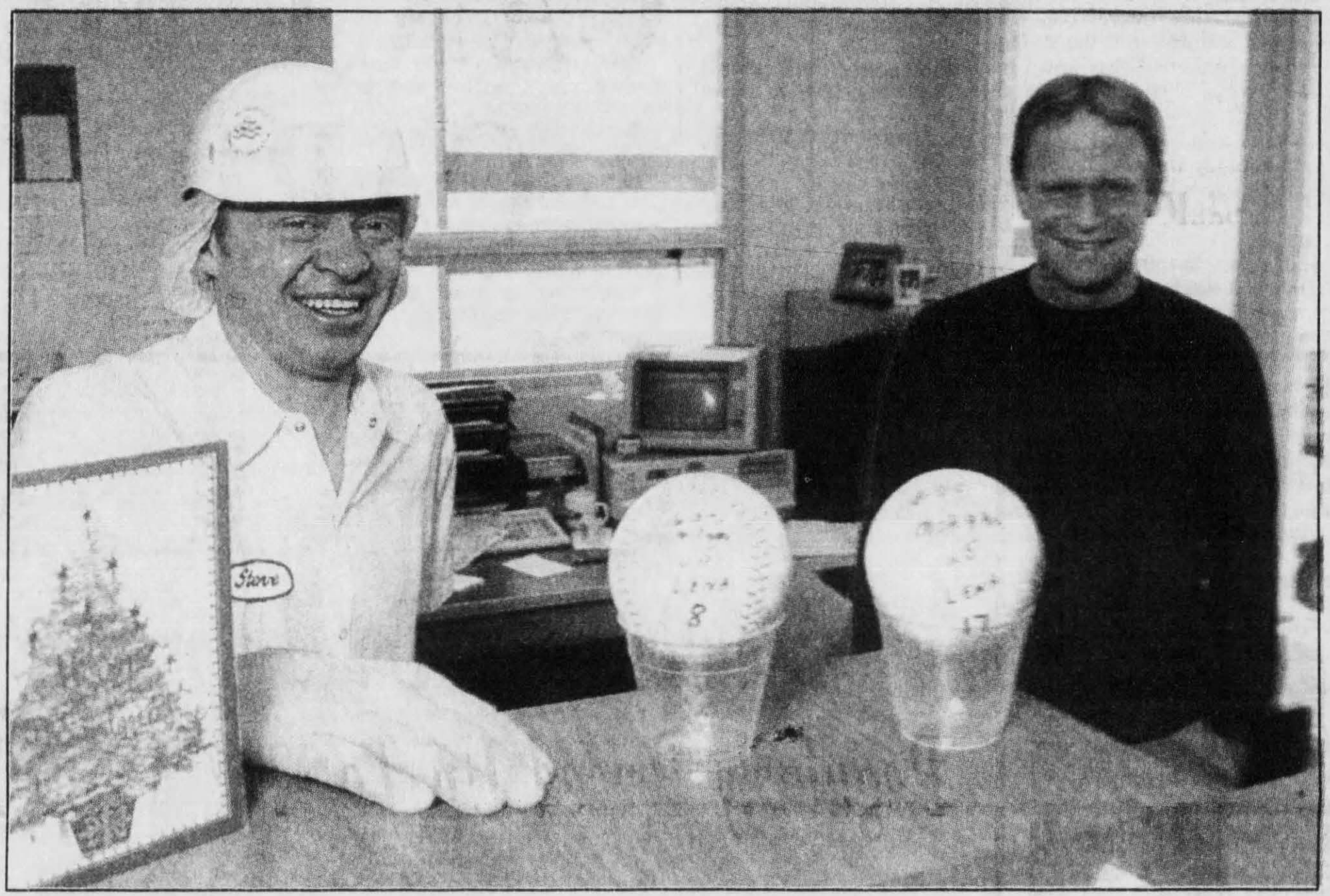
This week's community profile: Morgan



Batter up: Steve and Chuck Krause of Frigo Cheese in Morgan show off the two softballs the plant's team took home after winning games against Frigo's Lena plant the last two years.

They like their pumpkins raw

By Kathleen McGillis
Press-Gazette

MORGAN — An annual raw pumpkin-eating party may someday put this Oconto County crossroads on the map.

But its friendly residents, cheese-making heritage and active 4-H club are just as notable.

Press-Gazette photos by John Roemer

The unusual pumpkin event began in 1989, when someone on a dare took a bite out of a pumpkin decorating the Fox Den tavern around Halloween, said Chuck Krause, production manager at the Frigo Cheese plant in Morgan.

Last fall, 40 people gathered at another area bar on the designated party day, armed with flavorings such as fondue, Worcestershire sauce, and salt and pepper.

C. Salnik
Runs Fox Den tavern

"It's really unique," said Steve Krause, Chuck's brother and Frigo plant manager.

To stay at the party, each person must eat at least a bite of raw pumpkin.

"We've had a lot of people say, 'These aren't bad,'" Steve said of the pumpkin taste.

During the rest of the year, the community takes pride in other aspects of their town, located where Oconto County C crosses S, about 28 miles north of Green Bay.

Signs of hometown warmth and spirit abound. Family photographs sit on the back bar at the Fox Den, Route 2, Oconto Falls.

The small bar offers a varied menu that includes burgers made of buffalo meat from an area farm, filetted smelt and homemade green chili, dill pickles and scalloped potatoes.

"We're still surviving and a lot aren't, so we must be doing something right," said Charlotte Salnik. She and her husband Ronald bought the business in 1979 and bought kitchen equipment.

Why in Morgan? Ronald grew up about a mile from the crossroads, and Charlotte is a native of nearby Krakow.

The two softballs displayed on the counter at Morgan's Frigo Cheese plant, 3343 County C, Oconto Falls, are trophies of two trompings (25-8 and 25-17) of the team at Frigo's Lena plant. Chuck Krause noted the Lena plant has 200 potential players to draw from, compared with 30 at the Morgan plant.

Attendance at St. John Lutheran Church, 3374 County C, Oconto Falls, on Christmas Eve was 388. Henry Wolf, who was town clerk for 28 years, spoke proudly of this and the fact that the church has its own pastor.

The Morgan Badger 4-H flag that flies on the lawn of longtime Town Chairman Adolph Schindel, 3309 County C, Oconto Falls is another symbol of community pride. The group, led by Dolores Schroeder for the last 25 years, has 19 members this year.

Like many other community residents, Schindel has lived here for nearly 30 years and has held office for 22½ years.

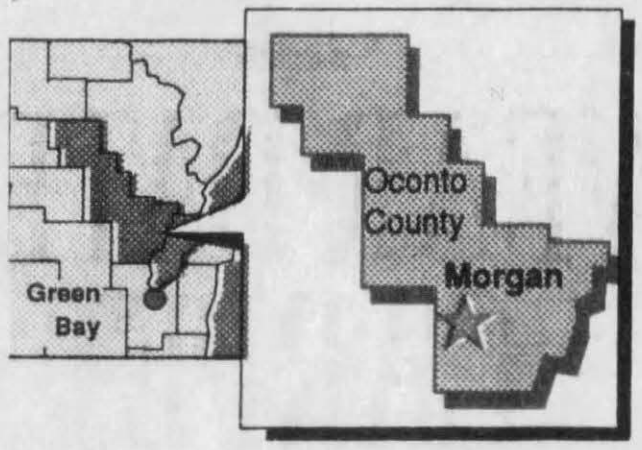
The town's first farm was the 200-acre Schroeder homestead settled in 1877, and several Schroeder families still live in the immediate area, some in the houses in which they were born.

"It's a very cooperative, helpful community," said Fred Schroeder, 3314 County C, a corn seed dealer. "We are quite lucky to be living in such a community."

When he had serious surgery last year, neighbors helped out by plowing 48 acres and planting corn and a garden for Schroeder and his wife Helen.

The town had two dairies through the 1980s, Krause Dairy and the Morgan Dairy Cooperative. Frigo bought the Krause plant in 1988. The co-op closed the same year and is now the site of two automotive businesses.

■ **Next week:** Briarton in Shawano County



The Morgan file

☐ **Population:** About 30.
☐ **Claim to fame:** A 300-pound cheese served at former President Jimmy Carter's Veterans Inaugural Party was made at the former Krause Dairy Corp., now part of Frigo Cheese.
☐ **Log schoolhouse:** The community's first schoolhouse, built of logs, still stands in a field at the crossroads. Students attend school in Oconto Falls, about seven miles away.

At the woodpile: Morgan Town Chairman Adolph Schindel hauls logs to fuel his wood stove.

Cozy kitchen: Fred Schroeder reflects on life in Morgan as his wife Helen washes the dishes.