

# Spirit Historical Society Newsletter

Nov. 2019 Vol. 1 No. 3

## Previously Liberty School News



Spirit Historical Society Newsletter is published by Spirit Historical Society, Inc. the successor of German Settlement History, Inc.

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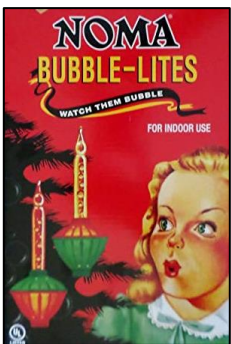
### History of the Christmas tree lights

In 1882, in a townhouse at 136 East 36th Street in New York City, Edward Hibberd Johnson had an idea that would make him the unsung set decorator of a zillion holiday snapshots. Johnson, Thomas Edison and others invested \$35,000 to form the Edison Lamp Company to sell the recently invented light bulbs.

Before long, Johnson had a bright idea. At that time, what really made a tree a Christmas tree were the candles, and while flickering flames were festive, they were also a fire hazard.

Over at the Edison shop, Johnson saw an opportunity. Setting up a tree by the street-side window of his parlor, Johnson hand-wired 80 red, white and blue light bulbs and strung them together around it, and placed the trunk on a revolving pedestal, all powered by a generator. The lights drew a crowd as passers-by stopped to peer at the glowing marvel.

Johnson's lights were indeed ahead of their time—electricity was not yet routinely available—and they weren't cheap. A string of 16 vaguely flame-shaped bulbs sitting in brass sockets the size of shot glasses sold for a pricey \$12 (about \$350 in today's money) in 1900. But in 1894 President Cleveland put electric lights on the White House tree, and by 1914, a 16-foot string cost just \$1.75. Today an estimated 150 million light sets are sold in America each year, it all started with Johnson's miracle on 36th Street.



Whether you decorate a tree or not, the Board Members of Spirit Historical Society wish you a blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with laughter, good memories and friendship.

Make your history something to be remembered.

Our annual **SHSI meeting** is scheduled for Sunday Jan. 26, 2020. This meeting will include the election of two Board Members and election of officers for the upcoming year. We will meet at the **Spirit Town Hall** beginning at 12:30 p.m. with a potluck lunch which is open to the public. The meeting will follow. Everyone is welcome.

The Spirit Legion Post 452 will sponsor a community **Christmas program** on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the Spirit Town Hall at 7:00 pm. Adults and children are encouraged to participate in the program (contact Duane Harper 715-657-0304). The evening will end with a visit from Santa and refreshments in the basement.

**Legion Post 452** holds their monthly meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs. of each month at the Spirit town Hall beginning at 7 pm.

**Spirit Town Board** meetings are held in the Spirit Town Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues. of each month, starting at 6:00 pm. Town board members are Darrel Lind, Bill Evans and Andy Holmquist. Clerk – JaNelle Nelson Treas. – Myrna Holmquist

The 77<sup>th</sup> annual **Spirit-Hill-Ogema 4-H Fair** was held Friday, Aug. 9 and Saturday, Aug. 10 at the Spirit Town Hall.



Clubs participating this year were Happy Hoboes, Hillbillies and Hamburg Hawks. The reigning queen is Anja Lind who was crowned on Saturday evening. Fair board members are Darrel Lind, Ed Ulrich, Adam Kielsmeier, Lynn Peterson and Molly Kielsmeier. Sec/Treas. is Colleen Schult. For more information and photos go to [www.facebook.com/spirithillogema4hfair](http://www.facebook.com/spirithillogema4hfair)

A spring planning meeting is set for April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at the Spirit Town Hall at 6:30pm.

Our Yesterday House is currently located at: **W1316 State Hwy. 86 in the town of Spirit, Price County next to the Spirit Town Hall.**

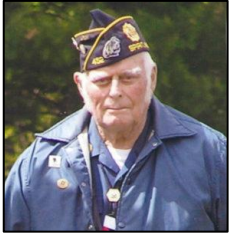
The Machine Shed will be rebuilt next year if funding can be raised to do so.

Tours of our buildings were cancelled for this year due to our relocating process. We hope to be ready to schedule tours again next summer. Tours will be free.

Mailing address: Spirit Historical Society, Inc. P.O. Box 621 Ogema, WI 54459  
Email us at [spirithistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:spirithistoricalsociety@gmail.com) Our website is [www.spirithistoricalsociety.org](http://www.spirithistoricalsociety.org)

Spirit Historical Society, Inc. is organized for educational purposes to protect, conserve and display buildings, artifacts and documents of historical value and interest in the Towns of Spirit and Hill in Price County and surrounding Spirit River Valley. S.H.S.I. is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit tax exempt organization.

# Obituaries

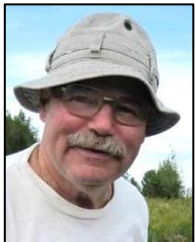


**Everett Dale Johnson**, age 80, of Friendship, while in route to Florida for the American Legion Run 2019, to raise money for disabled service members children, became a victim of an accident which caused his death on August 21, 2019. Everett was born March 10, 1939 in Hill Township, Price County, Wisconsin to Martin and Phoebe (Cutts) Johnson. He graduated from Prentice High School in 1959. Everett was in the Army, stationed in Korea as a combat engineer from 1962-1964. Everett married Florence Schneider in Colby, Wisconsin on July 23, 1966.

Everett worked on road construction in Milwaukee and Menomonee Falls before moving to Friendship, where he worked at Castle Rock driving truck and at the plant, Adams; Fischer Trucking, Fenwood, WI; Daily Express, Carlisle, PA; Jevic, New Jersey; Construck, Plover, WI; Brock Trucking, Vesper, WI; Retzloff, Berlin, WI; and Alsum Transport, Friesland, WI. He boasted of driving for sixty years – one kind of a truck or another, trailer, flatbed or drop deck. North, south, east, or west – where ever it took him, he was sightseeing.

Everett was a life member of the VFW Oxford Post 6003, life member of the Old Farmers Antique Club, life member of the American Legion Rider District #11, life member of the Knights of Columbus #6718, member of the American Legion Post 452 (47 years), and a guest member at American Legion Riders District 8 from Wisconsin Rapids. He enjoyed hunting, snowmobiling, bowling with the K.C.'s, riding his trike, working at the VFW Oxford 6003 for fund raisers, funerals, bingo – or whatever he could help with. American Legion Riders District 8, Wisconsin Rapids was so much closer than his District 11 – Everett helped District 8 to bring in the 14 Honor Flights at Mosinee (after he himself had gone on the Honor Flight). Everett raised money for Wreaths Across America, wreaths to be placed at King, WI.

Everett was preceded in death by his parents, Martin and Phoebe; his Ma, (Ruth) Johnson; brother, Elmer Johnson; sister, Louise Karlic; sister-in-law, Judy Molley; and brothers-in-law, Melvin Schneider and Verland Schneider. He is survived by his wife, Florence Johnson of Friendship; son, Dale Johnson of Friendship; son, Kenneth Johnson of Lake in the Hills, IL; grandson, Alan (Amanda) Johnson of SOMEWHERE; sisters: Mary (Kellen) Arnold and Audrey Allen; brothers: Frank Molley; Don (Janice) Johnson; Roger Abts; Ralph (Janet) Abts; Ronald Abts; and brother-in-law, Jack Karlic. Further survived by Sue (Art) Christofersen and Mairi Badon, many relatives on the wife's side, many loved nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.



**James R. Weigert** was born on April 5, 1946 in Ladysmith, WI, the son of Roy & Mildred (Woebbeking) Wiegert. Jim was a proud Vietnam Veteran – having served with the US Air Force from 1962 until his honorable discharge in 1966. Jim loved to fly and held his pilot's license for many years. In 197 Jim later was married to Joanne Nehring in 1997 and enjoyed spending time with her two children – Sara & Joe. 3, Jim married Joyce Stockhausen and together, they raised three children.

Jim ran a catering business for many years and loved talking with customers. He cherished being outdoors hunting and fishing, especially on the Spirit Flowage with his friend Dennis Loften. He also greatly enjoyed camping, traveling, playing cards and riding his motorcycle, but his grandchildren brought him the greatest joy.

Jim was a proud member of AA and attended meetings regularly. Jim was also a member of Vietnam Vets/Legacy Vets Motorcycle Club with the MidWest Region. He belonged to the American Legion Post 452 in Spirit and was a faithful member of Spirit Baptist Church where his dear friend Duane presides.

Jim will be deeply missed by his three loving children – Paul Wiegert of Fort Atkinson, Philip Wiegert of Jefferson & Elizabeth (Chris Topel) Bourke of Jefferson. Five siblings – Bonnie (Mike) Wagner of Newburg, Marilyn (Doug) Findlay of Oconomowoc, Linda (Mario) Maenza of Germantown, Robert Wiegert of Jefferson City, MO & Debra (Jim) Jenkins, McMinnville, TN. Jim is further survived by his three beautiful grandchildren, Katelynn, Logan, and Ashlynn Bourke. A former brother in law and dear friend Dennis Loften, his former son-in-law– Brian Bourke, his God Children – Kris Thompson & Matthew Loften and a loving friend Jan Pinter. Jim was greeted in heaven by his parents, sister – Janet, first wife – Joyce & beloved and deeply missed grandson – Connor James Bourke.



# Relocating Our Yesterday House

and putting  
into storage  
our historical  
artifacts until  
a new  
Machine  
Shed  
can be built.



On June 1, 2019 a work crew gathered to pack up and put into storage all of the organization's 'stuff'. The crew consisted of Barb Failing, Darrel & Luann Lind, Karen Baumgartner, Bill Hoffman, Darrell Pierson, Gary Failing, Dawn Meier & Cheryl Pierson.

Not shown are Mark Nyberg, JaNelle Nelson and LaVonne Meier.



The artifacts from the Machine Shed had to be taken down and boxed for storage until we are able to build a new Machine Shed at the new site at the Spirit Town Hall.



All the outdoor signs were pulled up and moved to storage. These will be used again at our new site.



Several file cabinets and countless boxes of artifacts, books, magazines and historical information were moved out of the basement and upstairs office.



All the books in the Liberty School library were boxed and hauled away for storage.



With the help of a tractor and loader, the entrance ramp into the Yesterday House was taken apart, railroad ties were loaded off to the side and all the decorative stone that made up the ramp was loaded up and moved.





Throughout the winter months all the legal technicalities were taken care of.



A rectangle beginning at point of origin (point A) located:  
64 feet from center of Four Oaks Road  
54.5 feet from NE corner of metal shed  
58.25 feet from NW corner of metal shed  
Then west to point B located:  
72.7 feet from NW corner of metal shed  
54.8 feet from NE corner of fuel tank cement  
58 feet from light pole  
82.25 feet from NE corner of town hall building  
Then north at 90 degrees for 75 feet  
Then east at 90 degrees for 80 feet  
Then south at 90 degrees for 75 feet to the point of origin.  
Landlord shall grant Tenant access to the site from the parking lot area on the south side of the site.

A location was agreed upon by the Spirit Town Board and Spirit Historical Society. A description and map was filed with the Register of Deeds in Phillips, WI and steel posts were driven to mark out our new location.

A contract was signed with a moving company, permits were acquired to make the move and we awaited the day when the Yesterday House would make its move from German Settlement Road to State Hwy. 86.

Advertising was done to inform the public of our intention to relocate and generous donations started coming in to fund our project. We are still seeking donations (private and business). With a minimum contribution of \$200.00 your name or your business name will be placed on a permanent word plaque honoring the Friends of the Spirit Historical Society who helped make the relocation possible.





Mid July an excavator was hired to prepare the new location. Top soil was pushed aside and the proper sized hole was made in the SW corner of our lot.



A cement footing was poured and loads of rock were brought in to fill inside and out.



Meanwhile back at Liberty School the process began to get the log building ready to move out. Our Yesterday House was jacked up and sets of wheels were put underneath the building. Long iron beams were in place in both directions to keep the building level as it was jacked up.



Once the building was safely and securely attached to all the wheels, it was pulled off of its location and parked next to German Settlement Road....ready to be hauled away.



Leaving nothing behind except an empty foundation that had served its purpose since 2003.





Early the morning of July 30<sup>th</sup> the crews showed up to start the big move. Michael and Toni watched as the old log house left their property.



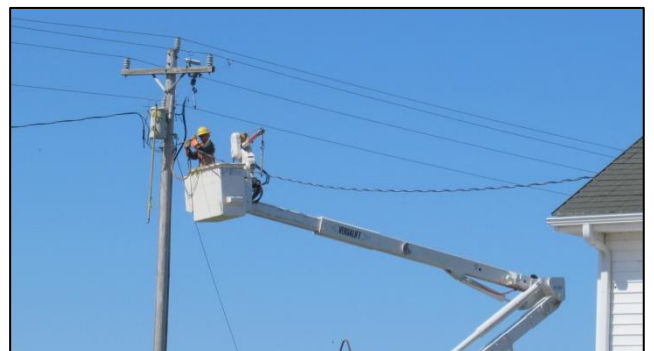
The route taken was west on Cty. YY to State Hwy. 102, then north to State Hwy. 86, then back east to the Spirit Town Hall. The big hills on YY required having a backhoe chained to the building to prevent any issues of going too fast down hill then to help pull up hill again.



The crew from Price Electric came from Phillips and volunteered their time to raise or remove wires to accommodate the almost 24 ft. of height needed to get the building down the road.

Price County Sheriff's Dept. supported us by sending officer Gabe Lind to serve as a free escort on the state highways.

A huge thank you goes out to all of them. They did an excellent job for us at no cost to our organization!







Once the building was beyond the parking lot, the truck was detached and a backhoe was attached by chain to pull the building up to the ramp by the foundation site. From there the truck became the winch that pulled the building down the ramp into position and the backhoe was chained to the back of the building to keep it from rolling down into the hole to quickly.



Cribbing was positioned on all 4 corners and the building was jacked up hydraulically until it was six feet above the footings, allowing for the foundation walls to be poured underneath.



All the wheels were pulled out from under the building. Ready for the next step of pouring cement foundation walls.







In order to make the site safe until walls could be poured, we put up a fence and warning signs to deter anyone from going under the building. Mark Nyberg, Scott, Katelyn & Derek Schult and Darrel & Luann Lind helped get the fence up.



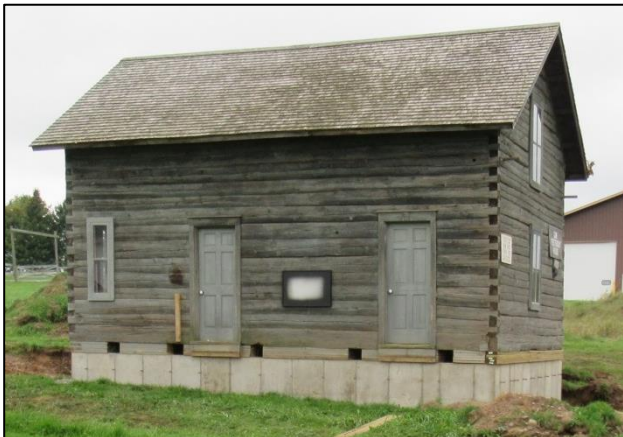
Four foot foundation walls were poured first. Then a few days later a floor was poured inside the walls. A layer of plastic and styrofoam was put down first. This floor will prevent any moisture from coming up from the ground onto the bottom of the building.



One last project evening was spent before the building could be put down on the foundation. Darrel Lind & JaNelle Nelson took down the fencing while Tim Nelson & Luann Lind added 2x8 treated boards to the bottom of the east and west ends of the building to level the bottom of the building all the way around.



On September 20<sup>th</sup> the building was finally lowered into place and all the steel beams and cribbing were removed.







After waiting for a VERY rainy fall to let up and before the frost had the ground frozen too deep, finally on November 7<sup>th</sup> an excavator was able to get in to our site to backfill around the building. A drain was installed from the SE corner of the footings out to the ditch to the east. This will take care of any water that finds its way to the bottom of our foundation walls.



For this year our project is finished. It will take the winter months to settle all the backfilled dirt.

Next spring there will be more leveling and landscaping. Topsoil will be spread over all the fresh dirt. We will then move our household display items back into the log home and start building a new ramp to access the front doors.

A plan is in place to plant flowers and seed down the rest of the area.

### **We are seeking donations**

(private and business) to help cover the expenses of the move. No donation is too small.

With a minimum contribution of \$200.00

your name or your business name will be placed on a permanent word plaque honoring the Friends of the Spirit Historical Society who helped make the relocation possible.

Help us relocate and preserve this collection of Spirit Area history.

We thank you in advance for your kind donation.

If you would like to help us complete this project, please send your donation to:

Spirit Historical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 621

Ogema, WI 54459

**S.H.S.I. is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit tax exempt organization.**



# A farewell picnic was held on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019

to say good-bye to Michael & Toni. Several days later they left Spirit to live on the west coast nearer their children. Their new address is:

**4700 SW Hollyhock Circle Unit 204, Corvallis, OR 97333**

This was the last picnic to be held by the Historical Society at the Liberty School site. Michael & Toni were honored with certificates of appreciation for the many years they volunteered to organize and run German Settlement History. Again we thank them for their tremendous service.



As usual a delicious pot luck meal was served at noon. There was a great variety of dishes all of which were very tasty. Thank you to each one who helped out with the meal.



It was a beautiful summer day. We were thrilled to see so many old friends show up to say their good byes and catch up on each other's lives and families.



There were many from the Rhody clan present to represent their spot in the history of Spirit and Liberty School. We got some of them together for a photo including Grace Ann, Donna, Vivian, Veronica & Ron, Jennifer and Don.



Of course grandkids and close family always make a picnic special!



# We sell books written by local authors

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Books by Jeanette Gilge**

“Pioneer Family Series”

		Quantity	Total
A Winter’s Promise	\$5.00	_____	_____
Never Miss a Sunset	\$5.00	_____	_____
All Things Heal in Time	\$5.00	_____	_____
Best of Intentions	\$5.00	_____	_____
Satin in the Snow	\$5.00	_____	_____
As Long As I Have You	\$5.00	_____	_____
<b>Set of 6 Pioneer Series</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	_____	_____
City-Kid Farmer	\$5.00	_____	_____

**Books by Carl Rhody**

The Saga of Spirit Valley	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley II	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley III	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley IV	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley V	\$7.50	_____	_____
<b>Set of 5 Saga books</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>	_____	_____

**Books by James Rhody**

Brant’s Bear	\$10.00	_____	_____
The Pleasure of the Sorrow	\$5.00	_____	_____

Shipping – Orders for \$10 and under – add \$3.50 > \_\_\_\_\_

Orders over \$10 – add \$7.50

Total Order > \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: Spirit Historical Society, Inc.

Mail to: Spirit Historical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 621

Ogema, WI 54459



# Spirit Historical Society, Inc.

## Membership Application

You are invited to become a member of S.H.S.I.

Spirit Historical Society, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) tax exempt organization whose mission is to protect, conserve and display buildings, artifacts and documents of historical value for educational purposes. Members are persons who contribute \$25.00 or more at any time during the year. Membership continues through the month of January the following year. As a member of S.H.S.I. you will be contributing to our mission, receive our newsletters and will be eligible to vote in person or by absentee ballot at the S.H.S.I. January annual meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Year \_\_\_\_\_

Categories: Please check one

\_\_\_\_\_ Swamper (Non Member) - \$1.00 to \$24.00 per year

**The following categories qualify you as a Member:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Sawyer - \$25.00 to \$49.00 per year

\_\_\_\_\_ Teamster - \$50.00 to \$99.00 per year

\_\_\_\_\_ Woods Boss - \$100.00 to \$499.00 per year

\_\_\_\_\_ Homesteader - \$500.00 to \$999.00 per year

\_\_\_\_\_ Settlement Builder - \$1000.00 or more per year

Please make checks payable to SHSI and mail to:

Spirit Historical Society, Inc.

P.O.Box 621

Ogema, WI 54459

**Thank you for your generous gift!**



**Spirit Historical Society, Inc.**  
Formerly German Settlement History, Inc.  
**P.O. Box 621**  
**Ogema, WI 54459**  
ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



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