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Pictured on cover (from left): Dawn Swanson, Gundersen Tri-State Ambulance; Janet Spain, Holmen School District; Joan Hutschenreuter, BNSF Railway. Photos on cover and above by Jordana Snyder Photography. Clocks by La Crosse Clock Company, available at Great Big Outlet.

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Photo by Jen Towner Photography

I've always thought that the ideal vacation would not be to some exotic or new location, but back in time, to a favorite point in life. My destination would be St. Paul, about 1996, any pleasant summer weekend—let's say one in June. Back then, I lived in a second-floor apartment in a Victorian house on a quiet street with a beautiful name: Laurel Avenue. I had an open back porch that was up in the leaves with morning glories climbing the posts, and I loved to sit there on Fridays when I worked from home, early mornings with a cup of coffee and evenings in any weather. I had a good job and all my needs were met; I had good friends close by, and I had the one thing that I miss the very, very most: time.

Of course, I didn't think so then. My life was an exhausting cycle of work, visits to the gym and the occasional volunteer opportunity. All this was squeezed in between leisurely walks down Summit or Grand Avenue, hours spent people-watching and writing in coffee shops, and the tough choice on weekends of whether to spend my precious hours knitting, reading or cross-stitching. All that solitary time could make a girl lonely, in which case I'd call up my friend Katie and we'd go out for ice cream or have a glass of wine on my porch. I remember feeling so *overwhelmed* sometimes, though today, I can't imagine why.

Because what I couldn't foresee then was that time would eventually become a

commodity so precious I would fantasize about it like some people fantasize about handsome celebrities. There were the grad school days when I was presented with hundreds of pages of reading material to consume before the next class. There were the infant-toddler-preschooler combo days when I forgot to brush my teeth or change out of the shirt I'd slept in—but I got my deadlines met! There were the days I taught three sections of college courses, when I'd stay up till 2 a.m. creating PowerPoint presentations (after putting the toddler-preschooler-first-grader combo to bed), then fall asleep at stoplights on the way home from class.

Happily, my schedule isn't that extreme now. But I still long for more time. And while it's not yet possible to travel back to a simpler era, I have discovered there's much I can learn from those fantasy days. A child's piano lesson is a chance to duck out to a coffee shop for half an hour. An evening TV show is a chance to knit. And an evening spent on my porch, alone or with a friend, is never wasted.

The women featured in this issue of *Coulee Region Women* have their own relationship with time. Our cover women, for example, have careers devoted to time: keeping trains on schedule, getting kids to school and acting fast in the moments separating life and death. Other women featured carry on age-old traditions, like breadmaking and beekeeping, while others look to the future: Tara Craig inspires young minds through *Odyssey of the Mind*, and Kahya Fox builds upon the success of Habitat for Humanity.

In this issue, we'll also encourage you to take time for yourself—whether to improve your mental health, spend quality time with your family while still getting things done, or save time, money and effort through savvy meal planning. We'll offer you suggestions for that rare moment you do find to curl up with a good book, and we hope to inspire travel—not necessarily through time, but certainly to places you'll want to visit time and again in your memories.

As for me, I'll be up on that back porch in St. Paul, enjoying my respite among the leaves before I return to the present and its busyness. Come to think of it, I could use a little company. Why don't you join me?

Betty

coulee region women

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The 13th annual Steppin' Out in Pink is Saturday, September 8, from 8:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Gundersen Health System's La Crosse Campus. Won't you join our community in supporting local breast cancer research and awareness?

Sport your pink attire and walk with a team, friends, family or by yourself to honor survivors and remember loved ones. All ages are welcome. There will be music, entertainment, kids' activities and shopping galore. A portion of all vendor sales will benefit Steppin' Out in Pink. You can earn prizes, too, by collecting pledges to support local breast cancer research.

Sign up before September 4 and the event fee is just \$20 for ages 12 and up, \$5 for ages 5-12 and free for ages 0-4. Ages 5 and up will receive a T-shirt. Register online today at www.steppinoutinpink.org.

FOLK MUSIC ON THE RIVER

The 43rd annual Great River Folk Festival returns to Riverside Park in La Crosse Friday through Sunday, August 24-26, and promises to be better than ever. This La Crosse tradition features three stages of musical talent in styles including folk, bluegrass, country and blues, as well as traditional arts and crafts and special performances and activities for children. Traditional arts demonstrations, a songwriting contest and food and beverage vendors are also featured. Friday night, Day Pass and All-Events tickets are available for purchase now at www.greatriverfolkfest.org. Admission for children (accompanied by an adult) is free. Visit the Fest at www.facebook.com/greatriverfolkfest for up-to-the-minute information on



acts, giveaways and other exciting updates.

HANDBAGS FOR A SAFE HAVEN

Join New Horizons in celebrating women—and ensuring that all have a safe place



to stay when they need it most—at the third annual Handbags for a SAFE Haven event Thursday, August 23, 5:30-9 p.m., at Celebrations on the River. This night of fashion, fun and friendship is presented by Marine Credit Union and benefits New Horizons Shelter & Outreach Centers.

Snag a new bag at the Handbag Bazaar for an affordable price. Score a fabulous prize in the raffle. Secure the winning silent auction bid on a designer handbag. Enjoy the fashion show from local consignment shops. Plus, you'll be able to nosh on mouth-watering hors d'oeuvres and sip on a signature cocktail.

To purchase tickets, go to www.nhagainstabuse.org. A limited number of VIP tickets are available, which include a special seating area for the fashion show; a swag bag with gifts, including a souvenir wineglass; and a free drink ticket. Mark your calendar now for this unique fundraising event—and please bring a gently used handbag to donate as part of your admission.



TALL TALES AND FAMILY FUN

Enjoy a good story—or tell one yourself—at the 16th annual La Crosse Storytelling Festival held September 7-8 at Myrick Park. Featured storytellers include Andy Offutt Irwin, Kevin McMullin and Sadarri, with appearances by local favorites such as Michael Scott, Sara Slayton and others.

The fest begins at 6 p.m. Friday with Tales of the Creepy and Scary, beginning with stories for all ages and progressing from “a bit scarier to very chilling” as the night goes on. Hans Mayer, Sadarri and Doug the Jug offer children's entertainment 11 a.m.-2:15 p.m. Saturday, then headliners Irwin, McMullin, Sadarri and others perform throughout Saturday afternoon in the main tent. The LUNA story slam is open to all storytellers at 5:45 p.m., and the headliners return at 6:30 p.m. for the Adult Cabaret. Throughout the event, enjoy music, food, beverages, a silent auction and more.

Admission is \$5 per person per day, \$15 for a family or \$25 for a weekend pass. Adult Cabaret is \$8 per person or \$3 with a wristband. Visit www.lacrossestoryfest.com and follow the festival on Facebook.

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August 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of New Horizons Shelter & Outreach Centers—that means 40 years of serving those in our community who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse with programs and supports such as a 24-hour crisis line, an emergency shelter, trauma therapy, legal advocacy resources, housing, family support and much more.



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Women on Time

For three Coulee Region career women, time is of the essence in more ways than one.

BY JUDITH MUNSON
Photos by Jordana Snyder Photography

Deadlines are a part of just about every job. Reports are due to the boss by noon. Your closing on a house today has to happen at 10 a.m., or the chain of closings behind it falls through. Table number six needs their drink tray. Kids need their jerseys washed before the soccer game tonight. “Time is of the essence,” as they say.

But for three area women, it’s particularly essential to stay on time at work. Their jobs are very different, but they all have others depending on them to deliver on time and, in some cases, beat the clock when lives are at stake.



Dawn Swanson, paramedic with Gundersen Tri-State Ambulance

When seconds count

About six years ago, Dawn Swanson made a fairly significant career switch. “I needed something more challenging,” says Swanson. “So I went from owning a salon to becoming a paramedic. I felt I could do more good and help more people this way.”

Today, Swanson is a corporal with Gundersen Tri-State Ambulance, meaning she is a lead medic and shift leader and trains students and new employees. She says the role time plays in her day is more a matter of speed. “We get there as fast as we can, but many times, we are left feeling that it is never fast enough.”

For some jobs, the daily pace is fairly even, with rush hours arriving at the same time every day. Not so during a paramedic’s 12-hour shift. “I go from reading a book in the ambulance to trying to save someone in cardiac arrest—it’s one extreme to the other,” says Swanson. “We don’t have scheduled breaks or lunches. We use the restroom when we can and often eat on the run. It’s exciting and exhausting all at once.”

As one might expect, the emotions of a paramedic also go from one extreme to another during a single shift. From saving a life to spending the last seconds of one with a patient takes an emotional toll. “EMS (emergency medical service) workers do this job because we like helping people,” says Swanson. “But this job takes away a huge part of us.”

The counterbalance to that toll is how well this job has fulfilled Swanson’s need to switch careers. “I’ve shaken the hands of the people I’ve helped save,” she begins. “I’ve helped broken people smile and calmed the scared. I’ve been an ear and a shoulder for people who felt like no one else was there. I’m an advocate for my patient. This is why I love my job.”

In addition to the time pressures of work, Swanson experiences what many working moms feel: concern about time away from family. The rush of an ambulance is replaced by the rush to get home and not miss an important moment in the lives of her two teenagers. “My family is all so busy that you learn the little moments count tremendously,” she says. “Every moment of family time matters.”

Support from both of Swanson’s families help her handle the daily stress. “If the pressure from work becomes unbearable, I have a wonderful support system at Tri State Ambulance,” she says. “My coworkers are my second family.”

“Every moment matters.”

Quick, before the school bell rings

Janet Spain has served the Holmen School District as a bus driver for three years, doing her best to get hundreds of kids to school on time.

“The beginning of the school year is a little intense,” says Spain. “Drivers need to make sure they do not miss any students and that they are not too early for their pickup time. By the second week of school, the bus driver and students get used to the stops and times.”

Much of what Spain and other drivers do to stay on schedule happens before they even hit the road. “During our pre-trip inspection, we make sure everything is working properly on the bus,” says Spain. “The school district does a great job on timing out our routes.”

A typical obstacle to a bus driver’s day might be a traffic accident or road construction, especially if it involves detours, says Spain. And weather—the oh-so-unpredictable weather of the Coulee Region. “Weather is a huge factor, from snow to icy roads and below-zero temps,” she says.

If her bus has a mechanical problem en route, dispatch sends a mechanic right away, says Spain. “Last winter my bus’s fuel gelled up because of below-zero temps. The bus completely stalled. I radioed for help, and the mechanics were on the way with a new bus. The students are very understanding when these things happen.”

Like anyone who drives a school bus, Spain needs help from the public with respect to stops. “We want to make sure we transport our students to and from school safely and on time,” says Spain. “Safe driving and the safety of our students is our top priority.”

It’s a job that takes a special person: one who has a heart for kids and possesses a rich measure of patience and understanding. “School bus drivers have the opportunity to start a student’s day on a great note,” says Spain, “with a smile and a ‘good morning.’”

Spending four hours a day, nine months a year, with her passengers builds a connection, says Spain. “Sometimes it is not until the end of the school year that you realize the bond you have made with the students. From the high schoolers who you don’t even think notice you to the kindergartners who are so nervous their first day—by the end of the school year, you really are going to miss them. I truly enjoy my job.”



*Janet Spain, school bus driver
with Holmen School District*

“Sometimes it is not until the end of the school year that you realize the bond you have made with the students.”

“The view from my office is like no other. From the front of a train, we see the sunset, the sunrise, the first snowfall.”



Joan Hutschenreuter, train conductor with BNSF Railway

Full steam ahead

Although trains don't run on steam anymore, they are responsible for moving about \$710 billion of freight across the United States annually, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation. Joan Hutschenreuter is responsible for moving some of that economic activity with her job as a train conductor for the BNSF Railway in La Crosse.

Hutschenreuter is one of nine women who work for the railroad out of about 200 men. “You have to have a strong personality to work with all these men,” she laughs. “I tell people, ‘I do a man's job, only better,’ because one has to be very flexible and able to multitask to do this job.”

“Flexible” is truly a mild way to put it. Hutschenreuter doesn't really have a set schedule of any sort; being on call 24/7, she is ready to work at all times. Once the call comes, the clock is ticking.

“I'm up, shower, get dressed, grab my coffee and lunch and get out the door in about 20 minutes,” she says. Once her shift is done, she has a mandatory 10 hours before she can work again, so a lot of her time is spent in hotels in Minneapolis or sometimes other destinations, such as Chicago, until she can work her way back home.

One of the greatest obstacles to staying on time with her job occurs before she even gets to the station. “Going from home to work can be the worst,” she says. “Traffic can cause my commute to take up to an hour.”

Once the engineer and she are cleared for departure, there are many reasons for possible delays during their shift, including mechanical failures, which they have to repair themselves, and the weather.

“The flooding has been terrible this year,” she says. “We also have to stop and wait if there are high winds.”

This means shifts on a train can run from 12 to 48 hours, for just two people, and no electronic devices are allowed.

It's also a life tough on families, as Hutschenreuter has missed birthdays, holidays and other important events. “They tell us right away during orientation, if you can't handle being constantly on call, this job isn't for you.”

But Hutschenreuter wouldn't have it any other way. “The view from my office is like no other,” she says. “From the front of a train, we see the sunset, the sunrise, the first snowfall. Riding along the Mississippi, it's gorgeous: the colors in fall and the eagles in spring. I'll see hundreds in one day; they fly right in front of us. It's still an amazing sight to me.” **(crw)**

Judith Munson is a freelance journalist and memoir writer living in western Wisconsin.

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IT'S ALL IN THE TIMING

Kaley Jacobson excels at the orchestration of catering.

BY DOREEN PFOST

Contributed photos



Kaley Jacobson, left, organizes and oversees all the events served by Pogy's Catering.

The happiest times in your life—weddings, reunions, parties—can sometimes also be the most stressful. Instead of celebrating, you're worrying about details of the event: music, flowers, photographs. Kaley Jacobson, general manager at Pogy's Catering, wants to be sure there's at least one thing you don't need to worry about. Through meticulous planning and adept orchestration, Jacobson and her team work to ensure that the meal they serve is flawlessly choreographed, so their clients have more time for fun.

Founded in 1985 by Clarence "Pogy" Pogreba and his wife, Dianne, Pogy's provides catering for events large and small, casual and formal, throughout the Coulee Region. Events are also held at the northside location on Avon Street, which, since 2011, is also home to Pogreba Restaurant. Both are now owned by the Pogrebas' nephew, Josh.

Essentially organized

Jacobson joined Pogreba five years ago as restaurant manager, with no restaurant management experience, but she knew how to be organized, and that's an essential trait for someone who sometimes oversees four or five events conducted by 30 staff members in a single day.

In addition to less elaborate events, such as business meetings and parties, Pogy's typically caters more than 30 weddings each year. Preparations begin with tastings, planning and the creation of a timeline. Jacobson uses specialized party-planning software to corral masses of information, tasks and planning details. She has a file folder for each bride: "Every note I take goes into the file folder, so nothing gets lost," she says. "Technology is great, because there's almost always

a trail of what happened. After each phone call, I send an email to the bride, reviewing what we discussed, so nothing is missed." And any time the bride makes a change, timelines are updated appropriately.

"Every day when I come in, I look at all the events for the next month," Jacobson says. She prints everything for the chef to see and adds handwritten notes for the staff. "I'm a very type A personality," she concedes. And that, apparently, is what it takes.

A well-choreographed performance

When the date of the wedding—or weddings—arrives, Jacobson is responsible for setup at each event: everything from wrapping silverware to setting up the buffet line. On the day before or morning of a wedding, she visits the venue with staff to review every detail and, importantly, to introduce the bride and groom to the team. "Because people don't like surprises on their wedding day," she says.

Meanwhile, like steps in an intricate dance, food preparation back on Avon Street is timed so that everything arrives on schedule at each venue. Food being transported to a 6 p.m. dinner, for example, might have to leave the kitchen at 4 p.m., requiring that preparations start at 2 p.m. And that's just one event.

In the end, when it all comes together, Jacobson's reward is to hear from clients that everything exceeded their expectations. The most satisfying part of her job, she says, is when a bride contacts her and says, "You were the easiest part of my wedding day." 

Doreen Pfost of Elroy is a member of Women Writers Ink. She doesn't know her personality type, but suspects it's not type A.

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Left-Right: Sheryl Gora-Bollom, MS, LCSW;
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LOAFING ON THE JOB

The women of Renaissance Breads and Pastries celebrate an age-old tradition.

BY JANIS JOLLY
Contributed photos



Sally Reimer prepares loaves for baking.



Harmony Bork presents a work of art from Renaissance Breads and Pastries.

When is a baker like a dancer? When she stretches, bends, twirls, scampers and pivots to the sound of—not music—but the *bing bing bing* of timers.

Sally Reimer, baker and co-owner of Renaissance Breads and Pastries in Galesville, moves smoothly and athletically through the kitchen as she (*bing*) shifts pans around in the four ovens, (*bing*) shapes risen dough into loaves, (*bing*) kneads dough for proofing, (*bing*) takes bread pans out of the oven and (*bing*) loads hot, steaming loaves onto cooling racks.

Reimer is finishing up a world of work that was started at 2 a.m. by her sister Harmony Bork, who mixed dry ingredients with liquid and yeast and let it rise so it was ready for shaping, proofing and baking when her sister arrived.

The dance begins early and continues until all 175 loaves are baked, cooled, packaged, labeled and delivered to stores, co-ops and farmers markets in the area.

Local, wholesome and pure

The two have quite a repertoire of breads, making around 30 varieties over the course of a year. Some are seasonal, some are experimental, but a few are standbys like their Wisconsin sourdough and seven-grain breads. On this steamy June morning, the big bake was sunflower-millet bread.

Devoted to using locally sourced and organic ingredients, Reimer and Bork are purists in the truest sense of the word, using local honey, organic canola oil and locally raised organic grains and flours. They also buy organic flour from Heartland Flour in Kansas, as well as butter and local eggs from Organic Valley.

The setting couldn't be more Norman Rockwell. The building in which the baking takes place is on the historic square in Galesville, a storefront with the name A.H. Czepull Harness Shop at the top. The front of the building is used for storage and cooling the bread. The baking takes place in the back two-thirds of the building, centered around a giant wooden table the sisters purchased from Kwik Trip.

The heart of the operation, the venerable Blodgett oven, occupies the back wall: six stacked shelves, each with its own door.

The old-fashioned way

As we talked, Reimer shaped measured mounds of dough into round sourdough rye loaves, working quickly to turn, knead and persuade the dough into perfect balls. These were set to rise one more time, and when they were ready, she slit the tops with a razor blade, making artistic slashes on one side. This is done to help the loaves rise higher, and the slits allow the loaves to become a slightly oval shape.

There is a trick to getting bread to rise high and light, depending on the skill of the baker to develop the gluten by kneading and shaping, then achieve maximum “oven burst” with the right combination of time, temperature and moisture.

Though they have owned it for 10 years, the sisters have been around the bakery longer. It was started by Chad and Lora Hill, who moved to Galesville from Vermont about 25 years ago and who were good friends of the Reimer family. The Hills bought all the equipment secondhand, wanting to make bread the old-fashioned way. Reimer and Bork continue their commitment to the old ways of working because it produces the best product. They also limit their output because “when you have to work too fast to keep up with orders, you have to cut corners.” They value their work-life balance, allowing time for Bork to spend with her family and Reimer to pursue an active lifestyle that includes teaching yoga. To keep on an even keel, they bake bread three days a week and make French bread, focaccia, scones and granola for the Winona Farmers Market on Saturdays.

The baking dance ends when the loaves sashay out the door in boxes and bags, to be delivered by their siblings, and sometimes by Reimer and Bork themselves, to waiting co-ops, grocery stores and a coffee shop. (crw)

Janis Jolly is a freelance writer from La Crosse who enjoys eating good bread.

Renaissance Breads and Pastries goods can be purchased at Driftless Bike and Beans in Trempealeau; Bluff Country Co-op in Winona, Viroqua Food Co-op and People's Co-op in La Crosse; the Festival stores in Onalaska and Holmen; and the Common Market in Galesville. The farmers market in Winona, on Saturday mornings, sells their scones, granola and more.



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Life has most of us multi-tasking with an endless to-do list, which can make us feel exhausted and lacking focus. This causes us to lose precious time in our day. The practice of yoga and meditation can improve our energy and ability to focus, thus helping us to feel more inspired to do our daily activities. Energy and improved focus motivates and assists in organizing, allowing us to complete our to-do list and spend more time doing the things we value most. Finding balance is finding time. See you on the mat.

Namaste ~ Tammy

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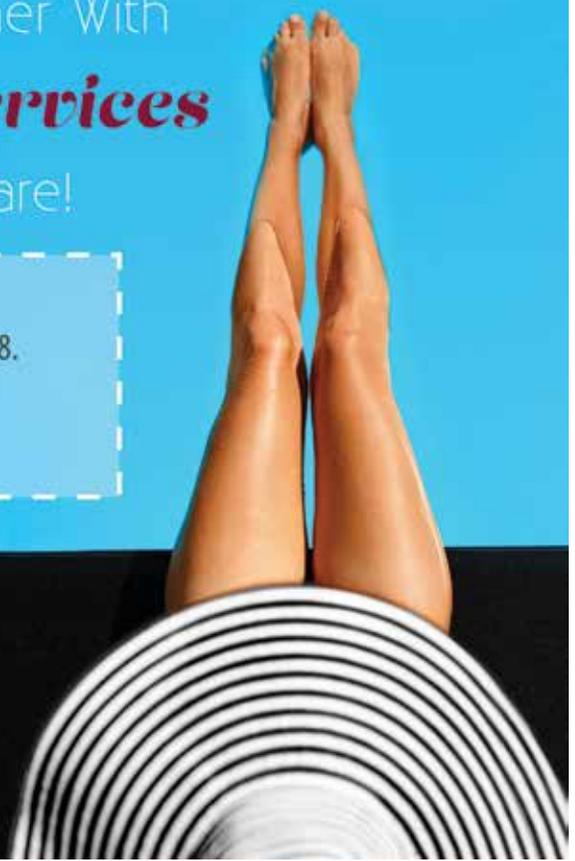
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TAKE AN HOUR FOR YOUR FAMILY

Minutes here and there add up to quality time.

BY DIANE RAAUM AND BETTY CHRISTIANSEN



There's never enough time in a day to get everything done, or so it seems. First of all, there's your job; add in a house to clean, meals to prepare and kids to attend to, and you're already overwhelmed. Still, you'd love to squeeze in a workout and do something with your kids besides shuttle them to activities. Here are ways you can make the most of small amounts of time to get tasks done *and* involve your family, too. With a 10-minute cleanup, a 20-minute meal and a 30-minute workout, you can take an hour for your family while accomplishing daily tasks.

10-minute cleanup

The key to getting kids to pitch in on household tasks is to keep it quick and make it fun. Set a timer for 10 minutes and challenge your kids (and they're always up for a challenge) to do as much as they can before the timer goes off. Their tasks may be as simple as clearing their toys out of the living room, dusting furniture or wiping down counters; it's the challenge and everyone pitching in together that makes it fun. Try these tips:

1. Pick up. This is a quick fix for picking up. Keep an empty laundry basket in a hall closet or handy location; at pickup time, grab the basket and toss whatever you can into it. When you have more time later on, you can carry the laundry basket throughout the house and put the items away where they belong.

2. Bathrooms. Wipe down countertops and toilets with Lysol/Clorox wipes. Use a Magic Eraser to wipe down shower/tub soap scum.

3. Dust. Nothing says clean like a shiny surface. Wet microfiber cloths are great for wiping off fingerprints. A quick pass with a Swiffer will get rid of dust and freshen your home.

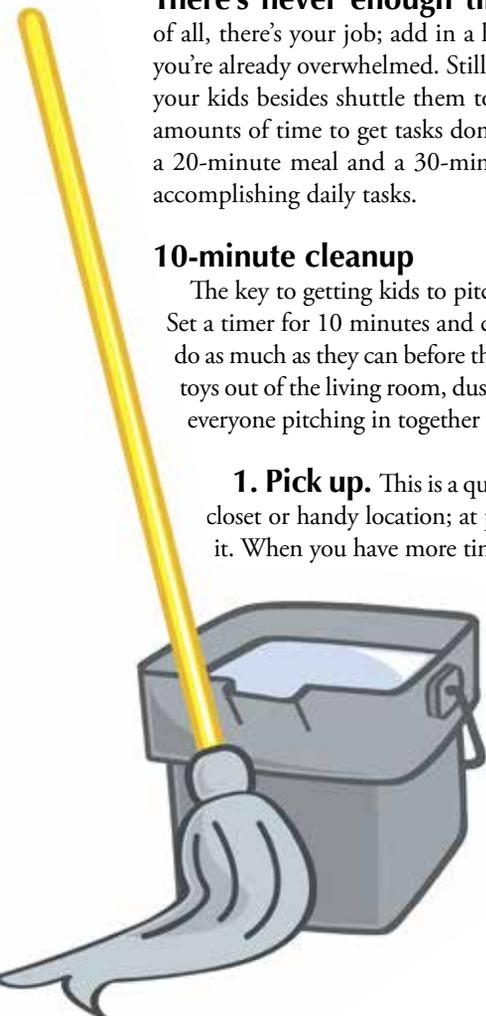
4. Vacuum. Invest in a cordless vacuum. Sweeping and vacuuming are a snap with one tool always ready to go. The lightweight models available allow even children to help in cleaning up.

Tote Your Tools: Create a Cleaning Caddy

Carry your cleaning caddy from room to room and use what you need out of it. You can also stock each bathroom with a basket of basics, like a microfiber cloth, sponge, antibacterial cleaner, etc. and only use them to clean that given bathroom.

What to Put in a Cleaning Caddy

- sponges
- vinyl gloves
- all-purpose cleaner
- bathroom cleaner
- toilet cleaner
- microfiber cloths
- shower/soap scum eliminator spray (equal parts of vinegar and Dawn detergent, mixed with some water in a spray bottle)
- paper towels
- Lysol/Clorox wipes





Squeeze in a workout by taking your family for a 30-minute walk on trails or in your neighborhood.

Homemade Pizza Night

- 2 frozen pizza crusts (let thaw at room temperature while you're preparing toppings)
- 1 can tomato or pizza sauce (if using tomato sauce, add pizza seasoning to taste)
- 8 oz. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- toppings of your choice (cooked sausage, pepperoni, sliced mushrooms, sliced black or green olives, chopped basil—use your kids' favorites or try something new!)

Bake at 425° for 16–20 minutes, or until crust is golden brown and cheese is melted.

5. Fluff those pillows. Fluff and straighten pillows and throws. Your room will instantly look more put together.

20-minute dinner

Even on nights when time is short, mealtime can still be hands-on and fun. The secret is ingredients that don't require much prep, and many willing hands. Buy a few frozen premade pizza crusts to keep on hand, keep cans of tomato sauce in the pantry and stock up on favorite toppings. Then declare it pizza night and set kids to work preparing their favorite toppings: an older child can cook sausage; another can shred cheese and another can spread tomato sauce. Everyone assembles their own combination, satisfying picky eaters, and this also presents an opportunity to have kids try something new in a small and palatable amount. Introduce fresh herbs, such as chopped basil, cherry tomato halves or bits of broccoli. Best of all, when you make pizza yourself, you can make it as healthy or indulgent as you choose—try looking for crusts containing whole grains, going easy on the cheese and being creative with veggies in toppings.

30-minute workout

And after that dinner that you enjoyed preparing as a family, an easy way to get a bit of exercise is to go for a walk. Whether you live near downtown or in a more rural area, the after-dinner timing is ideal. You're together already, and

it's often cooler in the evening if your kids balk at being outside on a hot day.

Time your “workout” so your family spends at least 30 minutes on the move, and use these tips to make it unique every time:

- Challenge your kids to find something new on every walk, whether it's a detail on a house in your neighborhood or a new bird on a hiking trail. This isn't just fun; it's making a connection to community and nature.
- Take turns playing “I Spy” as you walk. Moving at a slower pace than you would on a car ride is an advantage: That street sign or wildflower won't disappear from view as quickly.
- Turn your gaze upward: What objects can your kids find in the clouds? And how lovely is it to have a few minutes to cloud-gaze in the first place?
- You can take a family walk no matter what activities your children have in the evenings. While one is at martial arts class, take the others for a walk. While one is at baseball practice, engage others in walkabout fun near the ballfield.
- Set a desirable destination, such as an ice cream shop. While this may seem counterintuitive to exercise, your kids will be exerting themselves toward that reward and creating a pleasant family memory in the meantime. Just don't do it every night.

Between them, Diane Raaum and Betty Christiansen have more than 40 years of experience in getting kids to clean up, help with meals and go outside.

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TAKE TIME FOR MENTAL HEALTH

A mindfulness practice is key to less stress.

BY HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE

Contributed photo

Rare is the person who has no stress. From hitting every red light when you are already late to work to experiencing emotional and physical trauma, stress is everywhere. It's how we deal with it that matters.

What is mindfulness?

By now you've likely heard the term *mindfulness* and perhaps engage in some mindfulness practices. But did you know mindfulness can be one of the keys to successfully navigating the stress in your life?

Vanee Songsiridej, M.D., a retired Gundersen Health System physician now with Seven Rivers Mindfulness, defines *mindfulness* as simply being "in the moment, without judgment." She began her practice in medical school, as a volunteer, because the dean of her school found it helpful. She now has her own mindfulness practice and leads mindfulness groups.

Dr. Songsiridej explains that stress comes from both outside and inside. While we can't

control outside stresses, we can control the way we handle them inside ourselves through mindfulness. Without mindfulness, she says, "stress has its own life."

Though mindfulness has only recently come into the modern vernacular (it was initially used to help people with chronic pain), the concept, she says, has been around at least 2,500 years. Recent research shows that the synapses in the brain get stronger with a regular mindfulness practice, leading to more relaxation.

A daily dose

The easiest way to begin a mindfulness practice is to simply take a long, deep breath with a longer exhale, or out-breath, says Songsiridej. "When you let out a deep sigh," she says, "it's the body's way of expressing that long breath, and a clue that more are needed." Singing and laughing both incorporate natural long out-breaths.

"Mindfulness training involves meditation," she adds, but it's just one aspect. Sitting meditation, walking, yoga and tai chi are all ways

to incorporate mindfulness. "Anything works," she says, "when one is aware of what they're doing."

If you are one of those people who dread the beginning of the workweek but look forward to the

weekend, mindfulness should be a part of your life. "Stress builds up, and by Friday it's at the peak; then we have Saturday and Sunday to ease it down," Songsiridej says. However, she notes, stress never returns to its baseline. "Mindfulness should start Monday morning. Take a breath or two and relax."

Mind your mind

Anyone can begin a mindfulness practice; even young children are being taught to use it. The first step is to pay attention to what is happening now, in the moment. Guided mindfulness prompts are easy to find; simply search for *mindfulness* on the internet, and you'll locate everything from one-minute guides to YouTube demonstrations, classes, apps and mindfulness groups.

Many people, Songsiridej says, work with mindfulness teachers, including virtual ones.

"Some people say they don't have time, but it's important to remember to do it." She points out that some stress is perfectly natural, and we can accept it. However, it's how we accept it that makes the difference.

So, the next time a deadline is approaching, the grocery store line is long or your teenager is slamming their bedroom door, take a deep breath, release a long out-breath and take a moment to *be*. **(crw)**

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D., is a La Crosse area author who intends to breathe a whole lot more.

Online Mindfulness Sources

10% Happier, www.10percenthappier.com
Insight Timer, www.insighttimer.com
Sounds True (books and audio), www.soundstrue.com
Seven Rivers Mindfulness, www.7riversmindfulness.com
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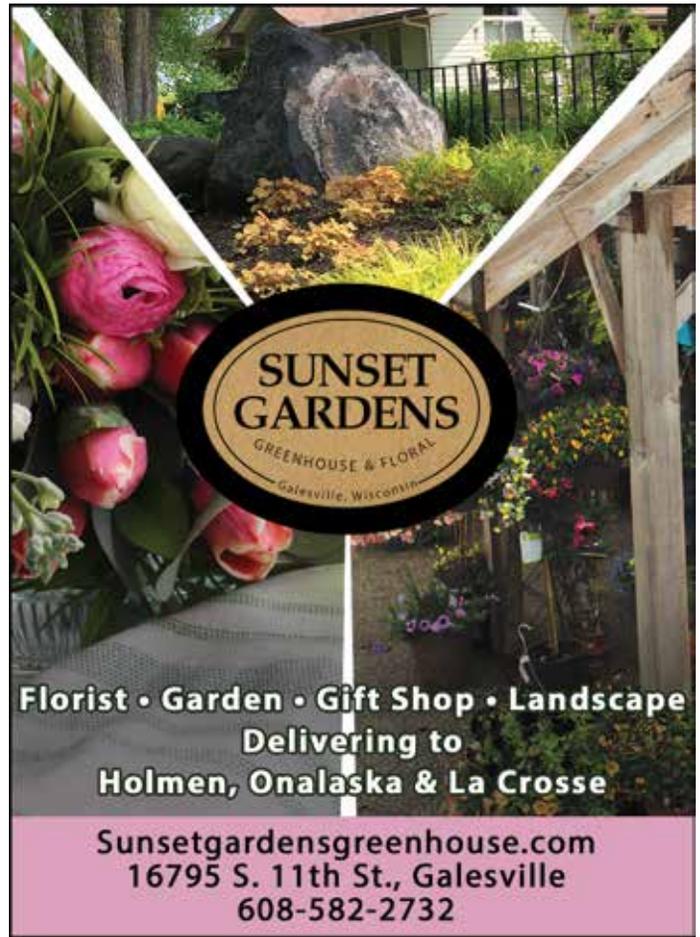
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Town and *Country*

The 2017 Parade of Homes winner offers a satisfying combination of both.

BY JESSIE FOSS
Contributed photos



Eye-catching wood details and a soothing decor follow throughout the living, sleeping, dining and kitchen areas of the Favre home.

It's a little bit city with neighborhood kids playing in one another's yards, runners running along the road and easy access to the highway. But it's also a little bit country with vast blue skies and cornfields butting up to several backyards.

Holmen's August Prairie subdivision has become a popular spot for those looking for the perfect mix of city and country.

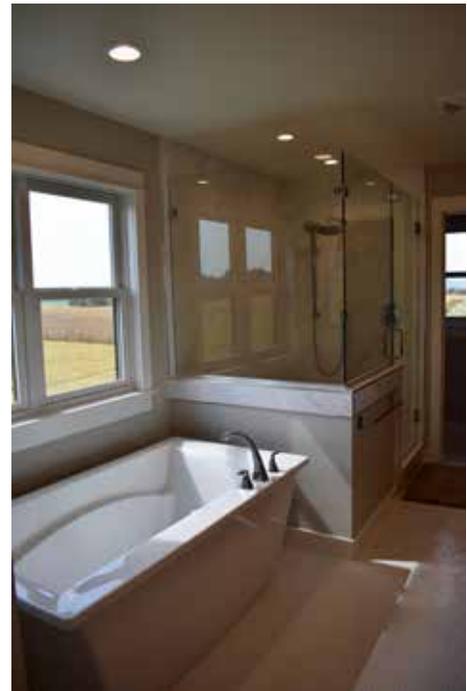
Bill and Katie Favre, along with their two daughters, Macie and Cora, and their three dogs, have had the fortune of calling the subdivision home for the past year after purchasing a lot and building a new home.

"I never really thought I'd live in Holmen," Katie says. "But now, I'll never leave."

A winning home

The Favres' home was one of 10 featured in the 2017 La Crosse Area Builders Association's Parade of Homes. Those attending the parade chose the Favre home for the 2017 People's Choice Award.

The building process for the Favres began in January 2016, when they purchased a lot in the August Prairie subdivision. Ground was



From the master bath to the welcoming entry to additional rooms in the house, window features connect the interior to the wilder outdoors.

broken in October 2016, and the home was completed in May 2017. During that time, the Favres were busy selling their home and flipping another house to sell while raising two daughters, working and, at times, living out of hotels.

The finished product is an approximately 3,600-square-foot, four-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bathroom home that features an open concept main floor with wood-plank flooring running throughout. The kitchen includes quartz countertops, a farmer's sink and Cora's favorite part of the house, a large island.

A large gas fireplace is flanked by built-in cabinetry on each side and anchors the main floor's great room. The main floor also has a custom kennel for the dogs, which was one of Katie's ideas. A mudroom, a powder room and an office with double barn doors finish off the main floor.

After being in the house for more than a year, Katie says there is nothing she would change about her home.

"I still walk in and still say I love this house every day," she says.

Room for everything

Katie and Bill knew they wanted a home they wouldn't outgrow anytime soon. The second floor has a spacious master suite with vaulted ceilings and one of Katie's favorite features: a laundry room with access from the master bath and hallway. The master bath features a freestanding soaking tub and a custom shower. There are also two more bedrooms and a full bath on the second floor.

The lower level of the house is all about fun and family with a family room with a movie projection system and a bar. A bedroom and bathroom finish off the downstairs.

Sader Construction of Holmen acted as the Favres' general contractor. Bill and Katie chose the Sader team after attending past Parades of Homes.

"[Sader Construction] homes were always my favorite," Katie says.

"[Steve of Sader Homes] treats you like family. He goes above and beyond to make sure you're happy and satisfied."

When it comes to choosing a general contractor, the Favres recommend getting recommendations from people who have built, and then meet with each contractor to see whom you mesh with. Bill says to keep in mind that the cheapest isn't always the best; you get what you pay for.

An eye for design

The Favres turned to J Company Design Studio of La Crosse when it came to furnishing the Craftsman-style home. Katie says she gathered ideas from Pinterest and knew she wanted the home to have a farm-style look to it, but "didn't know how to make it into what it's supposed to look like." Kristen Boettcher of J Company put Katie's ideas into a cohesive, family-friendly look and feel.

Bill and Katie, La Crosse natives, were both working as real estate agents when they first met. Katie has since become a nurse and works in the obstetrics department at Gundersen Health System. While the home-building process wasn't without its challenges, Bill and Katie both say in the end it was worth it. After completing the home-building process, and adding in their real estate knowledge, the two have some advice to offer to others considering taking the building plunge.

"Come into the building process with a game plan, because things will add up. Staying ahead of it will relieve some stress," Bill says. "And try to have fun."

Katie believes the most important thing is to do things right the first time.

"If you're debating on two things, don't say, 'We can change this later,'" she says. "Make a decision and go with it." 

Jessie Foss is a freelance writer living in La Crosse. She enjoyed the opportunity to meet the Favres and see their new home.

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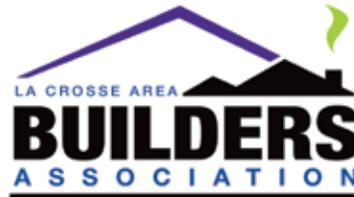
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Welcome

Have you been thinking of building a new home or perhaps remodeling your existing home? Are you overwhelmed with the decision-making process? Here's your opportunity to attend the 2018 La Crosse Area Builders Association Parade of Homes.

The 42nd annual Parade of Homes gives you the opportunity to speak directly with the builders, see their work and craftsmanship firsthand and gain knowledge about the new and innovative things happening in today's home construction. You will see stunning features throughout the homes and discover technology used in ways you probably never knew existed. What better way to stay up-to-date on the latest home trends?

This year's Parade of Homes features 10 homes within a broad price range built by highly qualified builders. The homes exhibit the professionalism, authenticity and unsurpassed standards of the La Crosse Area Builders Association members.

Don't forget to cast your vote for the People's Choice Award. As a ticket holder, you have the opportunity to vote for your favorite home at this year's Parade of Homes. The winning home will be featured on the front cover of next year's Parade of Homes magazine.

This annual event is sure to please everyone in attendance. What better time to check out your local options in home construction, remodeling and interior/exterior design? I hope to see you there!

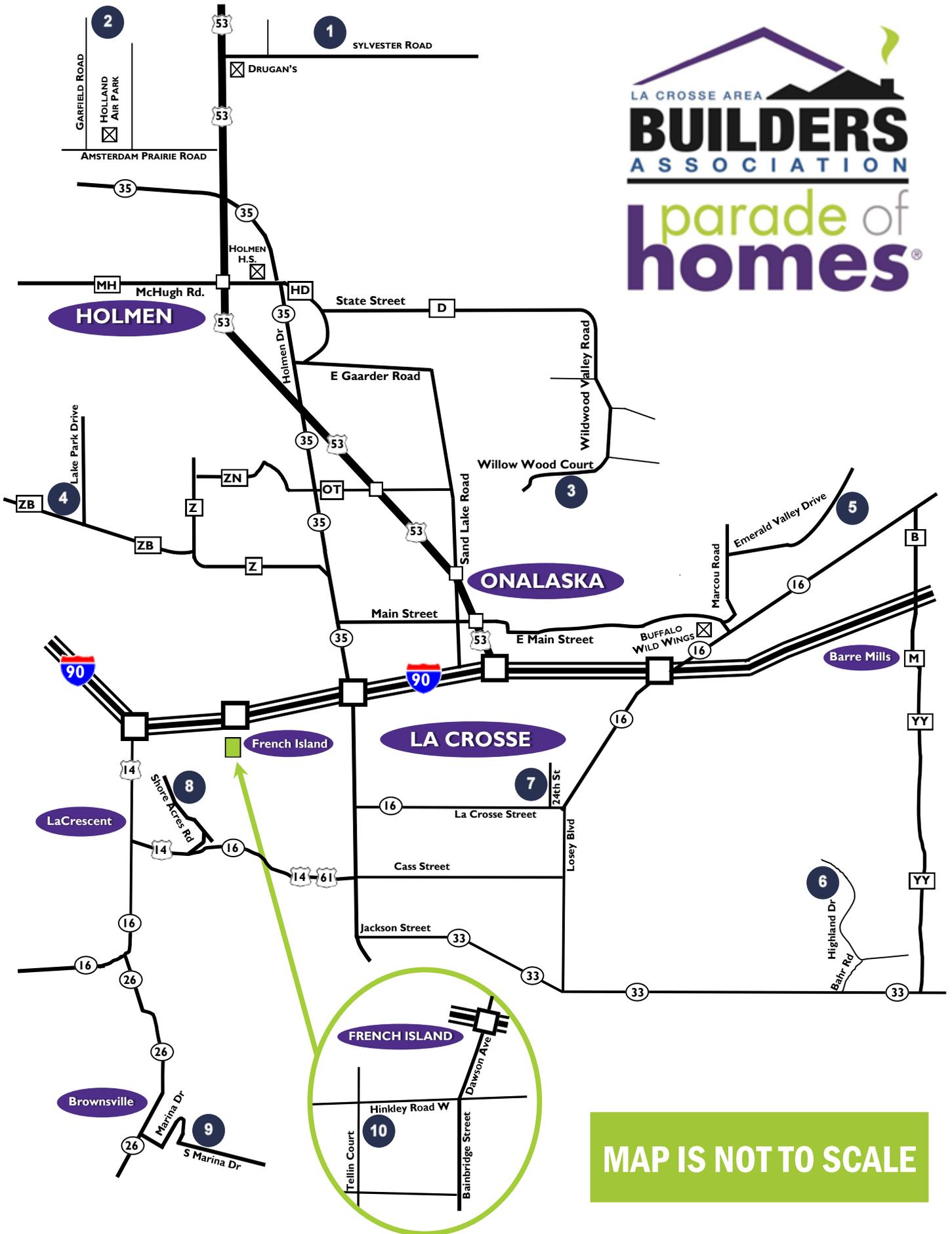
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Parade of Homes®, August 2018

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3	Lifetime Design Homes	608-386-0638	W6429 Willow Wood Ct., Holmen	Wildwood Valley	4	3	3,275	9
4	Marlin Homes LLC	608-779-4617	N5703 Lake Park Dr., Onalaska	N/A	4	3	3,300	11
5	Lautz Lassig Custom Builders, Inc.	608-792-0656	3370 Emerald Valley Dr., Onalaska	Country Club Estates	3	4	4,139	12
6	Moore & Moore Renovation & Construction, Inc.	608-780-2913	W3849 Highland Dr., La Crosse	Ridgeview Heights	4	2 + 2 half	3,320	17
7	Jon Olson Construction	608-780-5603	745 N. 24th St., La Crosse	N/A	2	2	1,400	19
8	Hartland Construction	608-385-6641	754 Shore Acres Rd., La Crescent	Shore Acres	4	3.5	3,617	20
9	Best Custom Homes, Inc.	608-317-7445	297 S. Marina Dr., Brownsville	Harbor Lites	3	2	1,582	23
10	MasterCraft Homes, Inc.	608-799-6422	346 Tellin Ct., La Crosse	Jackie Manor	4	3.5	2,322	25

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SADER CONSTRUCTION

LABA MEMBER SINCE 2005

HOME
#1



W7566 Sylvester Rd., Holmen - Castle Heights

This is another beautifully designed and functional home by Rugroden Design. The two-story home features a modern two-tone siding combination and a Craftsman-style interior with white trim and stained panel doors. The two-story great room is the focal point of the main level. It showcases two walls of windows for lots of natural light. The kitchen has white cabinets and quartz countertops. The large gray island makes a great work and serving area with lots of seating. The large patio off the dining room makes a great area to grill and entertain. The home office works great for both homeowners. A powder room, laundry and large rear entry with custom lockers complete the main level. The second level features a master suite with tile shower, soaker tub, double vanity and walk-in closet. The second bedroom features its own bath with tub/shower, vanity with makeup desk and walk-in closet. The second-story balcony has a great view of the golf course across the street. The lower level is complete with three bedrooms, a full bathroom, a recreational/game room, a mechanical room, storage and a garage stairway. The large three-plus-car garage is more than 1,600 square feet with a 6-foot door on the back for easy access for the lawnmower. We would like to thank all of our subcontractors for another great professional job. A big thank-you to Jason, Krystal, Austen, Dylan, Kolin and Lydia for sharing their home with you!



LABA members used: Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Builders Flooring, Inc.; Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints; Maxwell-White Plumbing, Inc.; Overhead Door Company of the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.; Rugroden Drafting & Design; Schneider Heating & Air Conditioning; Stetter Electric; Waldenberger Inc.; Wisconsin Building Supply, Inc.



5 Bedrooms
3.5 Baths
2,958 Ft²

Jason Sader
Steve Sader

608-769-4949

saderconstruction@gmail.com
www.saderconstruction.com



HARTLAND CONSTRUCTION

LABA MEMBER SINCE 2013



N8730 Garfield Rd., Holmen - Holland Air Park



4 Bedrooms
3.5 Baths
3,427 Ft²

Paul & Jennifer Westlie

608-385-6641

info@hartlandconstruction.net

www.hartlandconstruction.net

Fly on over or drive on up to the Holland Air Park to see this distinctive two-story home with its low-pitched rooflines and angled garage entry. In this open-concept design, an 18-foot-high stone fireplace draws you into the great room, as do the high and low windows, perfect for watching experimental aircrafts. The dark wood trim and doors welcome you back to a traditional, cozy atmosphere and complement the white kitchen. The second level provides adequate space for growing children and all their prized possessions, while the finished basement welcomes you to a high-tech theater room and casual wet-bar area in addition to a craft room and guest bedroom and bathroom. The main-level laundry room, mudroom and large walk-in pantry are a mom's dream come true, and the finished garage with epoxy flooring makes the garage as inviting as the home's front door.

LABA members used: Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Al's Drywall; Arcade Portables LLC; Bond Drywall Supply, Inc.; Coverra Insurance Services, Inc.; Decker Design, Inc.; Gerhards; Glass Interiors of La Crosse; Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints; Hidden Valley Designs, Inc.; Hilltopper Refuse & Recycling; HotSpring Spas & Pools of La Crosse; La Crosse Fireplace Company; Lifetime Insulation; MJG Excavating, Inc.; Overhead Door Company of the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.; Paveman Designs LLC; Riverland Energy Cooperative; Stetter Electric; The Audio Video Pros; Town n' Country Title LLC; Used Anew LLC; Waldenberger Inc.; Wettstein's; Wisconsin Building Supply, Inc.



LIFETIME DESIGN HOMES

LABA MEMBER SINCE 1999

HOME
#3



W6429 Willow Wood Ct., Holmen - Wildwood Valley

This stunning 3,275-square-foot ranch home has all the quality you have come to expect from Lifetime Design Homes. Once again, the kitchen is the focus as the heart of the home, balancing the great room and dining areas within sight of each other. It features an extended sit-down island for conversation, or as extra workspace for those who love to cook. The kitchen also has an extra-deep walk-in pantry. Special ceiling treatments of dark wood beams and white shiplap bring it all together. White cabinets are featured throughout the home, with a stone fireplace as the focal point of the great room. The master suite is split from the other two bedrooms and has a large walk-in closet, beautiful walk-in shower, and freestanding tub. The outside of the home is lovely as well, with a large screened-in porch connected to a patio for the ultimate in entertaining.



For other ideas and a taste of this Parade Home in a virtual tour, please visit www.lifetimedesignhomes.com.



4 Bedrooms
3 Baths
3,275 Ft²

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MARLIN HOMES LLC

LABA MEMBER SINCE 2004

HOME
#4



N5703 Lake Park Dr., Onalaska

Marlin Homes LLC presents this custom-built insulating concrete form (ICF) home, which uses concrete and thermal mass to reduce energy cost and provide additional comfort to the homeowners. These comforts include an almost-unnoticeable temperature change between floors, reduced outside noise and peace of mind in severe weather. This home also features a unique three-season room built on LiteDeck above a patio. LiteDeck is an insulated form designed for pouring concrete that provides advantages such as thermal mass, air- and watertightness and a stamped-concrete option for a durable finish. This home's stamped-concrete sidewalk leads you into a spacious entry; the kitchen, living room and dining room are open concept with hardwood floors that lead into the three-season room with a view of Lake Onalaska. The kitchen features concrete countertops with fiber-optic lights; custom concrete countertops also appear in the master bath.



If you want to build a new ICF home, remodel or make an addition to your home, stop by and be inspired by this beautiful home.

LABA members used: Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Badger Corrugating Co.; Beaver Builders Supply, Inc.; Carpets To Go; Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints; Overhead Door Company of the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.; Sherwin Williams; Wettsteins.



4 Bedrooms
3 Baths
3,300 Ft²

Duane Schulze

608-779-4617

duane@marlinbuilt.com

www.marlinbuilt.com



LAUTZ LASSIG CUSTOM BUILDERS, INC.

LABA MEMBER SINCE 2011



3370 Emerald Valley Dr., Onalaska - Country Club Estates



3 Bedrooms
4 Baths
4,139 Ft²

Kraig Lassig
608-792-0656
kraig@lautzlassig.com
www.lautzlassig.com

The 2018 Lautz Lassig Custom Builders Parade Home is built to meet the needs of an active retired couple. It is located on the new La Crosse Country Club with breathtaking views of holes #2, #7 and #8! The home features five gable ends on the front with accent stones, shakes and LP SmartSide siding. There's also a walk-out basement and two fireplaces, three bedrooms, four bathrooms, a bar rec room, a dining room with a coffered ceiling, a great room, a butler pantry, his-and-her walk-in closets, a walk-in shower, a soaking tub, a large deck overlooking the course and a 956-square-foot three-car garage.

We would like to thank Seuk and Rita Kang for letting us showcase their beautiful home this year. May the memories here be many and joyful!

LABA members used: ACT Concrete, Inc.; Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Bagniefski Heating & Air Conditioning; Best Kept Portables; Carpet One of La Crosse; Coulee Region Insurance Group; Design Masonry LLC; Earley Drywall & Construction, Inc.; Elite Electrical Solutions LLC; First American Roofing & Siding, Inc.; Gerhards; Green Built Insulation LLC; Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints; Home Depot; La Crosse Fireplace Company; Maxwell-White Plumbing, Inc.; Menards; Overhead Door Company of the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.; Parcher Painting & Home Improvement; Paveman Designs LLC; River City Lawnscape, Inc.; Rugroden Drafting & Design; Ultimate Insulation; Wettstein's; Wisconsin Building Supply, Inc.; Xcel Energy



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\$TAY ON BUDGET

WHEN BUILDING A NEW HOME



When you've made the decision to build a new home, selecting the right builder is an important part of the process. You want to find a builder whose business approach aligns well with your personal preferences. And staying within your budget is a key part of positive home-building experience.

Being an educated consumer, and asking your home builder the right questions, will help you build the home of your dreams without blowing your budget.

Included features and custom options

It's important to set your expectations in the beginning. A builder's model home is often designed to highlight how a buyer can personalize the home, but most of the time, what you see in the model is either upgraded or perhaps even a designer option that may or may not be available. It's important to know the difference between what features are included and what items have been upgraded to avoid being surprised when you go to contract or even during the building process.

Also, if you like a custom upgrade but not its higher cost, there is often a less expensive way to achieve the same look. For example, the custom cabinets shown in a model home may be offered in the same color and size with a lower-priced option. And if designer knobs or pulls are added, you can achieve a very similar look for far less. The same is true of granite counters and flooring. It pays to ask the builder's representative or design center consultant how to achieve the look you want and stay within your budget.

Closing cost contributions or incentives

In many areas throughout the United States, a builder's contract will stipulate that they do not pay any closing costs. That means they also don't pay the traditional closing costs that are typically paid by the sellers when purchasing a used or resale home. However, builders will often offer some sort of closing incentive that can be applied toward closing costs or options. The incentive may be tied to the use of preferred lender or title

company. Buyers should carefully run the numbers with their real estate professional or lender to see if those incentives make sense for their particular situation.

Some buyers may find it better to use an outside lender because of rates and fees. Other buyers may do better asking to have the builder's incentive applied toward options they will need to move into the home and have it become immediately livable, like adding a refrigerator, blinds or a washer and dryer, which are often not included in new homes.

The key is to understand what incentives are available and apply those to your particular situation in the way that best benefits you.

Warranty and regular maintenance

Most consumers understand that when you purchase a new car that is covered by a warranty, the buyer is still responsible for some maintenance and other costs. The same is true when you buy a newly built home. Before you go to settlement on the purchase of your new home, you and your builder will do a walk-through to conduct a final inspection. This walk-through provides an opportunity to spot items that may need to be corrected or adjusted, learn about the way your new home works and ask questions about anything you don't understand.

Often, a builder will use the walk-through to educate buyers about the operation of the home's components, the buyer's responsibilities for maintenance and upkeep, and the warranty coverage and procedures. Be sure to read and understand the warranty documents. It is important that you learn about the way your new home works and ask questions about anything you don't understand.

For more information about how to find the right builder to create your dream home, contact the La Crosse Area Builders Association.

Tips provided by Kimberly Mackey, New Homes Solutions Consulting.



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LABA MEMBER SINCE 2017

HOME
#6

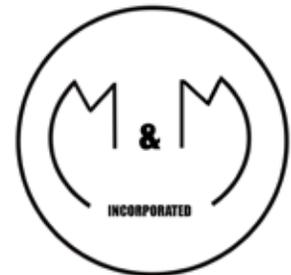


W3849 Highland Dr., La Crosse - Ridgeview Heights

This custom-built home by Moore & Moore Renovaton & Construction, Inc., sits high atop a ridge surrounded by beautiful views. The home was designed to be comfortable and functional. The open concept allows for family living and entertaining. The kitchen is highlighted with Amish-built custom cabinetry, a built-in hutch, a large island and granite countertops. The great room features a soaring 18-foot ceiling with a wall of windows to enjoy the views, built-in cabinetry and a custom gas fireplace. The main floor also includes a spacious master bedroom, a master bathroom with a walk-in tile shower and a den with more Amish custom cabinetry. An open staircase leads to the second floor, with two more bedrooms and full bath. The lower level features a family room with a gas fireplace flanked by built-in bookshelves. A fourth bedroom, bathroom and dish room complete the lower level.



LABA members used: Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Best Kept Portables; Builders Flooring, Inc.; E & B Insulation; Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints; Hess Excavating; Home Depot; Menards; Merchants Bank; Overhead Door Company of the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.; Rohde Painting, Inc.; Rugroden Drafting & Design; Sherwin-Williams; The Board Store Home Improvements, Inc.; Wettstein's; Wisconsin Building Supply, Inc.; Xcel Energy



4 Bedrooms
2 full, 2 half Baths
3,320 Ft²

Nick Mier

608-780-2913

nick2014mier@gmail.com

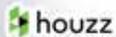
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- When you are finished with your tour, indicate on your ticket which home was your favorite, then deposit the ticket in the box provided at each home for this purpose.

For additional information, please visit our website at www.labaparadeofhomes.com.

JON OLSON CONSTRUCTION

LABA MEMBER SINCE 1990

HOME
#7



745 N. 24th St., La Crosse

You'll find easy living in this two-bedroom, two-bath Craftsman-style home chosen to fit within a traditional La Crosse neighborhood. This home features an efficient open design with little hallway and lots of closet space, a large laundry and mudroom, bonus office space, a nice kitchen with quartz countertops, a covered rear patio and a traditional front porch.

This home is just right for retirement with easy maintenance and energy-efficient features. This house is focused on energy with high R-values, special air sealing and LED lighting. We thank all of our wonderful contractors for their hard work. Also, thank you to the homeowners for allowing us to show their beautiful home.



LABA members used: Beaver Builders Supply, Inc.; Beyer Custom Cabinets, Ltd.; Stokes Electric LLC; Absolute Comfort Heating & A/C LLC; Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Hess Excavating; Wettstein's; Builders Flooring, Inc.; JBrooke Garage Door LLC; TRICOR Insurance; Menards; Xcel Energy



2 Bedrooms
2 Baths
1,400 Ft²

Jon Olson

608-780-5603

jolsonconstruction@centurytel.net

www.jonolsonconstruction.com

HOME
#8

HARTLAND CONSTRUCTION

LABA MEMBER SINCE 2013



754 Shore Acres Rd., La Crescent - Shore Acres



4 Bedrooms
3.5 Baths
3,617 Ft²

Paul & Jennifer Westlie

608-385-6641

info@hartlandconstruction.net

www.hartlandconstruction.net

Come experience life on the river! This two-story home located on the north end of Shore Acres along the Mississippi River offers relaxing year-round living for a family with a busy lifestyle. The 18-foot-tall great room fixed with six windows allows for fantastic river scenery and morning sunrises. The open-concept living maximizes entertaining abilities, and the entire main level includes in-floor heat. A contemporary cable railing system leads you up to the second story, which is perfect for raising teenagers with two bathrooms, three bedrooms and a bonus room above the garage. With no basement on this house, the mechanicals are neatly kept in a room off the nicely finished three-car garage that also includes in-floor heat and it leads out to the back patios, the river's shore and the boat dock.

LABA members used: Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Al's Drywall; Altra Federal Credit Union; Bond Drywall Supply, Inc.; Decker Design, Inc.; Glass Interiors of La Crosse; Graf Electric, Inc.; Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints; Hidden Valley Designs, Inc.; Hilltopper Refuse & Recycling; HotSprings Spas & Pools of La Crosse; La Crosse Fireplace Company; Lifetime Insulation; Overhead Door Company of the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.; Town n' Country Title LLC; Waldenberger Inc.; Wettstein's; Wisconsin Building Supply, Inc.; Xcel Energy





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BEST CUSTOM HOMES, INC.

LABA MEMBER SINCE 2001

HOME
#9



297 S. Marina Dr., Brownsville - Harbor Lites

This beautiful waterfront home features window walls, a stamped patio and private boat dock with wide-open views facing the Mississippi River. With three bedrooms and two bathrooms, this open-concept house includes an expansive great room, a spacious kitchen/dining room and vaulted wood ceilings with Craftsman-style trim. An oversize two-car garage with attic space has in-floor heat and lots of room for storage.



3 Bedrooms
2 Baths
1,582 Ft²



LABA members used: Maxwell-White Plumbing, Inc.; Five Star Concrete LLC; Badger Corrugating Co.; Graf Electric, Inc.; Menards-Onalaska; JBrooke Garage Door LLC; E&B Insulation; Coverra Insurance, Inc.; Hallman Lindsay Quality Paints; Best Kept Portables

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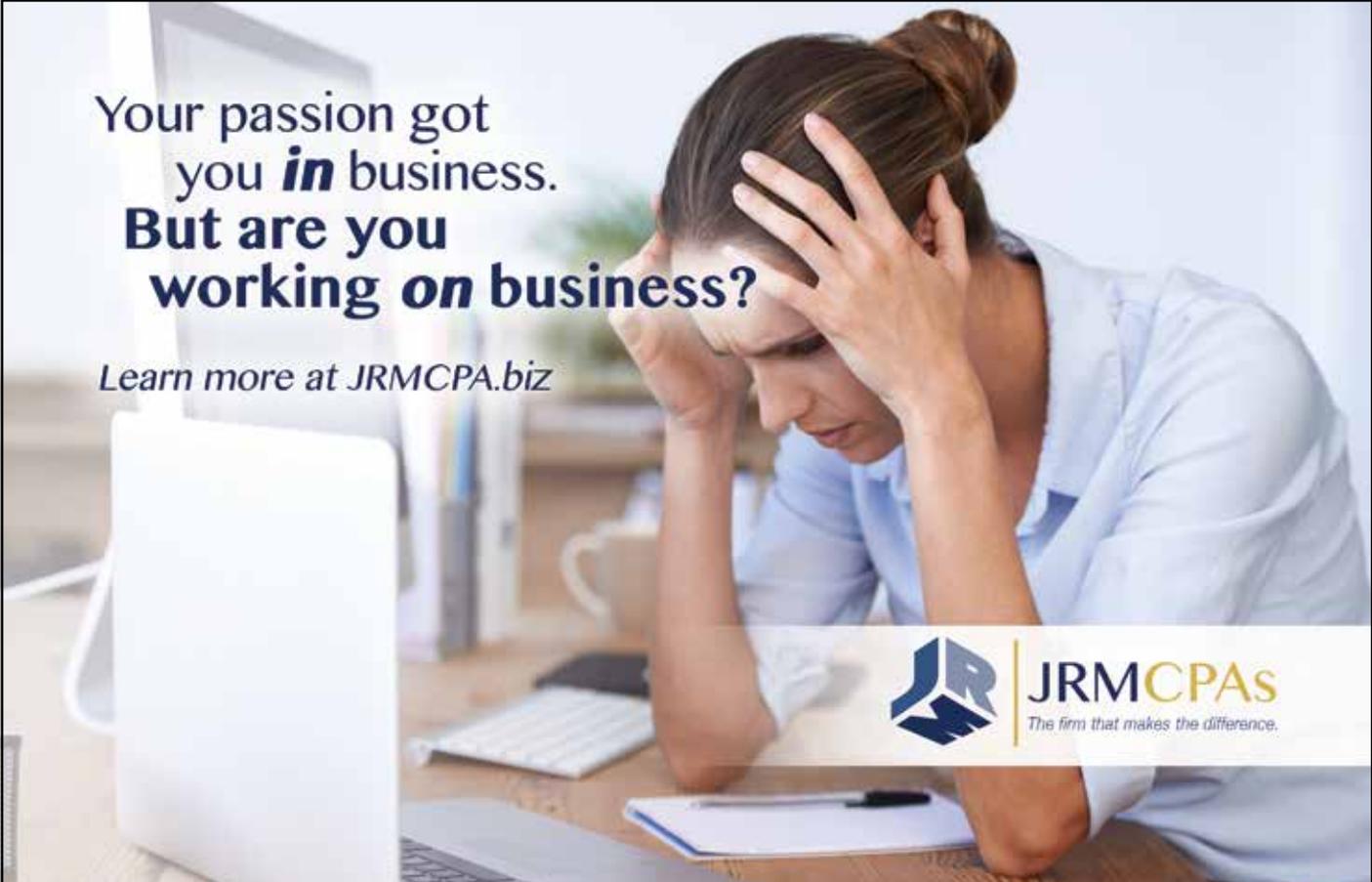
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MASTERCRAFT HOMES, INC.

LABA MEMBER SINCE 1986

HOME
#10



346 Tellin Ct., La Crosse - Jackie Manor

This gorgeous two-story home designed and built by MasterCraft Homes, Inc., has a clean, modern feel to it. Plenty of natural light, a neutral color palette and 9-foot ceilings make for a light and airy feeling. The front porch is a great place for the family to sit and enjoy summer evenings. Upon entering, you'll find wood tones, mixed metals and pops of color that are carried out throughout the home. The kitchen utilizes open shelving for design and function and displays a beautiful butcher-block top island. The kitchen opens into a spacious great room, perfect for entertaining family and friends. A mudroom, half bath and dining room make up the main floor. Upstairs are two bedrooms and a full bathroom along with the master suite, which includes a bathroom with a free-standing soaking tub, shower and double vanities. A family room, bedroom and one full bath complete the lower level. Nestled in the quiet neighborhood of the Jackie Manor subdivision on French Island, this home displays the creativity and design touches MasterCraft Homes, Inc., is known for!



LABA members used: ABC Supply Co.; Advanced Seamless, Inc.; Al's Drywall; Arcade Portables LLC; Badger Corrugating Co.; Bob's Window Cleaning; Bond Drywall Supply, Inc.; Decker Design, Inc.; Design Masonry LLC; Glass Interiors of La Crosse; Hilltopper Refuse & Recycling; Lifetime Insulation; Maxwell-White Plumbing, Inc.; Midwest Concrete Professionals; MJG Excavating, Inc.; Outdoor Services, Inc. (OSI); Overhead Door Company of the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.; Phillips Fencing; Schneider Heating & Air Conditioning; Seymour Electric; Sherwin-Williams; Wisconsin Building Supply, Inc.; Xcel Energy



4 Bedrooms
3.5 Baths
2,322 Ft²

Jason Etrheim

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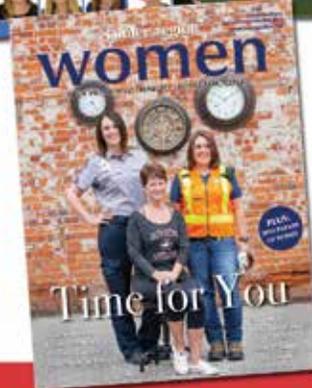
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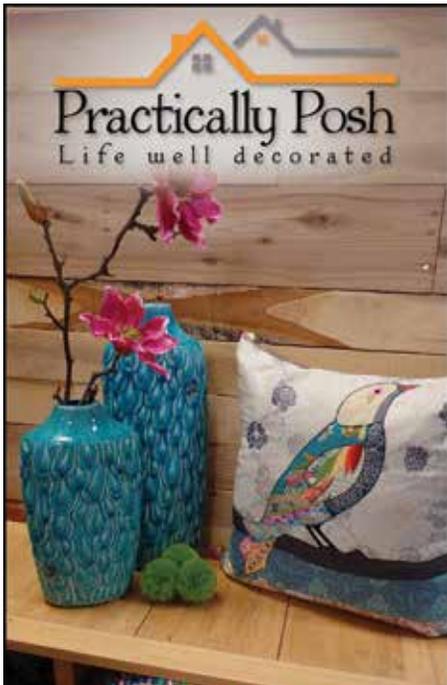
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DINNERTIME DILEMMAS

Meal planning saves shopping trips, time and money.

BY SHARI HEGLAND

It's 6 p.m. on a busy Thursday evening, and between baseball and swim lessons, the kids ask, "Mom, what's for dinner?" Oops.

You *can* avoid grabbing fast food to go, stopping at the grocery store every other day for just one or two things, or staring into the cupboard with no idea where to start. Planning meals and grocery lists in advance can help you eat healthier, save money and save time.

Here are 10 tips from seasoned meal-planning veterans in our area:

1. Start with your calendar and what's in the fridge.

Our experts agree: The first step in meal planning is to review the calendar for the week ahead. Make note of nights that are

extra busy and schedule those for easy prep such as slow-cooker meals, leftovers or salads. Also plan to use up perishable items you currently have on hand before they go bad.

2. Involve the whole family.

Tiffany McGathy, whose family includes five children, asks each one to choose one meal a week. Even with varying likes and dislikes, this guarantees everyone has at least one meal each week they enjoy.

3. Put it in writing for everyone to see.

Whether it's the simple dry-erase board Heather James has hanging in her kitchen, a single sheet of paper or a fancy menu board, putting the plan into writing keeps the cook on track and also allows other family

Our experts:

- Tiffany McGathy of Onalaska plans for up to seven members of a blended family every other week.
- Heather James of Galesville says planning ahead easily saves at least 15 to 30 minutes every day.
- The time Toni Smith Jensen of La Crosse saves by pre-prepping meals accommodates training schedules for the multiple distance running events she and her husband participate in.
- Lisa Grant of Holmen has dabbled in meal planning for other families, as well as her own, accommodating health needs including low-sodium diets.



members to know what to expect—then they can make their own peanut butter sandwiches if they don't like the chosen recipe.

4. Streamline processes by saving lists and recipes.

McGathy saves shopping lists in Google Drive to access them on her phone while shopping. Lisa Grant keeps recipes organized by dietary needs and saves past meal plans to use as inspiration for the future.

5. Cook once for multiple meals.

Grant likes to plan meals that allow her to cook a large amount one day and then use the leftovers in a variety of ways. One example is to cook meat for tacos one day, then use the extra meat for taco salads the next day. Or she'll cook a large beef roast one day, then use leftover meat in a casserole or stew later in the week.

6. Plan to use fresh produce first, then frozen or canned later in the week.

Shopping for a week (or even three) at a time may seem impossible due to the perishability of fresh produce. Create a meal plan that uses fresh produce early on, then relies on frozen vegetables in the last days of the plan.

7. Don't just plan, prep in advance.

Toni Smith Jensen takes meal planning a step further, prepping most meals in advance for the week ahead—both dinners and lunches—often starting with a simple ingredient such as grilled chicken or steamed shrimp that can be used in salads, wraps and other recipes for variety through the week.

8. Don't forget breakfast and lunch.

One key time-saver in meal planning is having a complete grocery-

shopping list to cut down on impromptu trips to the store. Create a list that includes what you will need for breakfasts and lunches: basics such as milk, eggs, whole-grain bread, low-fat deli meat and fruit.

9. Mix it up with new recipes, then save the winners.

Grant says that meal planning gives her opportunities to try new recipes knowing she has all the ingredients on hand. If the recipe gets a thumbs-up from the whole family, it is saved and put into regular rotation.

10. Planning frozen pizza is still planning.

Not every meal has to be strictly home-cooked. Plan for those nights when you know that you aren't going to be up for a challenge, then give up the guilt, McGathy says. Your family is fed. Your job is done.

SIMPLE SLOW COOKER SALSA CHICKEN

- 1 3-lb. bag of frozen chicken breasts
- 1 jar salsa

Place all ingredients in a slow cooker and cook on low 8 to 10 hours. Shred chicken meat and mix well with the salsa.

Add to a taco salad on romaine lettuce with toppings such as salsa or pico de gallo, diced avocado or prepared guacamole, shredded cheese, diced onions, diced peppers, sliced jalapenos, diced tomatoes, sliced olives and crushed tortilla chips.

Or, create a rice bowl with chicken, brown rice and toppings such as those listed above.

ANGELA'S AWESOME ENCHILADAS

Recipe by MomSavedbyGrace, Allrecipes.com

- 2 lb. cooked, shredded chicken (use recipe above if desired)
- 1 10.75-oz. can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1¼ cups sour cream
- ¼ tsp. chili powder
- 1 T butter
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 4-oz. can chopped green chilies, drained
- 1 1.25-oz. package mild taco seasoning mix
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped, divided
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp. lime juice
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- 5 12-in. flour tortillas
- 3 cups cheddar cheese, shredded, divided
- 1 10-oz. can enchilada sauce
- 1 6-oz. can sliced black olives

Combine the cream of chicken soup, sour cream and chili powder in a saucepan. Bring to a simmer over low heat, stirring occasionally, then turn off the heat and cover to keep warm.

Heat the butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in the onion; cook and stir until the onion has softened and turned translucent,

about 5 minutes. Add the shredded chicken, chopped green chilies, taco seasoning, half the bunch of chopped green onion and water. Simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in the lime juice, onion powder and garlic powder; simmer for an additional 10 minutes.

Preheat an oven to 350°F (175°C). Stir 1 cup of the soup mixture into the skillet with the chicken mixture. Spread the remaining soup mixture on the bottom of a 9x13-in. baking dish.

Fill each tortilla with chicken mixture. Sprinkle cheese over the chicken filling before folding the tortillas, reserving half of the shredded cheese for topping the enchiladas. Fold tortillas over the filling and place seam-side down in the prepared pan.

Pour enchilada sauce evenly over the enchiladas. Cover with the remaining half of the cheese. Sprinkle the reserved chopped green onions and the sliced olives on top of the cheese. Bake in the preheated oven until filling is heated through and the cheese is melted and bubbling, about 25 minutes. (crw)

Holmen writer Shari Hegland plans meals for one to three weeks at a time. Shopping once for three weeks takes no more time than shopping for one week, saving her at least a couple of hours a week that can be spent experimenting with new recipes.



Sangria: Make Wine a Summer Cocktail

Traditional sangria is a blend of red wine, fruit, sweetener and brandy. But today, any wine can become a sangria with a little bit of imagination! A light wine can create a white sangria. To extend your bottle, it can be diluted with lemon-lime soda or given a little more kick with brandy or pisco (a Peruvian white brandy).

Any fruit can be added; for a more citrus flavor, add oranges, lemons and limes. Mint, strawberries, apples, pears and pineapple plus a sweet white wine make a wonderful concoction.

The best part of sangria is that after the wine is consumed, everyone can share the saturated fruit for dessert! Happy summer!

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Busy as a Bee

Women Beekeepers create a buzz about bees.

BY JULIE NELSON
Contributed photos



Cathy Schuman, founder of Women Beekeepers of the La Crosse Area, examines a hive in her backyard

Bees for breakfast: It's the conversation, not the entrée, for approximately 18 Coulee Region women who gather monthly at the Root Note in La Crosse. They discuss bees, beekeeping and honey with goals that are both lofty and immediate: Save the bees, save the planet.

Local women, global impact



Cathy Schuman

The Women Beekeepers of the La Crosse Area was started by Cathy Schuman, a clinical psychologist at Gundersen Health System and avid beekeeper. Schuman started her first hive five years ago, when she was living near Boston. "A neighbor offered me a beehive, and I said, 'I know nothing about bees, but if you want to mentor me, I'd love one.'

"The person who ultimately mentored me had thousands of hives, and I had one in my backyard," she continues. "I was so impressed by her

commitment and the group she was involved with, I wanted to start a similar group when I moved here."

Schuman is fascinated with honeybees and the hives of 80,000 that are kept by the women of the bee colony. She says the hive work is critical to global food sources. "Honeybees are responsible for 80 percent of pollination overall and 30 percent of the world's food," she says. But lately, bees of all types have been dying off. Schuman says several factors are behind the collapse of bee populations, including the chemicals put on crops. When the bees pollinate the crops, they also consume the chemicals and bring them back to the hive. This unhealthy diet has likely taken a toll on the overall health of the bees.

Flower power

Schuman says there are several steps the home gardener can take to help save the bees:

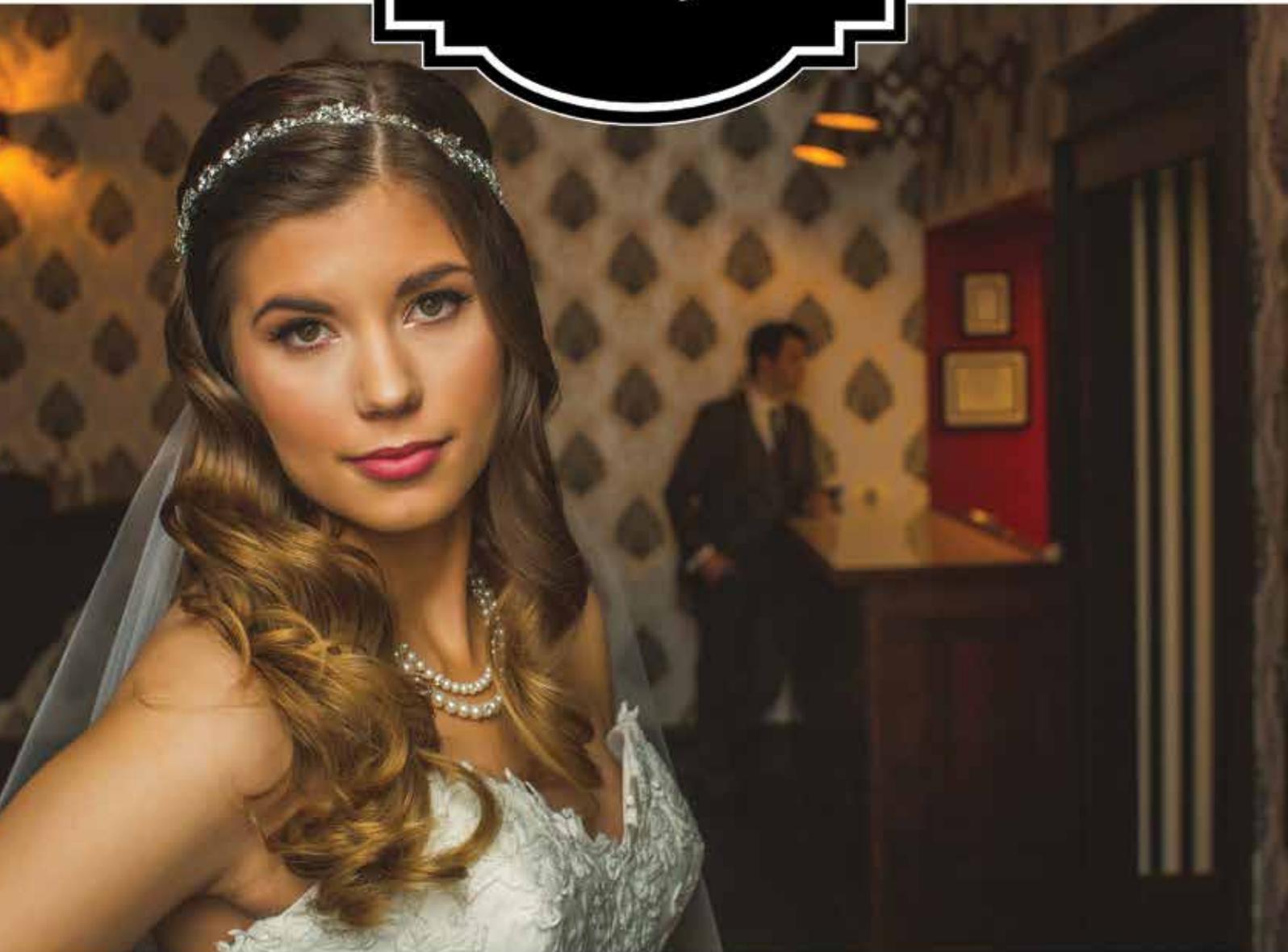
- Plant flowers with bright colors that are attractive to bees, such as whites, yellows and blues.
- Choose plants with a good landing platform for the bees or with tubular petals, such as milkweed, mint, sunflowers and asters.
- Don't use chemicals! Choosing plants native to this area will reduce the need for chemicals.
- Plant a variety of flowers that will bloom at different times. This will give the bees something to eat all summer long.
- Don't be afraid of bees. If you don't attack or threaten the bee, you'll be just fine. Schuman says it's rare for bees to nest in high-traffic areas, but if you do get a hive in an undesirable area near your home, you can contact her group, and they will help you move it.

Anyone interested in becoming a beekeeper is welcome to join a beekeeping group—hers or the La Crosse Area Beekeepers—to learn more. The women's group meets at 9 a.m on the first Saturday of the month to share scientific information, tips and ideas and to mentor those who are new to beekeeping.

Schuman was quick to take advantage of a recently passed city ordinance in La Crosse allowing up to two beehives in a backyard, and she is the first person in La Crosse to have a licensed beehive out her back door. Anyone wanting to know more about bees can contact her at cschuman@rollins.edu. 

Julie Nelson is a freelance writer who remembers her mother's advice on what to do when a bee lands on you: Just sit very still. It works.





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Expanding the Habitat for Humanity Women Build program is one goal of its executive director, Kahya Fox.

USING ITS MOMENTUM

Executive Director Kahya Fox primes Habitat for Humanity for growth.

BY ANASTASIA PENCHI

Contributed photos

When someone buys kitchen cabinets from the Habitat for Humanity-La Crosse Area ReStore, it provides and improves affordable housing for low-income families. That's why Executive Director Kahya Fox is so focused on its growth.



Kahya Fox, executive director of Habitat for Humanity

The retail outlet of used and new building materials that were donated by others is at the center of a marketing campaign featuring radio ads and monthly repurposing projects on local television. It has already resulted in a 16 percent increase in sales over last year and almost doubled the amount of building material donated.

Combine this ReStore growth with a \$1.6 million capital campaign to be kicked off later this fall, and it's clear it's time for Habitat for Humanity-La Crosse Area to expand.

"I think La Crosse County housing has become an issue and a focus," Fox says. "The Habitat model just resonates."

A wonderful model

A Chippewa Falls native and 2001 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Fox worked 11 years as assistant director of the Housing Department at Couleecap, a nonprofit agency that also houses and empowers low-income families, before heading to Habitat in 2016.

"It's doing a lot of the same things I was doing at Couleecap for years, but with the opportunity to advance my career," she said. "It was just such an easy transition."

Already familiar with the affordable housing world, Fox hit the ground running. She started a strategic planning process that involved focus groups, surveys and research into other Habitats. What she

found was a local community that felt Habitat was a "wonderful model with great support," but residents also felt the agency could be doing more.

Fox is doing her best to ensure that happens.

A future of growth

The agency's three-year plan includes increasing the number of homes it builds from one or two every year to six. It wants to expand the community's Neighbor's Day program and increase the number of home repair projects it completes from five to 25 per year.

Three homes were under construction at the time of this interview, and a fourth was scheduled to start soon, Fox says, resulting in four homes being built in 2018.

Partnerships are also part of the plan. Habitat is partnering with the Coulee Region RSVP Handyman Program to build wheelchair ramps. It had a recent fundraiser with the Coulee Region Humane Society to build doghouses, and another project addressed Habitat's storm water runoff.

Next is the expansion of Women Build, which gives women a comfortable atmosphere to learn construction skills while helping others. This traditionally takes place the week before Mother's Day, but Fox wants Women Build teams to start helping year-round.

"We are in the building where we want to be," Fox said of the location east of Valley View Mall off Highway 16.

"Now is the time to use the momentum of the results and do what we do best here at Habitat." 

Anastasia Penchi, a Coulee Region freelance writer, loves to shop at the ReStore and has even created her own Pinterest-worthy projects from materials purchased there. She can be reached at callmeloislane@hotmail.com.



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Laura will share a candid look inside the life of an international journalist, including the importance of exposing critical global issues, the challenges faced in various parts of the world, and what she learned in one of the world's most reclusive countries.

POSSIBILITY IS POWERFUL

A Modern Odyssey

A dedicated teacher in La Crosse helps students create their own great adventures.

BY LISA HEISE
Contributed photos



Creativity is boundless in the local Odyssey of the Mind program.



Tara Craig (at back, in purple) is in charge of channeling the creativity and problem-solving skills of Spence Elementary participants.

Seventeen years ago, Tara Craig embarked on an odyssey. In her first year teaching at Spence Elementary School in La Crosse, Craig was approached by another teacher in the district who was coordinating a program called Odyssey of the Mind. Because every teacher at the school is required to serve on a committee, and because Craig wanted that committee time to involve direct contact with children, she agreed to take on the assignment. Now, nearly two decades later, Craig definitely sees the importance of time in the role she's played and the impact she's made.

Odyssey of the Mind is a worldwide program for kids in elementary school through college. Participation in the program means improvising, creating and cooperating. In the fall of each year, Craig reaches out to her colleagues at Spence and asks them to nominate students to participate in the program. "I ask teachers to identify students who are hardworking, collaborative, flexible and creative," says Craig. Based on those nominations, she puts together the teams.

Improvising solutions

Each team of around seven students is handed a scenario that has been written by the Odyssey organization. It's the students' job to write and produce a performance based on the scenario, create props, come up with costumes and memorize their parts ... entirely on their own. Outside assistance from parents, teachers or anyone not on the team is strictly prohibited. An added dimension to each scenario is that it includes a unique "problem" that students need to solve. For instance, they may need to present their entire scenario without

speaking. They may need to find a way to have an object fly across the stage on its own during their performance. They may need to build a structure that can hold a certain amount of weight and incorporate it into their storyline.

Third-, fourth- and fifth-graders may not have had a lot of opportunities to independently problem-solve, notes Craig: "Sometimes, they come to me and want help solving the problems. I engage them with questions to get them thinking about how they might approach this on their own. It would be 10 times easier just to give them a solution, but they don't learn anything from that."

International competition

In the years that Craig has been coordinating Odyssey of the Mind at Spence, she has spent more than 1,000 hours in meetings and rehearsals with students. In late March every year, she coordinates a trip to the state competition in Madison, which represents a 14-hour day if everything goes as planned. In 2018, two Spence teams took first place in the state competition and then traveled to the world competition in Ames, Iowa, where they competed and interacted with more than 800 teams from all over the world. Craig was by their side every step of the way. She's quick to note that none of this endeavor would be possible without all the volunteer time given by parents and other teachers who help coach the kids. But every volunteer coach and every student will say that Craig's quick laugh and calm demeanor go a long way in making it worth their time. [\(crw\)](#)

Lisa Heise is a writer and educator in La Crosse who has had a front-row seat to the awesomeness of Tara Craig for the past five years.

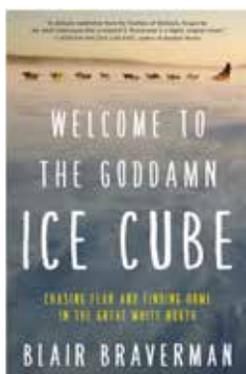
Readers Recommend ...

There's still time for a good summer read.

BY THE LIBRARIANS OF THE LA CROSSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

As summer winds to a close, don't deprive yourself of one of its best pleasures: stretch out on a hammock, kick back in a beach chair or curl up on a porch swing with a great book. For recommendations, we sought out women who know books best: our local librarians.

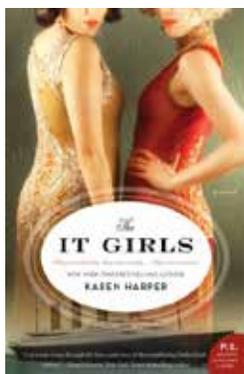
Here you'll find fiction and nonfiction books that beat the summer heat, immerse you in another era, offer a luscious escape and purely entertain—exactly what you need a good summer read to do. Best of all, they can all be found at your local public library.



Welcome to the Goddamn Ice Cube
Blair Braverman

This Wisconsin-based author chronicles her explorations into the world of arctic living. From sled dog school in Norway to being a guide in remote Alaska, Braverman shares what it's like to be one of the few women on the trails. In fact, she is currently preparing for the Iditarod 2019. *Welcome to the Goddamn Ice Cube* has humor, offers real-life survival scenes and unlocks the emotional and physical demands we make of ourselves as we discover who we really are. A contributor to *This American Life*, *Outside*, *The New Yorker* and more, Braverman makes her memoir with some of the best travel writing and poignant storytelling hitting the shelves.

—Jess Witkins, Librarian Assistant, La Crosse Public Library



The It Girls
Karen Harper

Transport yourself back to the early 20th century in Karen Harper's book *The It Girls*. It was certainly an adventure following the Sutherland sisters throughout their lives in their quest for their place in London's high society. Lucy, a designer, becomes known for her risqué dresses and luxurious fabrics as well as surviving the sinking of the *Titanic*. Her sister, Elinor, enjoys pen and paper. It isn't long before her novels become screenplays, and all of Hollywood takes notice. While jealousy and drama occur between the sisters, they never forget they are family. This was a very enjoyable read of two remarkable sisters that lived in a time before us.

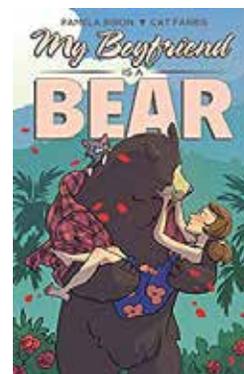
—Mary Dunn, Readers' Advisory Librarian, La Crosse Public Library



The Hating Game
Sally Thorne

Lucy and Josh hate each other. This is a problem because they work every day in the same tiny office, staring at each other. These two executive assistants in a publishing company go head-to-head on a regular basis about everything from clothes to email chains. Now, they're up for the same promotion, and they're both ready to do whatever it takes to win. But maybe all that workplace tension isn't hate after all. Maybe their hate is actually something a little bit more. This book is a stellar romance and perfect for a relaxing day of reading!

—Brooke Newberry, Collaborative Consultant, Winding Rivers Library System



My Boyfriend Is a Bear
Pamela Ribon and Cat Farris

In this graphic novel, our main character, Nora, has had rotten luck with dating. She's looking for a partner who is good at listening, who makes her feel protected and who loves snuggling. Nora is pleasantly surprised when the American black bear she encounters on a hike turns out to meet all her requirements and more! But while Nora is swept off her feet, her friends and family may take a bit more convincing. If you are looking for a light, romantic-comedy feel with a truly unique perspective, this definitely checks the boxes.

—Dana Johnson, Youth Services Librarian, La Crosse Public Library

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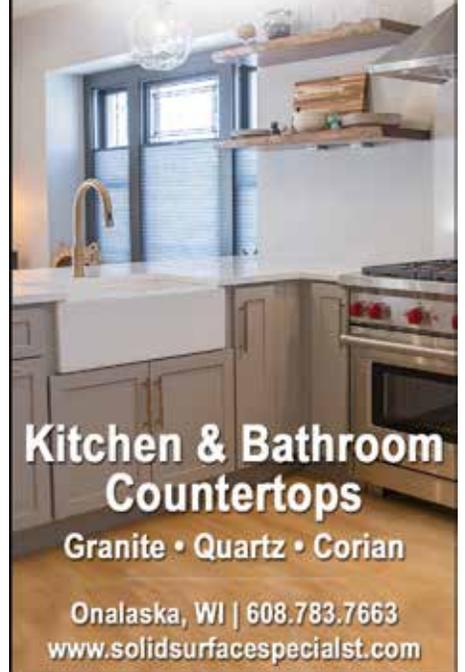
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Altra Receives Well Workplace Award

Altra Federal Credit Union has been recognized with a GOLD Well Workplace Award by the Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) and local affiliate Wellness Council of Wisconsin. By achieving the Well Workplace Award, Altra has made a long-lasting commitment to the health and well-being of its employees. As stated by WELCOA president Ryan Picarella, “Good companies know that their employees are their most valuable asset. Great companies adopt policies that support employees’ efforts to reduce health risks.”

A special thank-you goes out to Altra’s Human Resources team and Altra’s Wellness Team for establishing this program and motivating all at Altra to live a healthier lifestyle.



Kadrmas Joins Thrivent Financial

Melissa Kadrmas of La Crosse has joined Thrivent Financial as a financial representative with the organization’s Wisconsin/Upper MI Regional Financial Office. Kadrmas supports Thrivent members by helping them develop sound financial strategies so they can prepare for retirement, ensure their families are financially protected and live generous lives—at home, at church and within their communities. She comes to Thrivent with a bachelor’s degree from University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and a strong background in entrepreneurship and business management. We look forward to the energy and dedication Kadrmas will bring to the team. Her office is located at 931 Riders Club Road in Onalaska.



Mary Lea Yeomans Provides Companion Care

Mary Lea Yeomans provides Companion Care to elderly and disabled people wanting to stay in their comfortable and familiar surroundings. Mary Lea provides help by taking her clients to a doctor’s appointments, preparing one or two meals a day and cleaning up, running errands to the grocery or drugstore, changing sheets, doing light laundry or simply visiting on a regular basis to provide reliable reassurance that someone is there. Mary Lea brings experience as well as compassion, remembering the times when she needed help when her own parents were miles away. She is understanding, caring and patient. For more information and references, please call her at 608-789-2515.



From left: Weidner, Connors, Miller, Seeger

WAL Elects New Officers

Women’s Alliance of La Crosse has elected the following as officers for the next year: Angela Seeger, president; Allison Steers, past president; Sheila Connors, president-elect; Ann Weidner, secretary; Angie Jones and Gina Miller, treasurers.

WAL’s mission is to achieve equity for all women through advocacy, education and networking support and to promote economic self-sufficiency for La Crosse area women. The group meets the second Thursday of the month to allow members to network and hear a speaker. They also give out scholarships each year to local bright, motivated women seeking to further their education. For more information, visit www.womensalliancelacrosse.com.



Photo: Food Network

Oktoberfest Ladies’ Day Luncheon

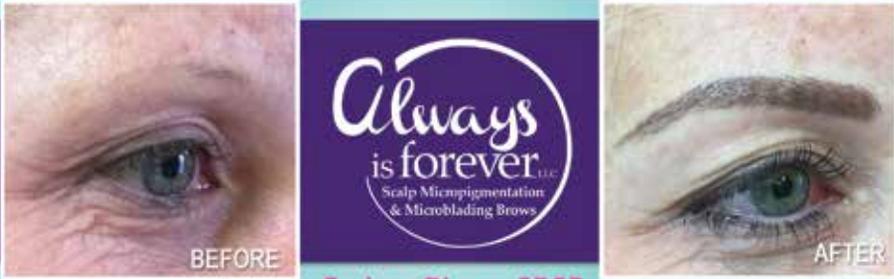
Jen Barney takes the cake at the Oktoberfest Ladies’ Day Luncheon at the AmericInn Hotel and Conference Center at 1835 Rose St. in La Crosse on Tuesday, October 2, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Barney, of Meringue Bakery in rural Stoddard, won the national Food Network’s Holiday Baking Championship in January 2018. She will highlight what it took to become the winner over nine competitors nationwide, and how her local business has grown in the spotlight. Barney will also make the dessert for the event, which will be a custom Oktoberfest treat. Reserved tickets are \$30 and available by contacting the Oktoberfest office at www.oktoberfestusa.com or 608-784-FEST.



Celebrate Local Heroes

YWCA La Crosse will host the CASA for Kids Superhero Breakfast, sponsored by Gundersen Health System, on Wednesday, August 22, from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the South Side Neighborhood Center in La Crosse. The free program will highlight the life-changing impact of YWCA La Crosse volunteers who are court-appointed special advocates (CASA) for children in need of protective services due to abuse or neglect. Learn ways to get involved in or support the CASA for Kids program, and help honor these dedicated volunteers from La Crosse, Monroe and Vernon Counties. For more information or to RSVP, contact YWCA La Crosse at 608-781-2783 or info@ywcax.org.

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Fashion Q&A

Discover tips on how to style some of your closet staples this fall.

BY PAIGE FORDE
Photos by Jen Towner Photography

Q: How can I get more wear out of my white tees?

A: A white T-shirt is easily one of the most versatile pieces in one's closet. In this outfit from Urban Shoetique (below left), this staple gives a casual look when styled with jeans and sneakers. Need a more formal look? Style this piece with some dress pants for a polished, office-ready look from Mainstream Boutique (below right).



Urban Shoetique, Onalaska
Good hYOUman graphic tee, \$55; Liverpool skinny jeans, \$89; Blackstone sneakers, \$175; FRYE metallic bag, \$198; Melania Clara teardrop necklace, \$35.



Mainstream Boutique, Onalaska
Papillon V-neck tee, \$39; Charlie high-rise buckled pants \$76; Madeline Girl buckled sandals, \$59; Clara Sunwoo studded jacket, \$218; Joy Susan blush clutch, \$39; Trés Chic bracelet, \$44.

Q: How can I style a midi dress to dress it up or down?

A: Completing the perfect midi dress look is all in the accessories. A fun, laid-back vibe is effortlessly achieved when paired with a blush denim jacket and pompom espadrilles from Willow Boutique (below left). To dress up this piece, try topping the midi with a cropped cardigan and statement necklace from Touch of Class (below right).



Willow Boutique, Downtown La Crosse
PPLA striped midi dress, \$88; Level 99 denim jacket, \$150; South Parade pompom espadrilles, \$110; Quay sunglasses, \$60; Noel Asmar eyelet clutch, \$220.



Touch of Class, Downtown La Crosse
Eileen Fisher midi dress; Claudia Nichole cardigan; Eileen Fisher peep-toe heels; Rebecca Minkoff embroidered purse; Shiver and Duke gold statement necklace.

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THE ART OF NATURE

A local artist offers a colorful way to celebrate Perrot State Park's 100 years.

A crown jewel of the Coulee Region is Perrot State Park in Trempealeau, which has been awing area residents with natural beauty and glorious views for 100 years. In celebration of that milestone, Onalaska artist and Perrot State Park employee Colleen Burke Shore has lent her talents to a commemorative Centennial Coloring Book that celebrates the park and supports park projects. Building on the popularity of adult coloring books,

Shore's contribution to this book features intricate and beautiful line drawings reflecting Perrot scenes and wildlife, allowing colorists to enjoy the serenity of the park even while not physically in it.

Centennial Coloring Books are available for \$4 each at Perrot State Park, located at W26247 Sullivan Road in Trempealeau. For more information on upcoming 100th anniversary events, visit Friends of Perrot State Park on Facebook or www.friendsofperrotstatepark.org.



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TIME FOR AN ADVENTURE

From castles to canyons, these favorites will spark wanderlust and make memories.

BY CHRISTINE HALL
Contributed photos



Wales has more castles per square mile than any other country in the world.



Grand Gulch in southeastern Utah is remote and unforgettable.



Seeing the Mississippi from the river is the only way to truly experience it—in this case, from the Delta Queen.

What's one of the best things about traveling? Reminiscing afterward, of course—looking over your photos, sharing your stories (good or bad!) and remembering a place you are now connected to because you've been there. Recently, I was challenged to come up with the top 10 favorite trips I've taken, and I had to think back over the years. Here, I've narrowed the list down to my top four—places that inspired me, changed me, made me wiser or have a special place in my heart.

Traditional London, England

London is an iconic, popular destination that allows one to travel to a foreign city, already know the language, learn its history (which might be part of yours) and visit famous tourist sites.

On everyone's list are the Tower of London, Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey. Why wouldn't they be? They are fascinating, wonderful historic sites that are professionally interpreted.

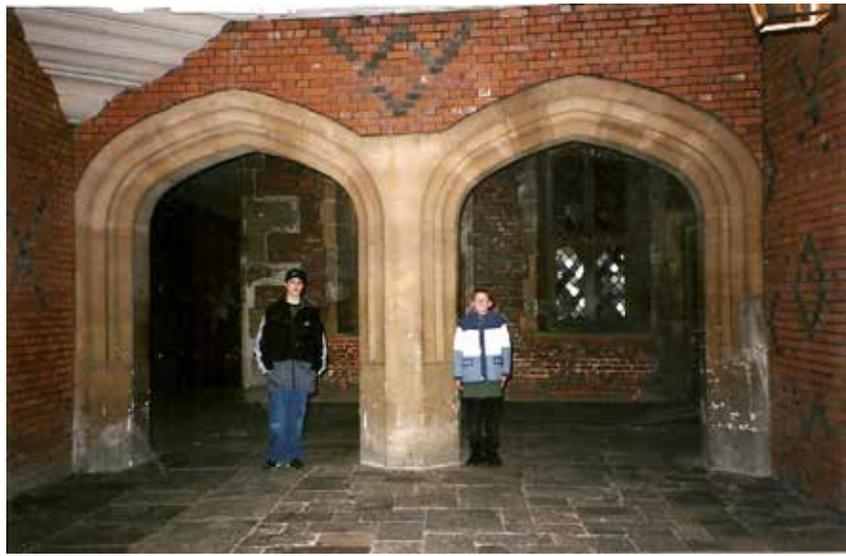
But for a truly authentic experience, reserve some nights through the Landmark Trust, which allows you to stay in a historic building that has been meticulously restored. When my boys were young, we spent four nights at Hampton Court Palace, King Henry VIII's castle just outside of London. When the castle closed to tourists for the day, we had free-roaming privileges to explore. We searched for ghosts down the dimly lit hallways and looked at the stars from the courtyard while pretending we were royalty. My boys, now in their 30s, talk about the experience to this day. It's every kid's dream to live in a castle—and dreams can come true.

Grand Gulch, Cedar Mesa, Utah

Grand Gulch is a 50-mile-long canyon on Cedar Mesa in southeastern Utah. It is dubbed one of the most remote places in the United States—45 miles from the nearest town. There is no satellite communication and no cell service, and you can go almost a week



In Grand Gulch, petroglyphs and pictographs portray shamans, hunting scenes and more.



Living in a castle for a few nights—here, Hampton Court Palace—is a dream that can come true for travelers to London.

without seeing another person once you are in the canyon. The only sign of modern life, once you get a permit to hike in and have your necessary supplies, is the air traffic in the sky above.

People have asked, “Isn’t it lonely out there?” Not in the least. You are surrounded by ancient rock art that tantalizes your mind—petroglyphs and pictographs that portray shamans, hunting scenes and dancing Kokopellis. Ruins of ancient Puebloan homes and grain bins dot the canyon shelves—a glimpse into the past when native people were harvesting corn on the canyon bottom and creating fine pottery, remnants of which you can see in shards spread on the sandy alcove floors. If you are quiet enough, you can hear their voices and imagine yourself here in this place 1,000 years ago. It is an escape, but it’s hard work to get there. It involves miles of hiking, hoping you can find water, and occasionally encountering a rattlesnake. But when you hike back to your base camp at the end of a day of exploring and see that a mountain lion has stepped in your footprints while you were away, you feel lucky ... and very alive.

The mighty Mississippi River, St. Paul to New Orleans

I had the tremendous opportunity to work on a steamboat that plied the nation’s intercoastal waterways, our homeport being New Orleans. Having grown up along the Mississippi, I did not fully appreciate it until I was into my stint on the *Delta Queen* and realized that people were coming from all over the world to view Mark Twain’s river.

But you need more than a glimpse. The lyrics in the song “Proud Mary” say it best: “I never saw the good side of the city ’til I hitched a ride on a river boat queen.” Seeing the Mississippi *from* the river is the only way to truly experience it. The earthy, aquatic smell of the river is a breath of perfume to those of us who have been away from it for a time. The sound of the ice coming out in spring is like nothing you’ve ever heard before—like a great gnashing of bone. And the powerful sway you feel on a fishing boat when a commanding towboat slides past you makes you realize how great these waters can be.

Atmospheric northern Wales

I recently took a solo trip to the land of some of my ancestors: Wales. This was my first time driving on the left side of the road from the right side of a vehicle, so I took it slow and easy, often causing traffic on the narrow roads to back up behind me. This allowed me to pull over and take advantage of some photo ops. The Snowdonia Mountains dominated the view, dotted with sheep and castles. Those stone goliaths appeared on the horizon at a steady pace; Wales has more castles per square mile than any other country in the world. I ended up near the market town of Llanrwst, where I spent three nights at the mysterious Gwydir Castle. It touts two guest rooms; I stayed in the Duke of Beaufort’s Chamber—the only guest in the castle for the first two nights.

Gwydir Castle is breathtaking, atmospheric and secretive. The huge oak doors creak on weary hinges, and there is an ancient smell about the place. In ruins by 1994, it was lovingly restored by its new owners, and its splendor shines through at each turn.

One day I walked the easy mile to Llanrwst to have dinner at a pub. I shared my table with an elderly local couple, and after the perfunctory questions, they asked where I was staying. When I answered, “Gwydir Castle,” the old man grinned and said, “Ach, you’re staying up there with the ghosts, then?” Yes, the castle is reputed to have some hauntings, and each night as I snuggled into my four-poster bed, I glimpsed at the portrait of the Duke of Beaufort looking down at me and wondered if I would be the recipient of a spectral visit. Somewhat to my disappointment, I slept well all three nights.

What are your top four trips? I’ll bet you have fun recalling. [crw](#)

Christine Hall’s love of travel has led her to pursue careers that have allowed her to explore new places. She’s worked as an officer on a steamboat, as an archaeologist and as a National Park Service ranger, among other jobs. She is now settled in the Coulee Region, writing by drawing from her experiences.

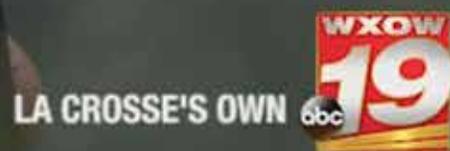
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

American Association of University Women (AAUW) 2nd Sat. of each month (Sept.-May), 9:30 a.m., aauwlacrosse@hotmail.com, aauw-wi.org.

Business Over Breakfast La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce, 4th Wed. every month, 7:30-8:45 a.m. Preregister 608-784-4807, lacrossechamber.com.

Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW) 4th Tues. of each month, Shelli Kult, crpwomen@gmail.com.

La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce monthly breakfast meeting, 2nd Mon. of each month, 7 a.m., Radisson. Admission is \$5 and includes breakfast. lacrossechamber.com.

La Crosse Rotary every Thurs. noon-1 p.m., Radisson Center, www.rotarycluboflacrosse.org.

La Crosse Toastmasters Club 2nd and 4th Tues. of each month, 7 p.m., Gundersen Health System Urgent Care Bldg., Basement, 1830 S. Ave., La Crosse.

League of Women Voters 2nd Tues. of each month, noon, Radisson Hotel, Nancy Hill, 608-782-1753, nfhill@centurytel.net.

NAMI Family Support Group 2nd Mon. of each month, 6:30 p.m., Family and Children's Center, 1707 Main St., La Crosse.

Onalaska Area Business Association 2nd Tues. of each month, noon-1 p.m., La Crosse Country Club, oaba.info.

Onalaska Hilltopper Rotary every Wed. noon-1 p.m., La Crosse Country Club, Onalaska.

Onalaska Rotary every Mon. at 6 p.m., lower level of Blue Moon, Onalaska.

Onalaska Toastmasters Club 1st and 3rd Mon. of each month, noon-1 p.m., Goodwill, La Crosse.

Set Me Free Shop, Saturdays & Sundays, 30 minutes before & after services. First Free Church, 123 Mason St., Onalaska. Also available by appt. 608-782-6022.

Viroqua Toastmasters Club 2nd and 4th Thurs. of each month, 7-8:30 p.m., Vernon Memorial Hospital, Taylor Conf. Rm., Lower Level, Viroqua.

Women Empowering Women (WEW), last Wed. of each month, Schmidy's, noon-1 p.m., Shari Hopkins, 608-784-3904, shopkins@couleebank.net.

Women's Alliance of La Crosse (WAL) 2nd Thurs. of each month, noon, The Waterfront Restaurant, Kasey Heikel 608-519-8080, drkasey@naturallyalignedchiro.com.

CALENDAR EVENTS

Aug. 1-5, Back to School Tax Free Weekend Celebration, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Aug. 1 & 8, Music in the Valley, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Norskedalen Nature & Heritage Center, Coon Valley, www.norskedalen.org.

Aug. 4, Winona Artisan Market, 1-5 p.m., Island City Brewing Company, Winona.

Aug. 8, Threshing Bee Dinner, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Norskedalen Nature & Heritage Center, Coon Valley, www.norskedalen.org.

Aug. 10-12, Irishfest, Southside Oktoberfest Grounds, La Crosse, www.irishfestlacrosse.org.

Aug. 11, Kid's Tour, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., Minnesota Marine Art Museum, www.mmam.org.

Aug. 11, 2018 Miss Onalaska Organization Competition, 7 p.m., Lyche Theatre, Weber Center for the Performing Arts.

Aug. 13-15, Rhythm Kids Camp, 9-11:30 a.m., Bebop & Bundles, pre-registration required, www.bebopandbundles.com.

Aug. 17-19, Annual Kornfest, Holmen.

Aug. 17-19, Goodview Days, Goodview, Minnesota.

Aug. 22, YWCA CASA for Kids Superhero Breakfast, 7:30-9 a.m., South Side Neighborhood Center, La Crosse, 608-781-2783, info@ywcax.org.

Aug. 23, Boys and Girls Club Back-to-School Fair, 4-7 p.m., www.bgclax.org.

Aug. 23, Handbags for a SAFE Haven, benefit for New Horizons Shelter & Outreach Centers, 5:30-9:30 p.m., Celebrations on the River, www.nhagainstabuse.org.

Aug. 24, Red Cross Blood Drive, 12:30-5 p.m., Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Aug. 24-26, Great River Folk Festival, Riverside Park, La Crosse, www.greatriverfolkfest.org.

Aug. 25, Cruisin' Craft Beer and Film Festival, 1 p.m., Weber Center for the Performing Arts.

Aug. 25, French Island Lions Club 18th Annual 5K Run/Walk, 7 a.m. registration, 8 a.m. race, French Island Community Center, La Crosse.

Sept. 1, Winona Artisan Market, 1-5 p.m., Island City Brewing Company, Winona.

Sept. 7-9, Elvis Explosion, 7 p.m. Fri., 2:30 and 7 p.m. Sat., 1 p.m. Sun., La Crosse Center, www.lacrossecenter.com.

Sept. 7-23, *Mamma Mia!*, 7:30 Thurs.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sat.-Sun., Lyche Theatre, La Crosse Community Theatre Production, www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

Sept. 8, 5th Annual Taste of Summer, 4-7 p.m., Clearwater Farm, Onalaska, www.clearwaterfarm.org.

Sept. 8, La Crosse Pride: PRIDE in the Park, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Riverside Park, La Crosse, www.7riverslgbtq.org/events/pride.

Sept. 8, Steppin' Out in Pink, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Gundersen Medical Center La Crosse Campus, www.steppinoutinpink.org.

Sept. 8-9, Fall Fitness Fest, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 8-9, Hair Scholarship Fundraiser, 7:30 p.m. Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

Sept. 9, Twilight Tour & Farm-to-Table Dinner, 5-10:30 p.m., Norskedalen Nature & Heritage Center, Coon Valley, www.norskedalen.org.

Sept. 13-16, Applefest, La Crescent, www.applefestusa.com.

Sept. 15, Walk to End Alzheimer's, Myrick Park, La Crosse, 8 a.m. registration, 9 a.m. ceremony, 9:30 a.m. walk, www.alz.org/gwwi.

Sept. 16, *The Picnic Operetta: Dr. Falstaff and the Working Wives of Lake County*, 3-4:30 p.m., Unity Park, Winona.

Sept. 17, Modest Mouse, 7:30 p.m., La Crosse Center, www.lacrossecenter.com.

Sept. 20, Art Reception, 6-7:30 p.m., The Heider Center, www.heidercenter.org.

Sept. 20, Rio Mira, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Page Theatre, Saint Mary's Performance Center, Winona.

Sept. 22, Viterbo Service Saturday, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse, www.funmuseum.org.

Sept. 22-23, Senior Living Expo, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 27-30, Oktoberfest, Southside Oktoberfest Grounds, La Crosse, www.oktoberfestusa.com.

Sept. 27-Oct. 1, Holiday Hiring Job Fair, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 29, Fall Fashion Show, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 29, Superstitions - A Psychological Spectacle, 7:30 p.m., Lyche Theatre, Weber Center for the Performing Arts.

Sept. 29, YMCA Maple Leaf Walk/Run, 7 a.m. half marathon, 7:15 a.m. 5-mile and 5K walk, Riverside Park, La Crosse, www.laxymca.org.

If your organization would like to be included in our Community Calendar, please contact us at editor@crvmagazine.com or call 608-783-5395.

A man and a woman are smiling and posing on a beach. The man is in the foreground, wearing a white shirt, and the woman is behind him, wearing a white shirt and a straw hat. They are both looking towards the camera.

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