



June - July 2026

Jenks Profiles Women Entertainers with Links to the Badger State

On May 6th, **Greg Jenks** helped set the stage for Mother's Day by using in-depth stories and video clips to tell the stories of twelve notable female entertainers who have had Wisconsin connections. Greg, who is a speaker for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (and an HCHS member), began his remarks by noting that the evening's program was "the world premiere of this presentation!" The women he profiled are:

Jeane Dixon, Astrologer/Psychic. Born in Medford, Wisconsin in 1904, she was one of the best-known prognosticators of the 20th century. Her prediction that a Democrat would win the 1960 presidential election and die in office helped make her a national sensation.

Lynn Fontanne, Actress. She and her husband, **Alfred Lunt**, co-starred in Broadway productions for more than four decades. When not performing, they lived at Ten Chimneys, their country estate in Genesee Depot, Wisconsin, which was close to where Lunt had grown up.

Charlotte Rae, Actress. Although a Broadway actress since the 1950s, she became most widely known for her performance as Edna Garrett in the sitcoms *Different Strokes* and *The Facts of Life*. She was born Charlotte Lubotsky in Milwaukee in 1926 and graduated from Shorewood High School.

Hattie McDaniel, Actress/Vocalist. In 1940, she won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role as Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*, becoming the first African-American to win an Oscar. During the 1920s-30s, she performed in Milwaukee as a vocalist and later commented, "Milwaukee was my springboard to Hollywood."

Bonnie Blair, Olympic Athlete. Widely recognized as the greatest female U.S. speedskater,



*Shown left to right, top to bottom:
The Chordettes, Charlotte Rae, Viola Smith,
Felice Bryant, Hattie McDaniel, Jeane Dixon*



Speed skater Bonnie Blair on the cover of Sports Illustrated in 1994 and an Olympics stamp in 1995

she trained in Milwaukee and competed in four Olympics. She won five gold medals and one bronze medal, making her one of the most decorated athletes in Olympic history.

Milwaukee Chicks, Professional Baseball Team. Competing in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League during the 1944 season, the team played at Borchert Field. They were also known colloquially as the "Brewettes" and the "Schnitts" (a term for a glass of beer served half-full).

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(WOMEN ENTERTAINERS, continued from page 1)

Hildegard Loretta Sell, Vocalist. This Adell, Wisconsin native was dubbed “the First Lady of supper clubs” by **Eleanor Roosevelt** for her chatty, cabaret-style performances. Her enormous popularity enabled her to promote herself using only her first name. She was best-known for the song “Darling, Je Vous Aime Beaucoup.”

Felice Scaduto Bryant, Songwriter. While working as an elevator operator at Milwaukee’s Schroeder Hotel, she met touring violinist **Boudleaux Bryant**. They eloped five days later and began working together, eventually becoming the most successful songwriting husband and wife team in country music history, creating such classics as the **Everly Brothers’** “Bye Bye Love.”

Viola Smith, Professional Drummer. Born in Mount Calvary, Wisconsin in 1912 and living to age 107, she was one of the first female professional drummers. In the 1930s she was billed as “the world’s fastest girl drummer.” Known for her work in orchestras and swing bands, she appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*

five times and played at President **Harry Truman’s** inauguration.

Mary Ford, Vocalist/Guitarist. She comprised half of a world-renowned musical team with her husband, Waukesha native **Les Paul**. Between 1950 and 1954, the couple had 16 top-ten hits, including “How High the Moon” and “Vaya Con Dios”, which were number one hits on the *Billboard* charts.

The Chordettes, Vocal Quartet. In 1949, this Sheboygan-born group won first place on *Arthur Godfrey’s Talent Scouts* and remained on the show for the next four years. They also appeared on the first national broadcast of *American Bandstand* in 1957. Their two major hits were “Mr. Sandman” and “Lollipop.”

Barbie, the Doll/Cultural Icon. Introduced by Mattel, Inc. on March 9, 1959 at the American International Toy Fair in New York City, Barbie was the brainchild of **Ruth Handler**, who modeled her on a German doll. Officially named Barbara Millicent Roberts, Barbie is said to hail from the fictional town of Willows, Wisconsin, along with her sisters Skipper, Stacie, and Chelsea, and her longtime boyfriend, Ken.

in Memoriam

Our Society lost one of our longtime members recently. **Sherman Stock** passed away at age 98 on May 26, 2026. Our sincere condolences go out to his family.

Sherman was born in Milwaukee and attended Marquette University, originally majoring in business administration. After service in the U.S. Army, he returned to Marquette and earned his law degree.

Sherman devoted much of his career to public service, working as legal counsel to U.S. Senator **Gaylord Nelson** for 18 years. They developed a



Sherman rebuilt his original diorama of the Western Hotel to fit its new location at the Library, 2018

close friendship and worked together on several significant projects, including the founding of Earth Day. Sherman also worked for Governor **Tony Earl** as Veterans Affairs Advisor.

Sherman was also known for



Sherman helped recreate the Summer Kitchen display at Cobb Park, 2019

his artistic talents. He worked on numerous HCHS projects. For example, in 2002, he volunteered to create a diorama of the Western Hotel, also known as Hotel Dreyfuss. That building was a Village landmark from

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(MEMORIAM, continued from page 2)

1834-1953. The display depicts a farmers market in 1883, with historically accurate costumes on the figurines and signs on the hotel's exterior. The three-year project required that he mold more than 30 figurines from wood and clay, including a horse and wagon, dogs, cats, and even several chickens.

The diorama was installed at a location on Forest Home Avenue from 2005-2017. Due

to fading from exposure to the sun, the display was removed from that site and reinstalled at its current location, the Hales Corners Library. Sherman volunteered once again to restore and repaint all his figurines, and reconfigured the diorama so that it would fit into its new environment.

Another major HCHS project demanded his attention in 2019, when he helped to recreate an outdoor display at the site of the Seneca Hale

Summer Kitchen. Sherman was involved in its initial installation in 1996, and like the diorama, it had been affected by sun exposure. The six-panel display was removed and replaced with his new versions.

HCHS owes a great debt to Sherman for all the time and effort he donated to so many projects though the years. His dry sense of humor and quick wit made working with him a great pleasure.

TALES OF THE CORNERS - JUNE From the files of the *Tri-Town News* and *Hub*

90 YEARS AGO (1936)

- Automatic traffic signals are being installed on Highway 100 at Janesville Road and Forest Home Avenue. The Janesville Road intersection is especially busy in summer with autos going to and from the Muskego Lakes region and northern Wisconsin.
- Hales Corners' new fire cistern holds 25,000 gallons of water. The pumping equipment can string out 1,000 feet of hose from the fire station.
- Due to the heavy rain on Sunday, many farmers go to Monday's fair day in Hales Corners because they are unable to work in their fields.
- A popular spot in Whitnall Park is a soft drink stand with free ice cream and soda for children picnicking in the area.

80 YEARS AGO (1946)

- Highways are lined with parked cars as people gather at the biggest June farmers' market that Hales Corners has seen in years. One person came by plane from East Troy, using the new Wisconsin Skyways Airport on Highway 100.
- Milwaukee County Sheriff patrols stop area motorists to check their cars in connection with the national safety drive.
- Edward Kelly, born at the family home on the hill known as Kelly's Hill, dies at the age of 76. Kelly's Hill is the hill on Forest Home Avenue that stretches in front of St. Mary's Church.

70 YEARS AGO (1956)

- Services are held at Emanuel Cemetery by the Freede-Eckel American Legion post at the grave of Milton Freede.
- A lawsuit brought by Greenfield to contest the Hales Corners annexation is settled and the area annexed by the Village on July 29, 1955 passes to Hales Corners without further delay.

- Trimborn's Food Market has cantaloupe at 19 cents each, cubed steaks at 69 cents a pound, and milk at 59 cents for two half-gallon cartons.

60 YEARS AGO (1966)

- Whitnall High School's paper drive nets \$105 for the school band to attend the Red River Music Festival in Winnipeg, Canada. The band places fifth in the concert competition.
- Burglars are evidently frightened off before they can gain entry to Barczak's Food Mart, 10111 W. Forest Home Avenue.
- Crashes at the Hales Corners Speedway result in a fatality.
- A junior dance opens summer activities sponsored by the Hales Corners Youth Council.

50 YEARS AGO (1976)

- Plastic cones needed to channel traffic during the July 4th Parade are in short supply. Hales Corners public works superintendent Elmer Faehrmann is having trouble obtaining enough barricades to protect marchers along the parade route.
- Hales Corners trustees approve an agreement permitting Schiek's Standard Service to hook up to municipal water service to supply a \$30,000 car washing machine being assembled in his building.
- Hales Corners pioneers and octogenarians are honored at a Hales Corners Historical Society dinner at the Village Hall. Some of those honored are lifetime residents of the Village.
- Fr. George Zwadzich, pastor of St. Mary Catholic Church, is recognized for the 30th anniversary of his ordination. He came to St. Mary in October 1970.
- State Bank Hales Corners announces plans to build a four-story tower addition to its building. The project will begin in late June. The estimated cost of the project is \$1.1 million.

Join Us July 15th for Our Special Third Program of 2026

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM

Co-sponsored by the Hales Corners Library

July 15, 7:00 p.m., Hales Corners Library / Hunt Room

— Presented by KEVIN WOOD, Professional Lincoln Presenter

Adults and children will enjoy a first-hand account from Abraham Lincoln himself of the history of the U.S. during his time, from his childhood on the frontier to the turbulent years from 1854 to 1865, which nearly destroyed our young nation but instead eventually resulted in a “new birth of freedom.”

Kevin Wood has made over 2,500 appearances in 35 states as Lincoln. He quotes from Lincoln’s best-known speeches and writings, and he also talks about his rise from a humble background to the presidency through self-study, hard work, ambition, and strong moral character.

AMERICA



Bicentennial Quilt On Display!

The HCHS Bicentennial quilt will be on display in the Hales Corners Village Hall at 5635 S. New Berlin Road during the month of July. This opportunity was made possible through the cooperation of the Hales Corners Board of Trustees in conjunction with the Village’s July 4th festivities and its celebration of our nation’s 250th anniversary. On July 4th, the public can view the quilt from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., during the pie judging competitions. In addition, the quilt can be viewed Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. through the month of July. The Village Hall is not open on weekends.

The 80” wide by 90” high quilt will be installed on the back wall of the main stairway. In addition, four posters will be mounted on easels that relate the story of its creation, and list the names of the 471 Village residents whose names are embroidered on the quilt.



Bicentennial quilt and a detail of its Prairie Flower pattern, some of the embroidered names, and the Village’s Bicentennial logo

The Ben Hunt Cabin and the Hale Summer Kitchen Will Be Open from Noon to 3 p.m. on July 4th

The Ben Hunt Cabin was built in 1924 and is on the national register of historic places. Tour the three rooms that make up the cabin and view Ben's rustic furniture, carvings, and Native American crafts that are displayed throughout the cabin. Seneca Hale's Summer Kitchen was built in the 1850s, and is the oldest structure in the

Village. It provides a link to our earliest days and a glimpse of life as it was lived by the first settlers in this area. The Summer Kitchen contains its original stove plus a variety of kitchen and farming tools HCHS has collected from the late 1800s and early 1900s.

TALES OF THE CORNERS - JULY From the files of the *Tri-Town News and Hub*

90 YEARS AGO (1936)

- An eight-day dry spell is hard on crops and results in numerous grass fires for Hales Corners firemen. In addition, they spend five hours fighting a fire at the Nicholas Jaeger farm on Cold Spring Road. Farm equipment is destroyed along with 22 tons of hay at \$12 a ton.
- Extremely warm weather fails to spoil the Emanuel Evangelical Church's picnic and 400 suppers are served.
- The annual Hales Corners Elementary School meeting approves a budget of \$5,500, \$500 higher than last school year. An appropriation of \$225 is voted for hot lunches for children who do not go home for lunch.
- A.W. Meier opens a grocery store in the former Scheffler store opposite the Welch hardware store on Forest Home Avenue. Opening specials are two loaves of bread for 15 cents, pork roast at 18 cents a pound, pot roast at 14 cents a pound, and hamburger, at two pounds for 29 cents.
- Close to 5,000 people attend the grand opening of the new \$30,000 Holz Motor Co. super-service automobile station which includes a feature movie and free dancing.

80 YEARS AGO (1946)

- The Hales Corners Fair is drawing people from all over the state on the first Monday of each month.
- Five flyers and students form a new club at the Hales Corners Airport.
- Boy Scout Pack 598 tours the Metropolitan Sewage plant at Jones Island. The Pack also attends the donkey-back ballgame in Greendale.
- Elroy Schill takes space in the Senft Triangle building in Hales Corners and plans to open a restaurant.

70 YEARS AGO (1956)

- By a vote of 103 to 60, Hales Corners School District electors approve a bond issue to finance new additions to the school, a \$195,000 tax levy, and a \$691,495 budget.

- Members of the Hales Corners rescue squad complete training for their new duties administering emergency aid. The rescue squad car is fully equipped for emergencies.
- The Hales Corners Labor Day Fair will probably be ruled off of Highway 24 unless a decision of a highway commission official is reversed. The Labor Day Fair is the biggest of the monthly fairs and usually attracts 30,000 to 50,000 spectators and several hundred sellers.
- Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hermann, 12226 W. Janesville Road, buy the first home in the Hales Corners Parade of Homes at 11100 W. Upham Avenue.

60 YEARS AGO (1966)

- A crowd estimated at roughly 10,000 watches the Hales Corners Fourth of July parade. The Hales Corners Business and Professional Men's float wins the grand trophy. Police Chief Harold Phelan says that more than 15,000 people watch the fireworks.
- Whitnall voters approve a \$1,496,695 budget with only one change, increasing school board members' salaries from \$100 to \$350 a year. This will result in a tax rate of \$22.10 per \$1,000 of equalized valuation.

50 YEARS AGO (1976)

- The Hales Corners Chamber of Commerce re-organizes the annual sidewalk sale event to a giant clearance sale all over the Village for one Saturday only. It is called the Maxwell Street Day Sidewalk Sale.
- The Consumer Beverage Center offers the following prices on its beverages: 12 pack of Schlitz beer in cans for \$2.49, 12 pack of Old Style beer in cans for \$2.25, 8 packs of Pepsi and Mountain Dew in 16 oz. bottles for 90 cents.
- State Bank Hales Corners holds groundbreaking ceremonies for its four-story addition.
- Heritage Savings & Loan holds an open house for its new building featuring tours, employees in early American costumes, clowns with balloons, hot dogs, and brats.

A look back at the Bicentennial from the July 1976 *Hales Corners Hub*: **July 4th Parade Shows Patriotic Colors**

Spectators lined W. Forest Home Ave. and W. Janesville Rd. up to the reviewing stand at Hales Corners elementary school as the Bicentennial Hales Corners Fourth of July Parade got underway.

The blue sky provided a beautiful background for **Steve Duell** and two other parachutists to land on the school playground. The first red, white, and blue parachute looked to be of an unusual rectangular shape and signaled its coming to the ground with a flare of red powder. The second was yellow and resembled the shape of a Chinese lantern, with the third a more conventional round shape but still emphasizing the patriotic red, white, and blue.

After the first few groups, consisting of the American Legion color guard, the Colonial costumed ladies of the Legion Auxiliary, the parade marshal, **Claude Petrykowski**, the sheriff's guard and Sheriff **Mike Wolke** and the fire departments of Hales Corners, Franklin, Muskego, and Greendale, the audience was treated to a surprise. Sen. **William Proxmire**, dressed in a white outfit with his name emblazoned on his shirt, jogged up Janesville Rd. to the reviewing stand, causing a ripple of applause as he waved and ran.

Other dignitaries in the parade, more staidly riding in cars, included Cong. **Clement Zablocki**, State Sen. **James Devitt**, State

Rep. **James Rutkowski**, Village President **Howard Graves**, Village Commissioner **Alexander McConnell**, and village trustees.

Groups and floats representing cub packs and scout troops, churches, local business and civic organizations took turns with bands, baton and drum corps, drill teams, and drum and bugle corps in providing a colorful hour and a half of entertainment. Interspersed were shiny antique cars driven by their owners.

Completing the parade were three pieces of U.S. Army heavy equipment and the Waukesha Wranglers with their pony-drawn small carriages and beautiful saddle horses.

Cash awards were given this year for the three floats judged to be the best. Hales Corners Lions Club won \$75, Hales Corners Woman's Club \$50, Hales Corners Historical Society \$25.

The Howard Graves special achievement award was given to the Whitnall Lucky Charms 4-H Club. **Nick Filardo** and his Shaker chimes were awarded the Walter J. Fehr outstanding unit award. First, second, and third places in the Ben Hunt Youth floats were won by Hales Corners Lutheran Church, Hales Corners Faith Baptist Church, and St. Mary's CYO of St. Mary's Catholic Church. Muskego was named the outstanding fire unit.

Prizes for theme, workmanship, and originality of floats were

awarded. For theme, first prize was for Hales Corners Lions Club, second prize for Hales Corners Woman's Club, and third prize for Whitnall Park VFW. For workmanship, Hales Corners Lions Club won first, Heritage Savings and Loan second, and Hales Corners Woman's Club third. For originality, Hales Corners Woman's Club was first, Hales Corners Historical Society second, and Scout Pack 598 third.

Whitnall High School band won the senior band award, and the Challengers of Milwaukee were presented the junior band award.

Drum and bugle corps awards went to Windjammers first, and West Allis Wranglers second. Senior Daley Debutantes were given first in baton and drum corps, and the Junior Daley Debutantes second.

The color guard first was given to Milwaukee County sheriff's department. The Buccaneers of Sheboygan won a first for their drill team.

Joe Trapp was afternoon parade chairman.

Other Fourth of July commission officers were **Mary Jakubowski**, president, **George Weber**, vice president, **Michael Stupar**, Secretary, and **Lance Giese**, treasurer. Members are **Emil Erben**, and **Jim Meadows**, Village board trustee.

This article was originally written by Pat Lemley



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