

**History\*:** When the first European settlers come to the region around 1835, they camped along the Kishwaukee River, now the center of Belvidere. The settlers decided to name the town Belvidere, for the Latin meaning of Belvidere is “beautiful to see”. By the mid to late 1800’s, Belvidere became an industrial hub. Commercial transportation began in 1851, the National Sewing Machine Company became the largest employer of the city around 1900, and the Green Giant Company came to town in 1911. Now, the Chrysler Corporation Belvidere Assembly Plant, General Mills, Dean Foods, Yang Feng Automotive Interiors, and Magna International all call Belvidere home, acting as large industrial employers to the area. In 1912, Belvidere was described by business woman Sarah Jones, “You can’t catch the real Belvidere with a camera- it’s the spirit of the real Belvidere which I like- the spirit shown by its schools and churches and friendly business firms, and manifested in the ideals of its people.” This same spirit is still displayed in Belvidere, through our rich history and our new beginnings.

*\*All history is cited from resources at the Boone County Historical Museum.*

Moorhead, Virginia B, editor. *Boone County Then and Now*. Boone County Bicentennial Commission. Belvidere, Illinois, 1976.