

# THE COUNTY CHRONICLER

Polk County Historical Society

2005

March

JLW

## **ELEVATOR FUNDRAISER**

Our fundraiser auction is scheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Many hours have been spent in planning and etc. We are pleased to say that some items have already been collected and stored. However we desperately need your help to make this event a great success. Please call us to help us with planning and preparation. We will be accepting donations up to the day before sale time. However it would be nice to have items by April 5<sup>th</sup> so we can advertise part of what will be on the auction block. Gary Hines has volunteered to be the auctioneer and the Amery Lion's Club will be serving lunch. All proceeds from the food sale will be donated to for the event.

**Thank you, Darrell Kittleson, Coordinator**



Leona Cumming  
Polk County History Woman of the Year  
See page 2



**MARCH IS NATIONAL WOMEN'S  
HISTORY MONTH**

*"For Your Auction Done Professionally"*

**HINES AUCTION  
SERVICE**

Gary Hines, Auctioneer  
Balsam Lake, WI  
(715) 485-3060 or 485-3146

FARM - ANTIQUE - HOUSEHOLD  
REAL ESTATE - AUCTION  
SERVICE & APPRAISALS



## Leona Cummings

I am what you call a full-blooded Swede. My dad, Samuel Lindquist was born in this country, but his parents and brother were born in Sweden. My mom, Annie Lundeen's grandparents also came over from Sweden. There is a Lundeen Road off of "48" named after the family. Both of my parent's attended Round Lake School and The Swedish Lutheran Church at Trade Lake (Zion) in Burnett County. With roots like that, I was meant to be a talker, an eater and a stubborn Swede.

I was born in 1928 on a farm that the Lundquist family homesteaded and was later lost in the depression years. Today my family would have been called needy or poor. In those days it was not noticeable, as everyone was in the same boat and it was accepted as a way of life.

We lived off the land and rented a number of different homes in Polk County. The rent was sometimes ten dollars a month and not always paid on time. My dad worked at a feed mill in Frederic a number of years and some summers my mom would walk two miles to town to work at Stokleys Canning Factory during the summer months. We were five kids; Carmond, Elaine (Johnson), Deloris (Peterson), myself, and Gloriann (Jones) and we all had jobs early in our lives. I was twelve years old when I started my first job as a hired girl on the Walter Lindh farm. I milked cows by hand, washed the separator, the dishes, the clothes and the face of a little girl.

I had Sunday's off and I walked home for the day. I was paid \$1.25 a week. I was treated as one of the family and I never felt that I was missing out on one single thing. I also worked in town for Gust Johnson's. Mrs. Johnson worked for the telephone Company and I took care of a child and made supper. I moved back home when I was fifteen years old. I had money in the bank, knew the meaning of caring, sharing responsibility and appreciation.

I started working at Hagberg's Store in Frederic when at fifteen years of age. I had to send to the state for a special permit to work. I worked there six and one-half years. I married Royce Cumming in 1950 and then worked as a bookkeeper for the electric company until we started our family in 1954. I was a stay at home mom for our four sons, Jeffrey, Jon, Jay and Gene.

Royce hauled logs until we started our family business of a sawmill. I still do all the bookwork for our business known as *Cumming Lumber Company, Incorporated*.

All of these jobs molded my life. The recipe I use most often was written by my grade school teacher, Inez Nelson in my autograph book in 1939:

True worth is in being, not in seeming,  
In doing each day that goes by, some  
Little good not in dreaming, of great  
Things to do by and by.

I have made that recipe a pattern for my life along with my gift from God, my imagination. For the past 30 years I have held a weekly Bible Study at our care center. I go as Grandma Passage to the North West Passage Child, Adolescent Center in Frederic. I share stories, laughter and hugs. I become Johnny Appleseed, a pilgrim lady, a schoolgirl, Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer, a housewife; baking sewing and caring for the sick with home remedies and washing clothes on the washboard in my apron. In 1976, I became Betsy Ross with my collection of flags and memories. I do this to remind us of our duty to our country and to honor our veterans and our flag.

Perhaps my greatest little thing that grew into a great thing, was planting the seed that sprouted and grew into our Frederic Soo Line Depot Museum. This project was the result of ordinary people, pooling ordinary time and talent to accomplish an extra ordinary gift to our town and visitors.

Each day I make someone laugh and compliment someone. It doesn't cost me one red cent, as they used to say. It isn't money in the bank, it's a gift to hearts.

Leona is a special gift to this community and we thank and honor her for the contribution she has made to mankind.

Garage sales are a big part of Leona's life. Some years ago she told her sons that she had been to the mortuary and prepaid the funeral expenses and purchased a lot and a headstone. She came home and said, "I could just see what the headstone would say if it was left up to you boys. The oldest one would say, 'let's buy this one.' The number two son would say, 'let's buy one a little nicer.' Before she could finish the story the third son spoke up, 'let's buy her one at a garage sale, that's the kind she would like the best.'"

Leona's garage sale items are a history lesson from the past and she shares them with the young and old. She will become Betsy Ross for us at our March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, sharing some of the flags and other memories.

Please pass the word around about this event. We would like to make it very special for Leona and having a big crowd would be the best way we could honor her.



Frederic Soo Line Depot Museum

2005

*Local History & Museum Workshops  
Sponsored by Wisconsin Historical Society*

*Disaster Planning in Cultural Institutions  
Friday April 1, 2005, 9:00 am-1: 00 pm  
Milwaukee Public Museum*

*Photographic Identification and Digital Projects  
Tuesday April 19, 2005, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Milwaukee Public Museum  
Also distance learning facilities in Eau Claire*

*Digitizing Collections  
Friday May 6, 2005, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Wisconsin historical Society*

*\$30 registration fee include lunch.  
Call Claudia Jacobson for more information  
(414) 278-2796 e-mail Claudiaj@mpm.edu*

**Help is needed to Distribute Brochures**

We need brochures distributed throughout the county and beyond.

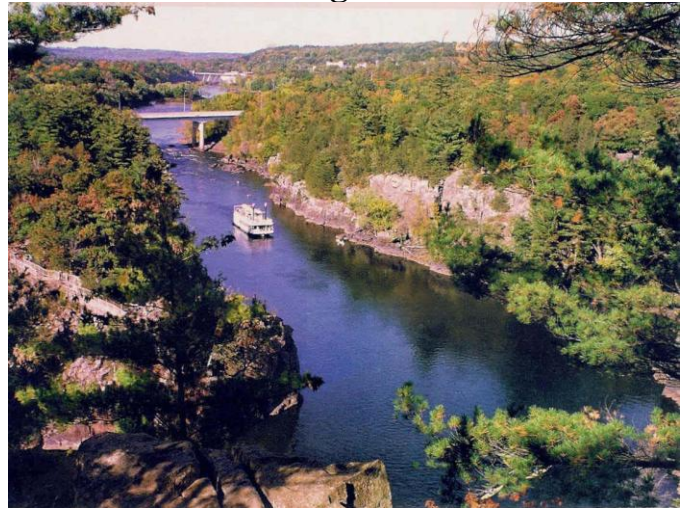
See **Marilyn Reiten 485-9774** or **Jim Gish 857-5045**.

**Know Your Antiques – April 26<sup>th</sup>**

Don't miss the best attended meeting of the year. For \$2.00 you can have your antique appraised by one of our professional antique dealers.

Judy Wester had a chance to talk to past Wisconsin State Historical Society president, John Greck and he asked to pass his greetings on the the Polk County Historical Society members.

**Coming Events**



**Annual Bus Tour  
June 10<sup>th</sup>  
St. Croix Falls**

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**The Lanesdale School**

Will be used by the Frederic School district in June and by the Amery School district in August.

St. Croix Falls uses The Red Little School house at the fair grounds in June.

**June is Author's Month at  
The Museum**

Authors will be visiting selling and signing their books.

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**Museum Special Displays**

June – Wedding Dresses

July – Military Uniforms

August – Quilts

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**LIBRARY DISPLAYS**



## A Reminder to Change!

The displays that we have in our local libraries are a great way to show the community a small glimpse of the collection of our County Historical Society.

Lynne Schaul, librarian at Centuria says that people of all ages are interested in the display and comment on it. It is changed every six months and now contains simple toys from the fifties. Lynne says this is a favorite.

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### **Style Show at Paradise Landing**

September 15, 2005

What could be better than sipping tea in Paradise watching a show of past wedding attire?

### **We want to thank the following people:**

**Elaine Erickson**, for the gift of Gun and Holster set for the toy room.

**Allen Smith**, Shoreview, MN

**Fred Olson**, Silver Springs, MD

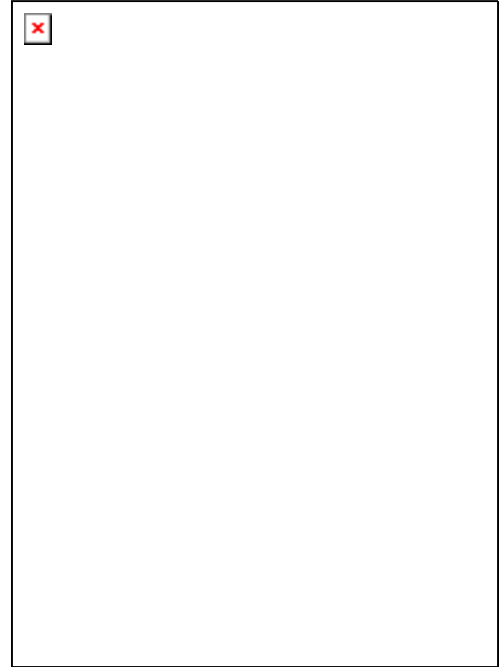
**Dr. Fred and Dolores Reigel**

For monetary gifts.

**Henrietta Anderson Family**, for gifts of advertising articles from local area; Amery, Dresser and Centuria, and many other artifacts for the museum and articles for the April 30<sup>th</sup> auction.

### **New at the Museum**

Dave Knutson and Jim Gish have been working on a new display in the lower level of the museum. The potato display has been replaced with a display showing the **Bee Extraction Process**. We hope to have a program about bee extraction in the future.  
Thank you, Dave & Jim.



### **Elevator Auction**

Saturday, April 30, 2005

Parking lot on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, between Main Street and Pearl Street at the Lanesdale School Parking Lot.

Seeking good, clean donations - Antiques, furniture, cars, boats, animals, gift certificates, tools, guns, etc.

We will pick up items or they may be dropped off at locations throughout the county. Please contact us by April 5<sup>th</sup> with our donation items.

**We will not be selling any items that have been given to the museum for display.**

For information, call:

483-3979 – Darrell Kittleson

857-5045 – Jim Gish

485-9269 – Museum

755-2254 – John Jenkins

269-8403 – Merle Bergren

We receive matching funds up to \$100,000 from the Marion Park Deaver and Harry Gilbert Deaver Foundation.

Look for an article about the family history in the April Newsletter.