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# women

AREA HOME AND LIVING MAGAZINE

## WHAT'S YOUR *DRIVE?*

MICHELLE FELTON

Behind the Wheel  
at Sleepy Hollow Auto

Mechanic Mavens

Passion for Fashion

Food Truck Fervor

A Car-Lover's Dream Home

Get Your Kicks on Route 66



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Pictured on cover and above: Michelle Felton, owner and vice president of Sleepy Hollow Auto in Viroqua.

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Photo by Jordana Snyder Photography

**I bought my first car**, a 1987 Ford Tempo, from a guy my dad knew who ran a small-town used-car lot in northern Wisconsin. His name was Chuck, and he had slicked-back hair and a cigar clutched between his grinning teeth. He seemed a little untrustworthy, and my instincts were correct. The car stopped inexplicably on Interstate 35E that night on its way to my apartment in St. Paul, and a kind stranger helped me limp it to a service station. It was the alternator, it turned out. I named that car “Fritz,” because ever after, it was always on the fritz.

My next car was a 1996 Nissan Sentra, a brand-new five-speed manual, bright teal. I wanted a stick shift to prove to myself that I could drive one even though my ex-boyfriend’s attempts to teach me had failed. My younger sisters came along for the test drive, shrinking in their seats from embarrassment as I sputtered down city streets. But I bought the car and forced myself to learn—and impressed every boyfriend after with my skills.

Next was a 2001 Audi A4, a “grown-up” car for my husband and me. Our salesman was an absolute gentleman named Jack; we loved him as much as we loved the Audi. A classy car for a professional couple, it soon morphed into the family car as one, two, then three car seats were squeezed into the sedan’s back seat and the floor became littered with Cheerios.

We graduated to a seven-seater SUV, a car we swore we’d never buy. But the comfort and space couldn’t be beat, especially on long drives to vacation sites. Then, it stopped inexplicably on Highway 2 just east of Alliance, Nebraska—a story you can read about online in our June/July 2018 “Adventure” issue—and we found ourselves orchestrating a complicated tow back to Wisconsin and springing for a new engine. It runs just fine now.

Though just machines, my cars are part of my life story. I’ll never forget driving Fritz to that ex-boyfriend’s house to break up with him, changing the course of my life. I remember struggling to click the car seat into the A4 when we brought our first baby home. And I’ll never forget the rush of accomplishment I felt shifting gears on New York’s West Side Highway in my little Sentra.

Cars, wheels and the passions that fuel us feature prominently in this issue of *Coulee Region Women*, themed “What’s Your Drive?” We showcase women and their relationships to cars, like Sleepy Hollow Auto owner Michelle Felton, mechanic Natasha Normand and car collector Stacey McIlquham. But we also feature women who follow an inner drive—like Ayo Uko’s passion for creativity and Linda Riddle’s drive to help other women. We throw in a car-themed home and kitchens on wheels, and top it all off with a road trip on Route 66.

It’s fitting, perhaps, that over the course of producing this issue, I bought a new car. Even more fitting, I bought it from a woman: Julie Ramos, who’s made a career of selling cars for over 20 years. Whatever your drive—whether a car that captures your own story or the calling that gets you up in the morning—we’re happy you’re riding with us here at *Coulee Region Women*.



Betty and Julie Ramos, Morrie’s Auto Group

*Betty*

# Coulee region women

AREA HOME AND HEALTHY LIVING MAGAZINE

ISSUE 108, VOLUME 18, NUMBER 6

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020

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Citywide Marketing Services LLC

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*Coulee Region Women* is published six times per year by Coulee Region Communications LLC 816 2nd Avenue S., Suite 300, Onalaska, WI 54650. Subscriptions available for \$24.95 per year (six issues).

Send check to the address above.

All unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

*Coulee Region Women* assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials.

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*Coulee Region Women* magazine does not necessarily endorse the claims or contents of advertising or editorial materials.

Printed at Crescent Printing Company, Onalaska, WI. Printed in the U.S.A.

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**To live as your** healthiest self, you must learn more about not only your health, but the health of your loved ones. Join Her Heart Health for its third annual luncheon and educational event on February 21, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Cargill Room. There will be free health screenings, exhibits and a speaker from Mayo Clinic Health System, Jamie Pronchinske, RDN, CD. The event is hosted by Gundersen Health System and Mayo Clinic Health System. The mission of the event is to empower women to take charge of their heart health through a social initiative, eliminate the myths of heart disease and raise further awareness of women's health. Individual tickets are \$25, and a table of eight is \$200, with registration ending on February 14. For more information, go to [www.herhearthealth.org](http://www.herhearthealth.org).



## PLUNGE FOR A CAUSE

**Embrace the cold** at the La Crosse Polar Plunge March 7 at Black River Beach. Each year, thousands of jumpers at different locations around the state take part in the plunge. This event is for all ages and will include food, drink vendors and more! Since 1999, \$20 million has been raised by plungers and their supporters for Special Olympics Wisconsin athletes. If you are not interested in plunging, you can spectate, donate or volunteer for the event. Every participant must raise a minimum of \$75 in order to plunge on the event day, which guarantees you a long-sleeve event T-shirt. You can plunge as a single or with a team by registering at <https://www.classy.org/campaign/2020-la-crosse-polar-plunge/c254953>. All proceeds are donated to Special Olympics Wisconsin athletes. For more information, contact Kerry Gloede at [gloedek@cityoflacrosse.org](mailto:gloedek@cityoflacrosse.org).



## WOMEN CELEBRATING WOMEN

**Celebrate the women** in your life at the Spring Fling hosted by the Women's Fund of Greater La Crosse. Held March 28, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Radisson Hotel Ballroom, the event will feature brunch, shopping with local women-owned businesses, a raffle and more! The Women's Fund will also be recognizing its 2020 Roberta Zurn Award Winner, Dr. Patty Barge, a third-generation chiropractor at Barge Berkley Chiropractic office in Holmen, who has been practicing for nearly 30 years. A second award recognizing young women philanthropists in the La Crosse community will also be introduced. Tickets are \$40 for lunch and admission fee for one, or \$400 for lunch and admission for a table of 10. To learn more about this event that works to uplift and support local women, and to register for your admission, go to [www.womensfundlacrosse.org](http://www.womensfundlacrosse.org).

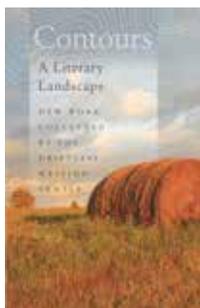
## A SLICE OF IRELAND

**Children and adults** of all ages will find joy at the Irish-themed family fun event Coulee Hoolie Ceili Dance Fundraiser and Irish Heritage Night held March 28, 6-10 p.m. at the American Legion Hall in La Crosse. Hoolie is a dance with music by the Coulee Hooligans and features Tim Jenkins, a popular caller who will lead the audience in a variety of group dances. There will also be Irish fare and a silent auction. The goal of the event is to raise money for nonprofits in La Crosse and Bantry, Ireland, that share the same missions. For 2020, WisCorps in La Crosse and Bantry Tidy Towns have been chosen. Both of these organizations engage in conservation projects to improve the environment. The admission to the event is \$20 per family, \$10 per adult and \$8 for military members, seniors and students. Tickets can be purchased in advance at Festival Foods stores in La Crosse starting March 1, or at the door. For more information, contact Lynn West at [lrcrosse@gmail.com](mailto:lrcrosse@gmail.com).



## STORIES ROOTED IN THE DRIFTLESS

**From hunting rattlesnakes** to staying high and dry during a flood, from savoring beauty to coping with loss, the Driftless Writing Center's recently published collection of new works by area authors and artists highlights the diverse people, history and stories of the Driftless area. *Contours: A Literary Landscape* features previously unpublished essays, poems, short stories, novel excerpts, artwork and hybrid forms from 64 contributors who have been influenced by the richness of the region and offer readers a multitude of viewpoints and vistas.



Copies of the collection are available now and may be ordered by visiting [www.driftlesswritingcenter.org](http://www.driftlesswritingcenter.org). Books are also available at select local retailers and at the many readings that will be held throughout the Driftless Region during 2020. The DWC is also donating copies of the anthology to area libraries.

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## A DRIVING FORCE FOR GOOD

**Sleepy Hollow Auto owner Michelle Felton steers her employees toward success.**

BY TALLITHA REESE

Photos by Stephanie Neprud Photography

**Michelle Felton**, co-owner and vice president of Sleepy Hollow Auto in Viroqua, never imagined working in the automotive industry when she was younger, but now she can't imagine doing anything else.

"It's fun to see the expressions I get when new customers ask what my role is at the dealership, and I explain that my husband and I own and operate the business," says Felton of being a local female leader in an industry that is often seen as male dominated.

### Fueling a family business

Felton and her husband, LaVon, own and operate the Viroqua business, which includes three franchise dealerships within a block of each other. LaVon started selling used cars on his family farm in Richland County in 1987 and moved to Viroqua in 1989. Felton, who is a Viroqua native, met her future husband in 1993 and, after the couple married, contributed to the development and growth of Sleepy Hollow Auto.

In 1995, they built a new building on the north side of Viroqua with six service bays and 50 used cars; in April 2007, they purchased the GM franchise store, moving across the street. In August 2009 they bought the Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram franchise dealership and the Ford franchise store in 2013.

In the early years of the business, Felton stayed at home with her two young children but started spending a few hours at the dealership each day once her son started school, helping where she could.

"Those few hours a day turned into weeks, which turned into

months," says Felton. "I discovered that I loved working with customers and our employees. When we were planning the remodel of the Chevy store, my husband and I decided that it would be beneficial if I worked at the dealership full time."

Felton currently serves as a one-person human resource department for Sleepy Hollow, which gives her a unique view into how the HR department can benefit the company's goals and purpose.

"I believe that our employees are our greatest asset, and they truly are the backbone of our company," she explains.

Felton has a bachelor's degree in psychology and two master's degrees: one in health psychology and the other in human resources development.

"My education has helped me have a better understanding of consumer behavior theory and the individual customer experience," says Felton. "My background in human resources development has allowed me to help maximize our company's human capital through training and organizational development initiatives."

While the majority of Felton's time is spent working on employee payroll, benefits and other HR tasks, she also takes time each day to talk with customers and tries to enhance their experience.

### Employee empowerment

Felton says that one of her favorite parts of her job is working with, empowering and supporting her employees, whom she considers family.

"One of my main mottos is 'family comes first.' Our employees

know we'll support them in challenging situations," says Felton. "They know my door is always open for them."

Felton says she strongly believes in her employees and their potential. "My purpose is to assist in the development of those who really want to develop," she explains. "One of the biggest rewards of my job is fostering the growth of an employee and then watching them flourish in their skill sets, ideas and autonomy."

Felton adds that empowering and supporting the women on her staff is particularly important to her. "Celebrating their strengths, encouraging them to step outside their comfort zones and showcasing their leadership elevates the entire organization to a new level," she explains. "It's essential to realize that other women doing well helps us all."

Felton has 15 women on her team and says they are the pillar of the Sleepy Hollow Auto dealerships. Two of these women are her own family members: her mother, Vicki Anderson, is chief financial officer, and her aunt, Patty Wilson, is a dealership controller.

"I would encourage more women to consider a career in the automotive industry," says Felton. "We need more women in leadership roles and as sales consultants. Young women thinking of trade school should consider careers as service technicians if they have a passion for automobiles." This is a particularly opportune time for that, as veteran service technicians are retiring and qualified replacement techs are hard to find.

Felton says this has led Sleepy Hollow Auto to create a tech program with Western Technical College. "We have been promoting the trades by founding the first Automotive College Course in Wisconsin," she explains. "This three-credit college course for high school juniors was taught at Sleepy Hollow in partnership with CESA 4 and Western Technical College and is now being modeled across the state."

## A driving force in the community

Sleepy Hollow Auto is involved in the community in several other ways as well, from donating to benefits and fundraisers to providing local schools with equipment and scholarships.



The man behind the woman: LaVon Felton, co-owner and president of Sleepy Hollow Auto.

Felton has served as a board member for the Viroqua Area Foundation, Sugar Creek Bible Camp and American Cancer Society Relay for Life. She's also been an education superintendent and confirmation guide mentor at Immanuel Lutheran Church as well as a hospice volunteer for Vernon Memorial Hospital.

Being on the go so much for both work and her personal life, Felton drives a GMC Yukon XL, even though she thought she would switch to a smaller vehicle now that she's an empty nester.

"I am constantly hauling items around, whether it be parts, promotional items for an event or even lunch for 100 to serve to our employees," explains Felton. "I sometimes help with courtesy transportation, and the larger SUVs are generally more comfortable for customers. I am switching out of vehicles quite often because our sales team keeps selling them, which I'm not complaining about because a sale is always a wonderful thing!" *(crw)*

Tallitha Reese is a freelance writer and content manager based in Cashton. She owns Words By Reese, and you can find out more about her and her work at [www.wordsbyreese.com](http://www.wordsbyreese.com).



For as committed as they are to customer service and employee support, the Sleepy Hollow owners are not afraid to take themselves a little less seriously, as evidenced by their popular ad campaign.

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Natasha Normand has found her niche in Auto Tech—which she considers a great career field for women.

## MOTIVATED BY MECHANICS

Auto Tech is the perfect field for Natasha Normand.

BY JANIS JOLLY  
Contributed photos

**Natasha Normand** is a young woman who has figured out what she wants to do with her life. It wasn't an instant discovery, but once she found herself in the Automotive Technician program at Western Technical College in La Crosse, she knew she was in the right place.

"I've always been fascinated by mechanics," says Normand. "My father worked on cars at our home in Chippewa Falls. I watched him in our garage, and he shared his knowledge with me. I loved working with him."

But her father passed away when she was 19, and Normand joined the military. For the next six years, she worked mainly in food service—"everybody has to eat," she says—and spent time in Iraq, Kuwait and the United States. In the military, she learned to organize her time and work efficiently. But she also developed post-traumatic stress disorder, and when she came out, she spent some time at the Tomah VA Medical Center, where she investigated opportunities at the Wisconsin technical colleges.

She entered the Medical Lab Technician program at Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire, but during that time, her interest in cars and engines resurfaced—and she followed it. Now she is one of two women out of 50 students enrolled in the Auto Technician program at WTC.

### Women's work

Women are well suited to automotive work, Normand says. The work isn't as physically demanding as one might think. It is rare that you have to lift over 50 pounds because jacks and supports are used for the heavier engine components, she explains.

It's true that there are so many men in the field, it can feel like

a boys' club. But Normand is not easily intimidated. "Being in the military and growing up with three brothers, I don't take any guff from the guys," she says.

### Driven to succeed

Motivated to prove her skills, she is at the top of her class and plans to stay there. She also serves as the SkillsUSA president for the Automotive Club.

Instructor and Automotive Technician program head Andy Olson describes Normand as "driven." "If she wants to learn something, she'll do whatever she needs to do," he says. And Normand thinks her instructors are top notch.

There is a lot of material to cover, because every engine is different, and they change every year. "It's very interesting how the engine works. I like to solve problems, and when I can figure out what is going on with an engine and complete a project, I feel great," Normand says.

Her class rebuilt a standard transmission engine last year and will tackle an automatic transmission engine next semester. Rebuilding isn't done much in the field anymore because of the labor expense, but it's an excellent way to learn how today's complex engines work, she explains. The course includes chassis, electrical, basic maintenance, brakes, tires, transmission and engine performance.

When she finishes this course, Normand is thinking of taking a course in diesel mechanics, which is a better-paying field with higher job security. A single mother of an 18-month-old daughter, Aurora, Normand finds those benefits appealing—while modeling to her daughter that there's no work a woman can't do. [\(crw\)](#)

*Janis Jolly is a La Crosse freelance writer who credits good auto technicians with the longevity of her 14-year-old car.*

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Couture techniques, fine fabrics and amazing detail add up to one-of-a-kind hats by Ayo Uko. Photos by Grady Richardson Photography.

# Passion for Fashion

**Ayo Uko's custom hats feature exquisite details and empower women globally.**

BY JAN WELLIK  
Contributed photos

**Ayotunde Uko is a woman** of profound accomplishments—but it is her drive to create that has put her on the map not only in the Coulee Region, but on the global stage.

Ayotunde Uko—Ayo to most people—was born in Malawi, East Africa. “I grew up surrounded by women who were beautiful, bold and accomplished in various professions,” says Ayo, who founded Ayo Uko. Hats, Truly Yours. about 10 years ago.

Growing up, her family instilled in her the belief that she could do anything she wanted in life and the passion to seek it. “A lot of what I saw inspired what I do today,” she says.

Ayo attended medical school in Nigeria, where she met her husband, Victor, and then went on to work as a family physician in England, where the couple lived for seven years.

## Doctor to designer

In addition to her medical interests, she's always had a “creative



Milliner Ayo Uko, owner of Ayo Uko. Hats, Truly Yours.

streak,” she says. As young as 5, she would cut up her clothes and redesign them. “I got into a lot of trouble for that,” she says, smiling. But her mother, a home economics educator, encouraged her and got her a sewing machine. She started making her own school uniforms in high school, as well as party clothes.

While living in England, she returned to her love of design and enrolled at a millinery school, where she studied hatmaking with Ann Morse-Brown. She still uses the handmade wooden hat blocks, or forms, created by Guy Morse-Brown, Ann's husband. “It's part of the ethos of the Ayo Uko brand—exquisite hand-finished millinery,” she says, stroking the fine solid wood.

Ayo wanted to innovate the African headdresses from her youth using a combination of traditional blocking and free-form millinery techniques. Ayo says she uses “modern techniques to make exquisite headwear more accessible to clients across the world.”

## A world of inspiration

Ayo moved to La Crosse six years ago with her husband—now a pediatric gastroenterologist at Gundersen Health System—and their son, Jonathan, now 8. “When I design hats, I want a woman to feel really special—truly unique,” she says. “These luxurious hats elevate the outfits they wear.” Ayo’s life experiences of traveling globally have connected her to global culture, which inspires her designs.

Ayo knows her hatmaking market and uses social media to promote her business globally. She has made hats for women and men worldwide, in Europe, Canada, Australia and the United States. Her clients are often repeat customers and might order a hat for a wedding plus other special events. One such customer was a woman who wanted a hat for a wedding in Tuscany and told Ayo, “I trust your creativity.” Ayo began by asking her what she wanted to feel like at her special event. “I want to feel glamorous,” said the woman. After receiving her hat, she told Ayo she “felt like a queen.”

Each hat takes anywhere from 12 to 48 hours of actual labor, depending on how elaborate it is, over a three- to four-week time period. “A hat has to be hand-finished to be truly exquisite,” Ayo says. She uses a variety of luxury fabrics, such as sinamay, felt, straw, damask, silk, satin and velvet. She utilizes a special layering technique while forming the hats, which adds fine detail in the finished product. She finishes each hat by hand with luxurious embellishments. “It’s in the details,” she says.

When a customer connects with her via email, they set up an exclusive consultation and the client sends photos of the outfit and

designs that they would like the hat to match. Ayo offers fittings when possible and guarantees her customers happiness with their finished hats.

## Empowering women in all ways

Amid her hatmaking, Ayo is still involved in the medical field as a health care consultant, having earned an MS in Health Policy in London and an MBA in Business Leadership at Yale University. As a consultant, she helps to create plans for health care organizations to be more sustainable and effective, and she has assisted groups in Malawi working on medical projects to gain funding and help the organizations grow.

Ayo would like to expand her designing to create luxurious workwear for women using high-quality artisan fabric woven in Africa. “A phenomenal aspect of this business model is that it creates sustainable value for the artisans and the communities in which they live,” she says.

Ayo reaches out to customers for feedback and requests photos of them wearing their new artwork. “The smile says it all,” she says of these images. “I love working with people, and I want to empower each woman to feel special.” 

*Jan Wellik is a writer and educator based in the La Crosse area.*



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# ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

Here's what to do to keep your body's engine running smoothly.

BY JULIE NELSON

**Just as you wouldn't wait** for your car engine to seize up before checking your oil, you also don't want to wait until you're sick to check in on your health.

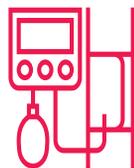


Jenna Bauer, CNP,  
Mayo Clinic Health System

Jenna Bauer, a certified nurse practitioner at Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse, acknowledges that preventive health care screenings and recommendations are constantly changing. However, she says certain aspects of your health should be addressed regularly. While your personal health may impact these screening recommendations, the schedules below offer a good guideline for maintenance checks.

## Blood pressure screening

Women 18 to 39 should have this checked once every 2 years. Women over 40: at least once a year.



## Cholesterol screening

Recommended ages for beginning cholesterol screening for women are between 20 and 45. Repeat every 5 years, unless you experience significant changes in your weight and/or diet, or if you have diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems or certain other conditions.

## Diabetes screening

This test can wait until age 45; then you should be tested every 3 years. If you are pregnant, you should be tested for gestational diabetes.

## Colorectal cancer screening

If you are between 50 and 75, you should be screened. Do this every 10 years if you get a full colonoscopy, but more frequently if you do a fecal or other test.

Under age 50: Talk to your provider if you have a strong family history of colon cancer, or inflammatory bowel disease.

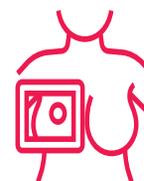
## Hearing

Your provider may recommend a hearing screening if you are 65 or older or are experiencing hearing loss.



## Mammogram

Guidelines on this are frequently changing, though all agree age 40 is a good starting point—unless you are at risk. Continue every year until your provider tells you otherwise. Contact your provider right away if you notice a change in your breasts.



## Mental health

If you are struggling with stress, anxiety and/or depression, an annual screening is recommended.

## Eye Exam

An eye exam helps detect eye problems at their earliest stage—when they're most treatable. In general, if you are healthy and you have no symptoms of vision problems, have your eyes checked on this schedule:

- every 5 to 10 years in your 20s and 30s
- every 2 to 4 years from 40 to 54
- every 1 to 3 years from 55 to 64
- every 1 to 2 years after age 65

## Have your eyes checked more often if you

- wear glasses or contact lenses
- have a family history of eye disease or loss of vision
- have a chronic disease that puts you at greater risk of eye disease, such as diabetes
- take medications that have serious eye side effects

## Immunizations

**Flu shot:** Every year, all ages.

**Tdap:** If you missed these as an adolescent, get caught up now, then get a booster every 10 years.

**Chicken pox/shingles:** You should receive two doses of varicella vaccine if you never had chickenpox or the varicella vaccine. If you are 50 or over, you should get the shingles vaccine.

**Human papilloma virus (HPV):** If you haven't gotten this vaccine in the past, or didn't get complete the entire series, get caught up between ages 18 to 26.

**Meningococcal B:** Women up to 23 years of age may want to consider this vaccine.

Your provider may recommend other immunizations if you are at high risk for certain conditions, such as hepatitis, measles and mumps.

Two quick screening tools are the General Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) and Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9).

## Osteoporosis and osteopenia

Get your first screening bone density measurement at age 65.

## Pelvic exam and Pap smear

Ages 21 to 29: every 3 years. Ages 30 to 49: every 3 to 5 years. Most women can discontinue these at age 50.

Women who are sexually active should be screened for chlamydia and gonorrhea up until age 25. Women 25 years and older should be screened if at high risk.

## Other screenings



Kelley Bahr, MD,  
Gundersen Health  
System

Your provider will screen for alcohol abuse, depression, intimate partner violence, obesity and tobacco use every year throughout your life. Older adults will also be assessed for risk of falling.

"Results from preventive screenings and exams are important, but it does not end there," adds Kelley Bahr, MD, in Family Medicine at Gundersen Health System.

Go to the dentist once or twice every year for an exam and cleaning. Your dentist will evaluate if you need more frequent visits.

"If something out of the ordinary is identified in a previous test, it typically changes screening timelines. Mammograms, Pap tests and even cholesterol levels, blood sugar levels and blood pressure readings are important follow-ups and something your provider will want to keep an eye on."

Yes, screening recommendations can change, and in the midst of our busy everyday lives, it can be tempting to write off the whole process. But health providers at both Mayo and Gundersen remind us that would be a mistake. The screenings can identify underlying conditions—even if you aren't experiencing symptoms—and can be critical in keeping you as healthy as possible. So go get your ounce of prevention; it truly is worth a pound of cure. 

Julie Nelson is a regular contributor to Coulee Region Women who got a flu shot this fall and needed the reminder to get a shingles vaccine.

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Angela Jones

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# A FRIENDLY WELCOME

## Dallas Werner

Home Show Committee Chair  
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Let 2020 be the year that you focus on your largest financial investment—your home! Interested in improving your home's value, curb appeal and comfort, but not sure where to start? Have an idea, but need some help on the details or implementation? Attend the 2020 La Crosse Area Builders Association Home Show for everything you need in one convenient location!

This year our Home Show has expanded to two full arenas featuring over 93 vendors. Meet with our industry experts now to find out what the new trends are, which investments have the greatest resale value for you and how to get your dream home. Vendors include builders, remodelers and experts in kitchens and baths, fireplaces, decks, energy efficiency, roofing, siding, audio-visual, home sales, compact tractors, HVAC, financing and more.

Friday night we continue the tradition of Date Night. Bring your significant other for a night out and enjoy two free drinks and live music while you take a stroll through our show. We will have beverages from Turtle Stack Brewery, Pearl Street Brewery, Elmaro Winery and Vernon Vineyards on site.

Saturday is our Demonstration Day, where you can enjoy two free drinks while watching live presentations on improving your home's performance, audio-visual home technology and more. We will be joined by MOKA, Oma Cafe, Pearl Street Brewery, 608 Brewery, Brambleberry Winery and Vernon Vineyards—and make sure you check out the Student Built Project Auction and see the talented local youth we have! The auction helps support the LABA Building Careers Tools for Schools program.

Sunday is fun day for the whole family. We will once again be featuring Touch-a-Truck, kids' crafts and activities, pet therapy dogs, a sample of flavored popcorn from Great River Popcorn & Ice Cream or a free scoop of Ranison's ice cream.

So mark your calendars for March 27-29 and let us help you with all of your home improvement needs!

Dallas Werner  
*Home Show Committee Chair*



## Jody Swenson

LABA President  
Knight Barry Title United LLC

Welcome to the La Crosse Area Builders Association 2020 Home Show! We're so glad you're joining us as a vendor or as a guest. Spring is such an exciting time in the Coulee Region, and the Home Show is the perfect place

to get spring plans rolling. Have you been peering out the window thinking the backyard could use a little pick-me-up? A fresh patio, deck, sunroom or maybe a fire table? You can find all of that at the Home Show as well as the experts to help you best utilize the space and assist with finding the perfect products to make that dream project a reality. Building or remodeling? Looking for options to make your home more functional as you age? The Home Show offers you the opportunity to meet your potential builder face-to-face and get to know them personally before you sign the contract. You can also walk just a few booths away from your builder's booth and see the exact product they would be using for your project. All the latest in cabinets, countertops, lighting, building styles and trending colors are here under one roof!

We also invite you to browse the projects area high school students have made that are up for auction at the Home Show. The funds raised through the auctioning of these projects is used to support LABA's Building Careers program. The Building Careers program helps to raise funds each year that are used for scholarships for trade students and also to put thousands of dollars of trade-related tools into the hands of students in our area high schools. In 2019 alone, 19 area schools received over \$10,000 in tools through our LABA Tools for Schools program! These schools are located all over our coverage area of La Crosse, Vernon, Trempealeau, Monroe and Jackson counties. Please consider placing a bid on one of these amazing projects!

Now we invite you to grab a beverage and browse both arenas of the Onalaska Omni Center as you enjoy the 2020 La Crosse Area Builder's Association Home Show!

Thank you for joining us!

Jody Swenson  
*LABA President*

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# 10 Tips for a Smooth Home Remodel

Communication and compatibility are key to a great remodeling experience.

Is a home remodel in your future this year? Follow these 10 tips to ensure the process—and the product—are what you expect:

**1. Establish effective two-way communication with the home remodeler.** It's essential to have good communication for a smooth home remodeling project. Does the remodeler listen? Does he or she answer questions clearly and candidly? Can you reach them when you need to? Do they return phone calls promptly? Do they let you know when problems arise and work with you on solving them?

**2. Make sure you are compatible with the contractor.** You'll spend a lot of time with your remodeler, so it's important to have a good rapport and trust in him or her.

**3. Set a clear and mutual understanding about the schedule.** You and your home remodeler should agree on the schedule up front to avoid conflict and problems later in the project.

**4. Request a written proposal.** Often, two people remember the same conversation differently. Get the proposal in writing and work with the remodeler to ensure it reflects your wishes.

**5. Get a clear and mutual understanding on miscellaneous details up front.** Settle these details before work starts. What times of day will the remodeler be working? How will they access the property? How will cleanup be handled? How will they protect your property?

**6. Be flexible.** Remodeling is an interruption of your normal life. Remember to be flexible during the project so that you can handle the unexpected and go with the flow.



**7. Discuss and agree on how change orders will be handled.** There is always a chance you will want to change materials or other project details during the job. Before work starts, make sure you agree with your remodeler about how these changes will be handled. Also understand that changes could affect the schedule and the budget, so it's important you have all changes in writing.

**8. Agree on a well-written contract that covers all the bases.** The contract should include these elements: a timetable for the project, price and payment schedule, detailed specifications for all products and materials, insurance information, permit information, procedures for handling change orders, lien releases, provisions for conflict resolution, notice of your right under the Federal Trade Commission's Cooling Off Rule (your right to cancel the contract within three days if it was signed someplace other than the remodeler's place of business) and details on important issues such as access to your home, care of the home, cleanup and trash removal.

**9. Ask for a written lien waiver from the home remodeler upon completion of the work.** If the remodeler hires subcontractors for portions of the work, then it is their responsibility to see the subcontractors compensated. In order to ensure this has been done and to protect yourself, ask for a written lien waiver when the work is finished. This document will verify everyone has been paid.

**10. Establish a project plan, covering all phases and dependencies in the work.** Plan your big-picture goals with the remodeler and discuss your needs. Hire a remodeler who will plan with you, listen to concerns and answer questions.

*From How to Hire Your Dream Remodeler by Tom Higgins, Superior Products Home Improvement, Littleton, Colorado.*



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**What is La Crosse Area Builders Association (LABA)?**

The La Crosse Area Builders Association is a nonprofit trade organization uniting more than 175 building-related companies in western Wisconsin.

At LABA, we

- educate our members on the latest in the building industry
- advocate for affordable housing at a local, state and national level through responsible government
- provide networking opportunities
- run the Parade of Homes and Onalaska Home Show

**What does LABA do?**

LABA works to better the building industry:

- We are watchdogs for changes that can affect home building and remodeling.
- We offer a membership of trained, qualified and insured builders and tradespeople to the consumer. From builders to electricians, plumbers, concrete specialists, roofers, fireplace installers, heating and air specialists, and so many others, our members affect the work on your most expensive purchase ... your home.
- We work to support the future of the building industry with programs like: Tools for Schools (putting tools into the hands of high school students), Scholarships, Building Careers Day, Building Futures for Kids Program at the Boys & Girls Club.

**Why should I use LABA?**

LABA members are insured, licensed (if applicable), and do continuing education to keep up with industry standards. One phone call to LABA can open doors to having a better experience and better success with home projects. LABA members have ties to the community in which we all work and live.

Our list of members is FREE to everyone and available on our website at [www.labaonline.com](http://www.labaonline.com). Make us your first call in your search for help with your home!





## Demonstration Schedule

### Saturday, March 28

#### Arena 1

10:15 a.m.

**Residential Solar + Storage**  
with Dave Pluym from Eagle Point Solar

11:15 a.m.

**Vinyl Plank Flooring Demonstration**  
with Keith from Home Depot

12:15 p.m.

**Bath & Kitchen Design**  
with The Board Store

1:15 p.m.

**Technology for the Home**  
with Justin Snyder from The Audio Video Pros

2:15 p.m.

**Dealing with Household Hazardous Materials**  
with Greg Smith from La Crosse Hazardous Materials Facility

3:15 p.m.

**The 5 Variables That Affect All Construction Projects**  
with Tom Kruse from Professional Home Inspection Company



Follow LABA Home Show on Facebook for the latest information!

#### Arena 2

10:45 a.m.

**Standards-Based Home Inspections & Radon Gas**  
with Tom Kruse from Professional Home Inspection Company

11:45 a.m.

**Improving Your Home's Energy Performance & Comfort**  
with Dallas Werner from First American Roofing & Siding, Inc., Dave Geissler from Onsite Performance Testing, Nat Peplinski from Focus on Energy

12:45 p.m.

**How to Install a Reclaimed Wood Accent Wall**  
with Larry Hutson from Used Anew

1:45 p.m.

**Geothermal 101**  
with Mark Flock from Flock's Heating & Air Conditioning

2:45 p.m.

**Do-It-Yourself Landscaping—Pruning Tips**  
with Mic Armstrong from McKay Nursery Co.

3:45 p.m.

**Tiling/Backsplash Installation**  
with Keith from Home Depot

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#### Saturday "Demonstration Day"



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#### Sunday "Family Day"



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# Spring Forward with Home Improvements

Here are 5 ways to freshen the look of your home.

**Spring is the perfect time to start planning** for home projects. Maintenance projects are a great way to keep your space comfortable, make it functional and possibly add value to your home. Not all projects are boring chores. Adding new space to your kitchen or sprucing up your décor can be fun and rewarding. Here are a few spring pick-ups for your home.

## Increase square footage

When it comes to increasing the value of your home, adding “livable” space such as a bedroom or bathroom can make a difference. When you’re ready to expand your space, make plans to attend the LABA Home Show and the LABA Parade of Homes, and/or contact the La Crosse Area Builders Association to find and consult with a builder. A residential construction professional can provide guidance on the feasibility of your project, estimates, zoning, building codes and the permitting process.

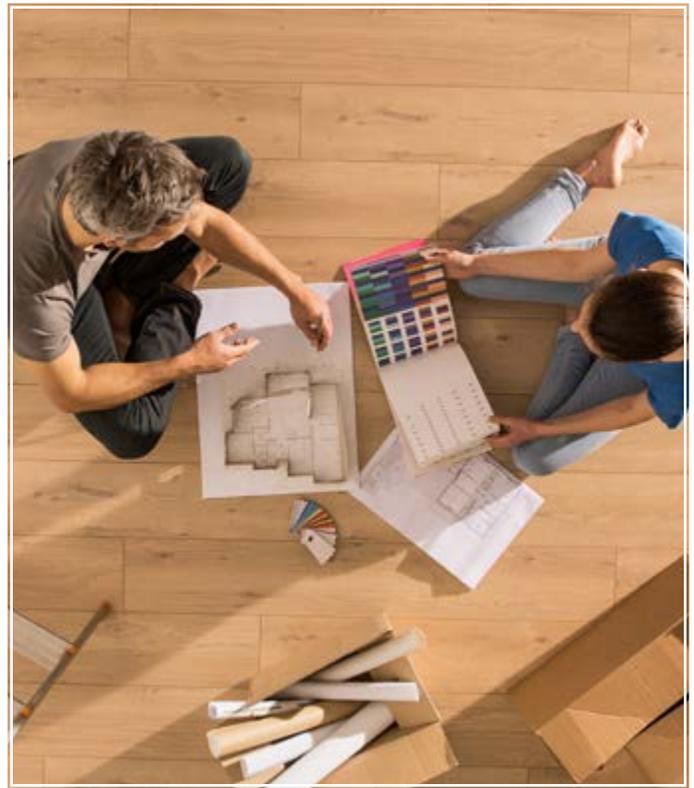
## Refresh floors and décor

Worn floors or dated interior home features can make your home feel dreary. Not all flooring is expensive, and sustainable options are available. Aesthetics are important, but you should consider other factors when selecting new floors, such as durability and moisture. If you’re happy with your current flooring and need to liven up your rooms, consider upgrading fixtures, updating lighting or adding greenery.

**When you’re ready to expand your space, contact the La Crosse Area Builders Association to find and consult with a builder.**

## Energize your home’s exterior

A well-maintained yard is the first step in boosting curb appeal. Fresh paint or a new door with a bold color can also make your home more attractive. Consider replacing your garage door or mailbox, or adding new lighting features such as walkway or entryway fixtures to make your home inviting.



## Take steps towards sustainability

There are many ways to reduce the energy consumption in your home. Begin by replacing heating, cooling or water heaters with more energy-efficient units—then maintain them regularly so they run at an optimal level. Installing drapes and shades on windows are easy and low-cost ways to regulate the temperatures in your home. Conserve water by taking shorter showers, turning off the water when brushing teeth and only using the dishwasher when it is full. Consider reducing the amount of garbage you generate by buying and using products wisely.

## Clean, clear and declutter

Cleaning and clearing your home is a great spring endeavor. An easy way to tackle a whole-home decluttering project is to organize room by room and sort items by type: toss, keep, reuse/repair, recycle and donate.

*Adapted from National Association of Home Building, [www.nahb.org](http://www.nahb.org).*

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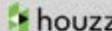


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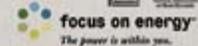
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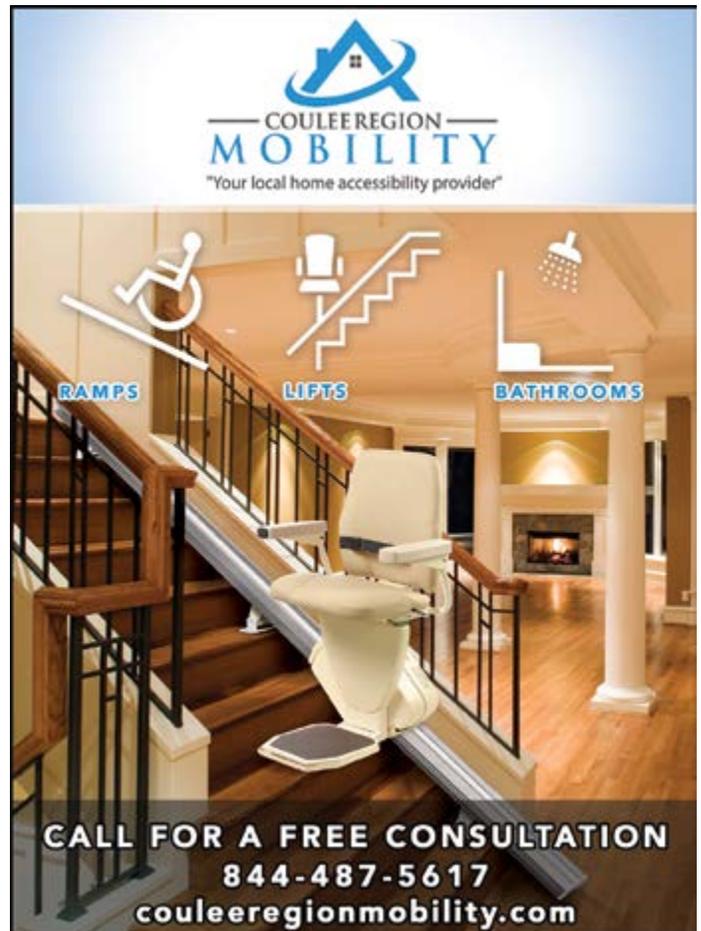
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# A CAR-LOVER'S DREAM HOME

There's room for everyone's passion in this state-of-the-art yet traditional home.

BY HEIDI BLANKE

Photos by Frontier Photography



*Not many area homes can boast a workspace custom designed for working on vintage cars, complete with car lifts.*

**You might say Cindy** and Bernie Gross's dream home was 20 years in the making. Modeled closely after the Kenosha area home from which they recently moved, their new La Crosse-area home is updated for retirement and single-story living. The kitchen, great room, master bedroom, office, laundry and garage access are on the main floor. "We loved our old house, but we didn't want to stay in that area," Bernie says.

This house is what Bernie calls their "rest of your life home." With everything needed for daily living on one level, there's no need to navigate stairs. More, it's a home set up for immersion in life interests—and for Bernie, that's cars.

## Local appreciation

"When my husband had his Harley, we put it in the trailer and rode around. Once we started doing that, we knew we wanted to retire in this part of the state," Cindy explains. "It's so beautiful."

The search for the perfect lot began in 2006, with the property purchased in 2013 and the house completed last summer under the expert guidance of Kraig Lassig, Lantz Lassig Custom Builders. "We were picky," says Bernie. "We had to have flat land, and in La Crosse, that's hard to find." The lot had to be secluded, yet somewhat close to town. After selling their business, Stainless Products, Inc., which had been founded by Cindy's father, they took the plans from their Kenosha home, made a few changes and built their 3,000-square-foot forever home. Now, Cindy can sit back in a favorite bedroom chair,

read and look out the window. "It's a nice view and relaxing," she says.

The brick ranch home sits at the end of a nearly 2 mile narrow and curving country road. An impressive tree-themed metal gate guards the driveway. Step through the front door, even on a cloudy day, and light fills the home. The kitchen opens directly into the family room, one of Cindy's favorite parts of the house. Wood floors, railings and cabinets balance the streamlined décor and give the feeling of being in and out of the surrounding woods at the same time. A couple of walls are warmed by exquisite framed cross-stitch projects done by Bernie's grandmother.

Heated floors, a cozy winter feature, run throughout the house, even in the three-car garage. "I didn't think they'd make that much of a difference, but they are so comfortable," Cindy says.

As much of the house as possible was locally sourced, from the construction materials to the furnishings to the artwork on the walls. Barn photos and paintings by Wisconsin artists hang throughout. "We tried to have everything local," says Bernie.

## State of the art

Cindy enjoys cooking—"She's a very good cook," Bernie confirms—and the kitchen was designed to her specifications. A large pantry, bigger than some walk-in closets, affords easy access to ingredients and small appliances. An island prep area with a sink, an eight-burner Wolf stove, three ovens and a large Sub-Zero refrigerator



Clockwise from top: A light-filled living area with relaxing views and a kitchen designed to her specifications make this a dream home for Cindy Gross. Car-themed artifacts and collections put Bernie's stamp on the house. Guests are greeted by an impressive wrought-iron tree-themed gate.

allows Cindy to cook numerous items at one time. Tile backsplashes, granite counters and hickory cabinets make the kitchen inviting.

While the house has a somewhat traditional layout, the technology is as modern as can be, controlled by circuitry headquartered on the lower level. "This is an integrated home," Bernie says. "It goes through a computer. We can keep an eye on this place from a phone." There's not a toggle light switch in sight.

"If I go in the basement," Cindy explains, "I can hit one button at the top of the stairs and turn the basement off. It's really, really nice and very convenient."

### A car-lover's dream

You could say Bernie is a car guy, but that would be an understatement. The basement rec room is a car lover's fantasy.

Turning the corner at the bottom of the stairs leading to the lower level is like entering a mini-museum devoted to cars. Bernie's smile as he talks about the items in the room is quiet evidence of his passion. Model cars line multiple shelves, and old gas station globes and pumps punctuate the area. A hanging stained glass pool table lamp has a car theme.

The basement level also features a guest suite, gym and sauna, and a second commercial kitchen. What would be a furnace room is an open space with a wall of tubes, pipes and wires that heat and monitor the entire house. An opposite wall blinks with computerized aspects

of the setup.

It's a cold, snowy day for this home tour, but we head for a 7,200-square-foot outbuilding a few steps from the back door. Larger than the main house, it's a vintage car aficionado's dream, at least one who enjoys collecting and working on them in an airy, warm and completely equipped space with car lifts, bright lights and multiple garage doors. "I restore them and drive them quite a bit. A lot of them are pretty rare."

Cindy does drive the cars on occasion, and she enjoys meeting people at car shows. She isn't quite as much into cars as is Bernie, though. "I'm part of the support system," she says with a laugh.

The building contains a kind of anteroom the couple lived in while the main house was constructed. Though the amenities were minimal, a small kitchen and a bathroom, still in perfect working order, made the place livable. "When we built the house, we lived in here," Bernie says.

Even with the dream home and the impressive workshop, Bernie and Cindy want to travel, mostly in the United States. An RV—their home on wheels—sits ready and waiting. Cindy, though, seeks to do a little more international travel than her husband. Wherever they go, it's a sure bet they'll be ready to return to their retirement oasis. **(crw)**

*Heidi Griminger Blanke is a La Crosse-area writer and a member of the Mississippi Valley Writers Guild. Her most recent essay was included in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Mom Knows Best*.*



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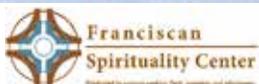
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# DRIVER'S LICENSE DEADLINE

Time is running out to get a REAL ID. Here's how to get one, and why.

BY BETTY CHRISTIANSEN  
Contributed photos

**You may have heard** of the drive to update Wisconsin driver's licenses to the REAL ID. Perhaps you already have one. But if you don't, be aware that the deadline to update your license is October 1, 2020, and that not doing so may result in big travel inconveniences. Here's why you'll want to update yours, and how to do so.

## What is a REAL ID?

The REAL ID Act, passed by Congress in 2005, enacted the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that the federal government "set standards for the issuance of sources of identification, such as driver's licenses." The new REAL IDs, introduced in Wisconsin in 2013, are designed to meet those standards for identification. A REAL ID is *not* required for voting.

## Why do I need a REAL ID?

On October 1, 2020, the regular Wisconsin driver's license or ID will no longer be accepted identification for domestic air travel or to enter a federal building or military base. Therefore, if you plan to fly even within the United States, you will need to present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or state ID card or another acceptable form of identification (such as a passport). Travelers without a REAL ID will be denied boarding their plane.

Cheryl Schleis, a longtime DMV trainer employed in the La Crosse area service center, located in Onalaska, says now is the time to get a REAL ID if you haven't yet. "We expect a crush before the October 1 deadline," she says. "We encourage customers to come in now, in the slower months."

## What do I need for a REAL ID?

To obtain a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or ID card, individuals must visit a Wisconsin DMV and bring the following original documents or a certified copy (not a photocopy, fax or scan):

- Proof of name and date of birth (certified birth certificate or unexpired passport)
- Proof of legal presence (same as above plus immigration documentation, if applicable)
- Proof of identity (current driver's license, ID card or passport)
- Proof of Social Security Number (Social Security card, 1099 form, W2 or pay stub with name and complete SSN)

- Proof of any name changes (birth certificate PLUS marriage certificate, divorce decree and subsequent marriage certificates, as applicable)

## Special concerns for women

"The biggest issue is for the woman who's changed her name since birth," says Schleis, which includes married, divorced and remarried women who have changed their names. Documentation for each name change—birth certificate, marriage certificate(s) and divorce decrees—are required to acquire a REAL ID. Newly married women planning a honeymoon involving air travel after October 1, 2020, should be especially aware of this requirement.



Cheryl Schleis, La Crosse area DMV

Note that if you have a current, unexpired passport, you have already provided the required information to the U.S. Department of State, and the passport is all you need for *all* name change documents. If you are married and did not change your name, you do not need to provide marriage documentation.

## How do I get a REAL ID?

Once you've gathered the required documentation, Schleis says, simply stop in to the DMV and take a number. You'll have your photo taken, your documentation will be scanned and you'll receive a 60-day driving receipt while you wait for your ID to be mailed. You can visit [wisconsin.gov/REALID](http://wisconsin.gov/REALID) for more information and to generate a personalized checklist of the required documents you will need to bring.

If it's time to renew your driver's license or ID, you can receive a REAL ID-compliant card for no additional fee if the upgrade takes place at the same time as the renewal. Customers whose current driver's license or ID will not expire before 2020 may obtain a REAL ID-compliant card for \$14 (the cost of a duplicate driver license) or \$16 for a duplicate ID card. crw

*Betty Christiansen, publisher of Coulee Region Women, does not yet have a REAL ID but has been inspired to get hers soon.*



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Photo by Luann Dibb Photography

# KITCHENS ON WHEELS

Two local women rev up business in food trucks.

BY JESS WITKINS

Contributed photos



*The Damn Tasty food truck complements Nicole Elliott's catering business—and serves up damn tasty food, too. Photo below by Boxcar Photography.*



**Persistence, creativity, adaptability**—three traits that these two entrepreneurs share in bounds. Inventing a plethora of new menu items and expanding their businesses to meet community needs, Nicole Elliott and Maria Norberg have found their niche in La Crosse area food trucks and beyond. You could certainly say these women have drive.

## The Damn Tasty

Nicole Elliott was born and raised in La Crescent, but she's been cooking, serving and bartending in La Crosse for 20 years. Her first job was in the deli of the People's Food Co-op. A few years later, she pursued culinary school in Chicago, and moved back to La Crosse in 2005. Her plan has always been to launch The Damn Tasty food truck.

"My husband and I borrowed his sister's old egg roll truck in 2013. Back then, it was a lot harder to get started, as far as regulations, so I started the lunch delivery. That became a pretty successful catering business."

While her catering business was thriving, Elliott missed the customer interactions. "I've spent so much of my career connecting with people, which you don't get a lot of as a caterer. You are perpetually in the 'back of the house.' Well, my husband and I are always hatching plans and coming up with great ideas, so we thought, 'why not do a

breakfast truck?' A place to get great food in the morning that is both fresh and convenient for folks headed into work. And damn tasty, too!"

Elliott admits the whole process of launching the food truck has been "a pain in the butt," but her passion for delicious food and beautiful presentation kept her going. "Anyone who has a food trailer, cart or truck can tell you, it's a lot of hoops. I've basically felt like a circus performer since August. But now that I've gotten started, I'm very happy. I'm excited to get more creative with my menus, being able to offer The Damn Tasty on wheels to more people, whether through vending at local events, or being able to offer the truck as a catering option for rehearsal dinners and smaller parties."

Some of Elliott's favorite menu items have been the Vietnamese Caramelized Pork Belly Bowl and Bacon, Cheddar and Chive Biscuits. "The Thai iced coffee, our famous mac and cheese, our gyro/falafel bowls are good ... I could go on and on." Her passion is personal. "I love eating really tasty food. It can literally make my day." Her goal for her customers? "Create food that makes them happy to take every bite."

Recently, Elliott has become a hybrid cook and baker, making baked goods from scratch. "Anyone in the food industry can tell you, you're either a cook or a baker. Cooks hate to follow directions, and baking is, basically, directions and math. I've been learning a lot and



*Maria Norberg's Apothik food truck is the result of flexible thinking and a love of serving great food.*

I love it.”

Elliott attributes the success of The Damn Tasty to her community. “All of the people in my life who have helped make The Damn Tasty even possible—family, friends, staff, even clients and Damn Tasty customers I’ve had since the beginning. It has definitely contributed to our success.”

## Apothik

Maria Norberg purchased Grounded Specialty Coffee in downtown La Crosse in 2011, knowing the empty lot next to it held a lot of potential. She gave herself space to learn how to run a beloved business and room to grow. She had no idea just how much growth lay ahead for her.

“I fell in love with La Crosse while attending Viterbo University,” she says. After purchasing Grounded, “the goal was always to do a big restaurant and name it Apothik.”

The name *Apothik* comes from Grounded’s history as an apothecary in the 1860s. Norberg was busy moving forward with building plans and new staff when she learned another neighbor held an easement on the lot property. What followed was a lawsuit that went on for two years.

Not wanting to lose momentum, Norberg adapted. “With all things, plans change and grow. We knew we had people in place, and we were ready and committed.” So, thanks to her nimble thinking, Norberg launched the Apothik food truck in July 2015.

“Apothik slowly and surely grew into a strong brand,” says Norberg, “and the drive to do the restaurant wasn’t the same after the legal battle. I decided to invest in Grounded.”

Invest she did. Norberg and team expanded the coffee shop with an outdoor patio and added beer and wine to their menu. She also learned more about the food truck industry by attending food truck fairs in Minneapolis, and she brought chef Nathan Wang to the team. “We work really well together, and he deserves a shout-out for his ability to create really interesting, unique and accessible food for a frequently changing menu.”

Apothik strives to offer as much locally sourced, seasonal and organic food as possible. Its menu typically changes every few weeks to keep ingredients fresh and in season. Some menu favorites of Norberg’s include an Asian-inspired burrito called the Wangton Burrito, named for its chef and creator, as well as any of their ramen bowls. “I look forward to the marinated egg on that dish,” she says.

Norberg’s success comes from her business model. “I thrive on change. While having a fast-changing menu is more work, we’ve figured out how to do that successfully and make it stand out. Plus, it’s also better and healthier for you. It’s a niche for us, and people look forward to it.”

The job isn’t easy. “Basically it’s a kitchen on wheels,” she laughs. “It’s a challenging environment with high heat, sharp knives and small space. The main challenges are always operational and making sure things run smoothly. But I thrive on challenges and troubleshoot to find the right solution.”

And, there’s more ahead! “The dream is still to do more,” says Norberg, who has purchased another building downtown that will serve as a brick-and-mortar kitchen allowing Apothik to more easily cater to events and deliver food. “We want to make sure we’re delivering what people want. We’re working with different businesses on catering for them so we’re open all year long.”

## SHOYU RAMEN BROTH

### Apothik

Makes 10 servings

- 2 T sesame oil
- 2 yellow onions, roughly chopped
- 1 carrot, roughly chopped
- 1 bunch green onions (6-8 onions)
- 4 oz. cremini mushrooms
- 4 oz. shiitake mushrooms
- 1/2 oz. kombu (or nori sheet)
- 4 oz. sake

- 1 gallon water
- 6 oz. soy sauce
- 4 oz. honey
- 2 oz. rice wine vinegar
- 3 T vegetable base
- Salt to taste

Heat sesame oil in a large stockpot. Add onions and carrots and sauté over high heat until heavily browned, 5-10 minutes. Add green onions and mushrooms and cook for 1 minute, then add kombu. Deglaze the pan with sake. Stir and cook until slightly reduced. Add water and simmer on low heat for 2 hours.

Strain broth, discard “leftovers.” Return broth to stove. Add remaining ingredients and simmer for 5-10 minutes. Taste and adjust any seasonings according to taste.

To make Shoyu Ramen: In a separate pot, cook your choice of ramen or udon noodles according to package instructions. Place noodles in a serving bowl, top with shoyu broth, and add desired toppings, such as fresh scallions, sliced radish, sautéed mushrooms, blanched vegetables, soft boiled egg, protein of choice, sesame seeds, chili oil, etc.

- 2 tsp. paprika
- Small handful of fresh dill, chopped
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 4 T butter, divided
- 3 T flour
- 1 cup heavy cream or half-and-half
- 2 cups beef broth
- 3-4 dashes soy sauce
- ½ cup sour cream

Melt 2 T butter in a small pan. Sauté the onions. Add garlic and sauté for another minute. Add mushrooms and sauté until the mushrooms release their juices.

Add 2 T butter to the mushroom mix and stir in the flour, constantly whisking for several minutes until the mixture is slightly starting to brown. Add the cream, broth and soy sauce, still whisking until the soup starts to slightly thicken. Add the paprika, dill, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium, cover and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Stir in the sour cream. Serve with a bit more chopped fresh dill. 

## HUNGARIAN MUSHROOM SOUP

### The Damn Tasty

- 2 T butter
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 container of mushrooms, chopped

*Jess Witkins is a writer, blogger and storyteller. Her mission: making pathetic look cool since 1985. She can often be found wordmongering in the Coulee Region’s many coffee shops.*



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## WOMEN IN OVERDRIVE

A team of car-loving women celebrate life in the fast lane.

BY HEIDI OVERSON

Contributed photos

*Stacey McIlquham is passionate about her car collection: a Ford Mustang, a Jeep Wrangler and a Toyota 4Runner. Photo by Jordana Snyder Photography.*

**Their passion is cars.** Collecting cars, repairing cars—even photographing cars, there are plenty of women in the Coulee Region who make cars their business, their hobby and their drive. We'd like to introduce you to a few of them, all amazing in their knowledge of autos and love for great cars.

### A couple and their cars

Stacey McIlquham of La Crosse is one of these car enthusiasts. This 45-year-old La Crosse-area native is a physical education teacher at Blessed Sacrament Elementary School. She's in her 21st year of teaching and enjoys working with children, but she *really* loves her afterschool hobby: her car collection. She currently has a classic Toyota 4Runner ("Ole Reliable," which is 20 years old), a 2012 Ford Mustang (her "fun" summer car) and a new 2019 Jeep Wrangler (her "adventurous" vehicle).

"My husband, Curt (Mac), and I don't have children, but we have our extended family ... and our cars," says McIlquham.

The couple has five cars in all. McIlquham drives the Wrangler, but in the spring she unleashes the Toyota and the Mustang, which gets driven the most.

"The Mustang is the one we take on trips," says McIlquham. "It's great on gas mileage, and we can fit two sets of golf clubs in that trunk."

McIlquham's passion for cars took her by surprise. "Mac and I often ride bikes around La Crosse-area car lots, and early on I became intrigued by the different cars we looked at," she says. "I educated myself on the many I liked and ended up purchasing some."

McIlquham found the Mustang in 2013 at Brenengen Auto in West Salem and the Wrangler in 2019 at Chrysler Winona. "We bought the Toyota from a private seller through Toyota of La Crosse," she says.

McIlquham has had a blast driving all three of them. In December, she and her husband participated in the annual Jeep charity food drive in La Crosse, in which 28 Jeeps were decorated with holiday lights and driven through the Rotary Lights display. The participants brought in 3,600 food items for area food banks.

"I have gained a lot of knowledge about cars over the years," says McIlquham. "But I didn't get here all on my own; for example, before this year's Jeep charity drive, Morgan, an auto technician at Pischke Motors, did a great job educating our group on Jeeps."

### The pit crew

McIlquham likes to think of Morgan Hampe as part of her pit crew, as her vehicles wouldn't be what they are without this special group of women.

Hampe started working at Pischke in April 2019, and she absolutely loves it. This friendly 28-year-old is a self-dubbed Jeep geek, who was born and raised in La Crosse and is a graduate of the Automotive Technician program at Western Technical College.

"I grew up loving to work on cars," Hampe says. "My dad and I would tinker and build things together, and we'd do some car work. I love working with my hands and love keeping busy, so becoming an auto technician made perfect sense."

Hampe first went to Pischke to special-order her Jeep Wrangler,



Morgan Hampe loves her job as an auto technician, and she loves her Jeep Wrangler, "She Hulk."

which led to an on-the-spot interview for a technician position. "There were never any problems or prejudice," Hampe recalls. "I am just one of the guys!"

Hampe's Jeep Wrangler is pretty hard to miss. "It has a 2-inch lift kit, 35-inch tires, it's green and has a six-speed manual drive," she says. "I have Loki on the dash, military stars, Lord of the Rings and Avengers details, *Supernatural* decals and a Captain America spare tire cover. There's nothing like driving around in the summer, playing music with the top down and the wind whipping all around you."

### Car lovers everywhere

The other members of McIlquham's pit crew are Jennifer Donley, the manager at Advanced Auto Parts on Losey Boulevard in La Crosse, and Jordana Snyder, McIlquham's car-session photographer.

"Both of these women are experts in their fields but also share the passion I have for cars," says McIlquham. "Snyder used to be a technician at Honda Motorwerks in La Crosse, and in high school she rebuilt a car with her father, so she knows her stuff. I got to know Donley over the years, as she has helped me countless times in the store when I have questions. She always has the answers!"

McIlquham's journey is a wonderful example of how an intrigue can develop and grow into a fantastic hobby. It's also a testament how women can form an uncommon bond and break a stereotype. Women stuck in neutral? Nope. Definitely moving forward. 

Heidi Overson's car is close to hitting 145,000 miles, but, like the women in this story, she's completely devoted to it. You can find Overson in the Internet world at [www.createsegue.com](http://www.createsegue.com).


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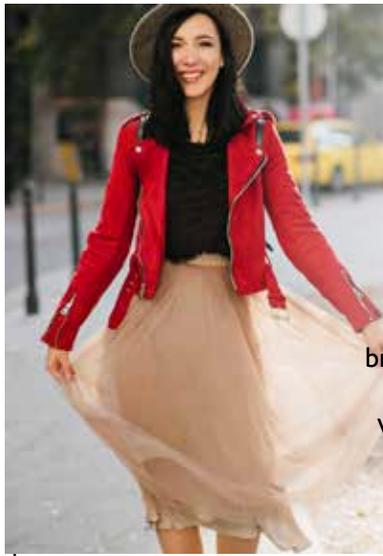
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# DRIVEN TO SERVE

Linda Riddle's passion to help women sent ripples through the Coulee Region.

BY KATHLEEN WALLACE

Contributed photos



Linda Riddle stood up for what she believed in: human rights, helping women and living and loving well.

**Linda Riddle—community activist,** artist, mother, grandmother, wife—was an extraordinary Coulee Region woman known for her advocacy of women experiencing domestic violence and her passion for honoring their stories. She passed away after surgery for a brain aneurysm on August 12, 2019, at the age of 65.

During her lifetime, Riddle received many honors, including the 1996 Chrysalis Center Woman of the Year Award, the 2004 Glass Ceiling Award from the Minnesota Women's Consortium and the 2009 Virginia McKnight Binger Human Service Award. In October 2019, Riddle was the first woman to receive the Roberta Zurn Award posthumously. All of these awards are given in honor of commitment to social justice and to empowering women who are impacted by cultural inequities.

Riddle's commitment came from her personal experience of domestic abuse and becoming a single mother of two children. She didn't try to leave that experience behind; instead, she used it to bring transformation to the lives of other women and improve the support and resources offered to those experiencing domestic abuse. "Linda had the ability to create beauty in all aspects of her life," Riddle's daughter, Celeste Mader, observes.

Hired in 1992 to be the director of Hokah County Resource Center (now Bluff Country Family Resources), Riddle believed strongly in honoring the stories of individuals. "Linda would have loved the term *herstory* for an article," Mader adds. "It was a term that she used often."

## Building a groundswell

Riddle was a trailblazer for culture change through advocacy and education, and she hoped to build a "groundswell" with others.

In 2007, Riddle expanded her efforts to Duluth, Minnesota, as executive director of the Domestic Abuse Intervention Program and later as manager of the Safe Harbor Program. She later worked with international partners in Russia, Singapore, Cuba, Colombia and Kurdistan to make the world a better place through education.

The work Riddle did was understandably stressful. In a model

example of self-care, she returned to her home community to be closer to family and became the Member Services Outreach Manager at the People's Food Co-op. Co-op general manager Lizzy Haywood remembers Riddle as someone who "put her whole self into her work." Co-op marketing specialist Kevin Ducey remembers how Riddle used her position at the co-op to continue to work for social justice. "She organized and facilitated memorable International Women's Day events and classes and outings for women and children," he says.

Riddle also impacted the Co-op by making connections within the community—with minorities, with farmers and with others who may not otherwise have been given opportunities. Patrons would often stop by the Co-op just for the chance to visit with her.

Riddle was a pillar and an inspiration to her family, too. She absolutely adored her two grandchildren, Aiden and Odessa. She had a wonderful sense of humor and delighted in making her family laugh. Riddle loved to garden and was able to grow beautiful flower and vegetable gardens everywhere she lived. She especially took joy in harvesting, preserving and preparing delicious food. She took solace in nature, and some of her favorite times of year were the annual monarch butterfly and tundra swan migrations.

## Doing the right thing

As often happens when we lose someone who has tirelessly worked for the common good, the community steps up to recognize, remember and honor that goodness. In November 2019, YWCA La Crosse presented its first Linda Riddle Community Activist Award to Joella Striebel. Mader says that Riddle would be pleased that the work to create the "groundswell" of change will be taken up by others.

Mader says that Riddle "was just doing what she knew needed to be done and was the right thing to do." Riddle was a woman who effectively brought change to communities. Even as she went into surgery for the aneurysm, she expressed a wish that "everyone could just be kind to each other." [crw](#)

*Kathleen Wallace is a resident of La Crosse and an occasional contributor to Coulee Region Women.*

## | ACCOMPLISHMENTS |



### Royal Bank Announces New Loan Officer

Royal Bank is pleased to welcome Susan Weber as a loan officer at their Viroqua location. Susan has a deep understanding of the community banking landscape. Her favorite things about being a community banker are the excitement of helping first-time buyers own a home and talking with young people about loans and credit. Her philosophy is that everyone deserves to be treated with respect.

Weber has immersed herself in the Viroqua community, including volunteering with the Driftless Humane Society and the Vernon Women's Alliance. She enjoys watching the Packers, golfing, hiking, biking and spending time with her husband, their yellow lab, their kids and their grandkids.

Weber can be reached at 608-637-3142 or [sweber@royalbank-usa.com](mailto:sweber@royalbank-usa.com).



### A New NUW Team Member

Naturally Unbridled Wellness is proud to welcome to its team one of the top Functional Nutritionists in the country, Susan Barendregt, MNT, BCHN. Barendregt provides in-office and virtual functional nutrition consultations and lab reviews.

Barendregt was vice president of the National Association of Nutrition Professionals from 2017 to 2019. Board-certified in Holistic Nutrition, she is a Certified Master Nutrition Therapist and a Certified Herbal Therapist.

Functional nutrition is a practice that understands wellness is more than the absence of disease; rather, it is a state of ease and optimal functioning. It is the goal of a functional nutritionist to help you reach that state. Learn more at [www.naturallyunbridled.com](http://www.naturallyunbridled.com).



### Winona Health Offers Accredited Cancer Care Program

Winona Health's Cancer Care Program is accredited by the Commission on Cancer (CoC), a quality program of the American College of Surgeons. CoC accreditation is nationally recognized by organizations including the National Cancer Institute, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, National Quality Forum, American Cancer Society and the Joint Commission as having established data-driven performance measures for the provision of quality cancer care. This means community members have convenient access to high-quality, patient-centered care and the full scope of cancer care services to diagnose, treat, rehabilitate, support and provide surveillance. Winona Health's Cancer Care Program has been accredited since 2013. Learn more at [www.winonahealth.org/cancercare](http://www.winonahealth.org/cancercare).



### WNB Financial Helps Warm the Region

Employees at WNB Financial, a community bank located in Winona, collected enough funds through a recent Jeans Day event to supply \$600 to local warming centers. Warming centers in Winona and La Crosse will receive \$300 each to help give adult homeless patrons a warm place to stay on cold winter nights.

WNB Financial utilizes Jeans Day—where employees pay \$2 to be excused from professional attire to support a local nonprofit—as a way for employees to give back to the community that supports the bank. Employees then vote on the nonprofit they wish to support.



### HouseWarmings Celebrates 6 Years

HouseWarmings, located at 1522 Commercial Street in Bangor, is celebrating its six-year anniversary. Co-owners Kim Herman and Patti Evans started the business in its current building, which was originally built as a hotel in 1902. HouseWarmings features gifts galore including quality toys, cards, wedding and seasonal holiday décor. They also feature antiques, vintage décor, crafted and new items in a charming atmosphere. Offering a little bit of everything, a trip to HouseWarmings is well worth the drive! Open Wednesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



### Altra Wins Community Service Award

Altra Federal Credit Union recently won the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award, which recognizes a credit union or chapter/multiple credit union group for social responsibility and charitable projects that support its community. Altra won the Wisconsin Credit Union League award for the inaugural Altra Gives Back Day initiative in which employees helped 36 organizations by volunteering over 1,300 hours in one day. In addition to volunteering in the community, employees created blankets for Project Linus, assembled activity kits for CMN Hospitals, put together personal hygiene kits for local shelters and wrote letters to soldiers stationed overseas.

Accomplishments is a paid section featuring your business or organization. Call 608-783-5395 or e-mail [info@crwmagazine.com](mailto:info@crwmagazine.com) for more information.

# What's Your Drive?

One word can define your style  
and your intention for 2020.

Photos by Kristina Olson Photography  
and Jordana Snyder Photography

## Ease

**Uncomplicated,** comfortable, peaceful—nothing spells out style like an outfit you feel completely yourself in. Soft knits, neutral colors and classic denim sum it up in this ensemble from **Drifting Boutique** in Viroqua. Modeled by Ava Olson; photo by Kristina Olson Photography.

*BB Dakota cardigan, \$108.00; Paige Denim mid-rise ultra skinny jeans, \$189; Sub\_Urban Riot V-neck T-shirt, \$38.*



## Action

This is the year to take charge—you know your goals and you are prepared to act on them. A bold splash of color makes a statement; a structured denim jacket paired with flowing pants lends contrast and intrigue in spring wardrobe staples from **Mainstream Boutique** in Onalaska. Modeled by Kimberly Bentzen-Täbbert, owner of Mainstream Boutique; photo by Jordana Snyder Photography.

*Liverpool jean jacket, \$98; Easel pant/skirt combo, \$49; Down East top, \$32; Alex and Ani necklace, \$88; Alex and Ani bracelets, various prices.*



## Vision

It is 2020, after all. And what better way to showcase your unique outlook for the year than with bright patterns combined with classic staples and eye-catching footwear? All this from **Urban Shoetique** in La Crosse. Modeled by Connie Peter, owner of Urban Shoetique, La Crosse; photo by Jordana Snyder Photography.

*Yana K "Milan" cardigan, \$130; Liverpool pull-on high-rise skinny jeans, \$89; Melania Clara bracelets, \$55; Irregular Choice "Star Light" sneakers, \$125.*



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# GET YOUR KICKS ON ROUTE 66

It's never too late for a girlfriend road trip.

BY CHRISTINE HALL

Contributed photos



Then and now: Cheryl Armstrong (left in both photos) and Jessica Clark head out for adventure in an AMC Matador in 1978 (left) and a Camaro SS convertible in 2019.

**Have you ever wanted to rewind** a part of your life and do it over? Maybe it was a certain day you'd like to live differently or a particular memory that was so enjoyable that you'd like to relive it? Most of us don't get the chance to do that, but Cheryl Armstrong of Kendall, Wisconsin, got together with an old friend this past fall to do just that and kick an item off their bucket list.

Back in 1978, college roommates Armstrong, originally of Tomah, and Jessica Clark, now of Waukesha, departed Wisconsin and drove to Modesto, California, then down the coast to stay with Clark's uncle in Los Angeles. This was quite an adventure for two young women in what Armstrong describes as a "crappy AMC Matador." Over time, as the years and the miles spanned between them, they always talked about "doing it right someday"—driving the iconic Route 66 in a convertible, the way it was meant to be driven.

This September, they did just that. With a detailed itinerary, a dashboard full of maps and a trunk full of enthusiasm, they hopped in Armstrong's newer Camaro SS convertible, left from Chicago, where Route 66 originates, and in 20 days drove the route to its end at the Santa Monica Pier.

## Heading out

They knew the trip was going to be sensational right from the start. In Chicago, they met several other enthused drivers who were starting the same trek and were just as excited as they were. "We met four guys from the Netherlands, a couple from France and numerous other folks we kept running into along the way to California," Armstrong says, "including a guy from Canada on a motorcycle and others from Belgium and Spain."

They followed their itinerary but veered from it if they saw something more they wanted to see or tour. They took in everything they could in the time they had, starting with the Lincoln sites in Springfield,

Illinois; the Gateway Arch and Anheuser-Busch tour in St. Louis; and Meramec Caverns in Missouri. They continued through the tip of Kansas, Oklahoma and the panhandle of Texas. Near McLean, Texas, they stopped at the Devil's Rope Museum also known as the Barbed Wire Museum, mostly for a laugh and a nod to Armstrong's significant other, Dennis, who is a farmer. "Turns out," Armstrong recalls, "it was the most interesting place, and we spent a lot more time there than we had planned!"

They continued through northern New Mexico, where they explored the Petrified Forest and the Painted Desert. One memorable evening, they stopped in Tucumcari and spent the night in the Safari Motel, a retro 1960s motel. The motel owners recommended a restaurant, but when the women arrived, the place was packed. As they stood around with other waiting customers, the hostess told them she had a table for 10, and if they didn't mind sharing, they could all be seated together. They all agreed, and Armstrong says they had the best time visiting with dinner companions from New York, Iowa and Florida.

## Off the beaten path

While traveling through Arizona, they visited the Grand Canyon and went off the beaten path to see the London Bridge in Lake Havasu City. They also did the section of road near Kingman, Arizona, called "Hair-raising Road." Armstrong didn't think it was that hair-raising, though, after driving roads here in the Coulee Region.

Although these highlights were memorable, Armstrong also recalls the "kitschy" little places they stopped at. "I don't think people realize how much there is to see in this country," she says. "There are so many unique American places along the way—lots of Route 66 museums with old cars, what was happening during this era or that era, where this celebrity stopped or lived, little places with the oddest stuff. And most were free."



Clockwise from top left: Armstrong's car parked in front of a Sinclair gas station; Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo, Texas; the Devil's Rope Museum in McLean, Texas; the Blue Whale of Catoosa, Oklahoma; a gift shop somewhere along Route 66.

## People, past and present

Armstrong and Clark had not spent much time together since they both were married decades ago, so this trip was not only a chance to relive a time from their past, but a time to renew their friendship. "Twenty days on the road with someone is a long time, so make sure it's with someone you're compatible with," advises Armstrong. "We had the greatest time and called ourselves Thelma and Louise."

When asked what her favorite part of the trip was besides spending quality time with Clark, Armstrong answers, "Meeting people from across the world. Everyone was so nice and so enthused to be on this trek, like we were. We ran into a classic car club from Alabama that was doing the route in sections. They would do one section one year, then come back and do another section another year. That makes it doable for people who can't take three weeks or so to do it all at once."

Was there anything she didn't like about the trip? "The traffic in LA," Armstrong says. "It is as horrendous as they say. But there's no avoiding it."

Armstrong admits they overpacked, as most of us do for any trip. They took way too many guidebooks, clothes and even a cooler that they never used since they stopped so often. Armstrong said the only book they really needed was Jerry McClanahan's *EZ66 Guide for Travelers*, which is the bible for anyone traveling Route 66. It is laid out with maps, side trips, historical markers, hints and more.

Would Armstrong recommend driving the iconic Route 66? "Yes!" she says. "Definitely do it—and maybe even add on two more weeks if you can spare the time so you can get out and stretch more and get off the beaten path." Her best advice, though: "Enjoy the drive!" [\(crw\)](#)

*Christine Hall has done plenty of road trips, traveling east and west and all around the Coulee Region. But after hearing Cheryl's adventures, she's up for a Route 66 excursion.*

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## ONGOING EVENTS

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aauwlacrosse@hotmail.com, aauw-wi.org.

**Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW)** 4th  
Tues. of each month, www.crpwomen.org

**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., La Crosse County  
Administrative Building, 212 6th St. N., Room 100,  
La Crosse, 411.toastmastersclubs.org.

**NAMI Family Support Group** 2nd Mon. of each  
month, 6:30 p.m., Family and Children's Center,  
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**Onalaska Area Business Association** 2nd Tues. of  
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oaba.info.

**Onalaska Hilltopper Rotary** every Wed. noon-1  
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**Onalaska Rotary** every Mon. at 6 p.m., lower level  
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**Onalaska Toastmasters Club** 1st and 3rd Mon. of  
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**Valley View Rotary**, every Wed., 7:30-8:30  
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valleyviewrotary.com/

**Viroqua Toastmasters Club** 2nd and 4th Thurs.  
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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,  
Visit www.womensalliancelacrosse.com for more  
information.

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

## CALENDAR EVENTS

### FEBRUARY

**Feb. 5-9, Frozen River Film  
Festival**, Winona, www.friff.org. ▶



**Feb. 7-9**, Downtown La  
Crosse Winter Days, www.  
lacrossedowntown.com.

**Feb. 8**, Coulee Blues and Brews  
starring Anthony Gomes and with special guests Sena  
Ehrhardt & Cole Allen, 8:30 p.m., Lyche Theatre, Weber  
Center for the Performing Arts.

**Feb. 9**, The Wisconsin Singers, "Hold on to Your  
Dreams," 3 p.m., Lyche Theatre, Weber Center for the  
Performing Arts.

**Feb. 9**, Legendary Ladies of Country Music, 7:30 p.m.,  
The Heider Center, www.heidercenter.org.

**Feb. 11**, Lulu Washington Dance Theatre, 7:30 p.m.,  
Viterbo Fine Arts Center.

**Feb. 11**, League of Women Voters February Lunch &  
Learn, "History of Women's Suffrage in Wisconsin,"  
11:30 a.m., The Waterfront Banquet Room, www.  
lwvlacrosse.org.

**Feb. 12**, AARP's What's Brewin' Wednesday, 4-6 p.m.,  
Pearl Street Brewery, www.aarp.org/lacrosse.

**Feb. 13**, Art Reception, 6-7:30 p.m., The Heider Center,  
www.heidercenter.org.

**Feb. 14**, Billy McGuigan's "Rock Twist," 7:30 p.m.,  
The Heider Center, www.heidercenter.org. ❤️

**Feb. 18**, The Choir of Man, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts  
Center.

**Feb. 20-23**, *9 to 5: The Musical*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sat.,  
3 p.m. Sun., Page Theatre, Saint Mary's Performance  
Center, Winona.

**Feb. 20**, Two and the Night and the Music: An Evening  
of Jazz with Dave Marck and Tim Harrison, 7:30 p.m.,  
Viterbo Fine Arts Center

**Feb. 21**, Sweetheart Dance, 7-9 p.m., YMCA-North,  
Onalaska, www.laxymca.org

**Feb. 21**, *An American in Paris*, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine  
Arts Center.

**Feb. 21**, Celebrating Her Heart Health Luncheon, 11:30-  
1 p.m., Cargill Room, www.herhearthealth.org.

**Feb. 22-23**, La Crosse Chamber Chorale Performance,  
7:30 p.m. Sat., 3 p.m. Sun., Mary of the Angels Chapel.  
www.chamberchorale.org.

**Feb. 23**, Chicken Que and Bake Sale, The American  
Cancer Society Sole Burner of Chaseburg, 12 p.m., Tippy  
Toe Inn, Chaseburg, www.Soleburner.org/Chaseburg

**Feb. 28-29, Mar. 1**, *Shakespeare's Twelfth Night*, 7:30  
p.m. Fri., 2 p.m. Sat-Sun. Viterbo Fine Arts Center.

**Feb. 28-29, Mar. 5-7**, *Little Women*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sat.,  
2 p.m. Sun., Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La  
Crosse.

**Feb. 28-Mar. 15, Proof**, 7:30 p.m. ▶  
Thurs.-Sat., 2:00 p.m. Sun., La  
Crosse Community Theatre,  
Veterans Studio Theatre, Weber  
Center for the Performing Arts,  
www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.



**Feb. 29**, Michael Charles, 7:30 p.m.,  
Pump House Regional Arts Center,  
www.thepumphouse.org.

### MARCH

**Mar. 4**, ReVoiced, 7:30 p.m., Lyche Theatre,  
Weber Center for the Performing Arts.

**Mar. 6-8, International Festival of Owls**, ▶  
Houston, MN, www.festivalofowls.com.



**Mar. 7**, La Crosse Polar Plunge, Black  
River Beach, La Crosse, www.  
polarplungewi.org.



◀ **Mar. 13, Midnight at the  
Masquerade Murder Mystery Event**,  
5:30-9:30, Celebrations on the  
River, https://celebrationslacrosse.  
com/murder-mystery/.

**Mar. 14**, Chili Cookoff and Bake  
Sale, The American Cancer Society  
Sole Burner of Chaseburg, 11:30 a.m., Tippy Toe  
Inn, Chaseburg, WI, www.Soleburner.org/Chaseburg.

**Mar. 14**, Uptown Girls, 7:30 p.m., The Heider Center,  
www.heidercenter.org.

**Mar. 17**, Goitse, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts Center.

**Mar. 21**, Night Fever: The Bee Gees Tribute, 7:30 p.m.,  
Viterbo Fine Arts Center

**Mar. 22**, Chicken Que and Bake Sale, The American  
Cancer Society Sole Burner of Chaseburg, 12 p.m., Tippy  
Toe Inn, Chaseburg, www.Soleburner.org/Chaseburg.

**Mar. 26**, Art Reception, 6-7:30 p.m.,  
The Heider Center, www.heidercenter.org.

**Mar. 28**, Coulee Hoolie Ceili Dance Fundraiser and Irish  
Night, 6-10 p.m., American Legion Hall.

**Mar. 28**, Women's Fund Spring Fling, 10-11 p.m.,  
Radisson Hotel Ballroom. www.womensfundlacrosse.  
org.

**Mar. 28**, Holler Bingo for Scholars, Coulee Region  
Professional Women fundraiser, 5-8 p.m., Onalaska  
American Legion, www.crpwomen.org.

**Mar. 29**, Jim Witter's The Long and Winding Road: The  
Songs and Stories Behind the Music of John Lennon and  
Paul McCartney, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts Center.

### APRIL

**Apr. 3**, Downtown La Crosse Spring Fling Open House,  
4-8 p.m., www.lacrossedowntown.com.

**Apr. 3-5**, Downtown La Crosse Spring Fling, www.  
lacrossedowntown.com.



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