

# The Gazette

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# 19 PEOPLE for 19 DECADES



PHOTO COURTESY ROCK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Parker Pen operated out of this office at Court and Division streets from 1920 to 1953.

## LOCAL

SHINE, Northstar  
CEOs: Nuclear  
medicine is the  
future  
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## STATE

Democrat  
Francesca Hong  
joins governor's  
race  
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## SPORTS

Evansville travels  
to Jefferson  
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## TODAY'S WEATHER

HIGH LOW

**88** | **62**

Very warm with  
periods of sun  
**More on A24**

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(MAILING LABEL ONLY)

Starting Thursday, Aug. 14, and continuing each Thursday through Dec. 18, The Gazette is celebrating its 180th birthday by taking a decade by decade look at the people who have most shaped Janesville history.

We'll share the stories of 19 people — 1 person for each of the 19 decades that The Gazette has touched since it began publishing, from the 1840s to the 2020s.

When we sat down to choose 19 honorees, we knew it wouldn't be easy. Every decade produced more than one person who made an outsized difference.

Ultimately, we picked for this honor people who made such a lasting impact

in a particular decade, that their accomplishment continues to locally reverberate today.

For the most recent decades, we considered how a person's accomplishments might continue to ripple far into the future. We considered that a person could accomplish great things — in fact, could become quite famous — but not benefit Janesville's long-term course much, or at all.

The 19 people we've chosen have been business and labor leaders, community organizers, advocates, elected officials, supporters of the arts and artists themselves.

When all 19 stories have run in The Gazette, we'll be compiling them into a booklet. That booklet will offer more stories about others who have made important contributions, as well, to Janesville. It will be available in print and through our website, gazettextra.com

But these first 19 are the pinnacle, who most carried Janesville from its founding as a small settlement along the Rock River, to the prosperous modern city it became.

1890s

## George S. Parker

STAN MILAM  
For The Gazette

For more than a century, Janesville was known worldwide as the home of the Parker Pen Company.

When a stranger asked a Janesville resident what the city was noted for, "Parker pens" was a good answer.

With thousands of employees working in Janesville and international distribution, Parker Pen set, throughout the 20th Century, the gold standard for fine writing instruments.

But what became the largest pen

manufacturer in the world developed from a humble start.

The company was incorporated in 1892, spurred by the individual efforts of founder George Safford Parker, and through his deep connections with people in the Janesville community who trusted — and financially backed — his vision.

George S. Parker officially launched his quest to make a better fountain pen in 1892, about four years after he came up with the idea for the business while living in a small apartment at the Myers House hotel at Main and Milwaukee streets in downtown Janesville.

More **PARKER** | **A6**



JANESVILLE GAZETTE FILE PHOTO  
Parker Pen Company founder George S. Parker.

## Executive director: Children's museum on track to open next year

GAZETTE STAFF

JANESVILLE — Construction is on scheduled at the site of the future Children's Museum of Rock County that's expected to open in late 2026, the museum's executive director said on Wednesday.

In a release, Kent Anderson said significant progress has been made since the groundbreaking in June at the site of the former First National Bank building, 100 W. Milwaukee St., to remake it as the children's museum.

More **MUSEUM** | **A2**