



2016 Lifetime Achievement Award Nomination Form

All nominees must have reached award criteria on or by December 31, 2015. Self-nominations are discouraged.

The following documents must accompany your nomination: 1) Two letters of critical testimony, 2) Samples of the individual's work or resume, and 3) Photographs of the individual. Optional documents that may enhance your nomination include: 1) Additional letters of critical testimony and 2) media coverage. Refer to the nomination instructions for more detailed information.

Nominee Information

Name of
Nominee

Organization

Work Status Paid staff member
 Board Member
 Volunteer - excludes board service
 Retired staff member

Mailing Address

City/Zip

Phone Number

Email

Date Reaching
Achievement

Nominator Information

Name of
Nominator

Phone Number

Email

Nominee Background (1,500 character max)

Nomination Statement (1,500 character max)

Jan Warner Retires from MCHS after over 50 Years of Service

A book could be written about Jan Warner, who has provided over 50 years of service to the Morrison County Historical Society. Make that three books; one for her work with the Morrison County Historical Society, one for her community service outside MCHS, and one to capture her prodigious memory.

Those who've had the pleasure of conversation with Jan immediately notice how historical facts related to Morrison County and Minnesota history issue forth with ease. She seems to know everyone and can share who they are related to as though she has pedigree charts stored in her mind. It's not uncommon for her to be able to recall where people lived within the county. She says her memory is genetic, passed down through the Nordlund line of her family. That's Book One of the Jan Warner Story.

Book Two is Jan's considerable volunteer service to the local community and to the state-wide museum field. Her interests lie primarily with community development, arts, environmental, and history organizations. While this list will likely not do justice to everything Jan has been involved with over the years, it's a great starting point for anyone wishing to write her biography. (It is roughly in chronological order.)

Camp Fire – Camp Fire leader - won the Wahkon Award for Imaginative Leadership
Parent Teacher Association
Little Falls Concert Association
Summer Bible School Superintendent
First Lutheran Church & First United Church
- Member of various church committees
Minnesota Museum Educators Roundtable
(became Minnesota Association of Museums) – founding member
Central Minnesota Historical Assembly – founding member, president
Minnesota Association of Collecting Agencies
Minnesota Aesthetic Environment Committee

Minnesota Natural Beauty Committee
Mississippi River Park Planning
Centennial Tree Planting Project -
Bicentennial Chairperson for Morrison County
State Bicentennial Heritage Commission
State Historic Records Advisory Board
4-H Leader
Gordon Rosenmeier Recognition Day – organizing committee
League of Women Voters – co-organizer, board member
Morrison County DFL



MCHS board member Deb Collis (left) presenting Art and Jan Warner a commendation from the board for their 40+ years of service to the organization. This was during the MCHS annual meeting at the Falls Ballroom, Little Falls, MN, October 15, 2005. #2006.16.14

Minnesota Preservation Alliance – member of steering committee to form organization
Institute for Minnesota Archaeology – member of the original board of directors, was made a lifetime member
Chamber of Commerce ad hoc arts council
Morrison County Arts Association (became Great River Arts Association) – founding member
Morrison County Art Train Project
Great River Arts Association – helped to organize, president
Maple Island Park Dedication & White Way Lighting Ceremony - organizer
Musser Weyerhaeuser Task Force

Governor's Design Team for the Little Falls Downtown Beautification Project
Lindbergh Drive Committee
Mississippi River Revival – board member, honored for her participation by MRR in 1990
Mississippi Headwaters Board
Cushing Women's Club – president, vice president
Cushing Community Club – board member
Cass Gilbert Depot Committee – founding member, chair
Little Falls Tourism Committee – advisory member
Little Falls Tourism & Convention Bureau – appointed by mayor
Little Falls Convention & Visitors Bureau – founding member
Mayor's Task Force 2014 (Little Falls)
Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums – board member
Little Falls Heritage Preservation Commission – helped found the commission along with City Administrator Rich Carlson
Great River/Great Minds (became Great River/Great People) – founder
Site Seers – founder
West Side Improvement Association – founding member
Region 5 History Coalition – organizer
Region 5 Resilient Region – participant for Morrison County
The Artisans – founder
Little Falls School District facilities planning meetings
Town 101

Like Father Pierz, who had a penchant for creating Catholic parishes in central Minnesota, Jan has a talent and passion for creating organizations, as is evident from the list.

In addition to her work with these organizations, anytime there was a community-wide planning effort, Jan would be there, along with her husband Art. While Jan often took a more public role in her service, Art was at her side putting in his own volunteer hours, primarily in research,



Jan Warner watching the work of cement contractor Joe Popp during excavation for basement addition on the Weyerhaeuser Museum, 1981. Photo by Mary Phillips for the Little Falls Daily Transcript. #1982.51.1

analysis, and documentation (including writing articles and bylaws for organizations), providing support and taxi service for Jan.

For her community service, Jan won the first Outstanding Woman of the Year award in 1984 from the Little Falls Jaycee Women. Jan and Art were both honored with the Little Falls Exchange Club's Book of Golden Deeds Award in 1994 for their extensive volunteer service.

It is difficult to gauge the effects of one's service while in the middle of it, but they can be far-reaching. David Grabitske, manager of outreach services for the Minnesota Historical Society, recently shared one of the long-term effects of Jan's work. Jan was part of a small group of people on the State Bicentennial Heritage Commission who created a process for distributing grants to Minnesota communities interested in celebrating the United States bicentennial. This process was adopted by Nina Archabal, who was working in the Minnesota Historical Society's grants office at the time and needed to update the organization's grant process. (Nina later became director of MNHS.) The grant process Jan helped to develop has since been adapted to the history-related Legacy grants that are distributed by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Book Two of Jan's community service would make for an epic documentary, yet there's been no mention of her greatest volunteer work, serving as executive director of the Morrison County Historical Society. That's Book Three in Jan Warner's Story.

together. Jan and Art immediately launched themselves into the daily life of the Society, which was housed in the basement of the Historic Morrison County Courthouse at the time. In 1965, Art was elected president and Jan was doing curatorial work for the organization. She slipped into the role of executive director fairly quickly, although wasn't formally named as the director until 1977. What the general public may not be aware of is that Jan served most of her 50+ years with MCHS as a volunteer. She was paid a pittance of a salary for about 15 years of her time.

In her service to MCHS, Jan was the public face of the organization, giving countless tours and presenting county history on the radio and in the Society's newsletter. She created exhibits, organized and packed artifacts, planned events, and managed volunteers and staff. She was involved in numerous preservation projects, helping to save the Cass Gilbert

Jan and Art got involved with the Morrison County Historical Society in 1963, during a time when the organization had become inactive and was being re-energized with the assistance of Arch Grahn from the Minnesota Historical Society. They became members that year, having consciously searched for an activity they could take part in

Depot, the Historic Morrison County Courthouse, and the Buckman Hotel. She worked to have architectural details preserved at the former Hennepin Paper Mill site, which has become Mill Park. She wrote the nomination for the Historic Courthouse to be placed in the National Register of Historic Places and was chair of a committee to gather history of the courthouse during Morrison County's sesquicentennial.

With all that, the project she takes the most pride in was her part in the construction of The Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum, which opened in 1975. Jan was the local point-person, the day-to-day contact who worked between the architect, donors, contractors, MCHS board and members, and the general public to get this world-class museum built. She helped design the museum's permanent exhibits, including writing the story of Morrison County through exhibit labels.

It is an understatement to say that Jan, through her tireless work with MCHS and throughout the community, has helped to shape the history of Morrison County. MCHS owes her and Art a huge debt of gratitude for their service.

Jan officially retired as executive director of MCHS on August 27, 2015. While she has no definite plans for retirement, she intends to continue her community involvement. Perhaps there is a Book Four in the Jan Warner Story.

- Mary Warner



Jan Warner (right) providing a tour of the Weyerhaeuser Museum for Joan Mondale (center), wife of U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale. The men surrounding them are agents of the Secret Service.

October 15, 1980. #1981.3.3

Jan Warner's Service in Pictures



Jan Warner watching the work of cement contractor Joe Popp during excavation for the basement addition on the Weyerhaeuser Museum, 1981.

Photo by Mary Phillips for the Little Falls Daily Transcript.



Jan Warner (far right) and attendees of a manuscript conservation workshop held at the Weyerhaeuser Museum, September 1977.

Jan Warner's Service in Pictures



Jan Warner (center right) providing a tour of the Weyerhaeuser Museum for Joan Mondale, wife of U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale. The men surrounding them are agents of the Secret Service.
October 15, 1980.



Jan Warner (left) and Julie Find at the entry of the Weyerhaeuser Museum waiting for the start of the Log Cabin Quilters' quilt show, May 4, 1985.

Jan Warner's Service in Pictures



Hildur Gustafson (left) and Jan Warner, waiting outside the Weyerhaeuser Museum to guide school tours, spring 1995.



Lucy Rosenberry Jones (left) and Jan Warner at the ribbon-cutting celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Weyerhaeuser Museum, August 27, 2005.

Jan Warner's Service in Pictures

Jan Warner speaking at an annual meeting of the Morrison County Historical Society, Randall, MN, September 2013.



Art and Jan Warner (back left) at a Region 5 History Coalition meeting in Staples, MN, January 2012.

Jan Warner's Service in Pictures



Jan Warner (center, laughing) giving a talk about the Little Falls Dam to attendees at the State Historic Preservation Conference, Little Falls, MN, September 2015.



**Jan Warner speaking at the program celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Weyerhaeuser Museum, Falls Ballroom, Little Falls, MN, 2005.
Art Warner is next to Jan.**

DOUGLAS A. BIRK, ARCHAEOLOGIST/HISTORIAN
2063 White Pine Point Trail SW
Pine River, MN 56474

23 February 2016

Mary Warner, Interim Executive Director
Morrison County Historical Society
The Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum
2151 S. Lindbergh Drive, PO Box 239
Little Falls, MN 56345

Dear Mary:

I am writing in support of Art and Jan Warner's nominations for Lifetime Achievement Awards sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums (MALHM). This letter specifically addresses my personal appreciation of Jan Warner and her far-ranging efforts to further the causes, public awareness, and standards of historical and cultural stewardship in the State of Minnesota.

I first met Jan Warner in 1972 while conducting National Register property surveys for the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. Her professional demeanor, her broad and precise familiarity with local and regional history, and her enthusiasm for gathering, curating, and sharing that history were immediately evident. Indeed, she is one of those grassroots dynamos, who, along with her late husband and associate Art, have had a lifelong passion for making their community (and a wide swath of central Minnesota) a better place to live.

Over the years, Jan has taken on myriad community projects with the wisdom of a hawk, the gentleness of a bunny, the industry of a beaver, and the tenacity of a bulldog. With regards to Minnesota history, she has created and seized opportunities, crafted initiatives, and built constituencies. Once involved, she works tirelessly and often *pro bono*. A part of her enduring legacy is getting things done in a forthright, positive, and timely manner. She has a remarkable and enviable track record of leadership with positive outcomes.

By the time I met Jan, she and Art were already deeply committed to reviving the stagnated Morrison County Historical Society (MCHS). She gave me a tour of the society's obscure storage space in the dusty basement of the county courthouse. I well remember the piles of boxes, papers, and objects. Over the previous decade, Jan had developed a studied command of those collections and a clear understanding of their historical value and potentials. She (and Art) also had a dream and a plan for the future.

Under their guidance and with the help of others, a few years later, the MCHS crawled out of that basement and moved, kit and caboodle, to a brand new facility on a scenic parcel of land overlooking the Mississippi River. The society's *Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum* is now an attractive, secure, state-of-the-art facility with well-conceived exhibits, carefully organized and accessible collections, exciting programs, and a friendly and knowledgeable staff.

A list of the many Minnesota organizations and activities in which Jan has engaged was recently published in the MCHS's high-quality newsletter. The list is way too long to recite here, but I must say that I am astonished by the full scope and depth of Jan's involvements with heritage commissions, advisory boards, preservation groups, and arts councils. Whether working as a hands-on volunteer or visionary leader--Jan has done just about everything from janitorial work, history radio broadcasts, and fund raising, to attending and hosting countless meetings, writing National Register nominations, and developing curricula, publications, and exhibits. Her long and ambitious service as the Executive Director of the MCHS has, in my estimation, helped make the society's museum/research center one of the most accommodating and respected within the State of Minnesota.

Mary Warner, 23 Feb 2016
Page Two

Despite Jan's alleged retirement, I suspect that she will continue on her mission to gather, preserve, and promote Minnesota history on both a state as well as a local level. I also expect that she will continue to demonstrate a steadfast dedication and enduring presence at the MCHS. Along with her life partner and associate Art Warner, I know of no one more deserving of the MALHM's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Birk
Archaeologist/Historian

P.S., A PARTNERSHIP

February 22, 2016

To the Directors of the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums

Re: Nomination of Jan Warner for Lifetime Achievement Award

We write in support of Jan Warner's nomination for the Lifetime Achievement Award. We write from the standpoint of independent scholars whose work depends on the invaluable assistance of archivists and librarians. Beyond that, we write of the very personal relationship through which we were able to tell the story of *The Gold Rush Widows of Little Falls*.

That relationship began in the spring of 1982, when we sent a letter (the first-class stamp cost us 18 cents) from our then-home in Montana to Jan Warner at the Weyerhaeuser Museum in Little Falls, Minnesota, telling her that we had come across a collection of nineteenth-century letters that could be traced to a family in Little Falls. To several families in Little Falls and Morrison County, as a matter of fact.

Three days later the phone rang. It was Jan. And that was the beginning of a collaboration conducted through letters, phone calls, and on-site visits, a collaboration that resulted, nearly a decade later, in the publication of our first book on western women's history. What we brought to Jan was a treasure trove of the personal papers of James Fergus, one of Montana's early and influential pioneers. Much of that material contained details concerning the life of James's wife, Pamela--and of the lives of several other women in the area who, in the early 1860s, were left behind to manage family and business affairs on their own when husbands and fathers set out from Morrison County for the goldfield of the West, promising to return home or to send for their families once their fortunes were secured.

What Jan provided for us was the other half of the story, the story as lived by Pamela and her fellow "widows." It turns out that recovering that story was not an easy undertaking for Jan. From the outset, she realized that at the time of our query her archives held relatively few materials on the earliest period of Little Falls and Morrison County, though she and others had been working to expand the records of that era.

From our perspective, Jan is the researcher's ultimate friend, not only in terms of her vast knowledge of the materials in her care, but also in her ability to make connections and to explore possibilities. Over the years, that special gift has worked to the advantage of many researchers and countless visitors to the Weyerhaeuser Museum. In our case, she welcomed us on our first trip to Minnesota, opening all museum resources to us and arranging interviews for us with officials and townspeople of Little Falls and the surrounding area. Then, as the story of the "gold rush widows" came together, she brought us back to attend civic celebrations where we shared the story that she and so many others had helped us tell. And upon the publication of the book, she spearheaded a series of Minnesota Humanities Council-sponsored presentations in Fergus

Linda Peavy · Ursula Smith

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Falls, Mankato, St. Cloud, and St. Paul, where we were able to shed new light on the lives of families impacted by the westward movement.

In sum, Jan Warner has devoted nearly fifty years of her life to locating, documenting, preserving, displaying, and celebrating the written and material artifacts that provide a window into the public and private lives of those who lived the history of which we write. We can think of no one more deserving of your award than Jan Warner.

Respectfully,

Lida Leavy
Archie Smith

February 22, 2016

Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums
Minnesota History Award Program

Dear jurists,

Jan Warner needs few introductions to anyone in the field of Minnesota local history. For the past 50 years she has been an integral part of the work of history in the state – both visibly and behind the scenes. A simple letter like this cannot adequately capture her immeasurable contributions, but this may serve future historians as an introduction to three enduring statewide contributions to Minnesota local history: grants, museum facilities, and best practices.

The Minnesota Historical Society strove to assist local groups of people with organizing county historical societies from about 1922 through 1981 when the last of the county historical societies formed. Although the Morrison County Historical Society formed in 1936 and had many successes over the years, but the late 1950s its cyclical life had reached a low that by 1962 suggested a need to reorganize. Arch Grahn, who led the Minnesota Historical Society's local history services (then called Field Services), called the meeting that Jan and her husband Art decided to attend. From that meeting Art emerged as president and Jan essentially was the volunteer executive director, both guiding the development of MCHS for half a century.

After a few years the organization had reestablished its capacity and reputation such that Jan was appointed to the Minnesota American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. While part of the commission, Jan along with others created a flexible and accessible grant program that made a significant difference in the way that Minnesotans marked the historic occasion of the nation's 200th birthday. While the Minnesota Historical Society had a grants program since 1969, then-MNHS Deputy Director Nina Archabal wanted the program to have the remarkable transparency of the program that Jan and her colleagues created. Archabal invited one of Jan's colleagues, Karen Humphrey, to chair the new MNHS Grants Review Committee in 1977, bringing Jan's grant program to the Minnesota Historical Society. In 2009, the Minnesota legislature directed that money for history grants from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund be distributed through "existing mechanisms." What Jan and others created for the American Revolution Bicentennial underpins the current legacy-funded Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grants program. To a degree, Jan Warner has influenced the way that history grants have been made for last 40 years.

Also in the in the 1970s, Jan Warner pioneered museum facility construction. Jan collaborated with legendary historical architect Foster Dunwiddie to create the Charles A. Weyerhauser Memorial Museum (1975). Earlier museum-purpose buildings such as the Minnesota Historical Society (1915), and buildings for the county historical societies in Mower (1948), Grant (1959), Carver (1960), Nobles (1962), Freeborn (1965), Koochiching (1966), Pope (1966), Houston (1968), Kandiyohi (1969), Lac qui Parle (1972), Murray (1972), Olmsted (1972), Kittson (1973), and Otter Tail (1973) had been built around storage and exhibit needs. While some clearly planned for adjacencies and architectural appearance, few considered climate control to provide preventative conservation for collections in their initial design. The Weyerhauser Museum built amid the energy crisis of the 1970s was a pioneer for

comprehensively addressing capacity, scientific requirements, along with a significant architectural statement that honored the high calling of history organizations. While some of the subsequent 23 new museum buildings after the Weyerhauser still inadequately addressed climate, many new facilities and additions in the 1980s through the 2000s certainly have taken a similar approach that Jan Warner piloted for the state. The experience of those comprehensive building projects greatly informed the book, *Building Museums: a handbook for small and midsize organizations* (2012). And, it is quite likely that the current general consciousness about museum environments grew at least in part from the work Jan did to create the Weyerhauser Museum and has advocated since.

Jan Warner has also authored an extensive body of work on best practices of history organizations, much of which is posted on the Morrison County Historical Society's website. These writings are about methods that she piloted and pioneered in her organization, and that could be a path forward for others facing similar circumstances. Her constant encouragement of improving our results through greater professionalism has been an example to all. These writings are an enduring legacy for those that work to save and share Minnesota history.

I am truly grateful for all that Jan Warner has done to advance the cause of history in the past 50 years. She certainly has shaped an effective Morrison County Historical Society to skillfully serve the people of Morrison County. Beyond those county borders, however, Jan has also created a remarkable body of work that I see having influenced so many other parts of the state. Jan Warner is truly deserving of recognition for all of her efforts, and I am humbled to be writing on just a few of her many accomplishments.

Sincerely,



David M. Grabitske, DBA
Manager, Outreach Services | Heritage Preservation
651-259-3460 | david.grabitske@mnhs.org

Marilyn J. Chiat, Ph.D.
11484 Fairfield Road West, #405
Minnetonka, MN 55305
952-544-6434 chiat@earthlink.net

February 15, 2016

Mr. Dustin Heckman
Goodhue County Historical Society
1166 Oak Street
Red Wing, MN 55066

Dear Mr. Heckman,

It is indeed a privilege and honor to write a letter of testimony for the awarding of the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museum's Lifetime Achievement Award to two outstanding people, Arthur(Art) and Jeanette (Jan) Warner, who together and individually have contributed so much to the documentation and preservation of Minnesota, and in particular, Morrison County's history. Their accomplishments in the field of local and state history are many and will be recounted by many individuals who have had the privilege to work with them on their many and varied projects. But their efforts have gone beyond the field of local history, they have also been committed to their larger community that was recognized and honored when they were presented with the Book of Golden Deeds Award by the Little Falls' Exchange Club in 1994 for their extensive volunteer service. I could go on and list many of Jan and Art's awards they received and accomplishments they achieved over the more than fifty years they resided in Little Falls, and in particular in their relationship to the Morrison County Historical Society where Jan was named Executive Director in 1977 and Art became its first Board President in 1965. It is in this context that I had the opportunity to first meet Jan and Art and witness first hand their outstanding ability to not only gather community support for a research project, but their leadership capabilities that are so important if a project is to achieve success, as this one did.

In 1989 I received grants from the American Association of State and Local History (the first awarded in Minnesota) and the Minnesota Historical Society for the Project to Document Places of Worship in North Central Minnesota. The counties participating in the project were Aitkin, Cass, Crosslake, Crow Wing, and Morrison, as well as the Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians. The project would require the participation of each of the county's historical societies' directors in recruiting volunteers to undertake the research under their supervision and that of

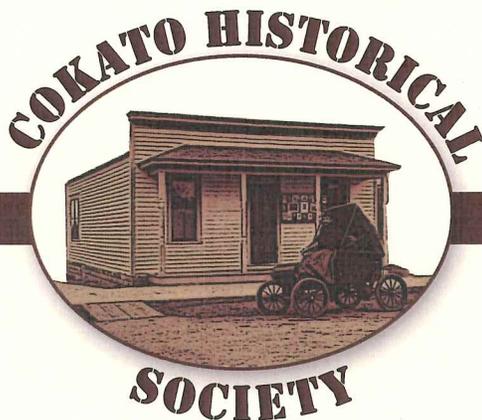
the project's directors. A training manual, written by the director, was used to prepare volunteers for the project. It is at this point that the county directors had to demonstrate their ability to attract volunteers willing to commit time and effort to the project, and it is here that I witnessed Jan's ability to do just this. Without going into an extensive explanation of the project, suffice it to say that Jan with Art's assistance was able to recruit the necessary volunteers, guide them through the training sessions, and oversee their work in the field. As Jan stated in a bulletin sent out by the Morrison County Historical Society in March, 1989, "...this project is one that the entire community can take part in." And, indeed the entire community did. Researchers compiled data including documents and photographs on over eighty houses of worship in Morrison County as well as conducting oral interviews with many congregants. That data is now in the archives of the Morrison County Historical Society where, according to its current director, Mary Warner, it has been used by many researchers.

Since the successful conclusion of that project in the mid-1990s, I have kept in constant contact with Jan and Art, both on a professional and personal basis. When I was asked to write a book by the National Trust for Historic Preservation on America's religious architecture, I consulted with Jan regarding a church in Morrison County that I wanted to include. She graciously provided me with all the information I required. In addition, I have spoken to both Jan and Art on numerous occasions about research projects we were both engaged in. Their suggestions and advice have always proved helpful.

Art has left us and Jan has recently resigned as Executive Director of the Morrison County Historical Society, but their outstanding contributions to their community and the State of Minnesota will always be there for others, such as myself, to benefit from, and for that I am grateful, and so should all of us involved in preserving our past for future generations. For that reason alone I urge you to consider Jan and Art for the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Cordially,

Marilyn J. Chiat, Ph.D.



COKATO MUSEUM AND AKERLUND PHOTO STUDIO

WWW.COKATO.MN.US/CMHS/

23 February 2016

Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums
Willmar, MN 56201

To whom it may concern:

Please accept this letter as my whole-hearted recommendation for conferral of the Alliance's *Lifetime Achievement Award* to Art & Jan Warner of the Morrison County Historical Society.

For many years, both Art and Jan worked diligently to bring attention to local history in their area. Even more importantly, they worked to extol the enduring value of local history across the state at a time when that field was largely being ignored. Their tireless efforts (some of which came with understandable frustration) helped pave the way for an entire generation of younger professionals in the field to demonstrate how local history can be a vital part of a community's composition.

As someone who came into the field in the early 1990s, I was a beneficiary of the Warner's efforts. They were without a doubt people who set a good example for us younger historians, and helped articulate the many ways local history could be more than just a building with "old stuff on shelves". Their energy and passion were certainly something I noted, appreciated, and tried to emulate.

It also bears noting that they did much of their work humbly, rarely trying to draw attention to themselves. Instead they wanted to work to be observed, shared, and spread far and wide. In that vein, their lasting contributions to the field of local history will likely never be fully measured or appreciated.

I am honored to be able to make this recommendation to the Alliance.

Sincerely,

Mike Worcester
Museum Director

Turnstone Historical Research

275 E. 4th St., Suite 790 ~St. Paul, MN 55101~Phone: 651-310-0601~ Fax: 651-222-7338

February 23, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Art and Jan Warner for the Lifetime Achievement Award sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums.

I do not remember the first time I went to do research at the Morrison County Historical Society, but I do remember all the times I heard about it before I ever went there. My mother, Helen White, who had worked before as a staff member of the Minnesota Historical Society and later was a free-lancer and publisher in Taylors Falls told me about Morrison County and about the splendid people, Jan and Art Warner who were guiding lights there. My mother had high standards and she made clear to me that Morrison County Historical Society was a wonderful place and the Warners were wonderful people.

Later on when I began to work on the project on Ojibwe photographs which led to my book *We Are at Home*, I am sure my mother asked me: "Have you talked to Jan Warner yet?" I did of course and then went there to do research, around 1987. Jan was very helpful to me and I loved doing research there. The building is one of the most beautiful of any historical society in the state and it is a lovely place to do research. I'm sure in my mother's eyes it gave her the feeling of a kind of Japanese architecture that she loved from her time in Japan, a sense of serenity, of a connection to nature, and to history and to its community. And I, who was born during parent's time in Japan, love the building too.

I have appreciated working at the Morrison County ever since my first visit. In terms of county historical societies, it is a state-of-the art organization, encouraging of scholarly research while at the same time connected to the public and to the community it serves.

Because of their role in making the Morrison County Historical Society the kind of institution it is, I strongly support the nomination of Art and Jan Warner for the Lifetime Achievement Award sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums.

Sincerely,
Bruce M. White, PhD
white067@umn.edu



February 12, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support the nominations of both Art Warner and Jan Warner for the Lifetime Achievement Award sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums and I am absolutely delighted to do so.

I met both Art and Jan in 1994 when I began work as the Morrison County Administrator and we worked together on many projects and community initiatives over the course of the next 14 years until my departure from that job in 2008. I say that I met Art and Jan because I do not recall seeing just Art or just Jan ... ever. Simply put, they were inseparable and both zealously committed to preserving the history of Morrison County. More than that, though, they were just as zealous in their commitment and passion to advancing the community of Morrison County in the broadest sense of the term.

I worked with them every year on the county's appropriation for the Historical Society—which, as an aside, was never enough. I worked with them to assist in setting up reasonable and affordable benefit approaches for the staff as the Weyerhauser Museum, the home of the Morrison County Historical Society. I never once worked on an issue related to the museum or the Historical Society when I didn't work with Art and Jan. Their presence in these active roles within the Society and the museum pre-dated me by decades and continued until just very recently after my departure.

I don't think it an overstatement to say they *were* the Morrison County Historical Society and, by sheer force of will and personality, they *built* that museum from scratch. The Society thrives today because of the solid foundation they laid and nurtured over decades of service; and, the museum is a priceless jewel second to none in Greater Minnesota. They introduced the idea of curation of the museum's holdings to ensure they were not just stored, but they would be properly preserved for generations to come. They were one of the first historical museums in Greater Minnesota to have a paid, trained Curator on staff. They tirelessly marshalled volunteers for event after event to highlight the rich history of Morrison County and to keep it fresh and alive for present generations. They were many years my senior, but I frequently got tired just watching the expenditure of energy they could muster for the Society, the museum, and the preservation, presentation, and interpretation of Morrison County's history.

That, in and of itself, given their passion and dedication over

Our Vision: Being Minnesota's favorite place.

Our Mission: Serve well. Deliver value. Drive results.

Our Values: Be responsible. Treat people right. Build a better future.

Timothy J. Houle
County Administrator

County Administrator's Office
Historic Courthouse
326 Laurel Street, Suite 13
Brainerd, MN 56401

Office: (218) 824-1067

Toll Free: (888) 829-6680

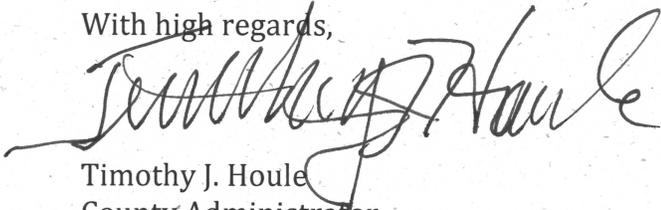
Fax: (218) 824-1054

www.crowwing.us

decades of selfless service, should be enough to make them deserving of the honor of this Lifetime Achievement Award. But that would not be the whole story. Art and Jan, once again inseparable, throughout their life could be found at any community gathering where there was an art display, performance art, or a cultural event of any kind for they keenly understood the building blocks of a vital and energized community did not just include a vibrant history, but also involved the *creation* of future history by our actions within the community today. That passion and dedication to creating and sustaining a vibrant community extended to their volunteering their time, their talents, and their treasure to a wide variety of community events and initiatives, a small accounting of which would include education, providing for those who are most vulnerable in our society, economic development, and community development. There were very few community advancement events or initiatives that took place during my entire 14-year tenure with Morrison County that did not include the presence and active participation of Art and Jan Warner.

Both Art and Jan are well known and much loved in their community. Art's passing and Jan's retirement (really retiring this time!) leave a significant hole which will be nigh on impossible for any other two people to fill. It will take the collective energy of a lot of people to replace the energy, dedication, and enthusiasm with which Art and Jan blessed the community. I cannot fathom that you could come up with a more deserving couple of people—an inseparable couple in their own right—to receive the honor of this Lifetime Achievement Award. They are the most deserving of recognition for their lifetime of contributions to their community across a broad spectrum of interests than anyone I have known in my 21 years of public service. I am honored, privileged, and delighted to supply this recommendation for a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums for Art Warner and for Jan Warner.

With high regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Houle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some overlapping letters.

Timothy J. Houle
County Administrator

TJH/

'VOLUNTEERISM' WAY OF LIFE FOR WARNERS
Little Falls Daily Transcript, May 8, 1978

One of four people in the United States does some volunteerism, according to a Gallup Poll. A 1974 Minnesota Poll found that one of two adult Minnesotans did volunteer work "during the past month." The dollars and cents contributions of volunteers would be impossible to assess. Each of our lives is touched by volunteer services.

Morrison county has hundreds of dedicated volunteers; some give only a few hours a week, others contribute hundreds of hours. We chose Mrs. Jan Warner of Little Falls, to represent all volunteers since she is a well-know Morrison County native whose wide-ranging interests include almost every age group.

Our visit took place in the Rosenmeir Room of the Weyerhaeuser Museum. The Morrison County Historical Society's Board of Directors requested that Jan oversee the management of the building and develop programs for the museum's present future.

Conversation ranged from mothers (her own and herself), to Morrison County, to music (her family's and the Heartland Symphony), to marketing techniques (a seminar she will attend, to Martin (Charley, that is). "I'm interested in so many facets of life," Jan said.

The Weyerhaeuser family financed and built the attractive museum and presented ot to Morrison County in memory of their father, Charles Weyerhaeuser. Much of the credit for the museum's inception, the long years of planning and development, and now its day-to-day activities should be given to the Historical Society's present president, Art Warner and his wife, Jan.

"Their leadership," according to Chuck Stone, an active member of the Historical Society, "provides the museums's continuity which is critical in these early years. Without Jan's support the job would be a lot harder-- she provides enthusiasm, she's helped keep the society viable and looking toward the future.

The Warners' membership in the Historical Society began with a postcard inviting them to a meeting some 20 years ago. "We had returned to Little Falls after a long absence," Jan recalled. "Art's army service and his college training were completed. He had a job in Little Falls.

The young couple were, and still are, active in their church, First Lutheran Church. Jan helped start the first women's circle and served as Sunday school superintendent.

"My only complaint was that the church tends to separate the family--each in separate groups, nothing for couples. The postcard suggested this might be a way for husband and wife to share an interest,"

"I've always been interested in Morrison County history-- any history," Mrs. Warner explained. "Preservation of history involves many area, environment, ecology, etc." As museum director, an unpaid position except for mileage, she lectures in schools, at service clubs, and church groups, to whoever wishes to hear the message of history's importance in today's world.

"Children learn so little about city and county history in schools -- that's one job the museum can do here. It's important to preserve our history, but there must be a balance between preservation and progress; one must not get in the way of the other," Mrs. Warner said.

As a member of the Minnesota Aesthetic ^eEnvironment Committee, the Minnesota Natural Beauty Committe, and the Mississippi River Park Planning ^{Project}, Mrs. Warner also is a part of her state's planning for the future of its natural beauty. The Centennial Tree Planting Project was one of her most successful committees, with many of the county's resource groups cooperating in a common effort.

"Helping others was a philosophy taught me by my parents-- to do things without monetary reward," Mrs. Warner said. Jeanette (Jan) Pigman Warner's parents, the Earl Pigmans, still live in her native Cushing, where Jan's mother was born, the daughter of Swedish immigrants.

"People in the county did for one another. My father was a kind of a 'community handyman.' People came to he garage-gas station when they needed help. He could do anything -- and often did, without pay -- as a neighborly gesture.

Jan was the Pigmans' only child. "Mother and Dad worked side by side in the station;

mother pumped gas and waited on customers, when needed, and I washed windshields. When World War II came, and the gas shortage, we moved to Minneapolis to find work. I graduated from West High School and worked for an optometrist until Art and I were married. My parents moved back to Cushing and even today they still work together in their furniture refinishing business."

"Art and Stacy and I came back to Little Falls to live, and in the next years Jill, Glenys and then Erik were born. There was PTA, Camp Fire, and the Concert Association. Art and I originated the husband-wife PTA program co-chairman. That seemed to work well. There were the carnival committees, and more lately, membership on the School Boards Basic Minimum Requirements Committee. I was in Camp Fire for five years. In fact, the only award I ever received was in Camp Fire. It was the Wahkon award for imaginative leadership. I was delighted!"

When Nancy Zarns of Swanville, Weyerhaeuser Museum curator, first came to work, knowing little about the job, she met Jan and they soon were friends. "I found," Nancy said, "that people don't work for Jan, they work with her. If I had my choice I'd like to grow up to be like Jan," she smiled broadly at that thought. "She's a fine teacher, interested in everything, anxious to learn more and to share her knowledge with others."

The three Warner daughters are interested in music, they sing and play instruments, and are involved in the arts. Their talent and interest in the performing arts was a factor in Jan's membership and leadership in the Area Arts Council, the County Arts Association, and the publication of Charley Martin's book of poetry, Voices of Yesterday.

Stacy, a College of St. Benedict graduate, is a staff member of the Carpenter Shop, a local Christian coffee house, where she and her two sisters often share their musical talents with the young people who come to the shop. Erik is a typical 10 year old. Cub Scouts activities are his latest interest. "I suppose our homelife was a little different from other homes--my parents were always busy, but never too busy to do things with us," Stacy said. "I respect anyone who takes action when there's something to be done. That's like my mother; she's willing to do the work herself if it needs to be done."

Does Mrs. Warner ever tire of being a volunteer, ever think about working for a salary?

"Not really. Of course I get tired sometimes, but when you give service you don't do it on your own, you draw strength from the community--you feed on the community. You get more out of serving than you ever put into it. The people you meet, the friends you make, you can't measure that in money," Mrs. Warner said.

"As far as a salaried job is concerned, in our family money is not the most important. My family comes first. As a volunteer I have plenty flexibility. Who knows what the future will bring -- perhaps I would like working some time again. But not now, while the children are at home. "I like what I'm doing right now!"

R.W.

History of Morrison County's past

"If they (visitors to the town) want to know what the community was like, that's not reflected there (at the Lindbergh Center)."

The Weyerhaeuser Museum is almost one of the town's best-kept secrets. While Lindbergh's home, as a national monument, gets the limelight, visitors are almost surprised to learn that there's a museum only a short distance away.

"We get a lot of the visitors that the Lindbergh Center gets, about half as much because, of course, it's a national landmark," Ms. Warner said.

The two institutions, however, don't compete for the attention of tourists, she said.

"I really feel strongly that the two complement each other, but that one should not be competing with the other, no way."

The first question the out-of-towner usually asks about the museum is an obvious one: Who was Charles Weyerhaeuser?

Back in the late 1800s, virgin forests blanketed Morrison County. Saw mills soon appeared after the first dam and mill were built at the "little falls" of the Mississippi River in 1849.

One of the first mills was called

the Pine Tree Lumber Company, organized in 1891 by two partners, Weyerhaeuser and R.D. Musser.

The two men operated a large saw mill and planing works on the west bank of the river at Little Falls until 1919.

The idea to dedicate a museum to Weyerhaeuser was a natural once the ball started rolling to build a new museum.

"It's a pretty typical story that a lot of historical societies go through," Ms. Warner said. "Our museum, like many others, started in a little room in the basement of the county courthouse.

"We wanted to get out of the courthouse basement. There was a furnace down there, and heat pipes."

The Morrison County Historical Society invited some members of the Weyerhaeuser family to a meeting to talk about the society's future plans.

"They liked what they heard," Ms. Warner said. "They decided we had some goals that they liked."

The family made a contribution, which, ultimately came to be a memorial to Charles Weyerhaeuser.

The building was constructed in 1975. It was designed, Ms. Warner explained "to be sort of an artifact itself."

Built in the Greek Revival style popular among early settlers of the county, the museum features operating wood shutters, panelled wood doors, rough-sawn, wood beam ceilings and steeple-tipped brass hinges on the doors — all designed, Ms. Warner said, to give visitors a "feeling of the past."

An addition was put on a couple years ago, designed to fit in exactly with the original structure.

Inside, the museum, using artifacts, exhibits, photographs and the written word, tells Morrison County's story.

At the museum's core is Ms. Warner's philosophy that every town must "promote what is unique to your community."

"The water power is the central part of it," Ms. Warner said, "because we had the falls, of course."

"We have to refer to ourselves as a saw mill town, not a logging town. The logs were cut farther north and sawed here."

In addition to rooms full of exhibits, the museum contains, among other things, a multi-purpose room, used for meetings and research, a

MUSEUM

Continued on Page 25



HISTORY IN STORAGE — Jan Warner, director of the Charles Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum in Little Falls, holds an antique iron as she stands amid historical artifacts in the museum's storage room. The museum tells the story of Morrison County's past, dating back to organization of the county in 1856. (Daily Dispatch Photos by Jim Sloan)

Weyerhaeuser Museum tells st

By JIM SLOAN
Staff Writer

LITTLE FALLS — So you figure that if you know about Charles Lindbergh you know all there is to know about Little Falls history?

Not by a long shot, according to Jan Warner, who runs a museum just a short distance from Lind-

bergh's home.

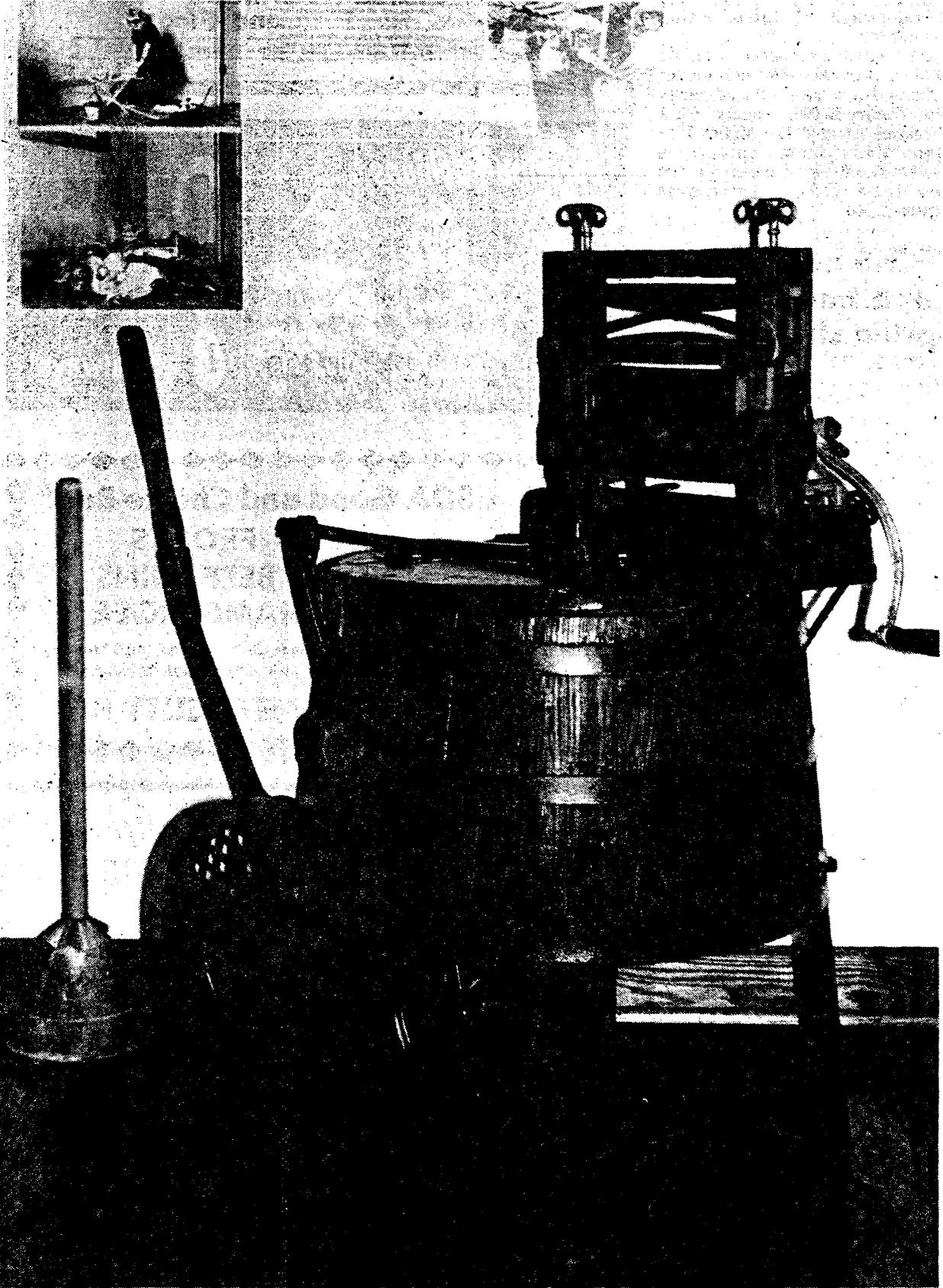
At the Charles Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum, she claims, you'll learn that "Lucky Lindy," despite his fame, was only a small part of the town's history.

"If we were to rely on the Lindbergh's history, that only goes back to the 1890s," she said. "Morrison

County was organized in 1856.

"I think he's really important to our history because he became a world-wide hero, but there's two parts to history as I see it.

"One part are those who became heroes — Lindbergh, Sinclair Lewis — and the other part is the history of the community itself.



A LONG WAY FROM MAYTAG — An antique washing machine is one of many historical artifacts in the Weyerhaeuser Museum. As an added feature, the machine is shown in use in the photograph mounted on the wall.

MUSEUM

Continued from Page 15

library stocked with books on local history and a manuscript storage area.

The museum is run by the historical society, which in turn is overseen by a nine-member board of directors. Funds come through donations, society memberships and the Morrison County Board of Commissioners.

While both the Lindbergh Center and the museum are part of the same, state-operated park, the two structures are distinct entities.

"We have no connection with the

Lindbergh Center," Ms. Warner said. "They are run by the state historical society, and we are run by the county historical society."

The park itself is operated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday all year, and from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday afternoons in the summer (May to October).

"Right now, we're in the process of getting ready for spring," Ms. Warner said.

To raise funds, the historical society will conduct a "Collector's Fair" from 2 to 5 p.m. March 18 at First United Church in Little Falls.

"These are not antiques," Ms. Warner said of the fair, "just people who like to collect interesting things."

Director Has Many Years Of Dedicated Service

By Stella LeBlanc

It is not easy to give Jan Warner credit for the work she has done for the Morrison County Historical Society because so much of it has been done without publicity. From the limited information found in the Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Museum correspondence file and in the New and Notes, an incomplete summary has been gathered.

A letter from Arch Grahn, field director of the Minnesota Historical Society, dated Nov. 27, 1962, stated that the Morrison County Historical Society had ceased to function. He scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, Dec. 4, 1962 at 7:45 p.m., in the Morrison County Courthouse. Ralo Bailey was elected president of the society in 1963. A year or two later, Art Warner became president. From that time on, Jan Warner worked very hard to build up an outstanding society.

It became traditional to have a very special Christmas party. The annual dinners in August or September also were enjoyable occasions. For several years a historical display was put up in the little round hut at the county fair in Little Falls. Jan was often called on to speak on the history of Morrison County.

After much work by all those involved, bids on a new museum were opened Nov. 29, 1973. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held in March of 1974. By March 4, 1975, the Morrison County Historical Society was able to host an open house in the new building.

Before moving into the new building, many hours had been spent in the basement of the old courthouse taking inventory of the artifacts. In the new building, planning and arranging the exhibits required a great deal of work.

From March 1976 to June of that year, 3000 school children visited the new museum. In addition to guiding groups through the display areas, other work in the museum includes: getting oral histories, identifying pictures, restoring artifacts, giving out historical and genealogical information, filing, accessioning, and helping people do research.

Some organizations concerned with history and having the Warners among their membership include: Central Minnesota Historical Assembly, State Historical Records, Advisory Board, Steering Committee of the Minnesota Association of Collecting Agencies, and Steering Committee Minnesota Museum Education Roundtable.

While Jan Warner was involved in all the above tasks, she did not neglect her role as daughter, wife and mother. She brought a son into the world -- a real living doll for three sisters to enjoy.

It is difficult to list the accomplishments of Jan Warner without mentioning her husband Art. They work as a team.



Jan Warner

Historical Society Enjoyed Christmas Party

By Norma Nelson

The Annual Christmas party of the Morrison County Historical Society featured a Colonial America Christmas. Members were asked to bring a food typical of that era to the Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Museum for a 4 o'clock potluck supper.

A Christmas tree festooned with popcorn, paper chains, pine cones and other typical early American decorations welcomed the guests into the Christmas season.

A filmstrip of early Williamsburg was a part of the evening's entertainment and further developed the early American theme.

Warner gets honor from Jaycee Women

By MARY PHILLIPS

Times Staff Writer

Jan Warner doesn't know how she fell for such a story.

She hurried off to the Oaks Supper Club Monday night for what she thought was a board of directors meeting, and ended up Little Falls' Outstanding Woman of the Year for 1984, courtesy of the Little Falls Jaycee Women.

Warner is the first person to receive the honor, which will become an annual award from the Jaycee Women.

The well-known volunteer director of the Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum, the lady who has more Morrison County history on the tip of her tongue than anyone, was surprised and happy.

She has said that recognition for women's efforts in the community has been slow in coming.

"But I have mixed emotions about getting it myself," she said today. "For everything I have been involved with there are faces and names that pop into my mind who assisted me or pushed me with either their help or finances. Men, as well as women, I should say. I have received the recognition, but so many people have made it possible."

Warner, according to her daughter, Jill, who nominated her, has been a full-time housewife, mother of four and "professional volunteer" for 23 years.

"It began when the old museum in the courthouse basement needed a curator and Mother volunteered," Jill said.

Warner's love for history and her dramatic flair for story-telling makes her a popular speaker in classrooms and service clubs.

Several state and national organizations have asked her to serve on their boards. She is a member of museum and historical committees, and once chaired a county tree-planting project and the Morrison County Art Train project.

Warner plans and watches over the activities at the Weyerhaeuser mu-

seum and has become an unofficial spokesperson for anything historical in Little Falls — the Burlington-Northern depot, the old courthouse, the old high school and a passel of old homes and churches.

Her other interests include the DFL Party, League of Women Voters, Cushing Women's Club, Little Falls Chamber of Commerce and her church.

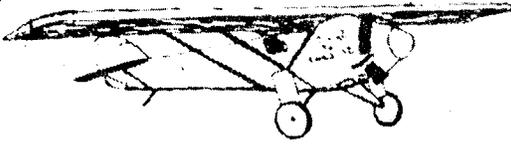
As a member of the board of directors of the Minnesota Institute of Archeology, overseers of the Fort Duquesne excavation north of Little Falls, Warner will continue to have one ear cocked for news of discoveries to bring people to the city.

Daily Times, St. Cloud, Minn./ Tues., Feb. 14, 1984



Jan Warner
Outstanding Woman of the Year

LAND OF LINDBERGH

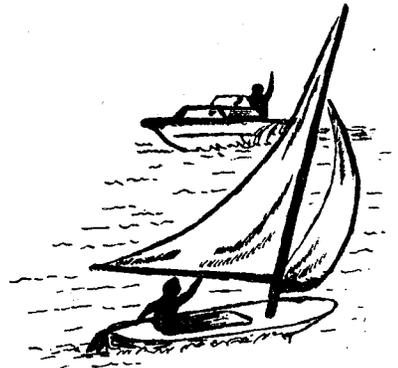


LITTLE FALLS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

~~318 Northeast First Street~~

202 S.E. 1 Ave. Telephone 612/632-5155

Little Falls, Minnesota 56345



February 16, 1984

Jan Warner
605 N.E. 4 St.
Little Falls, Minn.

Dear Jan:

Hand it to the Jaycee Women to pay honor and recognition where it is long overdue! Congratulations on your selection as Woman of the Year!

I had thought that perhaps you were a little overage in grade to be with the Jaycee Women, but I know you are young in spirit. I know they could not have selected anyone as deserving as you for the honor. I am well aware of many of the projects on which you have offered your time and talents. I am sure there are many more that I have never been familiar with.

Let me take this opportunity to thank both you and Art for the many hours you have both spent in support of Chamber projects for our community. They are too many to enumerate, but you were both always on the spot. Our community has been enriched in many ways by your efforts. Thanks for that terrific attitude and spirit.

Sincerely,


Glen Kraywinkle
Manager

sr



BOOK OF GOLDEN DEEDS AWARD PRESENTED TO HONOR VOLUNTEERS ART AND JAN WARNER

Copied from the Morrison County Record, dated November 13, 1994

Text and photo by Joyce Moran

According to Dr. James Gehant, member of the Little Falls Exchange Club, the Club's Book of Golden Deeds Award is given annually to those who have volunteered their services without expecting any recognition. "The Award is our way of showing appreciation for their good deeds," he related at the award's presentation banquet held Thursday evening at the Oaks Supper Club. He then proceeded to present the 1994 Award to Art and Jan Warner.

As the banquet's featured speaker, Chuck Stone pointed out, "We have a remarkable museum because of Jan and Art, and the history of our region continues to live." When one realizes that Jan has been the volunteer Executive Director of the Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Museum since it opened in 1975, and Art has been the President of the Morrison County Historical Society for most of the last 30 years, he or she understands more fully the meaning of his statement.

Jan, the daughter of Earl and Lillian Pigman, was born in Cushing. After attending school in Cushing and Little Falls, she graduated from West High School in Minneapolis in 1949. Her days of employment took her, among other places, to KLTF Radio, WDAY-TV and the Little Falls Daily Transcript. The list of her volunteer involvement is extensive. It includes being a Campfire leader, a summer Bible School superintendent, a member of various church committees, a member of the steering committee for the formation of the MN Association of Museums, a member of the steering committee for the formation of the MN Preservation Alliance, a member of the original Board of Directors of the Institute for MN Archaeology, the Bicentennial Chairperson for Morrison County, as appointed by the Governor, being on the State Bicentennial Heritage Commission, serving as a 4-H leader, being on the Governor's Design Committee for the Little Falls Downtown Beautification Project, being on the Little Falls Festival Committee, and serving as the banquet chair of the Lindbergh 60th anniversary celebration.

Currently, in addition to being the Executive Director of the Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum, Jan is President of the Great River Arts Association, President of the Cushing Women's Club, board member of the Cushing Community Club, advisory member of the Little Falls Tourism Committee, a member of the Mayor's Task Force 2014, a member of the Finance Committee at First United Church, a board member of Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums, and a lifetime member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Minnesota Archaeology.

Art was born in Minneapolis, the son of Alfred and Helga Nielsen Warner. After graduating from Vocational High School, he went on to graduate from North Dakota State University. His places of employment include Germany with the U. S. Army, the Morrison County Highway Department, Larson Boats and Morrison County Social Services. After being with the latter for 30 years, he retired in September 1991.

Art's volunteering services include working with the Chi Rho Advisory Board, the First Lutheran Church, the Boy Scouts, the 4-H, the Tri-Cap Board of Directors, the Kiwanis Club, the Lindbergh PTA, the Jaycees, the Preserve Our Land Committee, the Governor's Design Team for Little Falls, the Washington Playground Ad Hoc Committee, Little Falls festivals and First United Church.

Currently, in addition to being the President of the County's Historical Society, Art is a member of the Little Falls Planning Commission, a member of the Little Falls Historic Preservation Commission, a member of the Worship Committee at First United Church, an advisory member of the Little Falls Tourism Committee, a member of the Mayor's Task Force 2014, and continues to do volunteer work at the Weyerhaeuser Museum.

"After hearing all they've been involved in, perhaps we should introduce Art and Jan to each other," said Stone as he continued to pay tribute to the Warners. He then went on to emphasize the couple's part in getting the book of Charlie Martin's poems published, their part in getting local artists to paint pictures of the county's historic places, and the "trusting relationship" they developed with Bob and Sarah Modd [*sic Maud*] Weyerhaeuser Sivertson [*sic Sivertsen*] who, over the years, have quietly donated extensively to the construction of the Weyerhaeuser Museum.

Concluding his testimonial to the Warners, Stone stated, "We won't ever realize how much they've done until people start trying to fill their shoes. Please God, let them live forever."

In accepting the award, Art said, "We're deeply honored. There are a lot of other people out there who are doing volunteer work and who are just as worthy. It's the volunteers in the community who keep it going."

Stating she had made a lot of friends through her volunteer work, Jan, in accepting the award, went on to thank all those who had volunteered their time to assist her over the years. She also thanked their four children who, because their parents were involved in so many projects, had to make sacrifices themselves. But I believe they also gained from our example," she added. "They're all involved in volunteer work themselves now."

Concluding, Jan stated, "I guess I've always believed in what my mother taught us. That's 'If you give of yourself, it'll come back to you'."

Museum Sundries - Art & Jan

At the Pike Commemorative Dinner held on October 16, 2005, the board and staff of the Morrison County Historical Society took an opportunity to show appreciation for the forty years of service Art and Jan Warner have dedicated to the Weyerhaeuser Museum and county history. It is difficult to summarize forty years into a quick article, especially when the subjects have often taken on several complicated tasks simultaneously.

I wrote this article using past minutes of the Historical Society. These were an exciting treasure that I had trouble keeping to myself when discussing museum-related issues with Jan. The presentation was a secret, so I couldn't let it slip that I was looking at old minutes or Jan would know something was up.

During the New Business portion of the annual meeting dinner, board member Deb Collis slipped up to the front of the room and kindly read this piece. I would have become a blubbing mess if I had done so. Deb then presented a gift of recognition to Art and Jan from the board: A beautiful, clear glass pitcher engraved with the names of the Weyerhaeuser Museum and Historical Society, along with the year. The pitcher was filled with a colorful array of flowers.

Following the recognition, Jan spoke, modestly giving credit to past and present board members, donors, and staff, as if she and Art were no more than wallpaper in the history of the Society. We know better. They are the glue that holds this organization together and makes it a "premiere" Historical Society in the state.

Art spoke next, thanking everyone for the recognition. He continued the annual meeting by saying he was afraid to ask for any other new business because he didn't know what to expect.

Cheers to Art and Jan Warner. They make work at the Historical Society pure joy.

The names "Art and Jan Warner" are synonymous with the Morrison County Historical Society. They have earned this distinction through a commitment to the Society that has lasted over forty years. Art's name appears on a membership role in 1963, within a year after the Historical Society was re-energized by Arch Grahn of the Minnesota Historical Society. Art was elected to his first stint as Society president in 1965. At the March 4 annual meeting that year, "Mrs. Warner proposed keep-

ing a Scrap Book of photographs and articles of current events in Morrison County." (MCHS minutes, March 4, 1965) Thus, began Art and Jan's long association with the Society.

The Morrison County Historical Society was officially incorporated in 1936. It was an outgrowth of the Works Progress Administration, which put a handful of local people to work collecting the histories of long-time area families. The Society operated out of a dark, crowded basement space in the Historic Courthouse at the time Art and Jan joined. Jan set out to rearrange the space to display artifacts "to better advantage." (MCHS minutes, Oct. 14, 1965) She suggested to the board that "this should be done with a view to making the museum more educational and interesting for school children." (MCHS minutes, Oct. 14, 1965)

Art had a few goals of his own for his first year as president. He wanted the Society to work toward the preservation and marking of historic sites, create a booth for the County Fair, and establish a traveling exhibition. The minutes of the Society show that all of these goals were seriously pursued. One of the historic sites under discussion was Pike's fort. The Society was concerned about the placement of the monument, the meeting minutes suggesting that its location was not ideal.

As the Society ramped up its activities and public services, it became apparent that a new museum building was needed. Members investigated a variety of possibilities and plans took years to reach fruition, culminating in the opening of The Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum thirty years ago, in 1975. Art and Jan were fully entrenched in the project, with Jan having



MCHS Board member Deb Collis with Jan & Art Warner, who were recognized for 40 years of service to the Historical Society, Oct. 16, 2005, during Pike Commemorative Dinner at Falls Ballroom. Photo by Glenys Warner-Holman.

to convey to contractors and construction crews that she certainly did know what she was talking about when it came to building construction. She also worked with John Low to design the exhibits and write exhibit labels. Meanwhile, Art concerned himself with such details as selling the first property purchased by the Society for the museum, getting insurance, and having the burglar alarm and telephone connected. At this time, he also continued his presidential duties, having served all but one year in this office between 1965 and 1975.

The museum needed a director, but a qualified one could not be found. In June, 1975, Sr. Mary Venard Niehaus, secretary of the Society, suggested that the position be opened to Jan, because she had already been acting in this capacity. She declined, but continued directing day-to-day activities at the museum. She was not officially named as Museum Director until sometime in 1977.

Art and Jan are inseparable. They

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initially joined the Historical Society because it was an activity they could share, without being split into work groups by gender. They weren't looking to escape each other's company as other married couples sometimes do. To the great benefit of the Historical Society, they have complemented each other's talents beautifully.

Jan has served as the public face of the museum, speaking to innumerable groups; presenting local history on Partyline and in the Society's newsletter; leading the charge to save important historic sites; directing interns, volunteers, and staff; and serving on countless state-wide boards and committees. Behind the scenes, she has created exhibits, packed and organized artifacts and archival materials, and dreamed up all sorts of events, which she loves to revolve around themes. She could have been a party planner . . . maybe, when she retires.

Anyone who knows Art realizes that he is not particularly comfortable with speaking in front of people. With much throat-clearing and a soft-spoken demeanor, he does a fine job of it. He loves detail and has worked tirelessly on the legalities of operating the Society, along with keeping close attention to the organization's finances. He is fond of creating spreadsheets and budget reports that easily show the staff and board how money moves in the organization. Art also makes a great chauffeur for Jan.

Working together, Art and Jan have turned The Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum into a world-class facility, one that exceeds people's expectations of county historical societies. It is their love of each other and local history that have made it so.

~Mary Warner
Museum Manager

MCHS welcomes artifacts and archival items that are in good condition and deal primarily with county history. If you are interested in donating an item to the collections, feel free to give us a call 320/632-4007.



DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

by Jan Warner

Receiving recognition for our years of involvement with the Morrison County Historical Society was totally unexpected, and a wonderful gesture on the part of the Board of Directors and Staff. We have enjoyed forty years of association with countless people that we would otherwise not have met. The first person who comes to mind is Stella LeBlanc. Stella and I spent hours upon hours together, sorting, arranging, doing research and planning for the future. From her I learned how to pronounce French-Canadian names. We visited the White Earth cemetery where Allen Morrison, the County's namesake, is buried. She is only one among hundreds who have made significant contributions to the growth of the Society and to planning for a new facility.

There is no doubt that the Society would not be what it is today without the generosity of Robert and Sarah Maud Sivertsen and the late Carl Weyerhaeuser,

the daughter and son of Charles A. Weyerhaeuser. Their donation of The Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Memorial Museum lifted the Society from a small county museum to a premiere museum and research facility. It is gratifying that the grandchildren and even the great grandchildren of Charles Weyerhaeuser now show interest in the museum.

The engine that runs any organization is its Board of Directors. The Society has been blessed with dedicated people who have kept a watchful eye on the policies and the funds. Fiscal responsibility has kept the museum afloat. Credit also must go to staff members who keep daily tabs on museum operation. Fuel for the engine is supplied by the members and donors who have volunteered their time and supplied money.

Thanks also must go to the Board of County Commissioners. Throughout the years the Society has had the support of the Commissioners. The present Commissioners all take a personal interest in the County's history.

We have been richly rewarded to serve with so many people. Thanks to all who have made this effort possible and have given us so many wonderful friends.

Crude Beginnings

Seventy years ago a small group of people began collecting artifacts, information and memorabilia from the pioneers who had settled Morrison County. This group of founders included Mrs. J. K. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Stilwell, Mr. Val Kasperek, Mrs. R. L. Cochrane, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Gibson, and Mrs. Julius Jetka. They organized the Morrison County Historical Society and soon new members joined. As the collections grew a museum space was needed to house the items. The County provided a room in the basement of the courthouse. The room was small with not much head-room due to the heating pipes near the ceiling. One small basement window faced the west. As the collections grew the exhibits spilled into the hallway. A big furnace faced the museum's doorway from the opposite side of the hallway.

The artifacts were exhibited in cases donated by stores. Those not in cases were hung on walls. Tags attached to the items identified their use and who donated them. There were two metal file cabinets, not enough space for the manuscript collections. Boxes filled with papers were shoved into every available space. There was no provision for the conservation of the items and little was known about the elements which damage precious items.

In spite of these crude beginnings, it is to these founders that we owe much for their foresight. Some of the most important items in the museum's collections were gathered in these early days. It is our duty to carry out the work that was begun seventy years ago. Perhaps we could all pay tribute to their efforts with an extra donation to carry on the work of the Morrison County Historical Society.

~ Jan Warner



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Weber to compete for state Triple A award

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Little Falls graduate honored during annual Ag Arama at U of M - Crookston
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Section B

Fort Ripley man has one long commute — he works in Russia

By SHEILA MCCOY
Staff Writer

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Roger Knopik of Fort Ripley crosses the International Date Line (IDL) on his commute to work. It takes him nearly four days to arrive to his workplace. Knopik is one of three American equipment supervisors working at an oil drilling site on the Russian island Sakhalin, just north of Japan. Contracted out by Cisco Equipment, Odessa, Texas, Knopik said he works with Exxon Mobil, which has the advanced technology that is needed to reach oil that is difficult to get to.

“At Sakhalin, we have what we call ‘sweet oil’ as it’s low in sulphur. It’s as good as you can get it from the ground,” he said.

Knopik said the Sakhalin-1 project holds several world records in extended reach drilling and records for nine of 10 of the world’s longest wells. The O-14 well that was drilled at Chayvo field offshore to the northeast of Sakhalin Island has a depth of 44,000 feet and a horizontal reach of 39,000 feet, he said.

Knopik said the oil site produces 250,000 barrels of oil per day.

On a rotational work schedule, Knopik said he works for eight weeks, seven days a week, on 12-hour shifts. Then he returns home to the United States for four weeks, unless he is called back sooner.

“We have conference calls for about 15 minutes every day, except for Sundays, where we just basically give a progress report,” he said.

Knopik said that he and the workers live in a totally enclosed camp and sleep in barracks. The nearest village is an hour’s drive away.

“While those in supervisory positions get their own room, lower-level management share a room with one other person. Ordinary

workers are split into four persons per room,” he said.

In the summertime, there are approximately 1,200 workers on site, but fewer in the winter, he said.

Compared to Russian standards, Knopik said he eats very well onsite and that they are served various Russian dishes. Sometimes they are given meals, like steak and burritos, that are more familiar with the western culture.

“The burritos are really the highlight of the week,” he said.

It was through a string of events that Knopik became involved in the oil industry.

After graduating from Pierz Healy High School in 1972, he joined the Army for three years, but then moved to Alaska to work for an airline. A few years later, in 1978, he became a field repairman for Caterpillar Equipment in Seattle, Wash., which ultimately gave him connections and friends within the mining, logging and oil industry.

Knopik took his first trip to Russia in 1992, right after the iron curtain fell, when he delivered equipment for Caterpillar.

“At first I was kind of skeptical of the Russians because of all I had heard, but



(020716-KnopikRussia)

Staff photo by Sheila McCoy

Roger Knopik enjoys being home stateside for a few weeks before returning to the oil drilling site in Russia.

the people were very friendly. They also wanted to learn about life in America, if it really was like what they had seen in American movies,” he said.

When Knopik learned

“There’s a price to pay, working on a rotational shift. You have to count the cost before you get into it.”

—Roger Knopik

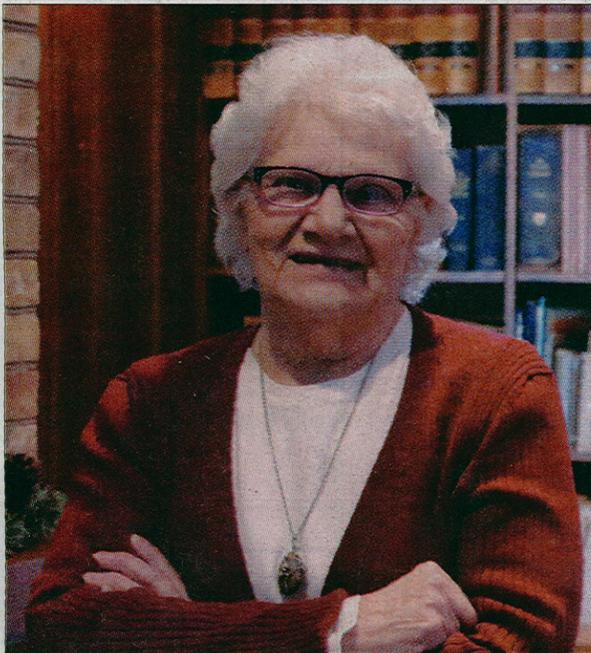
about the Sakhalin-1 project that was about to be piloted, he expressed his interest in

joining the adventure. He then quit his job at Caterpillar Equipment and joined Alaska Interstate Construction in 2002.

“We co-pioneered the place and started to assemble the oil site in Russia,” he said.

When the job for Alaska Interstate Construction was done, Knopik said he stayed behind and joined Cisco Equipment. He oversees 20-25 Russian employees.

“The workers there are (Continued on Page 12B)



(020716-JanWarner)

Staff photo by Gabby Landsverk

Jan Warner has retired from her role as executive director with the Morrison County Historical Society after more than 50 years of service.

Retiring from MCHS, Warner says history ‘can’t be pinned down’ — neither can she

By GABBY LANDSVERK
Staff Writer

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Jan Warner, longtime director of the Morrison County Historical Society (MCHS), has retired, after playing a major role in the organization for more than 50 years.

Her career includes a lengthy list of community service, leadership and other activities; work with the PTA, First Lutheran Church, 4-H, the Morrison County DFL, Town 101, the Tourism and Visitors Bureau, and the West Side Improvement Association, to name just a few of many.

“These aren’t things that I did by myself, Warner was quick to point out, however. She credits the community, her family, and the culture and history of Morrison County for the opportunities she’s had.

Most were volunteer positions, including at MCHS, where only 10 years of her time as executive director were paid, with the help of

grant funding. Far from a problem, this community engagement was a role Warner embraced.

“I didn’t want a 9-to-5 job, I didn’t want to be pinned down,” Warner said. “I was basically an at-home mom that was also taking care of the museum.”

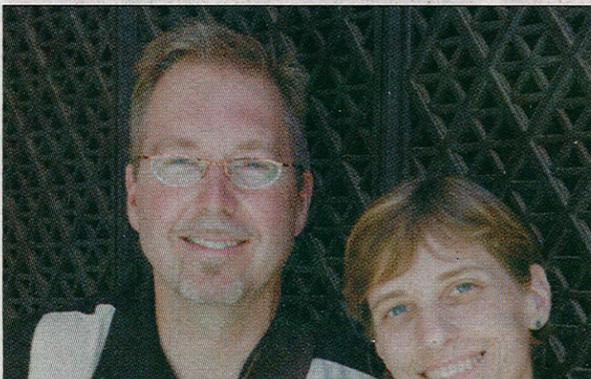
Her wide, varied participation in local events, from education to politics to art, was a reflection of her interests.

“It isn’t just history that’s my passion, it’s culture. And you can’t separate them. You can’t separate the land from the people. It’s all intertwined,” Warner said.

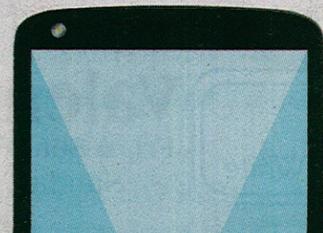
Warner herself has a history deeply rooted in the county, state and nation.

Born in a farmhouse in Cushing, she traces part of her family history back to before the Revolutionary War, while her mother’s side of the family emigrated from Sweden just a few generations ago.

Throughout her life and work, however, Warner (Continued on Page 12B)



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Jeff, Kelly, Nancy

Warner; Retiring from MCHS

(Continued from Page 1B) has shirked the limelight, preferring instead to accomplish things behind the scenes.

"I didn't want my name to be the face of what I was doing. I wanted the projects to stand alone," Warner said.

Despite the recommendation of more than a few friends, family members and associates, Warner has never run for government, nor does she plan to.

"I've never been interested in political office. I've always felt I could do more on the side," Warner said. "That's just not me, and I've got to be me."

Currently, a large part of Warner's interest is in figuring out how to bring historical and cultural engagement to the next generation.

"It is so hard," Warner said of getting people interested and involved in their community's history. "I feel that if children don't learn the history of their community, they don't value their community."

History isn't limited to the past, Warner adds, but can affect the future — without knowing the history of their town and beyond, it's much more difficult to see the connections within and between communities, and thus move forward toward a better world, she said.

"There are so many things we've stopped short on. ... My desire is to do a complete analysis of the community and figure out: where does this community fit in?" Warner said. "I think we're still looking at ourselves as a singular community. ... I don't think people are thinking big enough."

She said that's reflected in the shrinking population of rural areas, as young people grow up, move away, and never return.

"They go away and say, 'There wasn't anything there (in their hometown). But if they don't learn about it, of course there's nothing there,'" Warner

said. "I think they have to be engaged."

This is something Warner and her late husband, Art, worked hard to cultivate in their children.

One of Warner's daughters is a pastor; another helps people with special needs.

She has four children, as well as eight grandchildren and, recently, a great-granddaughter, Logan, less than two months old.

"It's very rewarding to see that it gets passed on," Warner said of teaching children to appreciate culture and history.

Family has always been at the core of her work at MCHS, Warner said — she and Art joined the Historical Society together in 1963.

"We wanted something we could do as a family," Warner said. "It looked like something we would enjoy."

Warner met Art after her family moved to Minneapolis.

The couple began dating at age 17, the beginning of a romance that lasted more than half a century.

"We did everything together," Warner said. "It was the most rewarding after he retired. We could just spend so much time together."

During that time, they led the Historical Society together, with Art serving as president, and jointly the couple earned many accolades, including the Book of Golden Deeds Award.

"He said we complement each other," Warner said. Art was a quieter, more introverted personality, compared with his wife's charismatic, social and high-energy style.

"It was good because I tend to have a million ideas and somebody needs to slow me down," Warner said.

Aside from work, the couple shared many of the same hobbies, including music, and enjoyed attending concerts and visiting the Schubert Club in Minneapolis.

"We had such a broad variety of interests," War-

ner said. "It's hard to pin us down."

Art passed away just 10 days before the couple would have celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. That, Warner said, is when she knew it was time to move on from her work.

"We had talked about retiring. He had said he wanted to finish his term, which he didn't get to do," Warner said. "After he died, I just didn't want to do it anymore."

Warner added that while retirement is bittersweet, she's leaving MCHS in very capable hands, namely, with daughter-in-law Mary Warner and curator Ann Marie Johnson.

"I'm hoping that I've taught them a few things that I know," Warner said. "They're very well-prepared. They can handle this place, no problem at all."

Although she's left the office, Warner has no plans to let that stop her from doing work, and she already has a long list of research topics she'd like to explore.

"My passion is working with the history of the Mississippi (in Morrison County) ... I want to keep working on that," Warner said. "It's never really been looked at in a continuum. ... What I would like to do is bring those stories together and tell why they're important."

Warner hopes to have the chance to accomplish this project since her health has been promising thus far.

"I've been extremely lucky to be very, very, healthy," Warner said. "Doctors haven't made much money off me."

Retirement, in other words, is just another step in Warner's long, lively path of discovery, one that doesn't seem to be slowing down any time soon, as long as there are questions left to answer.

"It's a journey that takes a lot of different detours," Warner said. "I still have some projects lingering. ... But I'll do whatever looks like fun."

Barnes; Valentine's Day concert

(Continued from Page 1B) themes, latin music and a few originals. "Perfect for Valentines." Brian Barnes said recently, adding that he will also be telling some stories about the songs and their writers.

The Barnes, now of St. Paul, have been performing together for 15 years. They are known for their stellar acoustic guitar and mandolin playing, smooth vocals and harmonies. Individually, they have been a part of several award-winning bands over the years, performing across the United States as well as internationally. James Dungan-Seaver, originally from Knoxville, Tenn., is one of the premiere bass players in the Twin Cities.

A native of Louisville, Ky., Brian wanted to be in a band "as far back as I can remember." He began studying the classical guitar at age 12, with hopes of joining a rock band someday. However, when his older brother, Kevin, bought a banjo, the two began playing bluegrass together. Eventually, Brian

followed Kevin to Minnesota, to join the bluegrass band "Stoney Lonesome," which Kevin founded. "I sold my truck and motorcycle, moving with only a suitcase, guitar and clock radio under my arm," Brian recalled. Stoney Lonesome would go on to be regulars on the live radio show, "A Prairie Home Companion," racking up several music awards along the way.

After Stoney Lonesome, Brian performed and recorded with both "Cafe Accordion" and as part of the Minnesota Ethnic Dance Theater's orchestra, known for playing folk music from around the world. He also was part of a jazz duo with harmonica player Clint Hoover. "He and I did a tour to Sweden, teaming up with some Swedish jazz players to play at the jazz festival in Umea, Sweden," Brian said. Over the years Brian has performed at a variety of venues across the United States (including Lincoln Center in New York) and in 15 foreign countries.

Sheralyn grew up in the farming town of DeMotte, Ind., studying both organ and guitar at an early

age. She performed with her brother, Bret, in a rock band while still in junior high, but was drawn to the mandolin after traveling to Ireland on two occasions. When dreams of working in Ireland did not transpire, Sheralyn moved to Minnesota and studied mandolin at the Homestead Pickin' Parlor in Richfield. Along the way, she became a fan of a bluegrass band Brian was a part of, eventually meeting Brian and marrying him. Prior to teaming up with her husband, Sheralyn worked as a musician in Yellowstone National Park, performing solo at one of the lodges there. In addition to being a musician, Sheralyn is a trained artist, known for her illustrations and oil paintings. Several of her paintings depict the Irish musicians that inspired her during her travels to that country.

For more information, check out the Arts Council's website at www.staplesmotleyarts.org.

Tickets are available online at the Arts Council's website. For more information call (218) 894-1112.

Long commute to work in Russia

(Continued from Page 1B)

really good," he said.

Since Knopik speaks little Russian, he uses an interpreter to communicate.

"It's really hard to find an interpreter that knows what the parts of the equipment are called though," he said.

Knopik said the weather on Sakhalin Island is very cold, often reaching 20 degrees below zero with the

wind chill.

"It's nasty. The wind never stops blowing. We might have 10 warm days in summer," he said.

During his time off in 2004, Knopik vacationed in St. Petersburg, Russia, where he was also introduced to his wife, Irina. The two got married and Irina came to the United States a year later. Knopik said that birthdays, holidays and anniversaries have been missed due to his rotational work schedule.

"There's a price to pay, working on a rotational shift. You have to count the cost before you get into it," he said.

Knopik said he speaks with Irina on the phone daily and that they simply just talk about their day.

"It's such a relief to know when things are well at home," he said.

Knopik said he video chats with family and friends through Skype too.

"That has been a lifesaver," he said.

Little Falls Community Services

Adult education classes

• **Beginning Basket Weaving** — Thursday, Feb. 11, 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. - LFCMS.

• **Amazing Benefits of Essential Oils** — Tuesday, Feb. 23, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m., Little Falls Community Middle School, Room 109.

• **Defensive Driver - 4 Hour** — Monday, Feb. 29, 5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., LFCMS media center.

• **Belly Dancing** — Wednesday, March 9, 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., Lindbergh Elementary School - Per-

forming Arts Center.

• **Pysanka - How to Make Ukrainian Easter eggs** — Monday, March 14, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m., Little Falls Community Middle School, Room 119.

Adult recreation

• **Water Aerobics** — Feb. 2 through March 24, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Little Falls Community Middle School pool.

• **Hall walking** — Hall walking through March 31, LFCMS, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m., Lincoln Elementary, 4 p.m. - 8 p.m., Dr. S.G. Knight El-

ementary, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

• **Running 101 and 102** — Tuesday, March 22, 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., meet at the Little Falls Community CEC Building, 14800 Riverwood Drive.

Adults with Disabilities

• **Open Bowling** — March 1, March 3, 5 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., Little Falls Bowling Center.

• **Valentine's Dance** — Thursday, Feb. 11, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Falls Ballroom, Little Falls.

Early childhood screening planned in Upsala

The early childhood years from birth to the start of kindergarten are an important time of rapid learning and growth. Early childhood screening (ECS) is a quick and simple check of how a child is doing at

age 3 1/2. It identifies, at an early stage, possible health or learning concerns, so that children can get help before starting school.

Upsala will be offering the preschool screening Monday, Feb. 15. Parents

who have a 3 1/2-year-old who has not been screened, may call Missy Bjerga (320) 631-2505 to schedule a time.

ECS is required by the state before a child can enter kindergarten.

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