

SPRING 2014



**THE
LINCOLN-
TALLMAN
FUN DASH
IS BACK!**



UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS!



**ROOTS IN
ROCK CO.:
BASICS
COOPERATIVE**



**VISIT
BECKMAN MILL**

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3. Roots in Rock County: Basics
- 4. A Holiday Tour of Italy Recap
- 5. What's Happening this Spring?
- 6. Created Equal
- 6. Sneak a Peak at Behind the Scenes Night
- 7. 2014 Annual Meeting
- 8. Francis Willard School Opens its Doors for Spring
- 8. Find your Historic Photograph at the RCHS Archives!
- 9. Are you Ready to Run? Lincoln-Tallman 5k/10k is Back!
- 10. Explore Rock County: Beckman Mill
- 10. Green Your Membership
- 11. From Our Store
- 11. Collections Corner: A Truly Royal Tale
- 11. New Archives Up and Running!
- 12. Green Your Life with RCHS
- 13. Volunteer Spotlight: Mary Frei
- 13. Call to Volunteers
- 13. Our Spring 2014 Wishlist
- 14. Thank You to our Sponsors
- 14. Blast from the Past: Women's Fitness in the Victorian Era.

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN



As the Rock County Historical Society campus thaws out and winter turns to spring, we are all excited for the new greenery that will grow around us. It is interesting how the theme of nature and conservation is woven into our programs and events for 2014. Nature has always been present throughout the narrative of Rock County history and is visible to us in bountiful natural resources.

Our Spring 2014 edition of The Finial is ripe with stories and tidbits of "green" activities that you can employ at home and enjoy while visiting our campus! "Art in Nature" is the 2014 theme for the Tallman Arts Festival and we are excited to invite florists and agricultural groups to join us as vendors this year. Basics Cooperative, Janesville's original organic grocer is celebrated for their foresight in promoting environmental education and a healthy lifestyle.

Even our 2nd Annual Lincoln-Tallman Fun Dash 5K/10K Run will encourage our "Lincolns" to adopt healthy eating habits and give back to the environment.

Enjoy the issue and everything that "Green" has to offer.

See you on campus!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Reuter". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michael Reuter-
Executive Director



Roots in Rock County: Basics Cooperative

When you are able to say that your job is one that helps to better the world, you know you are doing something truly good. This is how I hope employees and owners of Basics Cooperative feel when they go to work in the morning. As an avid shopper of their natural, clean lotions, soaps and cosmetics, Basics has been part of my life for many years. Since your skin is your body's largest organ, I've grown to care what I put on it but with all of the long and scary chemical names on the backs of lotion bottles, it can be overwhelming to know where to start looking for what is truly good, clean, and natural. What a relief to know that, when you are shopping at Basics Cooperative, they are the ones doing the hard work and you can

shop confidently knowing that what you put on is something that is truly good for you.

Basics started in 1977 by two individuals, Peter Roang and Deb Ramsdell who had a vision of bringing Janesville residents something clean and natural products. This was a direct response to the growing use of artificial ingredients in our nation's food and the feeding of these artificial things to the animals that we will consume ourselves. In the beginning, Basics was a privately owned natural and local food store run by five or six employees. In these early years, a few locals knew its existence and it was housed in a 400 square foot building. Its products were primarily cheese and dry goods like teas, coffees and a small selection of vitamins.

Now, Basics has a true presence in the community. In 2005, Basics became a cooperative and by 2008, 2,350 Basics Co-op owner

households were supporting its cause, helping to better the food industry and having a say in what goes into the things that we put on our bodies and what we put in our mouths. What started off as a dream for two individuals became a force to be reckoned with as they lead the charge against artificial ingredients in our grocery stores.

Basics offers skin care products, vitamins, product, grains and other foods. They also offer free classes on how to save money and how to stay healthy by shopping green. For more information on Basics and what they offer for you, visit their website at basicshealth.com



Meghan Walker
Marketing Coordinator

Are you an Artist, Vendor, or Non-Profit?

If you are, we want you!! The Tallman Arts Festival celebrates its 57th year, the longest running arts festival in Wisconsin. If you are an artist, restaurant owner, food vendor, or non-profit and are interested in being part of the Tallman Arts Festival, please visit www.rchs.us/tallman-arts-festival for an application!

The Tallman Arts Festival attracts over 100 artists and food vendors as well as over 3,000 visitors annually! There is live music, great food, children's activities, a silent auction, famous pie auction, and a wonderful variety of different art to see. Come join in the fun with us this year on August 3rd!

Check out our Store!

The RCHS gift shop has a lot of great items for all members of the family! Come check out some of our best sellers:

- The Irish in Janesville book and DVD
- 125th Anniversary Limited Edition Parker Pen
- Children's Civil War era toys and games
- Cookbooks from Rock County, the Irish, the Germans, and the Norwegians
- And much more!

Our gift shop is open from 10 am- 4 pm, Monday through Friday until our Tour season begins on June 1. From June 1st until September 30th, we are also open Saturdays and Sundays!



A Night to Remember: Tallman for Two

This Valentine's Day, the Lincoln-Tallman House welcomed its second Valentine's Day diners in nearly 100 years. Graciously catered by The Armory and splendidly cooked by Chef Troy Cox, the winner—and the winner, Julie Unbehaun, and her husband, dined on roasted pumpkin soup, a tuna and watercress wedge salad drizzled with cucumber dressing, roasted pheasant, an Irish Cahill wedge cheese, and a goat cheese apple tart for dessert. Our warmest thanks to Mick Gilbertson at The Armory for prepping all of the dishes to perfection, Chef Troy Cox for his magic in the kitchen, Janesville Floral for the lovely Valentine's bouquet given to the winners, and the string trio led by Ruth Banwell for the enchanting music that brought the Lincoln-Tallman House back to life for our guests. Julie and her husband said they had never imagined they'd be enjoying Valentine's Day dinner alone in the Tallman's dining room. It was truly a night to remember.



RCHS is happy to announce that our food exhibit, Breadbasket: Seed to Spoon, will extend its exhibition until December 31, 2014. Explore the food heritage of Rock County from June 1st to September 20th and then from November 30th to December 31st all 7 days of the week from 9am to 4pm. To see admissions prices, please visit our website at www.rchs.us/exhibits.

Spring 2014 Events

March

7- Freedom Film Fest: The Abolitionists- 6:30 pm. View the entire film of “The Abolitionists” in the lower gallery of the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center! This event is free! Visit www.rchs.us for more details.

12- Created Equal #2- 6:30 pm- 8:30 pm. Watch excerpts from “Slavery by Another Name” and participate in discussion with Dr. Elizabeth Jozwiak. This event is held in the lower gallery of the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center located at 426 N. Jackson St. This event is free! Visit www.rchs.us for more details.

14- Freedom Film Fest: Slavery by Another Name- 6:30 pm. If you attended Created Equal and would like to see the rest of “Slavery by Another Name”, come to the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center to view the entire film. This event is free! Visit www.rchs.us for more details.

21- Freedom Film Fest: The Loving Story- 6:30 pm. View the entire film of “The Loving Story” in the lower gallery of the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center! This event is free! Visit www.rchs.us for more details.

22- VIP: Behind the Scenes (RCHS Members only): 7:00 pm- 9:00 pm. Come and find out what RCHS staff and volunteers do on a daily basis! You also get the rare change to go up into the cupola of the Lincoln-Tallman House! This event is free for RCHS members!

28- Freedom Film Fest: Freedom Riders- 6:30 pm. View the entire film of “Freedom Riders” in the lower gallery of the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center! This event is free! Visit www.rchs.us for more details.

April

5- Volunteer Fair: 12 pm-4 pm. RCHS would be nothing without the wonderful support from its volunteers. If you are interested in volunteerism, please come down to our campus to learn about the many opportunities that we have for you.

9- Created Equal #3: 6:30 pm- 8:30 pm. Watch the full film of “The Loving Story” and participate in discussion with Dr. David McKay. This event is held in the lower gallery of the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center located at 426 N. Jackson St. This event is free! Visit www.rchs.us for more details.

19- Easter Egg Hunt: 11 am- 12:30 pm. Bring your little ones to the Lincoln-Tallman House grounds for a

great day of Easter fun! There will be an egg hunt and prizes, a bunny on the porch for pictures, and much more! See www.rchs.us for more information.

23- Annual Meeting: 6 pm-9 pm. Come join us at the Armory and enjoy dinner, drinks, and a presentation from author and Janesville native Jesse J. Gant on how Wisconsin became a bicycle state.

28- The Francis Willard School Spring Classes
Open! April 28th-May 23rd. For information, contact Laurel Fant at rchsfant@gmail.com or 608-756-4509

May

11- Mother’s Day Tours of the Lincoln-Tallman House:
All mothers take tours of the Lincoln-Tallman House for free! Tours run from 10 am-4 pm, leaving every hour on the hour. The last tour will leave at 3 pm.

14- Created Equal #4: 6:30 pm- 9:30 pm. Free and open to the public. Watch excerpts from “Freedom Riders” and participate in discussion with Dr. David McKay. This event is held in the lower gallery of the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center located at 426 N. Jackson St. This event is free! Visit www.rchs.us for more details.

June

1- Lincoln-Tallman House Tour Season begins: Tour season is here! Our tours run every day of the week from 10 am-4 pm with the last tour leaving at 3 pm. Check www.rchs.us/lincoln-tallman-house-tours/ for pricing.

14- Lincoln-Tallman Fun Dash 5k/10k: Get those laces tied and those sweat bands on! The Lincoln-Tallman Fun Dash is back! This year, we have extended the run to a 10k while still providing the 5k. The campus will have delicious summer food, music, and lots of other fun for family members cheering on their “Lincoln”. Visit www.rchs.us/ltfun-dash/ for more information.

15- Father’s Day Tours of the Lincoln-Tallman House:
All fathers take tours of the Lincoln-Tallman House for free! Tours run from 10 am-4 pm, leaving every hour on the hour. The last tour will leave at 3 pm.

Don’t forget to mark your calendars for...

August 3rd- 57th Annual Tallman Arts Festival!
Walk the campus and see 100+ artists, food vendors, and non-profit organizations from all over the Midwest! There will be food, music, children’s activities and more! Gates open at 10 am-5 pm. This year’s theme is ‘Art in Nature’ and many of this year’s art and games will reflect the appreciation of nature.



CREATED EQUAL: AMERICA'S CIVIL RIGHTS STRUGGLE

Excerpts from four featured films and discussion

The Abolitionists ❖ Slavery by Another Name
The Loving Story ❖ Freedom Riders



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities



THE GILDER LEHRMAN
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY
www.gilderlehrman.org

Appreciating the Civil Rights Movement

RCHS is proud to be one of the many organizations around the nation to host the 4-part film and lecture series: Created Equal. Dedicated to sharing the significance and importance of America's Civil Rights struggle, Created Equal relates to all Americans no matter their background or lifestyle.

All four evenings are free and open to the public. They will consist of excerpts of the featured film and discussion between the viewers and guest speaker. All meetings will be held in the lower gallery of the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center located at 426 N. Jackson St. in Janesville, WI.

Created Equal Film Schedule:

Wednesday, February 12th at 6:30pm-8:30 pm
Excerpts from "The Abolitionists" with discussion led by Dr. Elizabeth Jozwiak.

Wednesday, March 12th at 6:30 pm-8:30 pm
Excerpts from "Slavery by Another Name" with discussion led by Dr. Elizabeth Jozwiak.

Wednesday, April 9th at 6:30 pm-8:30 pm
The entire 77 minutes of "The Loving Story" with discussion led by Dr. David McKay.

Wednesday, May 14th at 6:30 pm-8:30 pm
Excerpts from "Freedom Riders" with discussion led by Dr. David McKay

Sneak a Peek at Behind the Scenes Night!

What is the view like from the Tallman House cupola? What treasures of Rock County's past are stored away in the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center? How are Rock County's relics preserved at the Charles Tallman Archives & Research Center?

Enjoy food and drink while you discover the secrets of each building on the RCHS campus. All this and more will be unveiled at the Historical Society's first ever Behind-the-Scenes Night, an opportunity for RCHS Members to see the inner workings of the museum and get exclusive access to rarely seen areas of our campus sites.

Memberships are available prior to and day of the event for those interested in seeing how the Rock County Historical Society preserves and promotes Rock County's history.

When: Saturday, March 22nd
Time: 7 p.m to 9 p.m.
Cost: Free for all RCHS members





THE 65th ANNUAL MEETING

65th Annual Meeting of the Rock County Historical Society welcomes back one of Janesville's own native historians: Jesse Gant.

Hosted by The Armory on Wednesday, April 23rd, the Annual Meeting will celebrate the evolution of the Rock County Historical Society over the past year and preview its new programs and events for 2014 with our new video yearbook

For the main program, enjoy Jesse Gant who has a passion for local history and the Lincoln-Tallman House

Gant reveals the rich cycling history that has gripped Wisconsin in his new book, *Wheel Fever*, released in 2013 by the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. Co-authored with Museum Curator Nick Hoffman, *Wheel Fever* chronicles how Wisconsin's cycling scene evolved from a sport for the upper classes to a leisurely activity all ages can enjoy. Get your signed copy and view the bicycles from collectors in Rock County at the Annual Meeting.

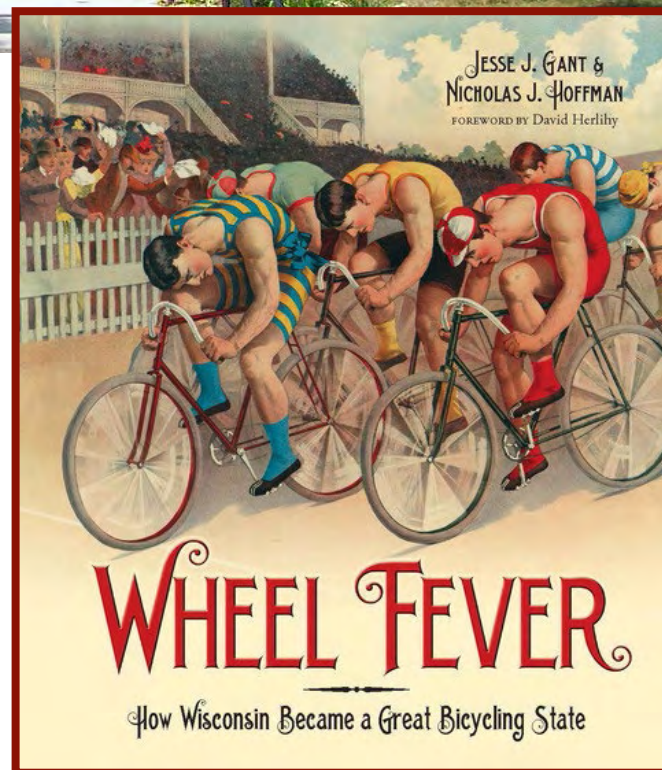
65th Annual Meeting

When: Wednesday, April 23rd, 2014

Where: The Armory, 10 South High Street, Janesville

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Cost: \$26 for RCHS Members, \$30 for Non-Members



Michael Reuter
Executive Director

Francis Willard School opens its doors this spring!

The Frances Willard School will soon be opening for Rock County third graders to experience an 1850's classroom. Boys and girls enter through separate doors and maintain their own sides of the room. Students often sit three to a bench and share a desk while working the arithmetic assignment on slate boards. They practice reading aloud and silently, learn sewing skills and finish with a spell down. The program has been offered for many years and we regularly host students from Janesville and area schools as well as home schooled children.

So who was Frances Willard? She grew up in Janesville and was a teacher, lecturer, suffragist and president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) for 19 years. In 1923, WI court statutes were enacted for schools to observe her birthday, September 28, 1839. She was the first woman represented in the Statuary Hall of the United States Capitol.

Volunteer teachers often dress in period costume and always get to ring a very loud bell to announce the beginning of class. Each year we look for new teachers to join the volunteer roster. Are you interested? A training session will be scheduled in April and we'd love to have you join us. Call Laurel at 608-756-4509 ext. 5.



Laurel Fant
Collections Manager



Find Your Historic Photograph at the RCHS Archives!

Have you been looking for a historic photo to display or incorporate into your family genealogy? Stop in at the Charles Tallman Archives and Research Center to search through our

collection. The image collection is 12,000 and growing as donations come in on a regular basis.

Our collection of photographs come in a variety of styles: carte-de viste which are a little larger than a business card--It would run about 5x7--and lithographs represent the earliest photographic records of Rock County. The collection includes late 19th and early 20th century prints, snap shots, Marvin Helgesen professional portraits and many Janesville Gazette photos. In addition to

print format, media include glass plate negatives, 35 mm and large format negatives.

Patrons may order a copy of any photograph owned by the Rock County Historical Society. Cost is based on the size print that is desired. Please ask for the Image Use and Reproduction Contract Form, or you may download it off of our website at www.rchs.us.

by: **Ruth Anderson,**
Archives Manager



Are you ready to run? Lincoln-Tallman 5k/10k is back!

Calling all runners, walkers, joggers, foodies, music enthusiasts, and anyone else that likes to have a good time! RCHS is hosting the 2nd annual Lincoln-Tallman Fun Dash but this time, we're adding a 10k to the mix! Don't worry, there will still be the 5k run/walk and plenty to do for the rest of the family.

In Year Two of our run, we hope to grow attendance by adding countless fun activities for every type of

person—athlete or not. The grounds of the Lincoln-Tallman House will be buzzing with summer fun like, delicious summer food, beer, and cheers for your special athlete. Don't miss the delicious pig roast that will be happening on the lawn of the Lincoln-Tallman house as well as live music from Rainbow Bridge!

We also have a lot in store this year for our runners and walkers. This year, our athletes will be chip-timed, making it possible to give them exact finish times. We will also have swag bags filled with all kinds of goodies for our participants.

You may register on our website
www.rchs.us/ltfun-dash.

Lincoln-Tallman Fun Dash Registration Prices:

	5K run/walk	10k run
Early (ends May 1)	\$20	\$30
Late (ends June 1)	\$25	\$35
Day-of	\$30	\$40
Family/Group Registration (4-6 people)	\$75 flat fee	\$110 flat fee



Exploring Rock County: Beckman Mill

If you haven't been to Beckman Mill, make it a priority this summer to go and visit. It is a lovely piece of Rock County history beautifully preserved on the east bank of Coon Creek in the Newark Township. Originally called "Howe's Mill" and then "Newark Mills", the Beckman

Mill has played many roles and provided work, nourishment, and a place for play for Newark's residents since 1868.

Beckman Mill was the site for grinding grain as well as a hot fishing spot for customers waiting their turn to purchase its grain, and children would come along to swim, catch frogs or fish with their parents. Eventually, the mill also housed the post office during the years of 1890-1892. The replicated 1890s letter box and copy of Henry Beckmann's, founder August

Beckmann's son, Postmaster Certificate still reside in the mill today.

Tours of the Mill are available from May-October on the weekends from 1-4 pm. To visit the Mill or to see the events being held at site as well as the other things that Beckman Mill offers—like a creamery and gift shop—please visit their website at www.beckmanmill.org.



Meghan Walker
Marketing Coordinator



Photograph taken by
Michelle Hayden

The Green Membership! Introducing Online Membership Renewal

In order to cut costs, the Rock County Historical Society encourages all of our members to renew their membership via our online ordering form. Whether a new or renewing member, we aim to be environmentally conscious of distributing unnecessary mailings and membership forms to our supporters.

Go to the webpage: www.rchs.us/membership/ to download our membership renewal form and begin to experience our campus like never before by visiting our exhibits and special events! The membership renewal form can be filled out right there on our website.

Thank you for helping the Historical Society save money so we can provide enriching programming!

Abraham Lincoln	\$1,000	Opens our doors to the Rock County community for a day.
William M. Tallman	\$500	Pays for cost of archives operations for a week.
Henry Janes	\$250	Pays for an additional docent for the Lincoln-Tallman House
Historian	\$100	Pays for a student to attend our History Camp.
Family	\$50	Underwrites exhibit workshops and lectures.
Individual	\$30	Covers all basic membership costs, including member openings, mailings, newsletters, and the annual report
Senior/Student	\$20	Same as Primary Membership benefits.

All memberships include:

- Free Admission to the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum
- Free Admission to Wilson King Stone Archives
- "Traditional Tallman" tour - passes for two.
- Benefits on many of our annual events like lowered admission rates

Collections Corner: A Truly Royal Tale

In a very dark hour in May of 1939, King Edward VI and her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth made an unannounced visit to Canada and the U.S. just as England was about to enter World War II. Due to the perilous nature of an Atlantic crossing, no advance announcement presaged the royal trip.

By all accounts, this dangerous mission was a huge success,

galvanizing support for the Allied War effort against the Axis powers. It was the first ever visit of a reigning monarch to Canada and the first by a British Monarch to the United States. The tour was an enormous success, attracting huge crowds in every city.

During their stay in Canada, Parker Pen employees worked feverishly to fashion a special presentation pen to honor His Royal Highness. Fashioned from solid gold with a diamond in the arrow clip, this one of a kind Speedline Vacumatic model was likely present to HRH in June of 1939 in connection with

the unveiling of the National War Monument. The lack of hallmarking is consistent with a gift to the royal family.

Roy Pennington, head of Parker Canada, gave it or a duplicate pen made for this occasion to Bruce Jeffris, Tom Jeffris' father, and president of the Parker Pen Company. The pen laid in Bruce's safe deposit box for many years, until his son Tom found it many years later. This unique Parker Pen now resides in Janesville, WI on loan at the Rock County Historical Society.



Laurel Fant
Collections Manager



Archives-New Location Up and Running!

We are now open in the Charles Tallman House, at 430 N Jackson St. Visitors will enjoy a spacious Reading Room, Guest Wi-Fi and helpful staff.

We have at our fingertips the Rock County Marriage Application papers, probate files, photos, city directories, and a scrapbook collection awaiting discovery- just to name a few. Finding aids are being updated so locating that tid-bit of information for your family/ house/business, is getting easier.

Bring your questions to us Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9 am to 3 pm and Fridays from noon to 3 pm or call for an appointment. 608-752-5891

by: Ruth Anderson, Archives Manager



20% off

**One full priced item in the RCHS gift shop!
Expires: July 1, 2014. Offer may only be used
once and must be surrendered to teller at
time of purchase. Limited to one coupon
per transaction. Offer may not be used on
memberships, event tickets, concessions,
auction items, or sponsorships.**



Green Your Life with RCHS!

Now that spring is finally here, I can talk about something near and dear to my heart: sustainability and green living! I lived for three years in Chico, California where Chico Bag and Klean Kanteen are produced so imagine my surprise when I went into the RCHS gift shop and saw a plethora of Chico Bag merchandise on the shelves! For years I was thinking of ways to green my grocery shopping experience by permanently saying “neither” to the paper or plastic question and, even though I had my cloth shopping bags, the little plastic bags that I put produce into made me feel like I wasn’t doing much to help. However, RCHS’ gift shop has the answer for a 100% green shopping experience: reusable cloth produce bags for grocery shopping and packing lunches!

We carry a wonderful pack of three sandwich bags that are not only washable and reusable and can be made into two different sizes depending on what kind of snack you want to use with it. It can be folded into its smaller size to fit a sandwich, or it can be used in its largest size to fit a sub! They are made with recyclable materials

that are BPA, etc, phthalate, PVC and lead free.

These bags are special because they restrict airflow and lock in moisture which make them perfect for items like squash, broccoli, carrots and peas.

We also carry produce bags in a mesh cloth. These three produce bags are ideal for fruit, potatoes and onions since they allow ethylene gas to escape for a longer shelf life. You may also get them in hemp. One of the many great uses for hemp cloth is that it absorbs excess moisture and restricts airflow. Use these for your grains, nuts and bulk foods.

Get one of each bag with the rePETe Starter Kit. The best part is that, like most of Chico Bag’s products, they fold up and fit inside a little cloth strawberry that can be clipped right to your purse handle or cloth shopping bags! Also, my biggest bit of advice, make sure to ditch those plastic water bottles and invest in something more green! We carry water bottle slips that make carrying that refillable water bottle easier for you. We have them in multiple colors like green, navy, and cranberry. You may find wonderful refillable water bottles in any store these days! If you want to try a Chico favorite, find yourself a Klean Kanteen!

Ditching the paper and plastic is a phenomenal and EASY way to start greening your life. Every year, Americans throw away enough plastic to circle the equator 300 times. • It can end up in the landfill, in the ocean, or on your street. Why not help support a local organization and help the planet simultaneously by greening your life with us here at RCHS?



Meghan Walker
Marketing Coordinator

•Wills, A. (2010, June 21). Recycling To-Go Plastics. Retrieved June 2010, from <http://earth911.com/news/2010/06/21/recycling-to-go-plastics/>

Volunteer Spotlight: Mary Frei

The wonderful help from RCHS' volunteers is why we have continued to succeed this long. To honor the work our volunteers do, The Final will be spotlighting a volunteer in each issue for the work he or she has done. Our first volunteer spotlight shines on Mary Frei.

Mary was one of the first volunteers I met when I started working at RCHS. In fact, I met her on my very first day when she and I decorated one of the Christmas trees in the Lincoln-Tallman House together for the holiday touring season. She is a warm and welcoming individual and it is such a treat to see her just about once a week.

Mary started volunteering for RCHS in the fall of 2012 working at the front desk, helping to answer the phones and assist anyone who walks into the building. She put in the most time helping to assemble the hats and the beards for the Lincoln-Tallman Fun Dash as well as volunteered her time with the Parker Pen Exhibit Opening. Recently, Mary has been helping with data entry into our new Membership database. The work she is doing will help us stay in better contact with our members, vendors, and visitors. "I believe all volunteers work for the common good and the topics and projects coming up should project us forward in the community." I could not have said it better myself, Mary.

Thank you for all your hard work!



Andrea Miller
Operations Manager

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS



RCHS is in need of volunteers for:

- Front Desk staffing
- Maintenance & cleaning
- Archives research
- Lincoln Tallman House Tours
- Easter Egg Hunt (04/19/2014)
- Francis Willard School Instructors (04/28-05/23/2014)
- Lincoln Fun Dash (06/14/2014)
- Tallman Arts Festival (08/03/2014)
- Historic House Tour (09/28/2014)
- Lincoln on the Lawn (10/10-12/2014)

AND MARK YOUR CALENDAR. Come to our Volunteer Fair on Saturday, April 5, 2014 from 12 PM to 4 PM at the Helen Jeffris Wood Museum Center in the Lower Gallery. Here you will be able to meet staff and learn more about the fun and interesting volunteer opportunities awaiting at RCHS. If you are interested in volunteering or to RSVP for the fair, please contact Andrea Miller at operationsrchs@gmail.com or 608-756-4509 ext. 3.

RCHS Spring Wish List

Now that our doors are reopening for a new year of fun, we are in need of a few supplies to keep ourselves up to date! Please let us know if you have any of the following that you would like to donate to us:

- New Refrigerator
- New Oven
- Small bookshelves
- Storage tubs/containers for Christmas decor & other props
- Good folding chairs
- Shovels for snow removal
- Outdoor grill

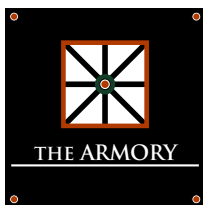
If you would like to donate anything to RCHS, please contact Andrea Miller at operationsrchs@gmail.com or via telephone at 608-756-4509 ext. 3.

Thank you to our 2014 Sponsors! Your support allows us to expanded existing and create new programs this year!

Legacy Circle



Historic 100



Blast From the Past: Women's Fitness in the Victorian Era.

The image of the Victorian woman is that of a sedentary, home-bound lady in large clothing that restricts fast and active movement. The female figure was thought to be physically weak and naturally sickly and, in response, doctors and society felt that an active lifestyle for a female would be a dangerous one. If she was able to exercise, her clothing usually was not of an appropriate fashion to produce comfortable movement: "If young ladies ride on horseback for exercise...what does it avail them, pinched and burdened as they are by their dress? If they row, it is under like conditions; and the results are the same" (26. Dress, Health and Beauty).

One opinion was that women should not indulge themselves in physical activity, but should remain sedentary in order to stay well. Peter Zheutlin, author of *Around the World on Two Wheels* quotes a Chicago Daily News article stating "when woman wants to learn anything or do anything useful or even

have any fun there is always someone to solemnly warn her that it is her duty to keep well. Meanwhile in many states she can work in factories ten hours a day...but when the same women, condemned to sedentary lives indoors, find a cheap and delightful way of getting the fresh air and exercise they need so sorely there is a great hue and cry about their physical welfare" (30).



So what kind of exercise was proper for a woman of the late 1800s? Janesville's own Gussie Tallman was a woman who enjoyed both sedate indoor activities like sewing and reading, but could also be found attending physical activities like "hops", or dances around town. In fact, dancing was such a large part of Gussie's personal activities that she wrote a letter to her cousin Lucien saying that she had attended hops and parties for nearly five weeks straight and that staying home felt like a luxury. Daily, Gussie would also go on walks with her mother and friends, or would spend time outdoors horseback riding (Hornbostel, 19).



Sir John Lavery, A Rally

While Gussie and other women of her age and socioeconomic status enjoyed dancing, it was not always considered a proper

thing for a lady to do. As a young woman, Gussie attended a school in Pittsfield, Massachusetts called the Young Ladies' Institute that was run by a Mr. Tyler who was considered quite progressive in terms of ladies' abilities and rights. Julia Hornbostel, author of *A Good and Caring Woman*, a study of Nellie Tallman's diary entries, writes "one floor was made into a large gymnasium. The dances and exercises taught there drew 'at once the mingled horror and admiration of spectators, many of whom...still considered dancing wicked' but these activities were soon recognized as a great aid in physical development" (15). It is possible that no other form of exercise shook the ground of Victorian lifestyle as the bicycle. In both Victorian literature and in the lives of the women themselves, the bicycle was a symbol of woman's freedom from the confinement of the home and provided her the means of

mobility to further parts of town on her own. The bicycle offered a gateway for the respectable and traditional woman of society to become a "new woman". It was considered masculine since the clothing most suited for bicycle riding consisted of bloomers. The New Woman idea was met with very harsh criticism from many who preferred a traditional form of society.

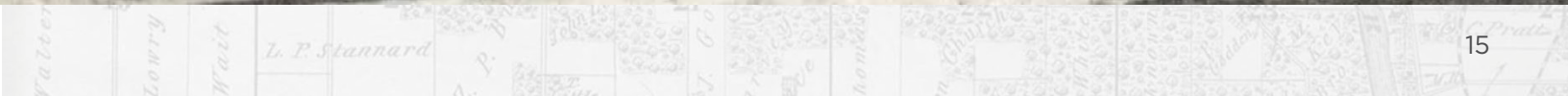
Frances Willard of Janesville, at the age of 53, was the owner of a bicycle and loved it dearly and even gave it the name "Gladys". She wrote an essay titled "How I Learned to Ride the Bicycle" and in it she exclaims how she so loved her bicycle and the freedom that it gave to her: "I began to feel that myself plus the bicycle equaled myself plus the world, upon whose spinning wheel we must all learn to ride, or fall into the sluiceways of oblivion and despair" (8). By the early 1900s, the world

of fitness and physical activity for women had blossomed into popularity. In 1902, an anonymous author in *The Girl's Empire* magazine proclaimed "the old-fashioned fallacies regarding health, diet, exercise, dress, etc. have nearly all been exploded, and to-day women are discarding the old ideas and methods, and entering into the new régime with zest and vigor which bodes well for the future" (4). The old ideas and methods were challenged worldwide and also right here with the very women who helped shape Janesville, WI in the lives of Gussie Tallman and Frances Willard.

for full bibliography, please visit www.rchs.us/womensfitness



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The Finial Editor: **Meghan Walker**
Design & Layout by: **mdezine Creative Group**
Photographs by: **High Impact Creations**

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