

Museum Notes

for the week of October 19 – 25, 2025

by Kristen Parrott, curator

The fall edition of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* arrived at the museum a couple of weeks ago, and we were very excited to see the cover. “Wait, that’s Francis Waller! From De Soto! Capturing a rebel flag at the Battle of Gettysburg!”

Yes, it’s a very familiar illustration on the magazine, a picture we recognize from the cover of the 1990 book, *In the Bloody Railroad Cut at Gettysburg*, by Lance Herdegen and William Beaudot. That book is about the 6th Wisconsin volunteers and what they did at Gettysburg in July, 1863, during the Civil War.

This brightly-colored picture on the latest edition of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* is now illustrating the article, “Loyal Hearts Ready for War: Civil War Stories from Wisconsin’s Iron Brigade”, by James Marten. The De Soto soldier Francis Waller was in the Iron Brigade. He won a Medal of Honor for capturing the flag of the 2nd Mississippi at Gettysburg. He served with Company I of the 6th Wisconsin, which was organized in Vernon County in 1861, and the 6th Wisconsin was a part of the Iron Brigade.

The article’s author James Marten is professor of history emeritus at Marquette University. He has just published a new book, *The Sixth Wisconsin and the Long Civil War: The Biography of a Regiment*. We are so fortunate to have engaged him as the guest speaker for our upcoming annual dinner.

The Vernon County Historical Society’s annual recognition dinner will be held on Sunday, November 9, in the dining hall of the historic Viroqua United Methodist Church, at 221 S. Center Ave. There will be a social time at 12 noon, and dinner will be served at 12:30. Prof. Marten will talk to us about his new book and will focus on the Vernon County soldiers who served in the 6th WI.

This event is also an opportunity for us to honor all of our volunteers, and especially the 2025 Volunteer of the Year, Karen Levendoski. Everyone is welcome to attend. Tickets are \$16. The menu for dinner is chicken or beef and noodles, carrots, cole slaw, rolls, and cookies. Please contact the museum at 608-637-7396 by November 4 to make your reservation.