

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

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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
www.burlingtonmenswearwi.com

2 100 East Chestnut Street

Ansay & Associates

The building is remembered by many as the Henney Drug Store. 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

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

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

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. In the first few years there was a lot of experimenting, but the World’s Best Burger was born and that reputation has spread far and wide. 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 boarding area once surrounded the building for passengers waiting for rapid transit electric train that ran from Burlington to Milwaukee.

9 597 North Pine Street

Rugan’s

Rugan’s is in a completely restored 1895 building at the corner of Pine Street and Milwaukee Avenue. www.rugans.com

10 141 West Chestnut Street

Wells Fargo Advisors

Formally housing Elsie’s (women’s apparel) until 1994, financial products & services are now provided here.

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 and Home Mattress expertise. 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 of 2006. They offer a full service food experience providing gourmet meat, cheese, spirits, and so much more. 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

15 400 Milwaukee Avenue

Town Bank

Formerly the First Banking Center, the current brick building was finished in 1960. www.townbank.us

16 448 Milwaukee Avenue

The Plaza Theater

The Plaza Theater first opened in 1927 with a single screen and is now a 4 screen, first run movie house. www.plaza4.com

17 425 North Pine Street

Mercantile Hall

From its construction 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 and industrial chic event venue in Burlington. 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

19 208 Washington Street

Thrivent Financial

During the restoration of 400 N. Pine Street, 208 Washington was restored and unveiled an old store front formally a paint store.

In 1927, the building was Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co., and, is now serving as Thrivent Financial. www.thrivent.com

20 401 North Pine Street

Flippy’s Fast Food

Flippy’s Fast Food is family-owned and operated and has been in Burlington for the last 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

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

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

23 224 East Jefferson Street

Burlington Police Department

This building houses the City of Burlington Police Department. www.burlington-wi.gov.

24 225 East Jefferson Street

2 Fancie Gals

The house was built in 1910 as a residential home. In 2017, it was purchased and is now owned 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

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

27 116 South Pine Street

North Shore Bank

Helping families thrive, businesses grow and communities flourish, they celebrate 90 years throughout Wisconsin. www.northshorebank.com

28 200 South Pine Street

Village Clean Laundry & Dry Cleaning

Formally known as Bank of Burlington, M&I Bank purchased the bank in 1992. The bank was transformed into a Laundry Mat/ 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. The Burlington location was purchased 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

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

31 400 North Dodge Street

Hampton Inn

Opened in 2011, the Hampton Inn is located in downtown. The hotel has 54 beautiful rooms, a conference room, swimming pool, fitness center and free hot breakfast everyday. 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

33 572 Bridge Street

Adrian’s Frozen Custard

Just 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 and Rehab

Built in 1954, the building houses multiple businesses as well as light manufacturing or warehouse space for lease. bruesewitzchiropractic.com

35 1058 Milwaukee Avenue

Big R Stores

The building was built in 1986 to be the K-Mart store and closed in 2011. The store has remained vacant until 2017 when Big R purchased it. This is the first of its kind in Wisconsin. www.bigr.com