

coulee region

women

AREA HOME AND HEALTHY LIVING MAGAZINE

Peggy Rodriguez
At Home at Painted Porch

Your Guide to Style for

- Beauty
- Fashion
- Work
- Healthy Eating
- Diets that Work

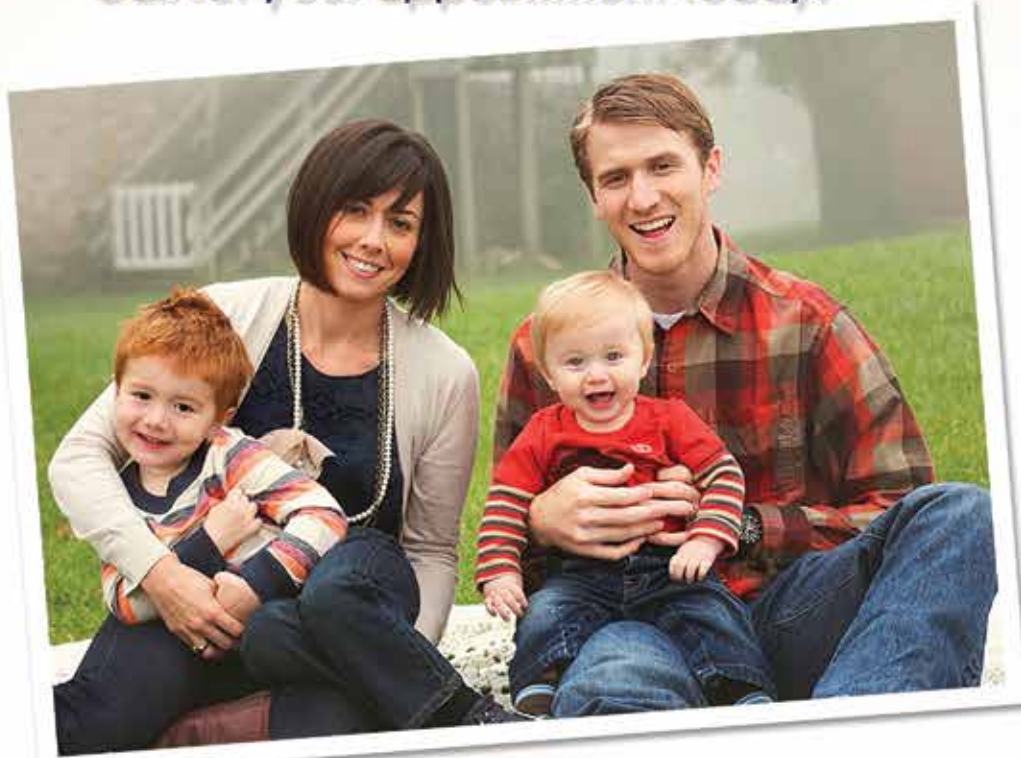
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In Style

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Meet Dr. Jake Siegert

Jake and his wife, Kathryn are both natives of Onalaska, WI. They are very excited to be returning to the Coulee Region. Jake received his Bachelor of Biology from the University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire where he was a starter on the Blugold Football team. Upon graduation from UWEC, Jake went on to attend Marquette University where he received his D.D.S. in May of 2011. He is an active member of the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Dental Association.

When he is not helping people achieve a beautiful smile, you will likely find him chasing one of his Toddler boys. Jake and Kathryn have been married for 5 years and are parents to two little boys. James is an active 3 year old with a passion for hockey, football, golf, and the great outdoors. Henry is a busy 1 year old, and tends to keep Kathryn in a constant state of movement since he has found "his wheels." Jake, being an avid outdoorsman himself enjoys spending time hiking, biking, and hunting. Both Jake and Kathryn enjoy golfing together, and are very enthused that James has shown such an interest in the sport.

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Pictured on cover: Peggy Rodriguez, owner of Painted Porch, downtown La Crosse. Photo by Janet Mootz Photography.



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It just so happens that while planning and editing this issue of *Coulee Region Women*, I was reading a book inspired by Coco Chanel. I can't think of better inspiration for style than the iconic proponent of couture clothing: the little black dress, the wrap skirt, the impeccably detailed tailored jacket. As the author, Claire Shaeffer, writes, it's easy to envision Chanel wearing these fashions herself as she briskly maneuvered the streets of Paris on her business. She popularized the style of casual chic; while her designs were destined to become iconic classics, they were, above all, wearable. These were no costumes, but items meant to be used, lending style, distinction and comfort to the women who donned them.

It made me think of the ways women embody style here in the Coulee Region—say, as they bustle about their business on the streets of La Crosse—and here, I'm not just talking about what they're wearing. It's impossible not to associate *style* with *fashion*,

and the women who wear it well—or help other women find their own. Broadly defined, though, style is a distinctive manner of expression, and this transcends appearance at all. We embody style in the work we do and how we do it. We embody our style in our every interaction with another person. Style is evident in the way we dress, the home we create, the food we prepare and the way we live. If *substance* describes who we are on the inside, *style* describes the way we show that to the world.

For example, you might describe cover woman Peggy Rodriguez's style as "vintage chic," but it also embodies a fascination with history, a love of creating and a passion to persevere. Local designers—our very own Chaneels—draw on their own style to create clothes and jewelry that that delight and decorate others. Beauty and fashion experts strive not just to express their personal style in their wares and services, but to guide others to explore, take risks and discover their own. This generosity and devotion is also part of who they are—their own distinctive style. And while we talk about style in this issue in terms of everything from food trends to flooring to ways women work, the stories in this issue all reflect on style as the presentation of who we are—whether that's the way we dress, the choices we make or what matters most to us.

A famous quote of Coco Chanel's is "My life didn't please me, so I created my life." It sums up, in a few words, her rise from a tattered childhood to a fashion icon—with much embellishment along the way. But it also makes me think of the way we women reinvent ourselves constantly throughout our lives, and how our style—our manner of expressing who we are—is ever evolving to reflect the substance inside.

What's your style? With this issue of *Coulee Region Women*, we hope to help you let it shine.

Betty

coulee region women

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Bring the family to Myrick Park and EcoPark on April 27 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for the sixth annual Earth Fair, presented by Coulee Partners for Sustainability, the La Crosse Area Family YMCA, the La Crosse Public Library and the Earth Fair Committee. This free event will feature children's activities, live music, local foods, a farmer's market and much more. For more details on Earth Fair 2014, visit earthfairlacrosse.org and follow updates on Coulee Partners for Sustainability's Facebook page.



DERBY DAY

HorseSense for Special Riders

invites you to join them for an afternoon at the Derby! The Kentucky Derby Jubilee will be held Saturday, May 3, at the Cargill Room at The Waterfront from 2-6 p.m. Enjoy live music, champagne, hors d'oeuvres, racing raffles, silent auction, hat contests and southern hospitality while you cheer on your favorite horse as they run for the roses! Tickets are \$35 per person; for more information, please visit hssr.org or email info@hssr.org.



ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A 5TH GRADER?

Join the fun as community celebrities and area fifth graders from Aquinas, Bangor, La Crosse and Onalaska schools compete to see Who Will be Smarter Than a 5th Grader in this fundraiser held by the Coulee Region Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Inc. (RSVP). Help your school of choice win a grand prize of \$1,000 by casting your vote for one of the Class of 2014 contestants today! To help your contestant "make the grade," donate online or mail your donation by May 7, 2014, to Coulee Region RSVP, 2920 East Avenue South, Suite 104, La Crosse, WI, 54601. More information and printable forms are available at rsvplax.org. To see who makes the grade, attend the event at the Valley View Mall Center Court on Saturday, May 10, 10:00 a.m. to noon.

GET MOVIN'

It's time to get outside and back in shape for summer. Why not get moving and contribute to a great cause at the same time? Here are several Coulee Region opportunities:

5-K-9 Run/Walk, April 5, Vernon County Sheriff's Office, Viroqua, vernonsheriff.com. All proceeds benefit the Vernon County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit Program.

Fleis Nightfall Frolic—5K Run/Walk & Youth Race, April 25, 6:30 p.m., Rowe Park, Onalaska, cityofonalaska.com. All proceeds go to benefit the John Fleis Youth Scholarship Fund, which provides financial assistance for Onalaska families to participate in the Park and Rec programs.

Annual Multiple Sclerosis Walk, April 26, check in at 9:00 a.m. at the La Crosse Center, walkwig.nationalmssociety.org. Funds raised support life-changing programs and cutting-edge research, giving hope to more than 10,000 children, women and men in Wisconsin who have been diagnosed with MS.

Festival Foods Grandad Half Marathon, May 2-3, festivalfoodsgrandadhalf.com. From the Half Marathon to the 5-Mile Family Bike Tour, the 5K Run/Walk and the free Riverside Youth Races, the Festival Foods Grandad Half Marathon weekend offers something for all interests and abilities.

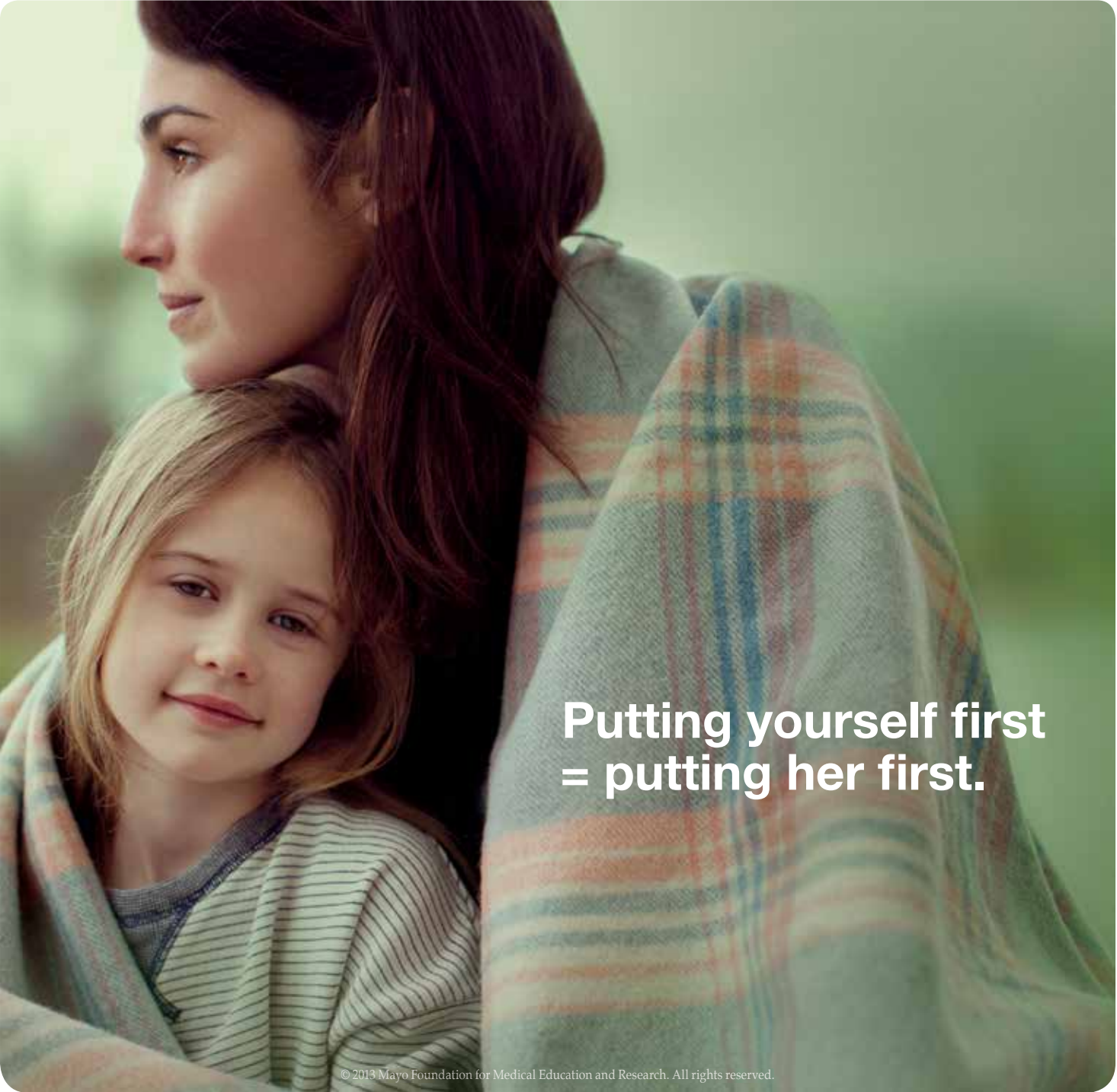
The EcoFamily Fun Run, May 10, mhcopark.org (under Calendar of Events). This 5-Mile Run/5K Walk starts at the EcoPark and ends at County Road FA on the blufftop. Participants will be bussed back to the EcoPark for a grill-out and awards ceremony.

Syttende Mai 5K Run/Walk and Half Marathon, May 17, Westby, westbysyttendemai.com. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. for Half Marathon and 8:00 a.m. for 5K Run/Walk.



CHECK IT OUT!

Everyone knows you can check out books from the library, but did you know you can check out seeds? Launched in February 2013 with the help of a grant from the La Crosse Community Foundation, the Seed Library at La Crosse Public Library lends free heirloom seeds to community members in order to teach and promote the art of heirloom seed saving and sharing. On March 29, 2014, the Seed Library opened its public catalog, so gardeners can browse and check out seeds. Just pick up your seeds, grow and enjoy the produce, then collect and return seeds to the Main Library Circulation desk in the fall. Saving seeds takes some education. Plan to attend one of the Introduction to the Seed Library workshops on April 8 or April 10 in the auditorium at the Main Library. Find more information and details on other informative seed and gardening workshops at lacrosseseedlibrary.org.

A photograph of a woman and a young girl wrapped in a plaid blanket, looking out a window. The woman is in the background, looking out the window, and the girl is in the foreground, looking at the camera. The blanket is a mix of green, orange, and blue plaid. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

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= putting her first.**

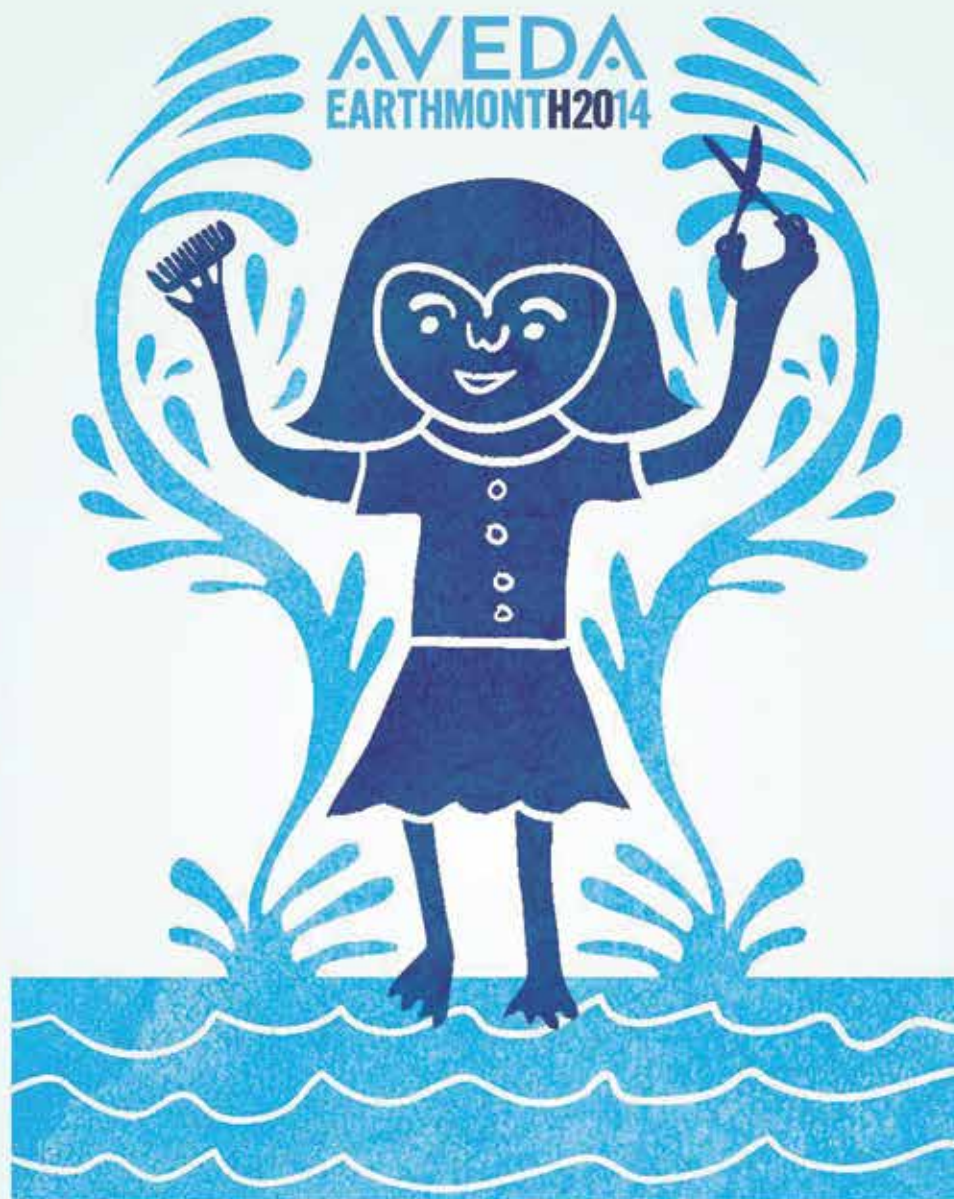
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AT HOME ON THE PORCH

For Peggy Rodriguez, in style, and life, everything that's old can be new again.

BY CHARISH BADZINSKI

Photos by Janet Mootz Photography



Peggy Rodriguez remembers the first time she learned the value of taking something old, beat-up and broken, and making it beautiful again. She was 7 years old. “We had a cabin up north, and my father would take us hiking in the woods. We came across an old dump that hadn’t been used in probably 50 years,” she explains, noting that it appeared people used the spot to ditch cabin household items. In the pile of half-buried cast-offs, they found a disassembled, ornate, cast-iron potbellied stove. “We dragged back all the parts, put it back together and wound up using it in our cabin. I remember thinking it was so cool.”

Today, rehabbing old furniture, vintage home accents and antiques into stylish, functional treasures—and helping others get the same look—is all in a day’s work. For four years now, shoppers have found their style at her store, Painted Porch, located in a charming 1800s building in downtown La Crosse with original antique doors, high ceilings and exposed brick walls. And while repurposing and restyling might seem like trends whose popularity spiked with the Pinterest boom, Rodriguez was repurposing long before then. In fact, she’s been scouring estate sales and garage sales for decades, then painting and distressing furniture for timeless taste, charming customers with her signature style of vintage sophistication.

Before the porch

Painted Porch wasn’t her first foray into running a business; Rodriguez knew from past experience what would resonate with customers. Long before opening the doors to Painted Porch, the La Crosse native had lived in Austin, Texas, for two decades. During that time she married her husband, a native Texan; had two children, Haley and Alex; and ran a successful children’s nursery furniture store for 13 years. “It’s a beautiful place,” she says of Austin. “It reminded me a lot of Wisconsin in the summertime, because there was a lot of green space.” But the city was undergoing big changes: It was growing quickly, paving over its greenery and becoming a fast-paced, business-driven city.

Rodriguez was undergoing changes too. “I was 35 years old and I had a 3-month-old baby, and the doctor told me I had cancer. It was a really bad year,” she says, noting that her Christian faith gave her strength through the challenges. “You take a look at your life a whole lot differently after something like that. That’s when we reevaluated our stance, and our priorities really changed. We decided maybe we ought to slow down a little bit and smell the roses.” (Today she is cancer-free.)

So Rodriguez and her husband decided to restyle their lives, and make what was once old new again. It was time to return to



Surrounded by furniture, antiques and gifts all bearing her signature vintage-chic style, Peggy Rodriguez has made Painted Porch an inviting shopping destination.



La Crosse. “It’s absolutely beautiful here. I didn’t appreciate that when I lived here the first time, but when you’re away for 20 years, you miss the seasons, you miss the friendly people and you miss the charm of a small town.” The move also brought them close to family once again.

Finding her niche

Nestled back in the Coulee Region, the family stayed true to Rodriguez’s calling, jumping right in to a home remodel. “I decorated my entire porch like my store is today: very refreshed-vintage, comfort and elegance. My friends would come over and say, ‘We just want to live in this porch.’ And people were wanting the look.”

Their interest, and her talent, led to Rodriguez’s lucrative hobby of consigning her pieces, which she did for the next seven years. Shoppers with a keen eye might recognize her work from *Ambiance*, a decorating and gift store formerly located in La Crosse. Rodriguez’s sophisticated, refreshed-vintage style became her signature, and it put her products in high demand. When *Ambiance* closed, Rodriguez felt ready to take her work to the next level. “I had quite the following with my creations, if you will. It was too good to stop doing it, at the time,” she says. “The next logical step was to open a store.”

Seeking space, with style

Rodriguez worked hard to find a place that matched her personal sense of style. “It had to have the charm and architecture that lent itself to my look, which is shabby and vintage and sophisticated and a little edgy. You don’t get that out of a strip center,” Rodriguez explains. She settled on a little shop right around the corner from the very store that built her local following, *Ambiance*.

But like the pieces she restyles for her customers, the store space needed some polishing. Beneath layers of decorating choices that weren’t true to the building’s 135-year-old original beauty, she found just what she was looking for. It took two months, the commitment of a number of friends and a lot of elbow grease, but eventually the shop’s historic 10-foot doors swung open. The reveal was truly special, for Rodriguez, her local customers and visitors to historic downtown La Crosse.

Style for everyone

Rodriguez says she loves the architectural design and durability of vintage furniture, but vintage goods also present challenges. “It doesn’t necessarily work with the style in a modern home. Or it’s old and it has issues: The doors don’t open, or there’s a water stain on top.” As a result of her passion for turning

these pieces into functional household items, Rodriguez makes frequent use of a nail gun and palm sander, among other power tools. “And paint cures a number of ills,” she adds. She restyles merchandise half of the week and sells it in the store the other half.

Rodriguez also offers consultation services to help others incorporate vintage style into their homes. For many, that means rescuing a family heirloom from the basement and doing custom work to make it fit within a modern home. The biggest decorating mistakes she sees? Rodriguez says furniture placement, scale and balance. She helps clients with everything from finding a focal point to color consultations to the heavy lifting.

Painted Porch draws a variety of clientele, from out-of-town visitors to modern women to college students seeking something edgy and funky. And with 25 to 75 “new” pieces on the floor a week, Painted Porch is perpetually a fresh, new place to shop for vintage style. *(crw)*

During the course of the interview for this story, Charish Badzinski realized she has been buying Peggy Rodriguez’s pieces for years. She currently has her own charming porch filled with them; it’s her favorite room in the house.



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Stylish from Head to Toe

Area fashionistas help Coulee Region women find their style.

BY HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE, PH.D.
Photos by Megan McCluskey, Atypik Studio



Allison Krzych
and Andrea
Poukey, kick



Connie Peter, The Ulti-
mate Salon & Spa

Want to be stylish? According to Coulee Region fashion experts, it has never been easier. They echo one common sentiment: Strict fashion rules are a thing of the past. These style mavens work hard to help you find your true style.

kick

Owners Allison Krzych and Andrea Poukey have a passion for shoes, and it's contagious. Their store is filled with fresh styles for women of all ages.

What's your business's signature style?

Allison: Our inventory changes all the time. We love fashion, but we are rooted in style.

Andrea: We're also rooted in comfort.

How do you help women step out of their style comfort zones?

Allison: We like to push the envelope; for example, wearing a luggage tan color as a black. We want women to feel good when they leave and be able to wear [a shoe] a lot of different ways.

What are your customers' biggest style concerns?

Allison: Women of a certain age always question leggings. We get asked about dress length and hosiery.

Andrea: And pant width. Customers ask, "Can I do this with an ankle boot? Can I do this with a flat? Do I look too old for this?"

What's one way to be stylish right now?

Andrea: Replace your heavy blacks and grays with nudes and bone and blush. Any of the pastels will be in for spring.

What is your favorite style website, magazine or book?

Allison: *In Style*, *Vogue*, refinery29.com, whowhatwear.com.

The Ultimate Salon & Spa

Owner Connie Peter has been in the business of hair for 32 years. She classifies her own style as ever-changing and age-specific. "I'm not one of those women who wants to look 30 years younger, but I'm also not willing to look 30 years older." Well said!

What's your business's signature style?

It is about inviting guests in and leaving everything else outside our four walls. We find out what their needs are and what we can do to meet and exceed their expectations that day.

How do you help women step out of their style comfort zones?

It's really a consultation, assessing where guests are at as opposed to where they want to be. We're really lucky because we have a wig salon.

They can see [a new style] as opposed to just trying to visualize it.

What are your customers' biggest style concerns?

How do I do this [hairstyle] at home? People bring in pictures. We can give you that look, but it's going to take these products, those heating implements, that brush.

How can you be stylish and environmentally conscious?

That's Aveda! They are a very environmentally focused company, from all of the ingredients and the renewable resources, to the global research and development.

What is your favorite style website, magazine or book?

We just Google. Put "mid-length bob for blondes" in your search engine, and you're going to come up with so many great options.



Kathy Phong, La Bella Nails & Spa

La Bella Nails & Spa

Salon owner Kathy Phong knows the latest nail trends. Whether you want intricate nail art or a no-nonsense manicure, her full-service salon can help you extend a very chic hand or foot.

What's your business's signature style?

We keep up with trends, especially from the East Coast and West Coast. We try to bring whatever is out there into the salon.

How do you help women step out of their style comfort zones?

We try to encourage them by taking a little time to explain. We'll show them a picture in a magazine or a Pinterest page. We help people slowly step out of the box.

What are your customers' biggest style concerns?

This time of year, the new styles and colors come out, so people are really into that. With dry skin, we do a lot of paraffin treatments.

What's one way to be stylish right now?

For spring, the style is bright and neon colors.

What is your favorite style website, magazine or book?

My favorite style website is nailsmag.com. Also, attending trade shows and Pinterest are how we keep up on trends.

Touch of Class

Owner Kim Pretasky and store manager Kay Mazza have years of experience in the fashion industry and have seen trends of all kinds come and go. They encourage women to wear what works for them, not what designers say is going to be hot this year.

What's your business's signature style?

Kim: Updated classics. Our tagline is "expect something special," and that's how we look at all the products we bring into the store. Have beauty in your life all the time. Don't save it for a special occasion.

How do you help women step out of their style comfort zones?

Kim: By being a good listener. Customers may be telling you something that they may not even realize.

Kay: I take in their visual and offer opportunities past what they see themselves as. You have to be respectful of how someone's been doing their story, and then you can nudge them into something they may not normally do.



Kim Pretasky and Kay Mazza, Touch of Class

What's one way to be stylish right now?

Kay: A great dress you can wear at any time. A good pair of leggings.

Kim: I'm all about accessories. If you have a basic dress, pants and jacket, and you change your accessories, you've got a whole new look. There's a big resurgence of belts and handbags. You can add a striking pop of color in a very safe way and instantly look current.

How can you be stylish and still be environmentally conscious?

Kay: We always have something in the store that is made in the USA. It's not as difficult as it used to be, but I think that's a trend that we're going to see turn around.

What is your favorite style website, magazine or book?

Kim: I think Oprah has outstanding taste, and her Favorite Things list is spot-on. A lot of magazines, like *Marie Claire* or *More*, are putting looks together especially for a woman who is age 35 and up. The other place, without question, is Pinterest.

Kay: I think *In Style* magazine if you want a number-one go-to place. They do all the edits for you, do all the options.

As the store owners here advise, be a little bit of a fashion daredevil from time to time, but never let go of the inner you. They will gladly help you nurture your style so the real you can shine through. **(crw)**

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D., is a freelance writer who has loved fashion since seventh grade, when an older cousin gave her a stack of Seventeen magazines.

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FULL TIME

PART TIME

WORK FROM HOME

WOMEN'S WORK STYLES

Whether full time, part time or at home, women find ways to make work . . . work.

BY SUSAN C. SCHUYLER

When it comes to work, women often find creative ways to achieve work/life balance. According to three Coulee Region working women who have found very different paths to that balance, it requires some creativity, flexibility and—they all agree—a supportive family.

Full time, full life

Linda Dickmeyer, 48, works full time as a full professor and department chair in Communication Studies (CST) at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. She shares her three teenage sons and her career with her husband, Scott, who is also on the CST faculty.



Linda Dickmeyer, Communication Studies department chair, UW-La Crosse

"I love what I do, and many days it doesn't feel like work," Dickmeyer says. In her leadership role as chair, she is proud of the culture she helps foster for her department's 30 employees.

She also is proud of the relationship she has with her husband, who is one of those 30 employees. "I am fortunate to have a partner who is very supportive," she says. "I couldn't do what I do without him."

Dickmeyer says that support means her spouse has taken on nontraditional roles in their 22-year marriage: "Our families have

always said, 'Wow! Scott is the perfect 1950s wife.'" He cooks and does laundry as a complement to Dickmeyer's 8- to 10-hour workdays. Dickmeyer reports her full-time lifestyle is good, and research shows it's also good for her health.

In a multiyear study reported in a June 2013 *New York Times* op-ed piece, two sociologists found that women who worked full time after the birth of their first child were physically and mentally healthier than their nonworking counterparts.

Full commitment to part time

In La Crosse County, 30 percent of women over age of 16 work part time, according to 2000 Census data from the Business Analyst



Julie Smith, nurse practitioner, Mayo Clinic Health System

Online database. Julie Smith, 38, a part-time nurse practitioner, thinks that number should be higher. "I wish all moms would be given the opportunity to work part time," she says.

Part-time work was her priority when she married her husband, Terry, in 2001 and first became a mom herself nine years ago. For her, it was the only option; the fast-changing world of medicine meant staying in the workforce to keep current, and her personal value system meant being home to keep her family healthy. "I personally think that two

full-time parents with kids and activities is a setup for something to unravel,” she says.

Smith works 25-28 hours a week providing primary care at the Center for Women’s Health at La Crosse’s Mayo Clinic Health System. Mondays are 11-hour days, which she says her husband makes possible. “I mean it. I have an excellent husband.”

To accommodate Smith’s hectic work schedule, Terry takes on the primary parent role. He completes most of his work during his 8-3 schedule as a full-time lecturer in UW-L’s CST department, so he’s more available at home. “I married a fabulous husband who really understands it takes two,” Smith says.

Home is where the heart is

There isn’t enough space on a business card to describe what Melissa Schultz, 44, does for her clients. She settled on the word



Melissa Schultz, independent business consultant

consultant after she described her skill in organizing projects and deadlines for a long list of local businesses, many of which are nonprofits. And she does it all in the comfort of her home—when she doesn’t tuck her laptop and smartphone in her bag to take her talent on the road. When she was expecting her first child 20 years ago, working at home raised some eyebrows. “Back in that day, nobody got it,” Schultz says.

Some employers still don’t get it. According to the 2012 National Study of Employers conducted by the

When it comes to balancing the work/life equation, these women have a common denominator: supportive husbands.

Families and Work Institute, highlighted by Catherine Rampell in her *New York Times* article, only 2 percent of U.S. employers allow all or most of their employees the work-at-home option.

Schultz beat the odds for her two children: “Once I had my kids, I fell in love. It was like an inner calling.” She admits it wasn’t easy to keep her roles separate, but it made her flexible. “When your business is at home, you have to adapt.”

Schultz too has a secret weapon—her husband, Matt: “I have an amazing husband who is incredibly supportive and has really helped make this work.” He’s a full-time electrician for Kish Electric who steps up to the plate to do household chores when deadlines loom for Schultz.

Although these three working moms find challenges along their unique employment paths, these lucky women don’t have to go it alone. It appears that behind every great woman, there’s a great man, and Dickmeyer, Smith and Schultz all agree that this nontraditional twist of the age-old adage makes the many challenges of juggling their work and family lives possible. When it comes to balancing this tricky equation, they have a common denominator. **(crw)**

Susan C. Schuyler is a freelance writer and senior lecturer in Communication Studies at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.



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THE *Art* OF DRESSING YOU

**Local designers blend style, comfort and a personal touch
to create one-of-a-kind wearables.**

BY THERESA WASHBURN
Contributed photos

Imagine a morning—the typical one, corralling kids off to school, pulling something out of the freezer for dinner, slurping one more cup of coffee and opening the closet door in an attempt to dress for the day. Everything comes to a sudden halt. There you stand, hands on hips, staring into the closet. The black pants are a little too long, the green blouse—bought on a whim—goes with nothing, the classic skirt rides too high on the waist, the favorite sweater is starting to pill. Finally, reaching for something that borders on a uniform, you wonder if there is a better way to start the morning. Could an outfit be an expression of the inner

soul? Could the jewelry tie perfectly with the blouse, and the lingerie underneath provide a smooth, silky base to the exact fit of the pants?

Is it just a dream to wear something that fits personality, job and beyond? Is it just a dream to be stylish *and* comfortable?

For three talented designers and creators of clothing, jewelry and lingerie, it is far from a dream: It is how they live their waking lives. Each woman views the female body as the perfect palette for artful couture—everyday couture—and seeks to build the piece for the woman who will wear it.

**Is it just a dream to wear something that fits personality, job
and beyond? Is it just a dream to be stylish *and* comfortable?**



Andrea Fisher, LARK

Andrea Fisher, owner of LARK in downtown La Crosse, draws inspiration from the details, workmanship and flattering design of the past. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, Fisher has always loved fashion. “As long as I can remember, I loved the chance to dress for a party,” she says. “When I was very young, I started sewing, and by age 16 I had a job at Jo-Ann Fabrics.” Her passion for clothing and design drove her to Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y., where she graduated with a degree in fashion design. In 2000 she opened Eidolon, a Brooklyn boutique that featured her work as well as the work of local New York designers.

She carried this desire to promote local designers and create clothing with the careful detail of vintage design to La Crosse and in 2010 opened LARK. “The name came from the expression ‘out on a lark,’ which I think shopping should be—something fun,” says Fisher.

Fisher, whose personal style she describes as “tailored and vintage,” draws inspiration from what she loves but designs for a wide variety of body types and personal tastes. “I design a mix of styles so my customers can find something that interests them.” One of her goals is to help people feel comfortable in beautiful clothing. “Everyone is stuck in yoga pants and T-shirts. I make clothes that look sharp, and yet you can roll around on the floor with your kids in them.”

Fisher’s gift for design and production of clothing fills a unique niche in the La Crosse. Her customer base has grown as people discover the joy of beautiful clothing that fits their personality and lifestyle and will last a lifetime.

Tina Kupitz, Organic Glasswork Jewelry

Describing herself as “serial decorator and renovator,” Tina Kupitz admits that her interest and passion for design and art have driven her since a young age. This love of design led Kupitz to study pottery and sculpture at the university level. She graduated with a degree in landscape architecture and began work at an engineering firm, but continued to dabble in art and design. Eventually, she began creating glass jewelry pieces and giving them to friends and family. This slowly evolved into a business that she loves.

“My family describes me as a gypsy at heart, and my pieces reflect that style,” explains Kupitz. Her designs are targeted to women who are “imaginative and rebellious” but enjoy a classic and timeless feel as well. Because they are handmade, no two pieces are alike, allowing the woman who wears Kupitz’s work to make a personal statement of style. “I like to offer more organic and uncommon jewelry options,” she says. “I blend found objects, gemstones and handmade glass to create pieces rich in character.” Kupitz, whose work can be found in local shops and through seasonal open houses, loves bringing her jewelry design to the Coulee Region, allowing women to make a personal statement in what they wear.



Sarah Patros, Jagress Intimates

Sarah Patros began sewing at age 4 and designing at 14. The combination of love for art and a desire to help others led her into teaching, then to a support staff position at a Veterans Affairs hospital and eventually to DeMontford University in Leicester, UK. “It was the only school in the world that offered courses in designing and creating intimate apparel. I wanted to be able to create sculpture that works on the human like an exoskeleton,” Patros explains.

In 2006, Patros began creating intimate apparel for clients, and in fall 2012, she opened a store in downtown La Crosse. Describing her personal style as impacted by “vintage fashion of the last 200 years,” Patros feels her aesthetic is influenced by the past. “A lot of people think my work is vintage. I did collect vintage, but I am always aware of what is happening in fashion today, and I soak that in.” Patros adds, “I appreciate the time, effort and detail of pieces that were made years ago. I like to put that kind of work into my apparel.”

Patros takes time with her clients, creating pieces that fit their bodies, taste and style. She is the only intimate apparel artist who does custom work in the Midwest and possibly the United States. She has international as well as local clients. Patros finds inspiration in the beauty and environment of La Crosse and the surrounding countryside. “I am very thankful that people are embracing what I do. It is a dream come true, to do this work and to be appreciated and understood.” *(crw)*

Theresa Washburn is a writer, workshop presenter and communications consultant. She lives in the Coulee Region with her family and a menagerie of animals.



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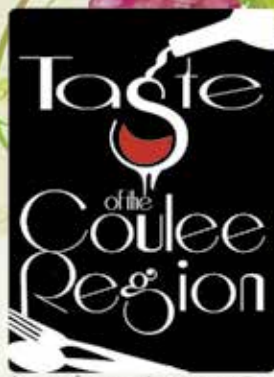


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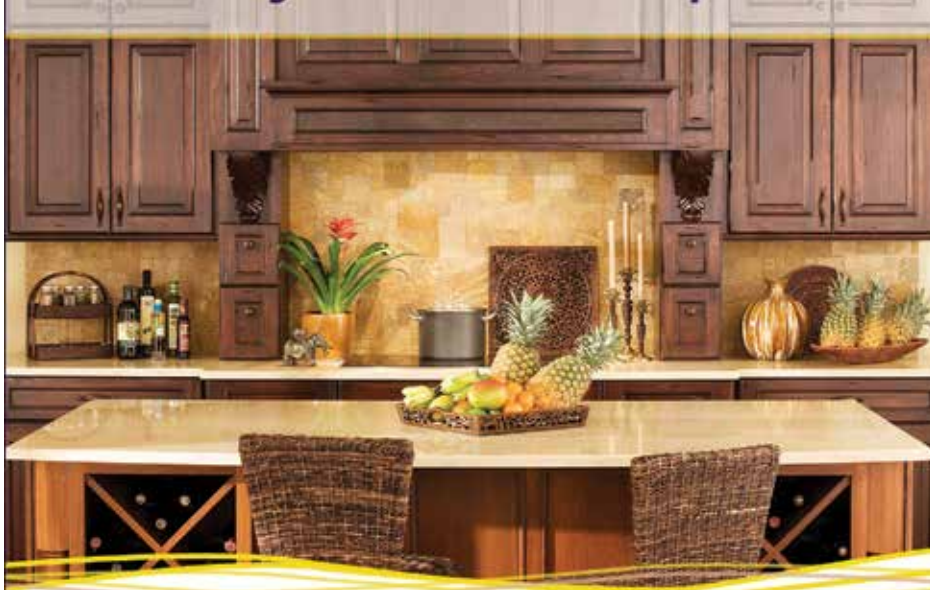
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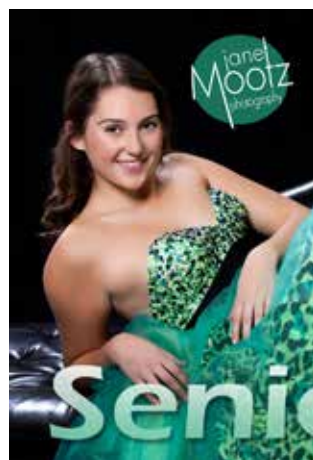
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SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE WORLD

Journalist Soledad O'Brien
shares her thoughts on her
career, motherhood and
combining the two.

BY ASHLEY REYNOLDS
Contributed photo



Recently, Soledad O'Brien—award-winning, national journalist for CNN, author and family woman—visited the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse to talk about her career and inspire the young minds attending the university. This sparked our interest in learning more about her life, family and career. Here, she responds to our curiosity, offers insight into her hectic, stressful, wonderful life, and gives us a glimpse of what it is like to be one of the most successful female journalists in the world—while balancing a family as well.

You have so much on your plate as a mother and a journalist, among other things. How do you juggle it all?

I think that step one is admitting to yourself that it *is* a juggle and that, as your job changes, as your kids change, things become very different. The juggle is constant, but it is always changing. I think it is important, knowing that, to have perspective and not to freak out about the little things. Focus on the important things and recognize how fortunate you are. My husband and I have kind of a joke about how only one of us should be freaking out at a time so the other one can keep us in check. It is definitely all about perspective.

I recently watched a promotion for your memoir where you talked about how you often take your kids with you when you travel for work to give them some firsthand experience of issues in the world. What would you say they get out of these experiences?

I think it is really important to give kids a sense of what life is about for all people. When they come with me, they see things that

they don't see every day. We have been so fortunate and not everyone out there is, and I believe it is important that they know that and they get a sense of the whole world and learn to give back. They learn that things they take for granted, such as having three meals magically set in front of them every day, aren't out there for everyone. It is important that they get a reality check about what the world is and the great opportunities they are presented with, even at such young ages. Life is beautiful, amazing, tough and difficult for everyone. Some people just have different amounts of those aspects, and we are fortunate enough to have what we have.

You've seen and done a lot so far in your career and life. Out of all of your experiences, what has been the most rewarding?

I love the opportunities I've had while making documentaries. More specifically, I love giving other people the microphone and giving them a chance to tell their stories. I use my amazing opportunities to shine light on things and stories that people don't know about, and that is so rewarding and so important. I have the podium and I have the spotlight, but that is my chance to give it to other people and tell America's story. I get to tell real people's stories and give a voice to people who don't have one, and I think that is definitely the most rewarding thing about being a journalist. (crw)

Ashley Reynolds is a journalism student at UW-La Crosse and an intern for Coulee Region Women. To learn more about Soledad O'Brien and her latest projects, visit obrienraymondfoundation.com.

SOMETHING NEW IS UNDERFOOT

Wood you like to add style to your home?
Explore these new flooring trends.

BY JULIE NELSON
Contributed photos

Young children and nice-looking flooring—they’re usually not two parts of the same household. But Daryl Ciekoiewicz at Floorcrafters in Onalaska tells about a Coulee Region couple with two kids and a love of hardwood floors who are making the two compatible. This couple just completed covering their entire main floor with a relatively new product called hand-scraped wood flooring. This real wood flooring comes in 5-inch-wide planks and—similar to stone-washed denim jeans—has been pre-gouged, giving it a rich texture that won’t show any new nicks or dings. The kids can play on it, the parents love it and, says Ciekoiewicz, “It looks beautiful.”

Hand-scraped is one of three styles of wood flooring gaining in popularity in the Midwest. The others are the barn board look and Acacia. The barn board look, according to Ciekoiewicz, incorporates gray and brown tones and, yes, is based off actual barn boards. Acacia is also known as Asian walnut and has deep red tones with blonds and blacks. Ciekoiewicz says improvements in technology in the past 10 years—like the type that can turn barn boards into sturdy flooring—have made a huge difference in the type and quality of flooring now available.

These products are just a few of many new flooring options available to Coulee Region homeowners—reflecting trends such as a new emphasis on natural and natural-looking floors, with heightened durability. And these trends apply to all floor types—from wood to tile to carpet and beyond.

LoVe iT

One example of technology at work is luxury vinyl tile (LVT). Tricia Hansen of Coulee Carpet Center says LVT is quieter, warmer and more comfortable than many other options, and because it is easy to install, it offers a lower installation cost. Best of all, LVT has style.

LVT is created to look like natural flooring—without the expense. The stone-cut look? Easy. The look of hardwood floors without the upkeep? Done. The latest in designer styles from California? Select from several options. You can even choose the size of your tile and, by mixing 12-inch by 12-inch tiles with 12-inch by 24-inch, you can easily create your own unique look, with or without grout.

LVT comes in two styles, both of which are appealing to do-it-yourselfers. LVT sheets have a peel-off backing, while LVT planks interlock so that, once connected, they will “float” on your floor. No messy, smelly glue needed. Hansen says the interlocking tiles are especially popular in homes where a family member has asthma.

Passion for pattern

The variety of patterns is part of the appeal for LVT, as it is for ceramic and porcelain flooring. Now many carpet lovers are jumping on the pattern bandwagon as well. Kathy Roth of Flooring Interiors says she regularly sends customers home with samples of Dixie Home, a carpet brand that has subtle patterns woven into it. Concerned that what you love in one small piece may bit a bit much when it covers your entire living room? Roth flips up the carpeting sample on display



Page 29: Porcelain Tile Wood Look offers the appearance of wood, but with the durability and easy care of porcelain. Left: Exotic Asian Walnut (Acacia) is a sturdy new option for those who love wood floors. Top right: Tricia Hansen of Coulee Carpet Center appreciates the style and simplicity of LVT—a new flooring product created to look like natural materials, like wood or stone. Bottom right: Hand-scraped hardwood offers built-in wear and tear—so you don’t have to worry about adding your own.

to reveal a “room scene” picturing a furnished living or dining room. The carpeting from the sample fills the room, and you get to see what it looks like “big.” Still having trouble visualizing how your room will look with new carpeting? Roth says another tip is to remember that the flooring usually looks a little bit lighter when it’s installed in an entire room.

If soft is what you’re after, Ciekiewicz dares you to touch SmartStrand Silk carpeting, an experience he calls “mind blowing.” SmartStrand Silk carpeting is more durable than standard carpeting, is naturally stain resistant (no Stainmaster applied) and is incredibly soft. It’s a bit more expensive, but can be well worth the money.

On the other end of the flooring spectrum are ceramics and porcelains. These surfaces are hard, which makes them durable and long lasting. Both ceramic and porcelain are made from earth-colored clay and minerals. Porcelain tile is made from lighter-colored clay and is baked at a much higher temperature than ceramic. This increased heat makes porcelain tile much harder and denser. Because it is so durable, porcelain is a good option in areas where pets are constantly clipping around, on patios, and in three- or four-season porches. Porcelain is a bit more difficult to install and remove, so if you like to change the look of your home every few years, it may not be your best fit.

Making choices

With so many options, how do you choose the right flooring for your home? Hansen recommends starting with one part of a room and going from there. If you are building a new home or addition, you have the luxury of starting with the flooring you like and coordinating other components to work with it. In existing rooms, she suggests you choose a part of the room that won’t change or that you really like and would like to highlight, such as the wood trim in a living room or the cupboards in a kitchen. Then, select a flooring color that goes well with your other fixtures and look for possibilities there.

Roth says if you’re like most people, you live several years with flooring that should be replaced before making the leap to get something new. And, she says, if you’re like many people, an upcoming event such as a graduation or a wedding will be the catalyst for change. But don’t wait too long to take action, Roth advises. You don’t want installers putting in new carpeting the day before company is coming.

When it comes to paying for the flooring, all our experts agree. Purchase flooring like you would olive oil: Buy the most expensive you can afford. The investment in higher quality, they say, will be a cost savings in the long run. **(crw)**

Julie Nelson was too chicken to get patterned carpet in her family living room, but now wishes she would have looked at a few more samples. Nelson is the public relations director at The Salvation Army.



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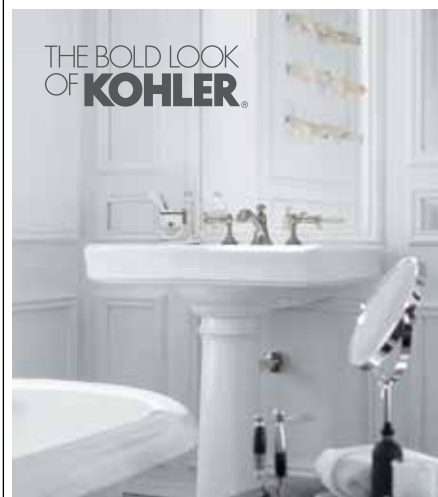
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Feist Dental is pleased to introduce a new dentist, Jake Siegert, to its practice. Siegert and his wife, Kathryn, are both natives of Onalaska, and they are very excited to be returning to the Coulee Region. Siegert received his Bachelor of Biology from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and received his D.D.S. from Marquette University in May 2011. He is an active member of the Academy of General Dentistry and the American Dental Association. While enjoying all aspects of dentistry, he is especially active in continuing education involving restorative and implant dentistry.

To make an appointment, call Feist Dental at 608-350-1591.



Pediatrician Joins Gundersen Onalaska Clinic

Gundersen Health System is pleased to welcome pediatrician Anna Jackson, MD, who provides care for infants through adolescents at the Gundersen Onalaska Clinic.

Dr. Jackson completed her medical degree at Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, followed by a pediatric residency at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Dr. Jackson is happy to be back in her home state of Wisconsin, and looks forward to building relationships with new patients and families.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Jackson, call Gundersen Pediatrics at 608-775-8138 or visit gundersenhealth.org/pediatrics for more information.



Mayo Welcomes Neonatology Nurse Practitioner

The Department of Neonatology at Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse is pleased to welcome nurse practitioner Theresa Heise.

Heise earned her Masters of Science in Nursing-Neonatal Nurse Practitioner through Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. Prior to joining the Department of Neonatology, Dunlap was a staff nurse in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. She has more than 10 years' experience in health care.

Heise is a board-certified neonatal nurse practitioner and is a member of the National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners and the National Association of Neonatal Nurses.

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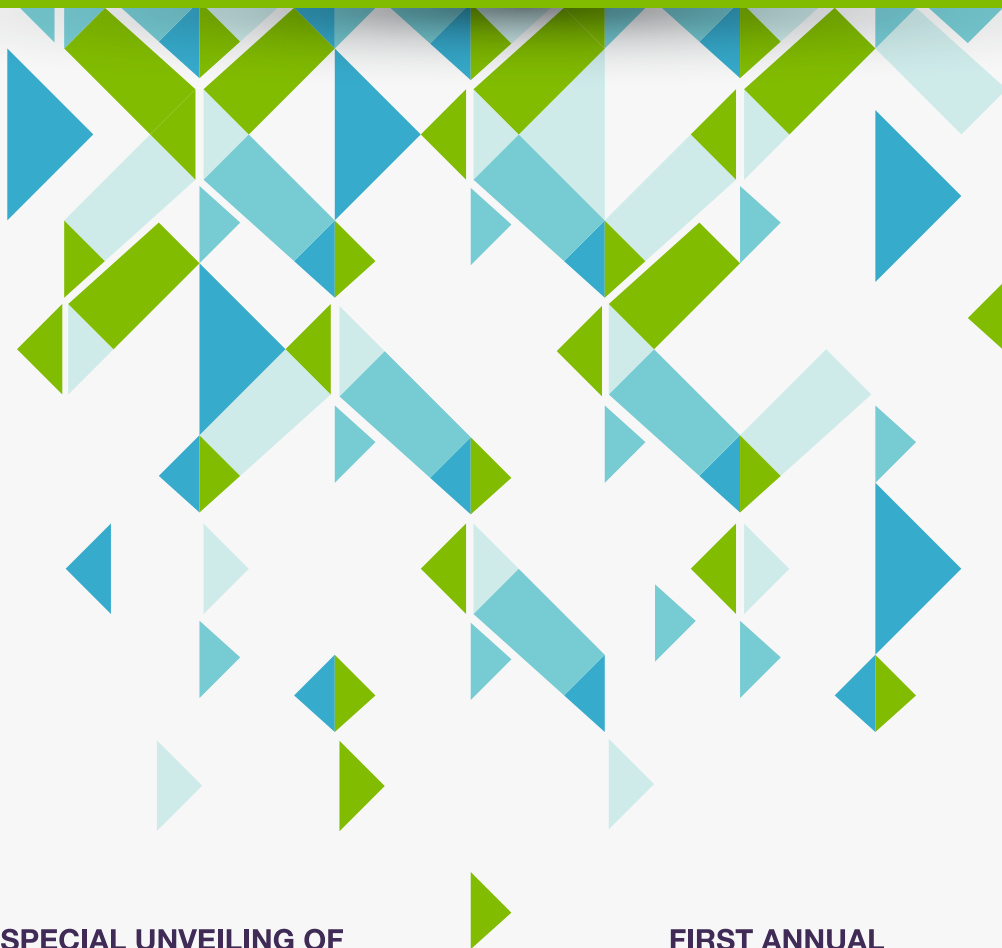
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SOMETHING TO HUG

Recycled jeans-turned-teddy-bears bring comfort to hospitalized kids at Vernon Memorial Healthcare.

BY LEAH CALL
Contributed photos

Women in the Coulee Region are finding creative ways to turn trash into treasure. Since 1994, the Two Ridges Homemakers in Viroqua have put their skills to work turning old blue jeans into teddy bears that are treasured by sick and frightened children, and some adults, at Vernon Memorial Healthcare in Viroqua.

The Two Ridges Homemakers formed in 1989 as a neighborhood women's group. Today, 16 talented women meet monthly to work on various projects, including their biggest project, the teddy bears made from old blue jeans that are donated by area residents.

Each woman has a hand in crafting the bears. "It's an activity we all look forward to," says Verna Mae Buhr, who sews the bears and brings them to the meetings to be stuffed and stitched up. Finishing touches are also added, including hand-painted eyes and a red heart that is stitched onto each bear. Finally a ribbon is tied around each bear with a tag that reads, "Made especially for you by the Two Ridges Homemakers in Viroqua."

Comfort to the community

To date, the women have donated 1,769 bears to Vernon Memorial Healthcare and more than 100 bears to other area organizations. "We try to do things to help the community," says Buhr, who leads the bear-making effort.

VMH Volunteer Coordinator Judy Gilbertson works with the Two Ridges Homemakers and other groups who make and donate items for hospital patients. Gilbertson describes Buhr as caring, talented



Members of Two Ridges Homemakers give a little extra support to children at Vernon Memorial Hospital. From left, Betty Schedivv, Judy Gilbertson, Verna Buhr and Ruth Gillmore.

and artistic. "She is a devoted person to her family, her church and her community," says Gilbertson, who has the pleasure of distributing the bears to the pediatrics and other departments within the hospital and to outlying clinics and ambulance services.

"If there is a child that needs to come by ambulance from one of the clinics, they will get a bear, or if a child is very scared in the doctor's office, they will get a bear," says Gilbertson.

The bears are given mainly to pediatric patients, she adds. "But if there is an elderly person that maybe doesn't have family around and they need a bear to hug, we give them a

bear. It is something they can hang on to and enjoy."

Well-loved jeans, well-loved bears

A proponent of recycling, Gilbertson encourages donations of used blue jeans when she speaks at schools and other venues. Her efforts continue to supply the Two Ridges Homemakers with an abundance of recycled denim for many more bears.

That kindness in the shape of a teddy bear can mean a lot to a young child. "When I showed the bears at a school, one of the students remembered getting a bear," recalls Gilbertson. "She said she still has it on her bed. That gave me goose bumps."

Groups interested in making and donating items for Vernon Memorial Healthcare patients should contact Judy Gilbertson at 608-637-4327 or jgilbertson@vmh.org. [crw](http://www.crw.org)

Freelance writer Leah Call lives and writes with her family in Westby.

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DIET DISCOURSE

Diet rankings may ease the diet decision for those looking to get leaner and healthier.

BY JESSIE FOSS

Atkins, South Beach, Paleo, Zone—is this a list of places to visit? The latest colors in a box of Crayola crayons? Perhaps they are the newest and hottest music artists everyone is listening to.

Actually, they are all types of diets people are trying in order to win the battle of the bulge.

With so many options and ways to diet, how is one to know what works best? For the fourth straight year, *U.S. News & World Report* has muddled through the diets and ranked the top ones.

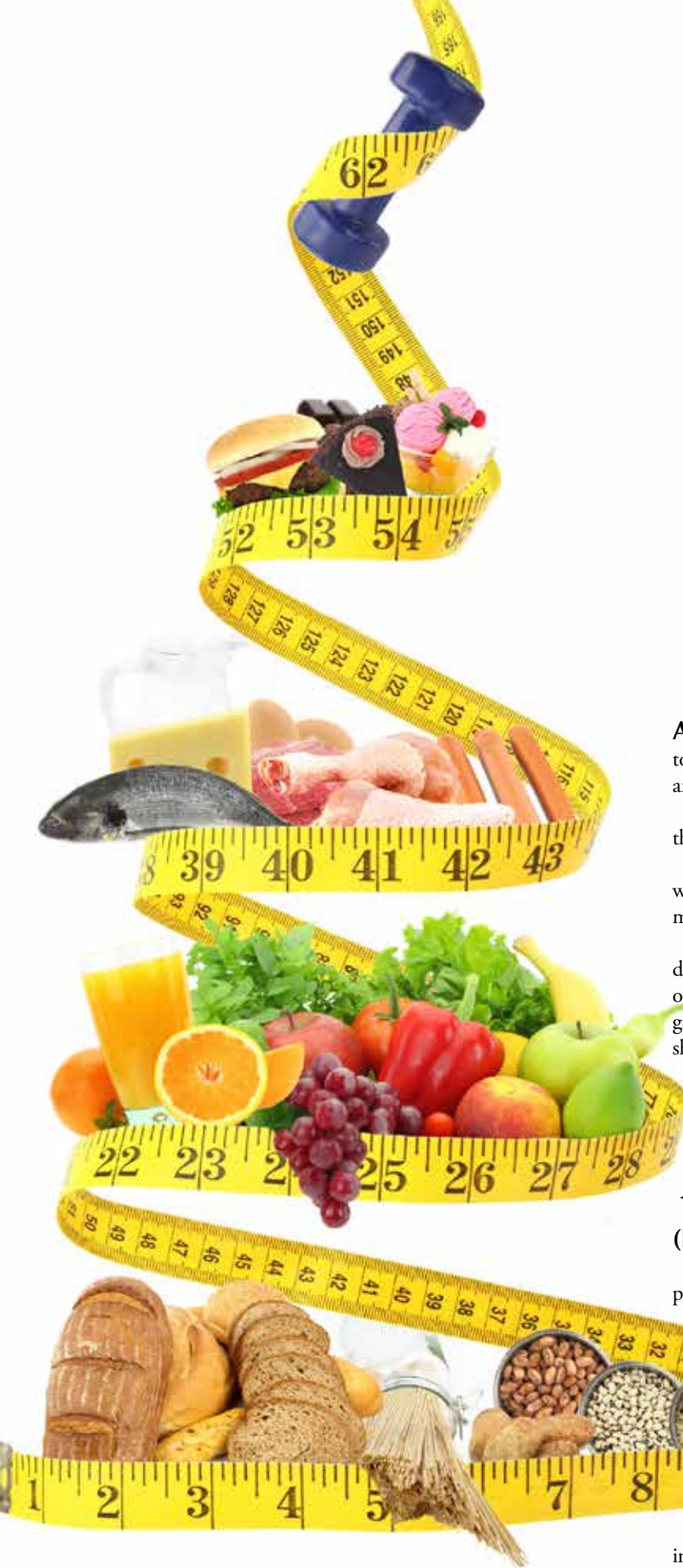
After months of research, *U.S. News* reporters and editors narrowed down the list, which was then reviewed by experts on diet, nutrition, obesity, food psychology, diabetes and heart disease. The diets were graded on these aspects: how easy it is to follow, its ability to produce short-term and long-term weight loss, its nutritional completeness, its safety and its potential for preventing and managing diabetes and heart disease.

Grabbing the top five spots in the *U.S. News* best diet rankings for 2014 are the following:

1. Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Diet

As its name implies, the DASH Diet was initially developed to prevent and lower high blood pressure. This diet focuses on eating foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat dairy, while staying away from high-calorie and high-fat red meat and sweets. The diet also emphasizes cutting back on salt.

Caloric intake is determined by age and activity level. The diet also points out where those calories should come from. While heralded for its ability to fight hypertension and promote cardiovascular health, this diet will also likely lead to weight loss and has been shown in some studies to prevent and control diabetes.



2. Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) Diet

This diet was developed by the National Institutes of Health's National Cholesterol Education Program. The main goal of the diet is to cut high cholesterol and claims that diet followers will be able to lower their bad LDL cholesterol by 8 to 10 percent in six weeks.

The TLC Diet emphasizes eating lots of fruits and veggies, whole grains, low-fat or nonfat dairy products, fish and poultry without skin. Dieters are given some freedom in choosing their calorie intake level based on individual goals. Meal plans are also available.

It is somewhat unclear whether the diet will lead to weight loss, since its real goal is to lower cholesterol, but low-fat diets generally lead to weight loss.



Paula Przywojski, registered dietitian, Mayo Clinic Health System

3. Mayo Clinic Diet (tie)

Developed by the clinic bearing its name, the Mayo Clinic Diet's aim is to lose weight. The diet's creators claim participants will lose 6 to 10 pounds in the first two weeks of the diet and will continue to lose one to two pounds every week thereafter until weight loss goals are met.

The Mayo Clinic Diet book is the bible for this diet and is divided into two parts: Lose It and Live It. The first part focuses on 15 habits—some to break and some to make. Part two is all about learning how many calories you should eat to either maintain or lose weight.

3. Mediterranean Diet (tie)

Fruits, vegetables, olive oil and fish take center stage in this diet, which mirrors the diets of those who live along the Mediterranean Sea. It has been shown that these people live longer and have fewer occurrences of cancer and cardiovascular diseases than their American counterparts. In addition to promoting consumption of the before-mentioned foods, this diet also encourages an active lifestyle and a diet low in red meat, sugar and saturated fat.

Cardiovascular benefits are at the heart of this diet, but it is also possible to lose weight on this diet if one creates a calorie deficit.

3. Weight Watchers (tie)

Weight Watchers is the highest-ranked commercial diet and features group support, lots of fruits and vegetables and wiggle room for the occasional splurge. The theory behind the diet is that dieters will eat less if they are able to make filling, healthy food choices. Dieters do not count calories, but rather foods are assigned point values based on the food's protein, carbohydrate, fat, fiber, calories and how hard the body has to work to burn it off.

Most studies show this diet does lead to weight loss and also appears to promote heart health.

Why they work

Paula Przywojski, a registered dietitian at Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse, says the strength of each of these diets is that they

all use real food, are nutritionally sound and are well balanced. All of the diets also focus on the importance of eating healthy fats and avoiding junk food.

"They all focus on what foods to eat more of for general good health," she says. "If we make this a priority in our eating, we will lose weight and be able to keep it off."

Which diet is right for you? Przywojski says the word *diet* is the first thing that needs to go. "Diets don't work. People need to think about healthy eating for a lifetime versus a diet mentality," she says. "Yes, if people follow them, they will allow weight loss, but this will not last a lifetime if healthy habits are not learned. This takes time, and behaviors we have learned for many years will not change overnight."

The weight will take care of itself, Przywojski says, if one focuses on taking care of oneself through nutrition, activity, getting adequate sleep and managing stress.

The complete list of the 2014 *U.S. News* Best Diets can be found at health.usnews.com/best-diet. 

Jessie Foss is a freelance writer who lives in La Crosse. She wishes losing weight were as easy as gaining it and reaching for an apple were as easy as reaching for a chocolate chip cookie.



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TRENDSETTING THE TABLE

The national focus is on local food—and the Coulee Region is ahead of the curve.

BY DEBORAH NERUD

Contributed photos

Recipes analyzed by Gundersen Health System registered dietitians

Where are you, what are you eating and do you know your farmer? These questions describe one of the top food trends of the nation—eating local food—and the Coulee Region is at the forefront. Ironically, the food products and styles that are gaining national attention are born of a way of life that is native to our fertile geography. The spotlight is shining on the folks who have followed the way of the small farm—consuming what is in season—and the way of health.

What's cooking?

Anthony Swartwout is excited about The Mint. “The idea that we can bring healthy, well-thought-out, well-crafted, locally sourced foods to the people of La Crosse is enormously exciting.” A longtime executive chef (Seasons by the Lake) and sous chef (The Waterfront), Swartwout brings a lot of talent and intention to the menu he has created with co-owners Corrie Brekke and Dane Gonzales, who also own the Root Note in downtown La Crosse.

“I want to utilize what’s available in the Midwest and show just how accessible it is,” says Swartwout. “Small family farms are being

revitalized, and our business should reflect that reinvigoration.” Along with a dinner menu that will feature small-plate items like local charcuterie and cheese, a half-dozen entrees, desserts, local beverages and in-house baked goods and pastries, there will also be a wealth of information served with each dish. “It’s exciting to create this menu, but really this is all about education—knowing where your food is coming from, learning about what’s available seasonally and regionally, and understanding the symbiotic relationship between restaurant and farmer.”

To that end, it is becoming common practice to include literature about the food; by connecting the diner with the farmer, there is an opportunity to expand the market reach of the farm. The Mint co-owners have recruited a number of local organic farms to grow more than 40 different types of heirloom seeds from Seed Savers of Exchange Decorah, Iowa, just for the restaurant.

Brekke’s passion for The Mint comes from a desire to revitalize the storefront businesses that used to fill La Crosse. “There is a depletion of the small neighborhood shops and grocery stores that were once so vital,” she says. “We wanted to bring that back with this space.”



Anthony Swartwout and Corrie Brekke, *The Mint*



Zac Mathes, Austin Ashley and Hallie Ashley, *WiscoPop!*

A third co-owner, Dan Schmidt of The Casino, bought the space at 1810 State St.—formerly occupied by Kate’s on State—specifically to create a relaxed, neighborhood dining experience. Brekke, a talented cook and baker, is especially excited about the weekend brunch menu and the expanded outdoor seating. “It’s important to create a space that is welcoming and comfortable,” she says. “I want to be part of a world where I can provide something delicious in a place where I would want to eat.” She also feels that a farm-to-table enterprise isn’t as much of a trend as it is a way of healthy, enjoyable eating. “The food will speak for itself, and I think the ambience will garner the attention the food deserves.”

Bottoms up!

Sure, Wisconsin is the homeland of beer and the microbrew, but it’s time to raise your glass to craft-beverage brewers of Wisconsin who are trying something different. While cider brewers and distillers are rolling out their bourbon barrels faster than ever, turning fresh, local grains and produce into some of the best alcoholic beverages the region has to offer, the folks at Wisco Pop! have been steadily responding to the growing consumer demand for local, all-natural, nonalcoholic sodas since their 2012 start, and it doesn’t look like they’ll be slowing down anytime soon.

Austin Ashley had always been attracted to canning, brewing and fermenting, but it wasn’t until he started dabbling with wild yeasts and ginger that he got serious with his efforts, making his first ginger beers in 2002. In 2006, Ashley relocated to Viroqua, where he began work with Kickapoo Coffee. Still experimenting with various ginger, strawberry, lavender, wintergreen, rhubarb, sassafras leaf and root beer recipes, Ashley sought to open Wisco Pop! with his wife, Hallie, and business partner Zac Mathes, owner of Homegrown Pizza in Viroqua. They source many of their ingredients from Wisconsin, including honey from Mazomanie, vanilla from Sand Prairie, maple syrup from Cashton and cherries from Door County.

The trio began selling their sodas at various farmer’s markets, offering their fizz by the cup. Their beverages are served in more than 40 Wisconsin bars, shops and restaurants; their Root Beer, Ginger Brew and Cherry Bomb gained such a following that it became necessary for the partners to consider expansion into product bottling, rather than reliance on tap sales. To finance the bottling equipment, an enormously successful Kickstarter campaign was born, their \$19,999 goal was exceeded by nearly \$5,000 and they were awarded a Buy

Local, Buy Wisconsin grant. “In a hard-core beer state like Wisconsin, it’s amazing to find this kind of support for something nonalcoholic,” says Ashley. “The support has been phenomenal.”

To your health!

Kathy Kampa is no stranger to health fashions and trends. “Some things are truly passing fads, but the health trends we’ve been seeing lately have been around for a while and seem to be picking up more steam.” She and her assistant department manager, Stephen Koehler, keep track of La Crosse’s alternative health pulse in the Health and Wellness Department at People’s Food Co-op; by monitoring sales, special orders and customer traffic, they’ve been able to identify the top supplemental health patterns. “Above all,” Kampa states, “gluten-free is top dog. Gluten-free options are plentiful here, and we see a lot of requests from folks who are choosing to cut gluten from their diets, either because of a gluten intolerance or allergy or diet choices.”

Chia seed, which can be used by those who are gluten-free, is also very popular, not only for its high dietary fiber and protein, but for its rich omega-3 content. “Omega-3s are still very important, and a lot of customers are looking to add more omega-3s to their diet.” Omega-3 fatty acids are important for metabolism, but their supplemental nature is continually being researched.

“High-culture-count probiotics are still really big,” Kampa adds. Probiotics are beneficial bacteria that aid with digestion. They are commonly found in fermented foods with specially added active live cultures, such as yogurt, or as dietary supplements. “We’ve been selling a lot of the 400 billion culture count supplements, and we’re seeing raw probiotics increase in popularity as well.”

Finally, Kampa stresses the prevalence of non-genetically modified organisms (GMOs). “Non-GMO beauty products, food products and supplements are very popular right now,” she says. “People want to know more about the ingredients they’re consuming, and they’re very aware of the risks of GMOs in the food system.” GMOs continue to gain a lot of media attention, with new bills being introduced to reduce or eliminate their presence in many growing regions throughout the United States.

Are these trends here to stay? It depends, Kampa says. A lot of product traffic she sees is directly related to what her customers have seen in the media. “If Dr. Oz talked about it,” she says, “chances are we’ll be placing a big order the next day.” *(crw)*

RADICCHIO SALAD WITH BUCKWHEAT HONEY VINAIGRETTE, GUANCIALE, HAZELNUTS & CAPERS

from The Mint

Serves 2

- 1 head radicchio, quartered
- 1 handful hazelnuts
- 1 handful salt-packed capers, soaked and patted dry
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped
- 1 oz. Pleasant Ridge Reserve cheese, thinly sliced
- ½ oz. Underground Butcher guanciale, shaved
- 1 small shallot, minced
- 1 tsp grain mustard
- 1 tsp buckwheat honey
- ¼ cup sherry vinegar
- ⅓ cup grapeseed oil or other neutral-flavored oil
- Sea salt to taste
- Pepper to taste

Lightly toast the hazelnuts for a few minutes, then place them on a slightly damp towel and rub to remove the skins. You may want to do this in rounds as some will release easier than others.

Gently crush nuts by pressing on them with the flat side of a knife. Toast hazelnuts again until they become fragrant, about 3 to 5 minutes.

Whisk together the minced shallot, mustard, honey and vinegar. Slowly drizzle oil in as you rapidly whisk together. Season with salt and pepper.

Cut radicchio into wedges, place in a large bowl, toss with desired vinaigrette and stagger on plates. Top with crumbled egg, then hazelnuts, cheese, guanciale and capers.

620 calories, 58g fat, 16g protein, 13g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 780mg sodium.

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Serves 1

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from Wisco Pop!

Serves 1

- 1 oz. Old Sugar Cane and Abe Small-Barreled Rum
- 5 oz. Wisco Pop! Cherry Bomb

Combine all ingredients over ice and serve.

130 calories, 0g fat, 0g protein, 19g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 30mg sodium.

ROOT BEER-BRAISED COUNTRY STYLE PORK RIBS

from Wisco Pop!

Serves 3

- 6 pork ribs

Rub:

- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1½ T five-spice powder

Braise:

- 1 T grapeseed oil
- 1 large red onion, minced
- 3-4 large cloves of garlic, smashed and roughly chopped
- 1 1-inch section ginger, peeled and minced
- 1 teaspoon powdered cumin
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 12 oz. Wisco Pop! Root Beer
- 1 cup beef or chicken broth
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme

Preheat oven to 275°F. Heat oil in a large dutch oven or deep cast-iron pan over high heat. Rub the ribs with salt, pepper and five-spice mixture. Using tongs, sear the ribs all over, cooking to a nice golden brown. Set aside on a plate.

Adjust heat to medium high, and add the onion. Cook until the edges have browned and the onions are tender. Add the ribs back in to the pot, as well as all of the braise ingredients. Bring the mixture to a boil, cover and then place in the oven—the braise liquid should not be covering the meat.

Braise in the oven for 2½ to 3 hours, turning the ribs halfway through. Remove the ribs from the oven.

Place the ribs in a deep pan to rest (you may place them on low heat on the stove to keep them warm) and the dutch oven on a burner over high heat. Boil the sauce down for 20 minutes, until you achieve your desired thickness, stirring regularly. Place the ribs back in the dutch oven to coat, and serve with rice, soba noodles or mashed potatoes and parsnips.

620 calories, 35g fat, 51g protein, 23g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 2040mg sodium. **(crw)**

Deborah Nerud lives, writes and enjoys local food in La Crosse.



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Style YOUR SHAPE

Flatter your unique figure
with the freshest styles of spring.

Photos by Bruce Defries Photography
Body shape style tips courtesy of JoBa Flat

We've heard the advice:

dress to suit your body type. But what does that mean, and how do we do it? Here, local merchants advise and inspire with their own takes on figure-flattering style.

TRIANGLE

Hips and thighs are the widest part of the body on this most common type.

- Enhance upper body
- Wear light colors and embellishments on top
- Straight-leg, flat-front pants flatter

JoBa Flat

Vivian Tweed Jacket, \$335;
Lovely Silk Top, \$195;
Poppy Flat Front Pant, \$195;
Whitney bangle bracelet, \$150



RECTANGLE

- Bust, hips and waist are basically the same width.
- Add femininity with prints and accessories
 - A-line styles add shape
 - Add a wide belt to accentuate the waist

Mainstream Boutique

Dress, \$59; purse, \$34; earrings, \$16; bracelet, \$22; necklace, \$28



HOURLASS

Top and bottom are balanced, waist is defined.

- Fitted and tailored styles work well
- Accentuate the waist
- Avoid baggy shapes

Lark

Andrea Fisher Designs dress, \$125; Me Moi leggings, \$45; scarf, \$30; Veronica Martens necklace; Mother Nature Gems bracelet, \$30; Mother Nature Gems earrings, \$10



OVAL

Wide waist with narrow hips, flat bottom.

- Monochromatic color schemes are slimming
- Elongate torso
- Straight-leg pants work well

Touch of Class

Nic + Zoe pants, \$128; Pure Amici cardigan, \$140; Pure Amici tank, \$74; AGL pump, \$320; Alexis Bittar silver bracelet \$320; Alexis Bittar steel blue bracelet, \$295; Hobo bag, \$348



INVERTED TRIANGLE

Strong shoulders and/or bust, hips are narrow.

- Draw eye downward, away from upper body
- Fitted bodices, sleeveless styles streamline the top
- Flared, pleated or gored skirts balance the figure

Dress Barn

Dress, \$50; jacket, \$38; nailhead enamel bangle, \$15; enamel hinge bracelet, \$15; necklace, \$34



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Thursday, April 10th from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

The Cargill Room at the Waterfront

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SPRING FLING OPEN HOUSE

Friday, April 11th - Saturday, April 12th

Stores are open late to kick off new spring trends, products, fashions, promotions and special events! Enjoy refreshments!

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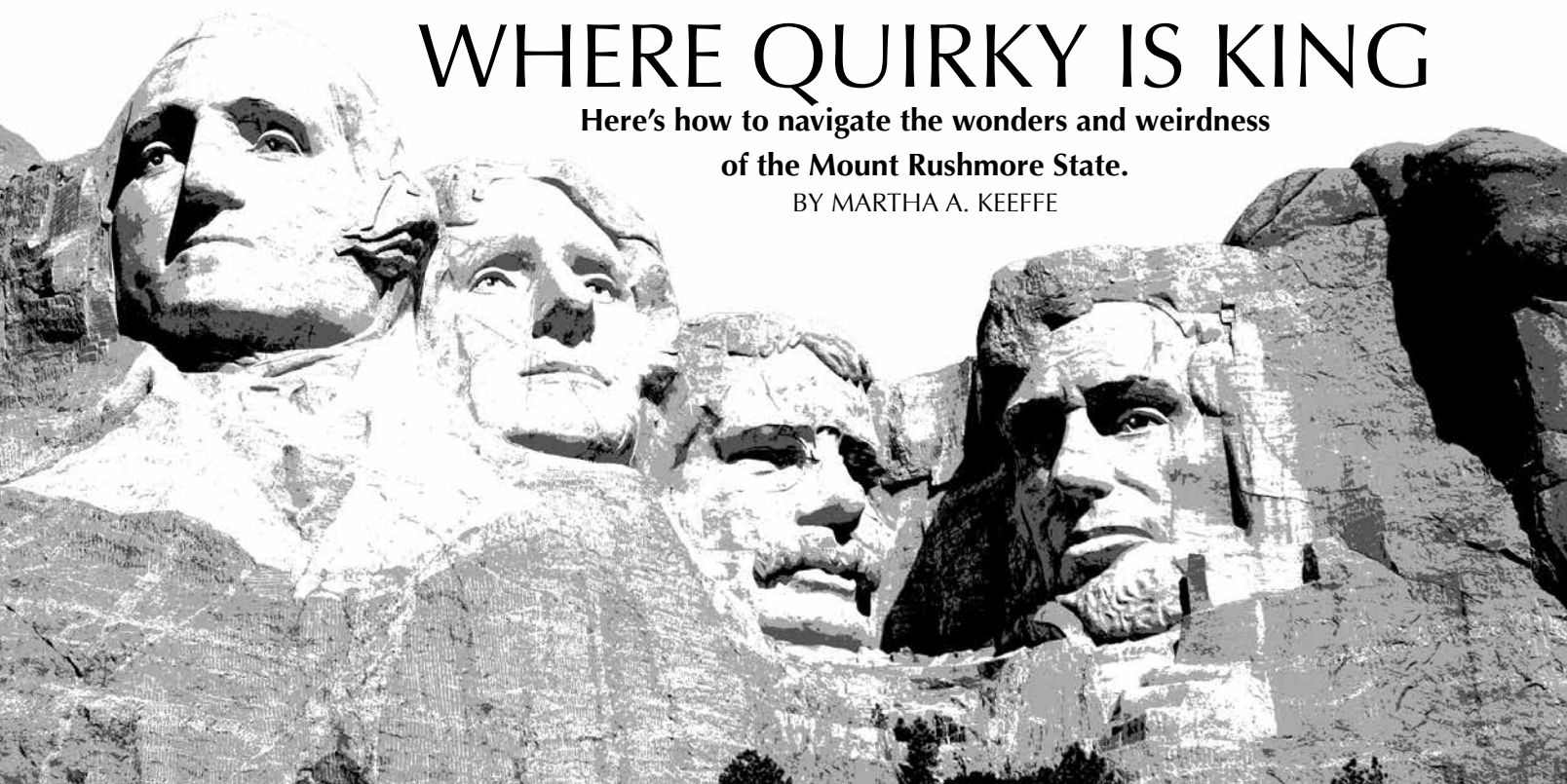
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SOUTH DAKOTA: WHERE QUIRKY IS KING

Here's how to navigate the wonders and weirdness
of the Mount Rushmore State.

BY MARTHA A. KEEFFE



Though the highways through South Dakota may seem uninspired, the character of the state is mind-bending. From wacky to wonderful, a trip through the Mount Rushmore State offers travelers an endless road of unique diversions and unmatched natural beauty. Wide-open expanses of windswept prairie hold the same promise of adventure for today's travelers as it did for the pioneers who first pushed west: a journey, which decades later has evolved into a popular vacation destination. Where else can you be dwarfed by the 60-foot-high faces of four American presidents carved out of granite cliffs, smile at the absurdity of a giant concrete prairie dog or hike the ancient, unworldly terrain particular to the Badlands? The following suggestions by Andrea Culletto, Travel Agent at Travel Leaders in La Crosse, owned and operated by Goli's Avenues of Travel, are certain to make your visit to South Dakota a trip worth talking about.

Beyond the Corn Palace and Wall Drug

To the delight of travelers, South Dakota's roadways are dotted with quirky roadside attractions. An enormous fiberglass buffalo and a towering human skeleton walking a dinosaur skeleton create a perfect photo op that's just a quick stop and snap away. Though no firm explanation can be made for their existence, Culletto, a former resident of the state, attributes the roadside attraction phenomenon to people's ingenuity. "The scenery along the highway doesn't change much, so perhaps these attractions popped up as a way to add variety," says Culletto. "And when people are given the opportunity, they come up with creative ways to use whatever they have on hand."

1880s Cowboy Town

In Buffalo Ridge sits a dilapidated replica of a Wild West town populated entirely by automated robots. Built with the intent of bringing history to life, wonky mechanical characters, in various stages of disrepair, crank out historical snippets while the vagaries of hand-painted signs and notations leave visitors scratching their heads. With the touch of a button you can experience "a near perfect balance of fear and fun" that according to roadsideamerica.com makes it worth the stop.

Porter Sculpture Park

Nothing stops traffic like a 60-foot sculpture of an Egyptian-inspired bull's head rising out of the prairie. Using scrap metal, Wayne Porter created this and other out-of-context oddities to feed his artistic muse. Whether or not you can embrace the unorthodox thinking behind sculpting a nightmarish jack-in-the-box or colorful nymphs dancing around a goat, you can at least appreciate Porter's effort to make you say "hmmm."

Natural beauty

Prairies dominate the landscape of South Dakota, but they don't define it—instead they serve as a prelude to the unexpected. "The natural diversity of South Dakota is truly amazing and in many ways indescribable," says Culletto, who has visited the Badlands and the Black Hills. "You have to experience it to understand why it's said to be sacred. It almost vibrates with energy."

The Badlands

Carved by the whims of wind and water, craggy spires, deep-cut valleys and weather-worn buttes give meaning to the Lakota name “Mako Sica” or Badlands—an expanse of colorful lunar-like landscape that challenged the mettle of the Native Americans and French fur traders who first attempted to navigate it. Miles of moderate to strenuous trails allow hikers to explore the interior of this natural wonder, and a scenic loop through the park gives you the opportunity to enjoy the view from your car. Culletto encourages travelers to detour off the highway and check out the Badlands. “The cool, weird formations, though kind of hellish, are definitely worth seeing,” she says.

The Black Hills

Thought to be the oldest mountain range in the United States, this isolated geographic anomaly emerges from the Great Plains as mountains so thick with evergreens that the Lakota called them “Paha Sapa,” or hills that are black. Perfect for outdoor enthusiasts, activities here include an exhilarating mountain bike ride through the hills, an afternoon of rock-climbing granite towers called the Needles or

a breathtaking hike up 7,244-foot Harney Peak. Sightseers can get their heart pumping, too. A drive along the 14 miles of hairpin turns and tunnels of the Needles Highway Scenic Byway, where bison routinely block the road, is akin to an amusement park ride. Be wary of the wild burro, though; they consider an open car window an invitation to get their nose scratched.

Small town, big character

When asked what is on her must-see list in South Dakota, Culletto says small towns. “They have retained so much of their historic flavor that you feel like you are stepping back in time,” she says. “Combine that with funky boutiques, trendy restaurants and spectacular scenery, and you have the makings of a really fun weekend.”

Deadwood

Home to the legendary characters of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane, this tiny town was once known for its bars, brothels and gaming halls. “Now everyone goes to Deadwood to get seafood,” says Culletto. “Why? Who knows, but you can find some really good all-you-can-eat buffets.” Before

you sit down to get your fill of crab, tour the downtown and get a taste of what life was like during the Gold Rush. “The architecture is extremely authentic,” Culletto remarks. “Just walking along the streets makes you believe you’re back in the 1880s.”

Sturgis

Despite its bad-boy reputation, this town, known for Harleys and questionable behavior, is still worthy of a visit—even if you go just to say you’ve been there. “Admittedly, it is an intense experience during the rally, but there are ways to enjoy the city without witnessing its less savory side,” says Culletto. Worth seeing is the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum and Hall of Fame, which gives the history behind the motorcycles and people that have made cycling a unique part of American culture. “Plus Sturgis, like most everything in South Dakota, is kind of unusual,” adds Culletto. “I mean, who would believe that over 500,000 people travel all that way just to be rowdy?” **(crw)**

Martha A. Keefe lives and writes in La Crosse. She has also traveled to South Dakota with her family where they went rock climbing, mountain biking and, yes, had a run-in with a buffalo.

Left: A granite Needle rises along Needles Highway. Top center: Deadwood, home to Wild Bill Hickock and Calamity Jane, is a classic Wild West town. Right: The haunting and beautiful mountains of the Badlands offer challenging hikes as well as memorable scenery. Bottom center: Visit South Dakota, and you, too, may have a run-in with a buffalo.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

American Association of University Women (AAUW) 2nd Sat. of each month (Sept.-May), 9:30 a.m., 608-519-0548, aauwlacrosse@hotmail.com, aauw-wi.org.

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

Children's Museum of La Crosse weekly programming: **Save-On-Sundays** \$1.00 off admission every Sun., noon to 5 p.m.

Mt. LeKid Climbing Wall open every Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sun. 12-4 p.m.

Wee Move for ages 1-7 with adult, every Fri., 10:30 a.m.

Little Learners for ages 1-7 with adult, every Thurs., 10:30 a.m.

Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW) 4th Tues. of each month, Nell's City Grill, 1111 3rd St. S., La Crosse, 5:30 p.m. Courtney Kubly, 608-516-6916, kubly22@yahoo.com.

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

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

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

NAMI Family Support Group 2nd Mon. of each month, 6:30 p.m., South Side Neighborhood Center, 1300 S. 6th St., La Crosse.

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

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

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

Onalaska Toastmasters Club 1st and 3rd Mon. of each month, noon-1 p.m., Globe University, Onalaska.

Valley View Kiddie Crew 1st and 3rd Tues. of each month, Valley View Mall Food Court, 10:30-11:30 a.m., myvalleyview.com.

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

Women in Networking and Support (WINS) 2nd Wed. of each month, Howie's, noon-1 p.m., Shari Hopkins, 608-784-3904, shopkins@couleebank.net.

Women of Worth (WOW) last Wed. of each month, Boot Hill Pub, noon. Debbie Lee, 608-784-2775, debbie.lee@westlandinsurance.com.

Women's Alliance of La Crosse (WAL) 2nd Thurs. of each month, noon, The Waterfront Restaurant, Kendra Brown, kendra@dmharrislaw.com.

CALENDAR EVENTS

Apr. 2-19, Photos with the Easter Bunny, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

Apr. 3-5, Gallantry and Il Signor Deluso, 7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Recital Hall, Viterbo University.

Apr. 4-5, Coulee Region Humane Society Make a Friend for Life Adoption Event, J.C. Penney Court, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

Apr. 4-6, 11-13, *Arms and the Man*, 7:30 p.m. Fri. & Sat, 2 p.m. Sun., Weber Center for the Performing Arts, La Crosse.

Apr. 5, La Crosse Symphony Orchestra Season Finale, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo University Fine Arts Center.

Apr. 10, Downtown Trend Showcase, 5:30-8 p.m., Cargill Room, The Waterfront, lacrossedowntown.com.

Apr. 10-12, Heart of La Crosse: Pass the Taters, 7:30-9:30 p.m., The Pump House, thepumphouse.org.

Apr. 11-12, Spring Fling open house, downtown La Crosse.

Apr. 11, Night Out at the Museum, 5:30-8 p.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse, funmuseum.org.

Apr. 12, Annual Spring Gift & Craft Show, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Onalaska Omni Center.

Apr. 12, Second Annual Edible Book Fest, 11 a.m.-2:45 p.m., South Community Library, La Crosse, lacrosselibrary.org.

Apr. 17-19, Easter Egg-Stravaganza, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fri., 9:30-11:30 a.m. Sat-Sun., Children's Museum of La Crosse, funmuseum.org.

Apr. 21-22, STOMP, 7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Main Theatre, Viterbo University.

Apr. 25-May 4, *The Metal Children*, Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse, uwla.edu/theatre/season-listing.

Apr. 25, Fleis Nightfall Frolic 5K Run/Walk and Youth Race, 6:30 p.m., Rowe Park, Onalaska, cityofonalaska.com.

Apr. 25-27, Gingerbread Arts & Crafts Show, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

Apr. 25, Johnsmith with Dan Sebranek, 7:30 p.m., The Heider Center, West Salem, heidcenter.org.

Apr. 25, Night Out at the Museum, 5:30-8 p.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse, funmuseum.org.

Apr. 26, Annual Multiple Sclerosis Walk, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., check in at 9 a.m., 300 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse.

Apr. 26, Between the Bluffs Beer, Wine & Cheese Festival, 1 p.m., South Side Oktoberfest Grounds, La Crosse, betweenthebluffsbeerfest.com.

Apr. 26, UWL-SOTA Funway Runway Fashion Show, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

Apr. 27, Earth Fair, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Myrick Hixon EcoPark, La Crosse, mhcopark.org.

May 1, The Salvation Army 2014 Civic Event fundraiser, 6-8 p.m., Cargill Room, The Waterfront, bells2ring.org.

May 2-June 6, Downtown Walk Around Walking Challenge, Downtown La Crosse Businesses Historic Downtown La Crosse.

May 3, Kentucky Derby Jubilee, HorseSense for Special Riders, 2-6 p.m., Cargill Room, The Waterfront, hssr.org.

May 3, Willy Porter, 7:30-9:30 p.m., The Pump House, thepumphouse.org.

May 4, Heider Center 9th Annual Mayfair Arts Fair, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., West Salem High School, 608-786-2550.

May 5-6, Zor Shrine Circus, La Crosse Center.

May 8-9, *The Sea Horse*, 7:30-9:30 p.m., The Pump House, thepumphouse.org.

May 9, Blood Center of Wisconsin Blood Drive, 12-4 p.m., Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

May 9-25, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, 7:30 p.m. eve. 2 p.m. Sun., Weber Center for the Performing Arts, lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

May 10-11, Mother's Day Gift Wrapping Sessions, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

May 10, Wienerfest, 2 p.m.-midnight, South Side Oktoberfest Grounds, La Crosse.

May 15-17, Three Boomer Broads, 7:30-9:30 p.m., The Pump House, thepumphouse.org.

May 16-18, Syttende Mai, Westby

May 17, Reggae Fest, 2-11 p.m., Trempealeau Hotel, Trempealeau.

May 17, Avery's Wish 5K Run/Walk/Roll, 8:30 a.m., Old Hickory Park, La Crescent.

May 17-25, Get Your Motor Runnin' Summer Fun Vehicle Show, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

May 18, Riverside Family Fun Fair, 12-4 p.m., Riverside Park, La Crosse.

May 18, Apple Blossom Bike Tour, 8:30 a.m., Apple Blossom Drive, La Crescent, appleblossomtours.org.

May 31-June 1, June Dairy Days, West Salem.

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

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