

Collection #
M 1098
OM 0550

**JANETNELLE CONNER WAHLS
1963–2009**

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Processed by

Brittany Deeds
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Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 manuscript box, 2 OM folders, 1 OVA photographs folder, 5 folders color photographs, 21 artifacts

COLLECTION DATES: 1963–2009

PROVENANCE: Janetnelle Conner Wahls, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2011

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2011.0235

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Janetnelle ("Jan") Conner Wahls was born as Janetnelle Weirick, on 27 April 1928.

Jan married her first husband, Richard F. Conner, on 16 December 1955. They had two children: Betsy Conner Neff and John R. Conner. Throughout much of her life and in most of the materials in the collection, Jan was typically identified as "Mrs. Richard F. Conner."

On 19 January 1996, Jan married her second husband, a widower named Gerald E. Wahls (b. 21 January 1925–d. 7 October 2012). Jan and Gerald were both involved in Bill Glass Prison Ministry and Evangelism Explosion and within other ministries and their church Walnut Grove Chapel of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Jan was a staunch conservative and devout Christian, which led to her involvement in many political and religious organizations and causes throughout her life. Some organizations she belonged to include: National Association of Pro-America, Crossroads Volunteer Association, Alpha Chi Omega Mother's Club, Indiana University Alumni Association, and the Women's Club of Indianapolis. However, the materials in the collection center on Jan's political activism from 1964 to 1977 and her involvement with the Brown County Women's Retreat from 1969 to 1999.

Jan was a dedicated supporter of the 1964 Barry Goldwater presidential election campaign. She was a member of the Marion County Goldwater for President Committee, and later served as chairman of the Northside Goldwater Bazaar Committee, a non-profit political organization. The stated goals of the Northside Goldwater Bazaar were to raise funds for Barry Goldwater's campaign and to serve as a locus for disseminating Goldwater campaign literature and materials. The bazaar was run out of Jan and Richard Conner's personal residence at 7901 Westfield Blvd in Indianapolis. The bazaar opened on 27 July 1964, and ran for a total of 17 weeks. Over 300 volunteers helped staff the bazaar six days a week. The bazaar stocked a total of 95 different campaign items, including Goldwater taffy, political pins of elephants wearing Goldwater's trademark horn-rimmed glasses, oven mitts, gold-colored aftershave lotion, and ashtrays. Bazaar stock was also made available at numerous Republican meetings in Marion, Hamilton and Brown counties and at "coffees" hosted out of volunteers' homes. Additionally, the Northside Goldwater Bazaar assisted other pro-Goldwater citizen groups by selling stocks of material at cost to 27 communities, including Fort Wayne, Indiana; Louisville Kentucky; Columbus, Ohio; and Flossmoor, Illinois.

Jan served as an elected delegate for Washington Township at the 1964 and 1966 Republican state conventions.

In November 1977, Jan served as an Indiana delegate to the National Women's Conference held in Houston, Texas. The National Women's Conference was a federally mandated and funded meeting held as part of the observance of International Women's Year. Elected delegates from the fifty U.S. states and six U.S. territories met to make recommendations

to President Carter and Congress on how best to eliminate sexual discrimination in the U.S. It was the first national meeting ever held to specifically address the concerns of women in the U.S. Jan was elected as part of a slate of the Citizens Review Committee, a conservative group that generally opposed the stated goals of the International Women's Committee, particularly the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

From 1969 to 1999, Jan was also heavily involved with the Brown County Women's Retreat (BCWR), a religious organization established to bring women together and to instruct women in biblical truths and spiritual growth. Jan was a founding member of the Brown County Women's Retreat Committee, and she continued to serve on that committee, either as a chairman or member, for thirty continuous years. During the spring 1989 and fall 1993 retreats, Jan ran a shop for attendees called "Jan's Gifts;" the proceeds of her shop went towards scholarships for the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade.

The BCWR has its roots in the fall of 1968, when musician Beatrice Bush Bixler invited some Indianapolis friends to attend a "Winsome Women" retreat at Winona Lake, Indiana. Seven women, including Jan, attended the "Winsome Women" retreat, and their positive experience inspired the attendees to create their own retreat organization, which they named the Brown County Women's Retreat. For their first retreat in May 1969, the BCWR committee selected the Abe Martin Lodge and cabins of Brown County State Park in Nashville, Indiana, as their site. The theme of the retreat was "Come Alive," and the speakers were Melva Wickman of Chicago and Martha Ayres of Philadelphia. The retreat was a success, with approximately 100 women in attendance. From 1969–1999, the Brown County Women's Retreat held retreats biannually: one retreat in the spring and one retreat in the fall. Over the years, the BWCR held retreats at several different locations within Indiana, such as Indiana University, French Lick Springs Hotel, Taylor University, and Vincennes University. By 2000, it appears that the BCWR scaled back their operations, and began hosting only one retreat per year.

Sources:

Materials in collection.

Gerald E. Wahls Obituary. <http://www.obitsforlife.com/obituary/586246/Wahls-Gerald.php>. Accessed 3 June 2014.

U.S. Public Records Index, Volume I and the Marion County, Indiana, Marriage Index, 1925-2012, both accessed through Ancestry.com.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The materials in this collection reflect the several religious and political organizations and causes that Janetnelle Conner Wahls was mostly actively involved with from 1963–1999. The collection is divided into seven series, primarily by organizations and causes. The series are arranged in roughly chronological order. The bulk of the collection centers on her involvement with the 1964 Barry Goldwater presidential campaign and her involvement with the Brown County Women's Retreat from 1969–1999.

Series 1 This series contains a wide variety of materials pertaining to the 1964 Barry Goldwater presidential election campaign. The series is roughly divided between items that are directly associated with the Northside Goldwater Bazaar and coffees (such as correspondence, reports, instructions for volunteers, inventory lists, volunteer lists and schedules, and campaign artifacts sold at the bazaar) and more general Barry Goldwater-related materials, such as campaign literature, newsletters, newspaper clippings, and campaign artifacts. There is one photograph of Jan and other Northside Goldwater Bazaar volunteers greeting Barry Goldwater, Jr., which was printed as part of an article on the Northside Goldwater Bazaar.

Inventory lists from the Northside Goldwater Bazaar allow for identification of which campaign artifacts in the collection were distributed for free-will donations through the bazaar and coffees. However, it is unclear which pieces of Goldwater campaign literature, materials, and visuals were distributed through the bazaar and coffees and which pieces of campaign literature, materials, and visuals may have belonged only to Jan. Where feasible, the pro-Goldwater campaign literature and material has been subdivided into folders by its distributing organization and/or type of material. There are fourteen Goldwater campaign artifacts within this series.

Series 2 This series contains materials pertaining to Indiana Republican political campaign in the 1960s. There are pamphlets and correspondence relating to several 1964 Republican candidates, as well as an undated Marion County GOP ribbon and a letter from The Cinema Educational Guild reporting on the voting records of all members of Congress during the 1963-64 sessions. There are six artifacts within this series.

Series 3 This series contains materials pertaining to the Jan's elections as a Washington Township delegate to the 1964 and 1966 Indiana Republican State Conventions. It includes Republican Party endorsement circulars and newspaper clippings of election results for both 1964 and 1966, two admittance tickets to the 1966 Indiana Republican State Convention, a pamphlet assigning delegates to voting machines for 21 June 1966, and a form letter from Indiana Supreme Court Judge candidate Donald R. Mote requesting support.

Series 4 This series contains materials pertaining to the 1977 National Women's Conference, held as part of the observance of International Women's Year. Included in this series are a voter card for Jan Conner, a certificate verifying Jan as an elected delegate from Indiana, several pieces of correspondence relating to Jan's role as a delegate and three

newspaper clippings about the conference. There is one artifact within this series: Jan's official photo ID and name card for the conference.

A book entitled *Charlotte: A Portrait of Freedom*, by C. Joanne Reynolds, was transferred to the print collection. The book is a personal memoir, interspersed with the story of the Indiana delegation to the 1977 National Women's Conference. It chronicles the author's opposition to "feminist" issues, such as abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment.

Series 5 This series contains assorted conservative literature and papers. Among the items are undated anti-communist papers; a pamphlet of Rev. Bruce W. Dunn's March 1964 sermon called "Watching a Nation Die!"; flyers for two talks opposing the Equal Rights Amendments, 1976–77; and some papers relating to the National Association of Pro-America, ca. 1978, including a brochure, list of officers for the Indiana Chapter (Jan was president), and one newspaper clipping.

Series 6 This series contains materials pertaining to the Brown County Women's Retreat (BCWR). Included in this series are official documents, such as bylaws and statements of purpose, as well as an undated phone directory and lists of committee members and participants. There is a list entitled "First Retreaters," which lists 12 names. It is unclear as to what event this list refers to, since there were seven Indianapolis women who attended the "Winsome Women" retreat at Winona Lake in the fall of 1968 that inspired the creation BCWR, and reportedly around 100 first attendees for the first BCWR program held in the spring of 1969.

The collection also has two full programs: one commemorating the 20th anniversary retreat (5–7 May 1989) and the other commemorating the 25th anniversary retreat (5–7 November 1993). These full programs include a more detailed histories of the Brown County Women's Retreat, detailed descriptions of workshops, maps of facilities, lyrics to Christian songs and hymns, blank evaluation sheets, and ordering sheets for recordings of the retreat on cassette tapes.

Four folders contain brochures for each retreat from 1969–2009. The brochures are arranged chronologically within a span of four decades. The Brown County Women's Retreat Committee held retreats biannually: one retreat in the spring and one retreat in the fall. Most of the retreat brochures contain the following information: the theme of the retreat, the dates and location of the retreat, a schedule or list of available workshops, photographs and brief biographies of the guest speakers and musicians, and a list of the members of the retreat committee. A few brochures have associated materials, such as testimonial flyers or recommendation cards for future retreats. The women of the retreat committee used to only be listed under their married names; however, beginning in the spring of 1999, the retreat committee members began listing their full names, with their husbands' first and surnames listed in parentheses. For the years 2000–2009, there are only brochures for fall retreats, which suggest that the BCWR scaled back their operations and began only hosting one retreat per year.

There are 37 color photographs of BCWR attendees, divided by date into three folders. One folder contains pictures from the 16–18 May 1986 retreat, the second folder contains

pictures from the 5–7 May 1989 (20th Anniversary) retreat, and the third folder contains retreat pictures taken circa 1980s. Although none of the individuals in the photographs are identified by name, the identities of some participants can likely be determined by cross-referencing the photographs of the speakers and musicians from the BCWR brochures.

Series 7 This series contains five unidentified and undated photographs, which likely pertain to Jan's personal life. There are four photographs of the Purdue University marching band performing at Purdue University stadium and one photograph of an unidentified child.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Barry Goldwater Presidential Election Campaign Materials, 1963–64

| CONTENTS | CONTAINER |
|---|--------------------|
| Northside Goldwater Bazaar Correspondence, Aug. 1964–Mar. 1965 | Box 1, Folder 1 |
| Northside Goldwater Bazaar Report to Volunteers and Contributors, Oct.–Nov. 1964 Final Report, Nov. 1964 Draft, Oct. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 2 |
| Northside Goldwater Bazaar News Release and Newspaper Clippings, Sept. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 3 |
| Northside Goldwater Bazaar Lists of Officers and Typed Instructions, Aug.–Nov. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 4 |
| Northside Goldwater Bazaar Inventory Lists and Price Lists, Aug–Oct. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 5 |
| Volunteer and Donor Lists for Northside Goldwater Bazaars and Goldwater Coffees [cross reference with OM 0550] | Box 1, Folder 6 |
| Northside Goldwater Bazaar Shift Sign-Up Charts September, 1964 October, 1964 | OM 0550 , Folder 1 |
| Goldwater Coffees and Meetings Posters Coffee and Meetings Sept–Oct 1964 Calendar "I'll Help With Coffees" Volunteer Sign-Up Poster | OM 0550 , Folder 2 |
| Contested Sales of Goldwater Campaign Items in Indiana, Sept.–Dec. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 7 |
| "Marion County Goldwater for President Committee" Materials | Box 1, Folder 8 |
| "Indiana Citizens for Goldwater-Miller Committee" Materials | Box 1, Folder 9 |
| "Goldwater for President Committee" Campaign Pamphlets | Box 1, Folder 10 |

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| "Goldwater for President Bulletin" News Releases, 10 July 1964 | Box 1, Folder 11 |
| "Citizens for Goldwater-Miller" Pamphlets | Box 1, Folder 12 |
| "Citizens for Goldwater-Miller" New Releases, 6 Oct.–7 Oct. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 13 |
| "Citizens for Goldwater-Miller"—"Victory Information Programs, 7 Oct.–30 Oct. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 14 |
| Americans for Conservative Action (ACA) Newsletters, Sept. and Nov. 1963 | Box 1, Folder 15 |
| The Magazine of Sigma Chi Fraternity, Fall 1964 issue | Box 1, Folder 16 |
| Film Documentary "Choice"—Papers and Newspaper Clippings, Oct. 1964 | Box 1, Folder 17 |
| Assorted Pro-Barry Goldwater Materials, 1964 | Box 1, Folder 18 |
| Barry Goldwater Newspaper Clippings, 1964–1982 | Box 1, Folder 19 |
| Barry Goldwater Masks and Other Campaign Novelties, 1964 Picture of Republican elephant sitting on Democratic donkey with hologram eyes that wink [color, cardboard mounted on tongue depressor] Pair of black cardboard horn-rimmed Goldwater glasses [in 3 pieces] Barry Goldwater face mask [color, cardboard, held in place by wearing glasses over ears] Paper bag [printed image of sun and cacti above the word "Goldwaters"] | Box 1, Folder 20 |
| Barry Goldwater Campaign Visuals [Jan Conner and other Northside Goldwater Bazaar volunteers greeting Barry Goldwater Jr. Cross-reference with article in Northside Goldwater Bazaar news clipping folder] [photograph of various newspaper titles regarding Lyndon Johnson and Bobby Baker] [Poster of Barry Goldwater] | OVA Photographs, Folder 1 |

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Barry Goldwater Color Photographs [Barry Goldwater speaking at a rally, dated July 1964] [Barry Goldwater at podium with "GOParty" sign, dated July 1964] [Color print of Barry Goldwater] | Color Photographs Folder 1 |
| Rubber Stamp, reads: "GOLDWATER IN '64" | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Rubber Stamp, reads: "NORTHSIDE GOLDWATER BAZAAR / 7901 WESTFIELD BLVD / INDIANAPOLIS 40 / INDIANA" [elephant on proper left] | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Ballpoint pen, reads: "Goldwater in '64" | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Pair Goldwater earrings [gold-colored elephant heads, wearing Goldwater's trademark horn-rimmed glasses] | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Elephant-shaped political pin. [gold-colored elephant, wearing Goldwater's trademark horn-rimmed glasses] | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Kids for Goldwater Club membership cards | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Political button, in Spanish, reads: "ARRIBA CON BARRY Y BILL" with picture of Barry Goldwater and running mate William E. Miller. | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Political button, reads: "IN YOUR HEART / YOU KNOW HE'S RIGHT," with picture of Barry Goldwater centered in red heart. | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Political button, reads: "GO! / BARRY / '64" | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Political button, reads: "AMERICANS / FOR / GOLDWATER" [blue lettering on yellow background, with union maker's mark] | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Political button, reads: "INDIANA'S / FAVORITE / FAMILY" [blue lettering on yellow background, with photograph of Barry Goldwater and presumably his wife] | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Goldwater trading stamp, reads: "TRADE-IN JOHNSON / FOR BARRY GOLDWATER!" | Artifact: 2011.0235 |
| Goldwater taffy label | Artifact: 2011.0235 |

Phonograph 33 1/3 record, "GO, GOLDWATER!"
[with typed instructions on how to use record]

Artifact: 2011.0235

Series 2: Indiana Republican Political Campaign Materials, ca. 1960s

CONTENTS

CONTAINER

Indiana Republican Campaign Pamphlets, 1964
Don A. Tabbert
D. Russell Bontrager
Dick [Richard L.] Ristine

Box 1, Folder 21

Indiana Republican Campaign Correspondence, 1964
Indiana Citizens for Good Government
Don A. Tabbert
John M. Ryan

Box 1, Folder 22

Pro-Republican Party Materials, n.d.

Box 1, Folder 23

Political button, reads: "REPUBLICAN / RISTINE/
FOR GOVERNOR" [red, white, and blue in color,
1964]

Artifact: 2011.0235

Political button, reads: "TABBERT / FOR
CONGRESS" [red lettering, with picture of Don A.
Tabbert, 1964]

Artifact: 2011.0235

Political button, reads: "FOR CONGRESS /
DONALD BRUCE" [white lettering on red
background with picture of Donald Bruce, n.d.]

Artifact: 2011.0235

Political button, reads: "RE-ELECT / ROUDEBUSH /
TO CONGRESS" [dark blue lettering on white
background with picture of Richard L. Roudebush,
n.d.]

Artifact: 2011.0235

Cardboard cutout of Republican elephant [presumably
for tracing, n.d.]

Artifact: 2011.0235

Return address label for R. F. Conner, reads: "Reduce
/ Inflation / GO REUBLICAN" [n.d.]

Artifact: 2011.0235

Series 3: Washington Township Delegate to Indiana Republican State Convention Materials, 1964–66

| CONTENTS | CONTAINER |
|--|------------------|
| Endorsed Delegates for Washington Township Flyer and Election Results Newspaper Clipping, 1964 | Box 1, Folder 24 |
| Delegate to Indiana Republican State Convention Materials, 1966 | Box 1, Folder 25 |

Series 4: National Women's Conference, 1977

| CONTENTS | CONTAINER |
|--|---------------------|
| National Women's Conference Materials, 1977–78 Voter card Certificate verifying Jan Conner as Indiana delegate, 16 July 1977 Correspondence | Box 1, Folder 26 |
| National Women's Conference Newspaper Clippings, 1977 | Box 1, Folder 27 |
| Photo ID and name badge for 1997 National Women's Conference for Indiana delegate Jan Conner | Artifact: 2011.0235 |

Series 5: Assorted Conservative Literature and Papers

| CONTENTS | CONTAINER |
|--|------------------|
| Anti-Communism Papers, n.d. | Box 1, Folder 28 |
| "Watching a Nation Die!" pamphlet, 1964 [reprint of sermon given on 1 March 1964 by Rev. Bruce W. Dunn, Grace Presbyterian Church, Peoria, Illinois] | Box 1, Folder 29 |
| Flyers for Talks Opposing the Equal Rights Amendments, 1976–77 | Box 1, Folder 30 |
| National Association of Pro-America, ca. 1978 | Box 1, Folder 31 |

Series 6: Brown County Women's Retreat Materials, 1969–2009

CONTENTS

CONTAINER

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Brown County Women's Retreat Bylaws and Other Official Documents 3 drafts of the 1972 BCWR Bylaws 1975 BCWR Bylaws Statement of Purpose and History [n.d.] 2 copies of BCWR Statement of Faith and Statement of Purpose [one with handwritten notes, n.d.] Study Paper and Policy Statement Relating to the Charismatic Movement [n.d.] | Box 1, Folder 32 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Lists of Participants Directory [n.d.] List of BCWR Committee Members from 1969–89 List of "First Retreaters" [12 women listed, n.d.] 2 handwritten lists of last names and dates [prayer request for Julia Lawton written on back of one list, n.d.] | Box 1, Folder 33 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Materials (5–7 May 1989, 20th Anniversary) Full Program Schedule Correspondence Evaluation Report | Box 1, Folder 34 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Materials (5–7 Nov. 1993, 25th Anniversary) Full Program 25th Anniversary Poem | Box 1, Folder 35 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Brochures, 1969–79 | Box 1, Folder 36 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Brochures, 1980–89 | Box 1, Folder 37 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Brochures, 1990–99 | Box 1, Folder 38 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Brochures, 2000–09 | Box 1, Folder 39 |
| Brown County Women's Retreat Photographs, 16–18 May 1986 [20 photographs total, individuals not identified] | Color Photographs, Folder 2 |

Brown County Women's Retreat Photographs, 5–7
May 1989

[5 photographs total. Each photograph is of the same group of unidentified women attendees at the 20th Anniversary retreat. The group is centered under a cabin-shaped banner reading "Abe Martin Lodge" and a smaller banner reading "COME ALIVE"]

Color Photographs,
Folder 3

Brown County Women's Retreat Photographs, ca.
1980s

"Speaker, 5/15–17/1987" [photograph of unidentified woman with BCWR speaker Beverly Terrell, who is wearing a blue dress with white lace collar]

[11 photographs of unidentified women gathered and chatting in hotel room]

Color Photographs,
Folder 4

Series 7: Unidentified Photographs

CONTENTS

Unidentified Photographs [n.d.]

[4 photographs of Purdue University marching band performing at Purdue University stadium, taken from stands, n.d.]

[1 photograph of unidentified small child getting into kitchen drawer, n.d.]

CONTAINER

Color Photographs,
Folder 5

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 1098).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.