

## Burlington Liars Club

*It all started, of course, with a lie.*

On a slow news week between Christmas and New Year's in 1929, reporters Otis Hulett, a noted prankster, and Manuel Hahn fabricated a news story about a lying contest between the Burlington police and fire departments. The patrolmen and firemen were sitting around the station on a New Year's Day, and wanted to see who could fabricate the biggest lie. The winner, hands down, was the Chief of Police, who denied ever telling a lie in his life. Picked up by the news services, the story gathered enough interest that the Associated Press contacted Hulett the following year for the name of the new champion liar. A winner was selected and the contest was rolling.

Each year lies poured into Burlington. Hulett formed a national, then a worldwide club. Membership was originally a lie and a thin dime. Today, inflation has pushed the price to a one-time fee of a dollar, and of course, the lie. From the beginning, however, membership has been restricted to amateurs, thus, denying membership to politicians. Hulett closed the club in 1979, but the Burlington Area Chamber of Commerce financed its reopening in 1980. The club, now a non-profit corporation, still sponsors its annual contest and the winning lie is announced each New Year's Eve.



## TALL TALES TRAIL

Some of the tall tales gathered since the inception of the Burlington Liars Club over 80 years ago.

“A great town for lying around.”

Officers of the **BURLINGTON LIARS CLUB**  
After due consideration of evidence submitted, do declare that

\_\_\_\_\_ is a Full Fledged Liar, entitled to every courtesy from Liars everywhere, and Honorary Member of our club for life.

Burlington Liars Club President

RULES: The Burlington Liars Club reserves all rights of publication, broadcast or otherwise disposing of lies sent to it, and all become the property of the club.

In future correspondence, please mention that you are a club member.



# Burlington

Area Chamber of Commerce

113 East Chestnut Street, Suite B  
Burlington, WI 53105  
Phone (262) 763-6044  
Fax (262) 763-3631

[www.burlingtonchamber.org](http://www.burlingtonchamber.org)  
[info@burlingtonchamber.org](mailto:info@burlingtonchamber.org)



# HISTORY OF TALL TALES TRAIL

## History of Tall Tales Trail

### 1 113 East Chestnut Street

#### **Burlington Chamber of Commerce/ Burlington Menswear**

The building's second story Cream City brick façade and graceful arched windows recall its past as it was accurately restored to its historic beauty. One of the earliest owners was Matthias Klingely in 1909, also a clothier. It is listed as a Historic Building in the National Historic Registry. In addition to Burlington Menswear, this building also houses the Burlington Area Chamber of Commerce, Visitor Center and Chocolate Experience Museum. [www.burlingtonchamber.org](http://www.burlingtonchamber.org)  
[www.burlingtonmenswearwi.com](http://www.burlingtonmenswearwi.com)

### 2 100 East Chestnut Street

#### **Ansay & Associates**

Although it housed many businesses in the past, the building is remembered by many as the Henney Drug Store.  
[www.ansay.com](http://www.ansay.com)

### 3 189 East Chestnut Street

#### **Chase Bank**

The original structure, built by lawyer Caleb Barnes in 1848, is the oldest building in the state built as a bank and still used for that purpose. [www.chase.com](http://www.chase.com)

### 4 492 North Pine Street

#### **The Coffee House on Chestnut & Pine**

This brick corner building, named the "Florence Block" after the builder's daughter, was constructed in 1888 by Thomas W. Buell, replacing an earlier wooden building.  
[www.burlingtoncoffeehouse.com](http://www.burlingtoncoffeehouse.com)

### 5 500 North Pine Street

#### **May's Insurance Agency**

This stately building, made of Bedford sandstone, was constructed in 1909 at a cost of \$80,000. Once the Bank of Burlington, it now houses the oldest Aetna Casualty Agency in Wisconsin. The third floor was originally a gymnasium complete with billiard tables and a basketball court, while the basement contained the local operators and switchboards of the Wisconsin Telephone Company. [www.maysinsurance.com](http://www.maysinsurance.com)

### 6 556 North Pine Street

#### **John's Main Event**

John's Main Event, owned by John Puntillo, has been located in downtown for a number of years. Stop in to see the beautiful original tin ceilings and tile floors. The restaurant/bar is known for its famous chicken sandwich and wraps.

### 7 596 North Pine Street

#### **Fred's Best Burgers**

In September of 1980, Fred Mabson bought a neighborhood pub called The Parkview. There was a lot of experimenting during the first few years until the World's Best Burger was born and that reputation has spread far and wide. [www.freds-burgers.com](http://www.freds-burgers.com)

### 8 700 North Pine Street

#### **Former Burlington Standard Press**

Founded in 1863 by abolitionist Lathrop E. Smith, the newspaper holds a long history of journalistic achievement. In 1984, the paper moved to the two-story brick structure, built in 1926 as a railway terminal. Loop tracks and a roofed boarding area once surrounded the building for passengers waiting for rapid transit electric train that ran from Burlington to Milwaukee. The business relocated to Dodge Street.

### 9 597 North Pine Street

#### **Rugan's**

Rugan's is in a completely remodeled 1895 building at the corner of Pine Street and Milwaukee Avenue. [www.rugans.com](http://www.rugans.com)

### 10 141 West Chestnut Street

#### **Wells Fargo Advisors**

Formerly housing Elsie's (women's apparel) until 1994, financial products & services are now provided here.  
[www.wellsfargoadvisors.com](http://www.wellsfargoadvisors.com)

### 11 417 Milwaukee Avenue

#### **Burlington Square**

This shopping center opened in 1978 with Reineman's True Value Hardware Store. The center houses a variety of retail and service businesses.

### 12 481 Milwaukee Avenue

#### **Bigelow Appliance**

Established in 1939, locally owned and operated, you'll find all major appliances & repair service.  
[www.shopbigelowappliance.com](http://www.shopbigelowappliance.com)

### 13 690 West State Street

#### **Gooseberries Fresh Food Market**

The Spiegelhoff family opened this grocery store in 1912 which later became a Pick N Save. The business name became Gooseberries Fresh Food Market, opening in their current location in June 2006. They offer a full service food experience providing gourmet meat, cheese, spirits, and so much more.  
[www.gooseberriesmarket.com](http://www.gooseberriesmarket.com)

### 14 35518 West State Street

#### **Burlington Glass**

Burlington Glass has been in business for approximately 40 years. The business is owned and operated by Mark and Karen Caliva. The shop handles all types of glass, repairs, custom picture framing, gift items and many other services.  
[www.burlingtonglassinc.com](http://www.burlingtonglassinc.com)

### 15 400 Milwaukee Avenue

#### **Town Bank**

Formerly First Banking Center, the current red brick building was finished in 1960. [www.townbank.us](http://www.townbank.us)

### 16 448 Milwaukee Avenue

#### **The Plaza Theater**

The Plaza Theater first opened in 1927 with a single screen and has become a 4 screen, first run movie house. [www.plaza4.com](http://www.plaza4.com)

### 17 425 North Pine Street

#### **Mercantile Hall**

Constructed before the turn of the century, the building has morphed from a mercantile (old school mall) to a department store, and most recently a furniture store that was ravaged by a massive 5-alarm fire in 2014. As the restoration crews worked removing the layers of soot and melted wires, the most amazing discovery was found - the original hardwood floors hiding beneath a fireproof polyester covering. Mercantile Hall is now an urban & industrial chic event venue in Burlington.  
[www.mercantilehall.com](http://www.mercantilehall.com)

### 18 400 North Pine Street

#### **Thrivent Financial**

This historic building was constructed in the early 1860's as the Western Union Hotel. In 2017 Scott Herrmann restored this building back to its original state. Thrivent Financial has occupied this building on the corner of Washington and Pine since 2009, helping people be wise with money.  
[www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com)

### 19 208 Washington Street

#### **Thrivent Financial**

During the restoration of 400 N. Pine Street, 208 Washington was restored and unveiled an old store front formerly a paint store. In 1927, the building was Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co., and, is now serving as Thrivent Financial. [www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com)

### 20 401 North Pine Street

#### **Flippy's Fast Food**

Flippy's Fast Food is family-owned and has operated in Burlington for 20 years. They specialize in Chicago-style food offering a variety of sandwiches including hot dogs, gyros, Italian beefs . . . just to name a few. [www.flippysfastfood.com](http://www.flippysfastfood.com)

### 21 166 East Jefferson Street

#### **Burlington Public Library**

Traces of the former 1917 post office were left when this tan brick, neoclassical building became the library in 1964. The new addition in 1987 closely matches the original exterior.  
[www.burlingtonlibrary.org](http://www.burlingtonlibrary.org)

### 22 300 North Pine Street

#### **Burlington City Hall**

Erected in 1925, this building once housed the library, police department and jail under its roof. In the basement, one could find an American Legion clubroom. [www.burlington-wi.gov](http://www.burlington-wi.gov)

### 23 224 East Jefferson Street

#### **Burlington Police Department**

This building built in 1982 houses the City of Burlington Police Department. [www.burlington-wi.gov](http://www.burlington-wi.gov)

### 24 225 East Jefferson Street

#### **2 Fancie Gals**

Built in 1910 as a residential home, it was purchased in 2017 by 2 Fancie Gals who recycle and repurpose furniture.

### 25 217 East Jefferson Street

#### **Bear Foot Yoga, LLC**

Bear Foot Yoga was established in 2009. After two years of searching for the right location and an extensive remodel, Bear Foot Yoga Healing opened in February 2013. They were the first facility in western Racine County fully dedicated to yoga and all its healing facets. [www.bearfootyogastudio.com](http://www.bearfootyogastudio.com)

### 26 113 South Pine Street

#### **Wanasek, Scholze, Ludwig & Ekes, S.C.**

Attorneys with more than 40 years combined experience and strong community ties, the firm handles family, business, criminal and estate planning. [www.btownlaw.com](http://www.btownlaw.com)

### 27 116 South Pine Street

#### **North Shore Bank**

Their mission is helping families thrive, businesses grow and communities flourish. Opening their branch in 1984, they celebrate over 30 years in Burlington.  
[www.northshorebank.com](http://www.northshorebank.com)

### 28 200 South Pine Street

#### **Village Clean Laundry & Dry Cleaning**

Formerly known as Bank of Burlington, M&I Bank purchased the bank in 1992. The bank was transformed into a Laundromat/Dry Cleaner & Plymouth Children Center in 2018.

### 29 156 South Pine Street

#### **Richter Marketplace**

Richter's Marketplace has been a close-knit family affair since 1947. Their new Burlington location was built in 2001 as Sentry Foods. Norm and Larry Richter are the current owners of the business under the new name of Richter's Marketplace.  
[www.burlington.richtersmarketplace.com](http://www.burlington.richtersmarketplace.com)

### 30 241 East Jefferson Street

#### **Fox River State Bank**

Fox River State Bank is the only headquartered bank in Burlington, Wisconsin. The bank was founded in 2003.  
[www.foxriverstatebank.com](http://www.foxriverstatebank.com)

### 31 400 North Dodge Street

#### **Hampton Inn**

Opened in 2011, the Hampton Inn is located downtown. The hotel has 54 beautiful rooms, a conference room, swimming pool, fitness center and complimentary hot breakfast every morning. [www.hamptoninn3.hilton.com](http://www.hamptoninn3.hilton.com)

### 32 340 Bridge Street

#### **Bahr & Kadlec, LTD**

This small professional firm offers more than 20 years experience in accounting, tax and consulting services.  
[www.bandkltd.com](http://www.bandkltd.com)

### 33 572 Bridge Street

#### **Adrian's Frozen Custard**

Across from Echo Park, Adrian's Custard has been serving award winning custard since 1974. Adrian's has occupied this corner since the 1930's and is well-known throughout Southeastern Wisconsin and Northern Illinois.

### 34 925 Milwaukee Avenue

#### **Bruesewitz Chiropractic**

Built in 1954, the building houses multiple businesses and offers light manufacturing or warehouse space for lease.  
[www.bruesewitzchiropractic.com](http://www.bruesewitzchiropractic.com)

### 35 1058 Milwaukee Avenue

#### **Big R Stores**

Built in 1986, this building housed K-Mart until its closing in 2011. The store remained vacant until 2017 when Big R opened making this their first store in Wisconsin. [www.bigr.com](http://www.bigr.com)