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women

AREA HOME AND HEALTH LIVING MAGAZINE

**Vicki Markussen
Steps Up
at the
Chamber of
Commerce**

The Next Step

**Barb Nick:
A Woman in Power**

**Run, Don't Walk:
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Pictured on cover: Vicki Markussen, executive director of the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce. Cover photo by Jordana Snyder Photography. Hair and makeup by Tease Salon, downtown La Crosse. This page: Photo by Jen Towner Photography.





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Perhaps you are a woman like me, filled with ambition but lacking in time. We're always looking for opportunities to take the "next step"—to better ourselves in terms of career, family and community involvement. Or rather, if we're not actively looking for these opportunities, they have a way of finding us, and we are hard-pressed to say no. Why, of course I can teach that class, coordinate that project, chair that committee or sit on that board. I can meet my deadlines, do my own taxes, support my kids' school and give back to the community—until I can't. My good intentions (and my hubris) inevitably betray me, and I find myself in a place you might find familiar, too: wondering how I'll survive the next day, let alone take the next step.

One extra task I never regret taking on, though, is a project here and there from a book publisher that specializes in the topic of addiction and recovery. Editing these materials, I'm constantly reminded of the slogans and sage advice that have kept millions of people sane and sober for decades. You don't have to be in recovery to benefit from their

simple wisdom: "One day at a time." "Take it easy." "Step by step." "Let it go."

I write these slogans in the margins of my to-do list, and they help me break insurmountable tasks into manageable pieces. I put them on Post-it Notes on my cupboard doors, and I remember to breathe while my coffee is brewing. They help me remember that an hour over coffee with a colleague or a weekend away with old friends is time well spent. An afternoon at our farm, taking hikes and collecting maple sap with my husband and kids, is the best rejuvenation imaginable.

I also take inspiration from women such as those featured in this issue of *Coulee Region Women*. They, too, have made remarkable steps while balancing an immense amount, and our community benefits from their success. Vicki Markussen, our cover woman, has journeyed from humble beginnings to a career in journalism, a number of executive positions and the shattering of a glass ceiling as she becomes the first woman to lead the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce. Speaking of glass ceilings, Barbara Nick, the new CEO of Dairyland Power, has broken a few of her own, taking leadership positions in the utilities industries while finding her own inspiration in reading—and writing—books. A pair of occupational therapists in Viroqua helps their patients heal and take their own "next steps" through water therapy, and the good folks at Couleecap help entrepreneurs take the next step through their new CO.STARTERS program. And we'd be remiss not to take our "next step" theme literally by inspiring you to train for a marathon and by showcasing a closet full of fabulous spring shoes.

Whether your "next step" is a career move, a family commitment or one more opportunity to serve your community, you, too, can take inspiration from the women featured in this issue of *Coulee Region Women*—or any woman you know who has life experience in making progress for herself and the thrill and the challenges that brings.

Betty

coulee region women

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CELEBRATE THE EARTH

Looking for an environmentally and family friendly event to attend this spring? Check out the seventh annual Earth Fair Celebration on Sunday, April 26, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Myrick Park Center. This event will be jam-packed with activities for all ages including children's crafts, the first farmers market of the season, outdoor tours, a concert by popular children's singer Hans Mayer and more. The Earth Fair Celebration is hosted by Coulee Partners for Sustainability, the La Crosse Public Library, the La Crosse Area Family YMCA and the Earth Fair Committee. Bring your family out for a free, fun-filled springtime event! To learn more and get a full list of times, go to www.earthfairlacrosse.com or follow Coulee Partners for Sustainability on Facebook.



RUN FOR THE ROSES

What's your Derby Day tradition?

This year, gather your friends and create a new one with the help of HorseSense for Special Riders, which is hosting their annual Kentucky Derby Jubilee on Saturday, May 2, at the Freight House in La Crosse from 2 to 6 p.m. Enjoy live music, hors d'oeuvres, racing raffles, silent auction, hat contests and southern hospitality while you cheer on your favorite horse. Tickets are \$35 per person; for more information, please visit www.hssr.org, email info@hssr.org or call Linda at 608-317-0714. Don your most fashionable hat, order up a mint julep and enjoy a day at the races!



ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A 5TH GRADER?

Coulee Region RSVP, local celebrities and area fifth graders from Bangor, La Crosse, Onalaska and Aquinas Catholic schools invite you to join in their "Who Will Be Smarter than a 5th Grader?" competition Saturday, May 9, from 10 a.m. to noon at Valley View Mall. You can help the school of your choice win the grand prize of \$1,000 by casting a vote for one of this year's contestants and their fifth-grade partner. To help your contestant "make the grade," you can donate online at www.rsvpjax.org or send a donation to Coulee Region RSVP at 2920 East Ave. S., Suite 104, La Crosse, WI, 54601. Come out and support your local celebrities and school systems this May! After all, don't you want to know who in the community is smarter than a fifth grader?

IN FULL BLOOM

Join the Bluff Country Master Gardeners Association and UW Extension-La Crosse County as they host the 2015 Wisconsin Master Gardener Conference at the La Crosse Center July 31-August 1. Experience two full days of spectacular scenery, engaging speakers and camaraderie among old and new gardeners during this informative, educational conference on gardening. Open to anyone with an interest in gardening, the conference will feature presenters including Roy Diblik, author of *The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden* and Dr. Karen Oberhauser of the University of Minnesota. Dr. Oberhauser developed national programs for the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project and Monarchs in the Classroom. Attendees will have a choice of educational breakout sessions and (new this year) offsite workshops. The conference also includes a silent auction, wing span raffle, photo contest and numerous vendors. For more information, go to www.bluffcountrymastergardeners.org.



RUN LA CROSSE, RUN!

Come out for this year's Festival Foods Grandad Half Marathon May 1-2. This two-day event is put on by the City of La Crosse Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department, and allows locals and visitors from across the country an opportunity to be active and enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Coulee Region. The race begins at 8 a.m. sharp on top of Grandad Bluff. All finishers of the half marathon will receive a T-shirt and a Festival Foods Grandad Half Marathon commemorative medal, and an award ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. to award trophies to the top three men and top three women as well as give awards for each age group. If you register before April 26, the fee will be just \$70, but goes up to \$80 on race day. To register and learn more about the event, visit www.festivalfoodsgrandadhalf.com.

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 towards the camera. The blanket has a green, orange, and blue plaid pattern. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

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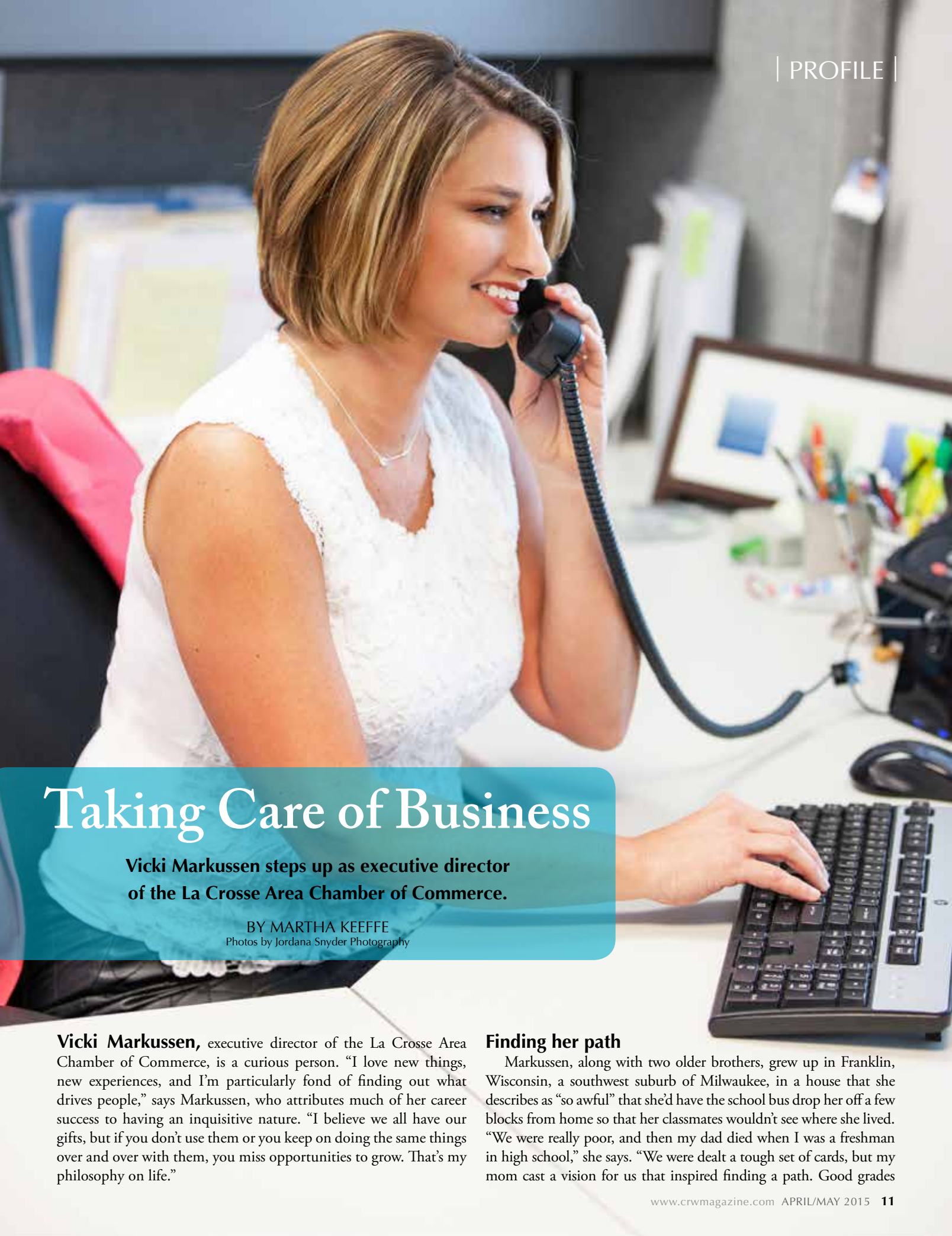
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Taking Care of Business

Vicki Markussen steps up as executive director of the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce.

BY MARTHA KEEFFE
Photos by Jordana Snyder Photography

Vicki Markussen, executive director of the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce, is a curious person. “I love new things, new experiences, and I’m particularly fond of finding out what drives people,” says Markussen, who attributes much of her career success to having an inquisitive nature. “I believe we all have our gifts, but if you don’t use them or you keep on doing the same things over and over with them, you miss opportunities to grow. That’s my philosophy on life.”

Finding her path

Markussen, along with two older brothers, grew up in Franklin, Wisconsin, a southwest suburb of Milwaukee, in a house that she describes as “so awful” that she’d have the school bus drop her off a few blocks from home so that her classmates wouldn’t see where she lived. “We were really poor, and then my dad died when I was a freshman in high school,” she says. “We were dealt a tough set of cards, but my mom cast a vision for us that inspired finding a path. Good grades

were valued, and she never doubted that we'd go to college."

With the goal of continuing her education, Markussen didn't allow hardships to derail her, but rather saw earning a degree as an opportunity to keep on track. "My background is part of who I am, but I didn't let it define me," she explains. "Instead I found that I'm driven by a desire to achieve."

With that desire to achieve, Markussen earned enough scholarship money and recognition to be accepted into the broadcast journalism program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison—an area of study that had captivated her since childhood. "I always knew that I wanted to be writer," she says, recalling how she spent her middle school summers writing books on an old manual typewriter. "In fact, writing a book is still on my bucket list."



The on-ramp

Following graduation from UW-Madison, Markussen was hired as an associate producer writing news stories for what was then WITI in Milwaukee. At the time, she earned \$5 per hour and commuted 45 minutes against traffic through downtown Milwaukee just to get to work. Laughing at how ridiculous that scenario seems now, Markussen admits that if you have a passion for something, you'll do crazy things to see it realized. "I seriously think I spent my entire paycheck on gas," she says, "but it was my first job, and I was determined to do anything to keep it."

To her advantage, WITI changed station affiliations to FOX6 before she was hired. This resulted in significant newsroom expansion—a move that gave Markussen her first career opportunity to write global and national news stories that were read on-air by the anchors. Markussen then began to explore the possibility of becoming on-air talent in other markets. After receiving a number of offers, she accepted a position at WXOW News 19 La Crosse as a television news reporter, and within a month of moving to the area, she met her future husband.

Markussen became a familiar on-air presence covering the news three days a week while gliding into weekend broadcasts and acting as a fill-in anchor. It was a position that she remembers fondly, but after four years, she needed a change from covering holidays and weekends. "I loved TV reporting, and it just crushed me to leave," she says. "But the opportunity to move into a different position wasn't there."

Steps to success

Faced with the challenge of taking her skills in a whole new direction, Markussen had to figure out how to take what she had learned in broadcasting and apply it to an entirely new discipline. She found the answer lay within being able to communicate effectively, and she used that skill to land a job as executive director of the La Crosse Area Builders Association, a position that she held for 10 years before making a move to 7 Rivers Alliance, where she served as executive director for four years. "Probably the number one question I get asked is how I made the transition from journalism into management, and I'd say it's the ability to communicate," she says. "Strong communication skills, confidence and a willingness to listen and learn are invaluable. Those are skills that you can carry to any job."

For Markussen, her tenure at the La Crosse Area Builders Association and at 7

Rivers Alliance, which fosters economic growth through collaboration between businesses in western Wisconsin, southeastern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa, gave her an appreciation for just how interconnected businesses are, and how those relationships have a ripple effect on the local and regional economy. "It was really eye-opening for me to see that for every builder, there are 15 other businesses that benefit from their work," she explains, noting how impressed she was with how far-reaching the impact of mom-and-pop businesses is. "I've never run a business before, and I was given a greater understanding of what drives an economy, and in particular how the global economy affects us locally."

Building up business

In March 2014, Markussen left 7 Rivers Alliance and accepted the position of executive director at the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce, the first woman to hold that title. Bringing her appreciation for local businesses with her, Markussen strives to improve relations between local business owners and the chamber as well as foster connections among the owners themselves. Citing the chamber's mission to advocate on behalf of existing business and support new ventures, Markussen makes it a point to keep in contact with member business while encouraging them to take advantage of the chamber's programs and services. From monthly "Cracker Barrel: The Forum" events where elected officials talk about the impact of the state budget on the local economy to "Business After Hours" open houses devised to strengthen networking between businesses to youth leadership workshops and achievement banquets, it's Markussen's aim to increase the visibility of the chamber throughout the community.

Considering how busy Markussen is, it's a wonder she has any time for herself and her family, which includes three boys—14, 11 and 7. "I couldn't do any of this without my husband," she says. "He's the kind of dad who wants to be active, likes to coach and is incredibly flexible when it comes to the day-to-day stuff." Even so, Markussen has to remind herself that it's important to prioritize and accept the help of others, both at home and at work. "In my enthusiasm, I forget that others possess gifts that I don't have," she says. "Sometimes I have to remember, that by the grace of God, I'll find my way." 

Martha Keefe lives and writes in La Crosse. She encourages everyone to explore and patronize the businesses that make this community so vibrant.

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AQUATIC BODYWORK, A WELLSPRING OF RENEWAL

Therapists at Vernon Memorial Healthcare harness the healing power of water.

BY LAURA ROWLETT

Contributed photos



Certified aquatic bodywork practitioner Sarah Olson helps a client relax during a session at Vernon Memorial Healthcare.

From ancient Japan to Theodore Roosevelt, history reveals that warm water's rehabilitative properties run deep. At Vernon Memorial Healthcare (VMH) in Viroqua, certified aquatic bodywork practitioners Sarah Olson and Heather Wuolle combine breathing, gentle stretching, specific movement patterns and Shiatsu massage techniques, melding modern Western medicine and traditional Eastern healing to strengthen energy pathways in the body.

"Aquatic bodywork promotes a shift in awareness accessed through deep relaxation and movement, creating an opportunity for the client to tap into her inner being and the potential for positive change," Olson says, describing the sensation as gently dancing, floating or even flying in the water. "Sessions offer a shift from daily experience and can facilitate a meditative, intuitive state, freeing the body and mind from pain and tension and allowing for restoration and a renewed sense of well-being."

Wuolle is in the pool Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons, and Olson sees clients Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings as well as Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Both perform land-based therapy assistant work as well. Olson, a physical therapist assistant (PTA), worked as an athletic trainer and water aerobics instructor for the U.S. military. She now typically aids in orthopedic rehabilitation for gross-motor movements, balance and walking. Wuolle, a certified occupational therapy assistant (COTA), completed certification of lymphedema treatment and also aims to restore patients' independence to perform activities of daily living, such as self-care tasks, upper-extremity rehab and cognitive/memory functions.

"By bringing aquatic bodywork to VMH, Heather and Sarah have taken their careers to new heights," says Amy Evenstad, the occupational therapy manager at VMH. "They've demonstrated a lot of initiative and creativity. They took their therapy role outside the medical model."



Olson and Heather Wuolle (above) are two out of just 25 certified aquatic integration practitioners in the entire nation.

A new way to relax and heal

Their shared focus and complementary expertise in the overlapping PT and OT fields are at the heart of VMH's aquatics program. A poolside conversation in 2005 planted a seed. "We were co-treating a stroke patient, and I enjoyed working in the pool so much," Wuolle says. "I told Sarah I'd really like to increase my hours in the water and asked her, 'How can we make this happen?'"

Together they decided to build on their existing skills while launching their careers in a new direction with the support of VMH. Aquatic bodywork methods promised clients increased freedom of movement, greater fluidity, decreased pressure on aching joints and a deeper sense of calm. "I always want to improve for the patients," Olson says. "Being in the pool is like working on a 3D table. There are some things you just cannot do on a table that happen effortlessly while moving through warm water."

What started as a relaxation method called Watsu® (Water Shiatsu) in California's natural hot springs' health clubs 35 years ago is gaining a foothold in the medical realm right here in the Coulee Region. Aquatic bodywork practitioners support a client's body in the water, sometimes using assistive floatation equipment, to facilitate releasing tension from orthopedic problems, arthritis, sleep disorders, fibromyalgia and chronic pain.

As the session begins, the practitioner encourages the client to settle in, breathe deeply, close his eyelids and let go of the day. At 93 degrees, VMH's 20-by-30-foot pool is a tranquil, body-temperature environment that encourages surrender and increases range of motion as a practitioner guides the client's body through the water while massaging specific points in a sequence that releases tension from target areas and calms the mind. Enveloped in sensory bliss, taut muscles displace stored energy, drawing the floating client toward pleasantly disorientating oneness with the water. These sessions summon a surreal serenity, inviting an otherworldly headspace. The combination of the gentle motions, point work and warmth of the water can create deep relaxation that one may not experience with traditional massage techniques.

"The goal is to be present in the moment, to remove the external environment," Wuolle says. "We are tuned into sensing when people start to relax. Throughout the hour, the client's role can move from a passive state to a more dynamic, active role while we're collaborating and she's moving. We're not forcing it at any time but rather allowing it to occur."

Training in tandem

Since they first envisioned bringing holistic, aquatic bodywork to rural healthcare in Viroqua, Wuolle and Olson have trained together and worked as a team. The duo traveled as far as California and Washington at five- or six-day stretches totaling eight weeks of intensive training. Each logged more than 500 hours of training to earn credentials as Watsu Practitioner

in 2007 and Aquatic Integration™ Practitioner in 2010. Today they are two of just 25 certified aquatic integration practitioners in the entire nation and are two of four Watsu practitioners in Wisconsin.

"In rural populations, people endure long days and work hard to survive," says Cameron West, the California-based aquatic therapy expert who trained Olson and Wuolle in her aquatic integration methods. "And who needs this more than a body that's been bending, lifting, turning or even sitting over a long period of time? I find it so valid that Sarah and Heather brought these techniques into their beautiful work in a setting where clients really need this the most." Learning to train others in the art of aquatic integration methods might be yet another next step they could take in tandem, Wuolle and Olson say.

Learning how to be

"I love the variety and diversity aquatic bodywork brings," Wuolle says. While recipients seek aquatics for an array of reasons—floating massage, employee-wellness benefits, post-surgery rehabilitation—all receive the same careful attention with a customized approach that hinges on how he or she feels right then. Practitioners may spend 15 to 20 minutes talking and walking in the pool with a client to assess posture, gait and holding patterns but also to help establish a comfortable relationship. These initial intake surveys assess sleep patterns, pain scale and perceived tension to determine a shared focus for treatment.

"It's all about empowering the client to be more aware of his or her own body," Olson says. "We get just as much out of this as the receiver does, and the thing about the giving is that it takes us out of our environment and allows us to be in the present moment, too. We teach about listening to the sound of your breath instead of your thoughts about errands and what's for dinner. The real goal here is learning how to just be, taking time for one's self." For more information about aquatic bodywork, visit www.vmh.org/content/what-watsu. (crw)

Laura Rowlett lives in Sparta with her husband, three children and two mutts. In reporting about the many benefits of aquatic bodywork, she learned that doing nothing—but with intention—is one pathway to positive change.

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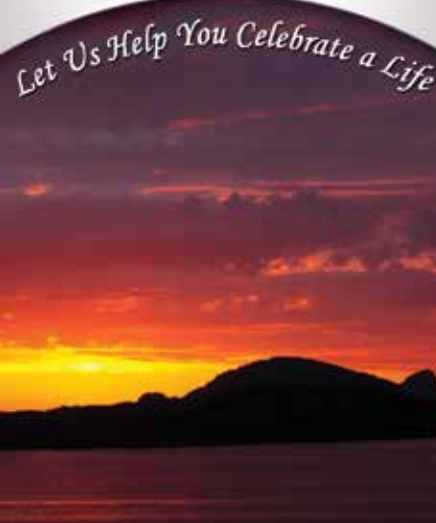
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LEADERSHIP BY THE BOOK

**Dairyland Power Cooperative's new CEO, Barbara Nick,
reads a lot into her leadership legacy.**

BY SUSAN C. SCHUYLER

Contributed photo

Barbara Nick calls writing and publishing books her “hobby.” As it turns out, the theme of books comes up often in Nick’s story of phenomenal leadership and achievement as Dairyland Power Cooperative’s new CEO.

Nick’s resume is packed with leadership roles accumulated from her more than 30 years in the electric and gas industry. She served as president of Michigan Gas Utilities Corporation and Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation within the Integrys Energy Group from 2012 to 2014. She initially joined Wisconsin Public Service Corporation in 1981 and has held numerous positions, including Senior Vice President of Energy Delivery and Customer Service and President of Upper Peninsula Power Company (UPPCO) from 2006 to 2012. A graduate of Harvard Business School’s Advanced Management Program and University of Wisconsin-Green Bay—and a mother of six grown children—Nick is a model of the positive impact a woman can have in the corporate world, her own family and the lives of others.

Throughout her career, books have informed and enhanced her leadership style, and they’ve also given her a space to share her own insights on life and leadership. Her first children’s book, *Bella the Dragon*, consistently ranked among the top 10 in the early days of digital publishing, with more than 300,000 downloads. Since she founded Catto Creations, Nick’s publishing company has earned several Global eBook Awards and many of the coveted Quality, Excellence, Design (QED) certifications for e-books.

Beginning with Bella

Bella the dragon’s roots took hold in 1974 at an Arizona girl’s camp, where Nick was a counselor. Her team of campers had not yet won any of the evening competitions, and Nick was determined to change that on storytelling night.

Nick started with, “Once there was a dragon named Bella whose scales were made of gems,” and the girls helped build what later became a bedtime comfort story for Nick’s own children. “It’s a story of hope and friendship and dealing with sadness,” she says. “I believe



Barbara Nick, CEO, Dairyland Power Cooperative

that children have complex emotions, and stories are a way to help children deal with those difficult times.”

Later, Nick’s children insisted that she write the story, a friend begged to illustrate the tale and Steve Jobs invented the iPad’s digital platform—and Bella was delivered to the world.

But Nick’s lifelong passion for leadership inspired another publishing triumph. During her brief retirement in summer 2014, she gathered essays on the topic.

The result, *Lenses of Leadership*, is described in its pages as a “call



Barbara Nick's book *Bella the Dragon* began as a campfire tale at an Arizona girl's camp, where Nick was a counselor. "It's a story of hope and friendship and dealing with sadness," she says.

to action" and "a unique collection of essays from a diverse group of global business leaders, young professionals and savvy individuals."

The voices in its pages include CEOs, physicians, educators—even Nick's own granddaughter and son. The book was published October 2014, while Nick was in retirement, and within weeks of the offer to lead Dairyland.

Living leadership again

When Nick reached the helm as Dairyland's CEO in December 2014, she once again achieved something unique. Nick is only the second woman to serve as CEO of a generation and transmission cooperative, or G&T.

The G&T business model dates back to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, when rural electrification delivered power and telephone services to areas where investor-owned utilities would not provide service.

In that industry—and all others—women CEOs are rare. According to a 2014 review of the gender pay gap in the journal *International Review of Economics & Finance*, just a small percentage of businesswomen reach the top.

In 1972, when the *Washington Post's* Katherine Graham became the first female CEO of a Fortune 500 company, she represented just .2 percent of that population, according to the journal. As of 2012, only 4.2 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs were women.

Measuring all business types, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the number of women CEOs at 26.39 percent in 2013—well below parity.

Being a woman CEO at a utility is an especially daunting task. Nick describes the profession as conservative and "one of the last bastions of the male-dominated industries," populated mostly by male engineers and accountants.

But Nick is no stranger to the electric and gas industry, and she rose quickly through the ranks at other Midwestern utilities. At only age 26, she was insightful enough to weigh the odds of her success in the Wisconsin utilities industry. The odds were stacked against her: "I'm not from the Midwest. I'm not a male. I'm not an engineer. I'm not an accountant, and I'm not German," she says. Despite these disadvantages, she persevered and, as always, excelled.

Back to the books

Before she wrote books, she relied on them to guide her along the competitive professional path she chose. "I read a lot of books to help me understand it," she says.

As she discusses the intricacies of navigating leadership as a woman, she alludes to the "narrow band of acceptable behavior" that women in business are bound by, from the iconic 1980s feminist manifesto *Breaking the Glass Ceiling*.

Nick likens the band to a tightrope. "You have to be feminine, but not too feminine;

tough, but not too tough. It's much more of a perilous journey," she says.

She attributes her success in surviving to her "ability to assimilate without compromising."

A psychology book Nick read helped put her journey through the nuances of male-dominated relationships and culture into perspective. "This really isn't about women," she says. "When you think about human psychology, anyone who has an advantage doesn't want to lose that advantage." She also found the research cited in the footnotes of Sheryl Sandberg's book *Lean In* rich with insight into human behavior.

Shaping a legacy

Her coping strategy is simple: "At the end of the day, it all comes down to being a leader," she says. Another book comes to mind as she considers her own leadership legacy: Stephen Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. In the book, the author asks, "What do you want people to say about you at your funeral?"

"I would like people to say I was a gracious person," Nick says. Although she freely admits that her goal-driven, type-A personality may work against her, she adds that one can be gracious and still have energy. Nick is living proof of that. (crw)

Susan C. Schuyler is a freelance writer and instructor at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

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Linda Miller (second from left) savors the rewards of long-distance running, particularly the friendships and the satisfaction of completing events such as the 2014 Dances with Dirt 50K at Devil's Lake State Park with friends Laurie Enos, Sandy Miller and Deanna Verdon.

STEPPING UP THE DISTANCE

Is a marathon in your future? Take some advice from local long-distance runners.

BY SHARI HEGLAND
Contributed photos

"I only run if someone is chasing me," you used to joke. Then someone asked you to do a 5K with her, and somewhere along the way, you became hooked. Now you've run some 5Ks, maybe a 10K, and the lure of something longer is calling.

Go for it, say veteran runners who have been where you are now.

Why go the distance?

Running wasn't new to Karla Olson, who was a runner and soccer player in high school before she played soccer at Viterbo. But battles with an eating disorder and addictions took their toll in her early 20s, and it wasn't until she ran a 5K as a community service activity that she found who she was.

"I fell in love with it," Olson, 34, says. "It gave me a sense of purpose."

That 5K led to a 10K and then toward fulfilling a loftier goal: to complete a marathon before her 30th birthday.

For Linda Miller, 58, taking up running was less natural. "I was a couch potato," she claims. Though she enjoyed hiking and other outdoor activities, her entry into running in her late 40s was her first athletic pursuit. After watching her husband and his friends take up running and tackle marathons, she began training using a run-walk method. "At my first 10K, I finished second to last," she says. "That was when I realized that for me it would be about finishing and enjoying the experience."

Today, both of these ladies have run multiple marathons and ultra-marathons (races longer than the official 26.2-mile marathon distance), with no intention of stopping.

Tips for finding the time

For women juggling jobs and family responsibilities, finding the time to train for longer races can be a challenge. Karla Olson offers these tips:

- If you are a member of the YMCA, utilize their Child Watch program.
- Use a jogging stroller to run with younger children.
- Swap child care with a friend.
- Run early in the morning or late at night.
- Hire a sitter and consider your run a "date" with your partner.
- Run right after work, without going home first.

What you need

Running generally requires little in the way of equipment, but when preparing for your first half-marathon or marathon, there are necessities you can't run without.

All of our runners cited two items women need to be willing to invest in to get the right quality and fit: shoes and sports bras.

Tyler Heinz, owner of Grand Bluff Running in downtown La Crosse and a former collegiate runner, offers slow-motion gait analysis to help ensure runners are fit with shoes that match their mechanics. And all of the staff at Grand Bluff Running, including the men, are qualified to help fit sports bras. Heinz also recommends getting good-quality sport socks in order to avoid blisters.

Other necessities are a method of carrying water (unless you can plan all of your longer runs around water fountains and other water sources) and lighted or reflective gear for running in the dark.

Local opportunities

There are plenty of chances to step up your race distance without traveling outside the Coulee Region. Here are a few longer La Crosse races:

- Festival Foods Grandad Half-Marathon, first weekend in May, festivalfoodsgrandadhalf.com.
- Goosebumps 6-Hour/24-Hour Run, third weekend in September, www.locallupus.org/get-involved-events/goose-bumps-run.
- Maple Leaf Road Races Half-Marathon, last weekend in September, www.laxymca.org/events/maple-leaf-walk-run.
- Marathons are held each year in nearby Eau Claire, Wisconsin (www.eauclaireremarathon.com); Norwalk, Wisconsin (railstotrailsraces.com) and Rochester, Minnesota (www.medcitymarathon.com).

While an hour-long training run for a 10K may not require stops for water or nutrition along the way, a three-hour-long training run for a marathon does, especially in summer. Runners can use waist packs, handheld water bottles or hydration packs in lightweight backpacks to carry water and nutrition for their runs.

"As you increase your miles, nutrition is a big part of it, for the marathon especially," says Miller. "Train with what you are going to eat that day. You don't want to try a lot new the day of the race."

Nutrition during a race could come from specialty energy gels or chews, energy bars or even pretzels, almonds or bites of a peanut butter sandwich. Olson says runners should experiment to find out what works best for them.

Who you need

"If you can run with other people, your miles will go much faster," Miller says. "Before you know it, you've gone 10 miles."

Olson, a group fitness instructor and running coach, agrees. A group, a friend or another running partner can provide extra motivation and accountability as your miles increase. She helped guide a group of women to their first half-marathon finishes last fall at the Maple Leaf Half-Marathon, and many are now training for Grandma's Marathon in Duluth, Minnesota, in June.

"Running together three or four times a week, we got very close," Olson says.

Grand Bluff Running hosts group runs several times a week to provide the sense of camaraderie that make the miles fly by. Heinz says everyone is welcome, with some of the store's sponsored runs attracting as many as 85 runners and offering prizes and food at the end.

In addition to companionship, finding a running group can also provide insight

into how to plan your training, especially if you can hook up with experienced runners or a formal training group through an organization such as the La Crosse Area Family YMCA or the La Crosse Parks and Recreation Department, both of which have hosted training groups leading up to local half-marathons.

Training philosophies

Miller firmly believes that for her, especially coming to running in her late 40s, using a run-walk approach has been key to reaching longer distances, including a 50-mile trail race and a 24-hour run. "You only have to go one mile (at a time)," she says.

And while she trains with races in mind, Miller also focuses on enjoying each run. "I love the training runs just as much as the race," she says. "You've got to enjoy the moments and the journey."

Heinz suggests that runners be conservative and patient as they approach the longer distances. "Think about running as a lifetime sport," he says, rather than increasing mileage too quickly for a short-term goal and risking injury. "Sometimes that means postponing a race until a year from now."

Going the distance isn't always easy, but veteran runners say it is worth it. "You may bite off more than you can chew," Olson says, "but even if you do, you will find that what you do achieve is more than you ever imagined."

For Miller, running is a metaphor for life: "It is all about one step at a time. In life, when hard things come and you can't see the end, just take the next step. You'll get there." **(CRW)**

Holmen writer Shari Hegland can still remember how amazed she was the first time she ran a full 10 miles. Double digits! That was seven years and more than a dozen marathons ago.





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THE NEXT STEP IN HOME BUILDING

Bigger is no longer better—the newest local building trend features small, yet wonderful homes.

BY JULIE NELSON
Contributed photos

There was a time when the American Dream—or maybe it was just a Coulee Region dream—was to buy some land in the country, build a big home and live there until it all became “too much.” But now La Crosse area builders are telling us the times, they are a-changin’.

Martha Belfany (pictured above) and her husband, Greg, are a case in point. They considered moving to a new house in the country, but decided instead to stay right where they are. They like the location, they like their neighbors and they liked the price of remodeling compared to building.

Jon Olson of Olson Construction says many people, like the Belfanys, aren’t building the big homes they used to. “Maybe we’re getting smarter,” he says of the requests for smaller, practical homes that will suit the homeowner’s needs for several decades. He says most of his requests come from established families with older kids who have either moved out or are close to moving out. “These homeowners are thinking about staying in place and are looking at what they will need as they age,” says Olson. “They are looking at ways to make their homes easy to get around in and easy to care for.” In many cases, instead of building new, people are remodeling with an eye on the future.

“A lot of the people we are building for are in their 50s and 60s,” he says. “They plan to make this their last home, and they want to make it both nice and comfortable.” Olson says another societal change taking place is the desire for proximity. He says people are placing more value on being close to the grocery store, to church and to other places they frequent. He’s talked to many people who at first planned to move to the country and then realized they’ve come to like their neighbors and living in a neighborhood.

Life changes, home changes

As people look at growing older in their homes, they think about the reduced mobility that may be in their future. If someone broke a hip, had a knee replacement, suffered from arthritis or needed to use a walker or wheelchair, what would happen? More people are designing homes now that can accommodate life changes that may not be predictable.

Olson says the most common remodeling projects requested—large walk-in showers and hardwood flooring—make the house a little nicer now and allow for greater accessibility and less maintenance as time goes by. Walk-in showers are easier to get in and out of than a bathtub, and hardwood flooring is easier to care for than carpeting.

Details matter

Practical, however, doesn’t mean boring. “People are doing a number of things to make their homes unique,” says Olson. “The varieties of tile, wood trim and flooring that are available today are much more plentiful than they were several years ago.” Olson also says when people are planning to live in a house for many years, they know they will get their value out of nicer amenities. Think heated floors in the bathroom, granite countertops in kitchens and components throughout the house that increase energy efficiency.

“We see lots of remodeling where people open up a child’s bedroom that’s no longer being used to become a master suite with a master bath. We see more being done with lighting—more ceiling lights in the living room and lots of lighting in the kitchen. Probably 50 to



The Belfanys opened up their living room and dining room to create one open space and added a three-season porch just off the kitchen.

80 percent of what we install is recessed lighting,” says Olson, adding that, as prices of LED lighting are coming down, more people are opting to use the more energy-efficient lighting.

While most of the building going on in the Coulee Region is remodeling, Olson says plenty of new houses are still being built. One of the big considerations in a new build is entrance. If you’ve ever tried to help an aging parent using a walker or wheelchair into an older home, you know even one to three steps can present a considerable obstacle. Olson says more people are designing homes that eliminate the steps from the garage into the house. Open entryways and wider hallways are also more common. “People are thinking ahead,” he says.

Building homes so that all entrances are flush with the ground level is possible, but Olson says it does present another challenge. Additional measures need to be taken to make sure the home is watertight, which adds to the cost. However, he says, many people feel it is money well spent, especially compared to constructing a wheelchair ramp that consumes a large piece of the front yard.

Societal shifts prompt housing trends

Olson also sees a change of values among the young families who are building homes. He mentions one couple who lived right across the street from their day care provider and began

rethinking their plan to move to the country. They thought about having to leave an extra half hour to get to work and worrying about the condition of the roads and the price of gas. He says in the end, they, too, opted to remodel their existing home and enjoy the convenience of living in a neighborhood.

Another societal shift Olson sees that affects the housing industry is the way we are aging. We are healthier longer, and we have more opportunities for entertainment. He says people are less willing to be tied down to their homes. They want to live in a place that is easy to care for and is low maintenance.

Patios, for example, have become more common additions than decks. Olson says you can get a nice concrete patio that looks like stone, but is easier to care for. Wooden decks, meanwhile, require regular treatments that most people would rather avoid.

Home theaters are still popular among those who have a basement that can be remodeled for this purpose, and almost everyone wants lots of electrical outlets that are good for televisions and computers. Many people are also requesting computerized control of their heat, air conditioning and sound system.

We Coulee Region dwellers may not know what the morrow holds, but we do know we’d like to enjoy our homes as long as possible. And if recent trends are any indication, we will do just that—in style. **(crw)**

Julie Nelson lives within walking distance of the library, the YMCA, the People’s Food Co-op and much more. You can bet she and her husband would much rather remodel than move.



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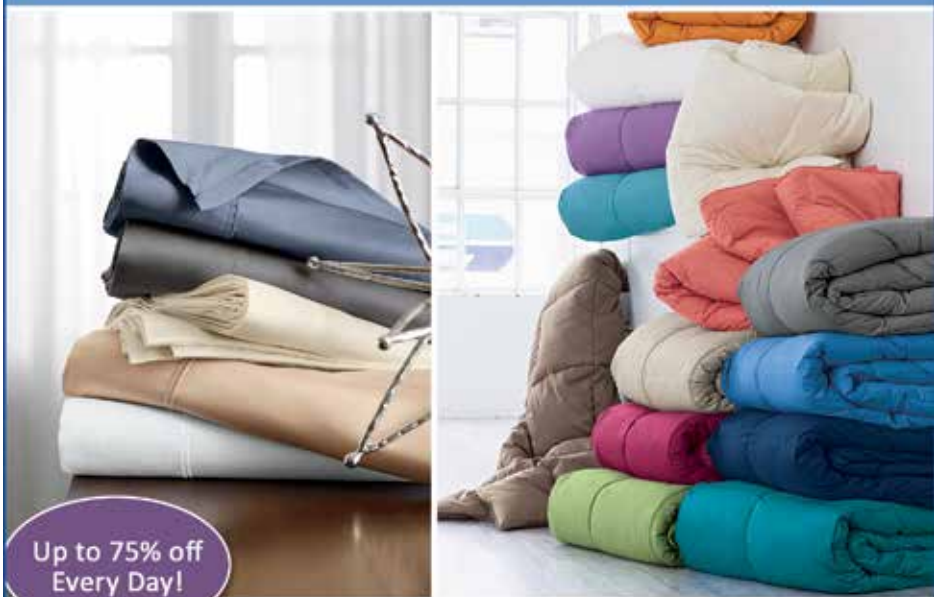
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FROM APPRENTICE TO PROFESSIONAL

UW-La Crosse graduate Rachel Rockwell takes the step from college to the professional world.

BY ASHLEY REYNOLDS

Contributed photo



Rachel Rockwell celebrates her graduation from UW-La Crosse with her parents, Betty and Bill Rockwell.

Making the transition from college to the professional world is one of the most important times in a woman's life, and, naturally, it comes with ups and downs and various uncertainties. We turned to Rachel Rockwell, recent University of Wisconsin-La Crosse graduate and future educator, to shed some light on the challenges that come with becoming a young, professional woman.

What have you found is the most difficult yet exciting thing about transitioning from college to the professional world?

Transitioning from the college to the professional world is like opening and entering through a wide-open double door and finding endless possible paths to take. Knowing which paths to take, when to take them and how to do so can be challenging. With a sense of achievement and confidence

in my readiness for the real world, I am excited for the future! However, there are times when I will unnecessarily worry about the "what-ifs": What if I am not a good educator? What if I don't make a difference? What if I don't get a job? When the negative voice in my head starts firing these questions, I am left with the choice to worry or to believe in my abilities. I often choose the latter.

How do you feel in relation to the more advanced professionals around you? Do you feel that college has prepared you to be a professional?

My university education has prepared me well for my professional career; however, I still feel somewhat inadequate. My feelings of inadequacy come from comparing myself to the advanced professionals with whom I interact. I think, *I'm never going to be as good*

as him or her, or Do I know enough to be good at what I need to do? When I plague myself with these questions of doubt, I must remind myself that I have what it takes to gain the experience necessary to be an exceptional professional. I must remind myself that everyone makes mistakes and has the choice to learn from them.

What are some problems that you think every woman going through this transition faces, no matter her career, based on your experiences?

Young women making the college-to-professional-life transition should not let the transition overcome them with fear. Rather, we can allow it to be a beautiful time of life with recognition of the great opportunity to continue and/or start fulfilling our passions. One difficulty in this transition is possibly saying goodbye to close college friends. Keeping in touch with those friends can be difficult because of busyness and varying schedules, but I have found it extremely important to stay in touch however often I am able.

What advice do you have for other women in your position?

As young professionals, we must believe in our current and potential abilities with the motivation to do our best and give ourselves grace when we fail. Life is full of ups and downs, and if we allow the negative to consume us, we may not be living the life we want to live. Stay positive and see the good in people. Enjoy the life you were given, make sacrifices when necessary, be confident in yourself and learn to grow like you never have before! **(CRW)**

Ashley Reynolds is a journalism student at UW-La Crosse and an intern for Coulee Region Women. She is set to graduate in May and will be undergoing this transition soon!

IS THIS NORMAL?

Ask an expert from Winona Health Women's Health Center.

BY MELISSA RICHARDS, MD
Contributed photo

Being a woman can be complicated. Sometimes it's difficult to tell what's "normal." Here are common questions I hear in my practice—answered!

Is it normal to see an obstetrician/gynecologist?

Absolutely! We take care of women throughout their reproductive years and beyond. Current recommendations include a yearly well-woman exam. This a fantastic opportunity to identify concerns and evaluate any symptoms or physical findings. For example, we can address specific concerns related to pelvic health, pregnancy, menopausal symptoms and health screenings.

When trying to get pregnant, what is the normal amount of time it takes to conceive?

There is a 15 to 20 percent chance of pregnancy per month for couples attempting pregnancy. Within one year of trying, 85 percent of women will become pregnant. An initial visit with your women's health provider may offer reassurance along with answers to your questions regarding fertility. It is also a great opportunity to prepare for a healthy pregnancy, which can reduce the risk of complications.

I have been told I have fibroids. Are these normal?

Uterine fibroids are benign, non-cancerous muscle bundles that can form on the outside and inside of the uterus. They are extremely common (80 percent of women have them), and you often don't know you have them unless an ultrasound is performed. However, fibroids can be problematic from a heavy bleeding standpoint. Large fibroids can also press on the bladder or bowels, causing urinary or constipation issues. Anytime heavy or irregular periods are affecting your plans or clothing choices, a visit to your women's health provider may offer relief. Although hysterectomy (removing the uterus) is still an option for bleeding issues, there are a number of non-surgical and minimally invasive surgical options also available. My goal is to offer the biggest improvement with the least intervention.

Can leaking urine be a normal part of getting older?

Yes. One in three women will have issues with urinary incontinence or pelvic organ prolapse (such as "a fallen bladder"). Pelvic organ prolapse can be quite problematic for many women, greatly restricting normal activities. When urinary incontinence (unintentional urine leaking) becomes a problem that affects your life, it's important to know there are surgical and nonsurgical options to reduce symptoms. At Winona Health, we may use physical therapy and other nonsurgical interventions or, in some cases, surgery to improve symptoms of pelvic issues.



Melissa Richards, MD, Winona Health Women's Health Center

Is it normal for my periods to restart after menopause?

No. That's not normal. The definition of menopause is one year without a period with the average age of menopause being 51 years old. Any bleeding or brown/pink discharge should be considered abnormal. It is so important to see your health care provider for further evaluation. Postmenopausal bleeding is often due to a noncancerous, benign reason. However, the presence of bleeding can be the first symptom of uterine cancer. Most uterine cancers diagnosed in an early stage have an excellent prognosis. Noncancerous causes of postmenopausal bleeding also require treatment (often simple treatment) to alleviate symptoms.

A good start to protecting your health and living life to the fullest is finding a health care provider you're comfortable enough with to ask anything.

Melissa Richards, MD, cares for women in the Winona Health Women's Health Center along with two OB/GYN physician partners, a women's health nurse practitioner, a certified nurse midwife and primary care providers with a special interest in women's health. For more information, visit www.winonahealth.org or call 507-457-7701.



Law Office of Heidi Eglash and Edward Jones Host Retirement Seminar

Attorney Heidi Eglash and Amy Stodola of Edward Jones will host a comprehensive seminar called "Revitalizing Retirement: Keys to Building & Maintaining Your Successful Retirement and Estate Plan." Participants will learn about topics such as "Providing for Your Health & Well-being," "Will I Have Enough?," "Preserving & Protecting Your Assets" and "Creating Your Legacy." Join Eglash and Stodola at Cabin Coffee in downtown La Crosse from 8:30 to 10 a.m. on April 2 and May 7 to learn how to prepare yourself financially for a successful retirement.



Hear, Here Launches April 12

La Crosse is a very special place with a rich history, which is why UW-La Crosse historians are calling for stories about downtown La Crosse's past and present through the Hear, Here project that is set to launch April 12. Join local history lovers, Downtown Mainstreet and UW-La Crosse for the official launch party on Sunday, April 12, 2-6 p.m., at the Pamperin Tobacco Company Building at 115 S. Second St., La Crosse, featuring storyteller Michael Scott, the band Seesaw and the Hear, Here voices. Then, look for signs to be posted at various downtown locations and listen to the stories linked to them—or record your own via mobile phone or www.hearherelacrosse.org.



New Interior Design Service and Store Come to La Crosse

Practically Posh and Let's Imagine Interior Design are now open inside the Great Big Outlet at 2815 Losey Blvd. S. in La Crosse.

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A NEW TAKE ON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**Couleecap's CO.STARTERS program
helps entrepreneurs take the next step.**

BY ANDREA CULLETO
Contributed photos

What do a pet services company and an environmentally friendly bulk-goods store have in common? It turns out, a lot more than you'd think. Businesses as diverse as these are discovering their similarities and advancing their expertise with CO.STARTERS.

CO.STARTERS is the new business development program of Couleecap, a nonprofit organization that helps low-income families in the Coulee Region. According to Andrew Londre, Couleecap's Business and Income Developer, "Many people begin the program with just an idea. Others come to take their business to the next level or in a new direction."

A collaborative approach

Couleecap has been offering business development services for years, but the CO.STARTER approach is new. Rather than focusing on a business plan, the nine-week CO.STARTER program vets and establishes an entrepreneur's business concept, priming it for success.

Under the guidance of established business owners, participants work together to examine their ideas, evaluate consumer need and craft an intentional response. “The CO.STARTER program is hands-on,” explains Londre. “People are working as a group, together. It’s not a lecture. It’s collaborative.”

This new approach is turning out to be extremely effective. “Two thousand people have done CO.STARTERS in the United States, and 1,700 businesses have started as a result,” Londre points out. Even more impressively, “graduates of the program are enjoying a 70 percent success rate after the first two years. The success rate for business startups without CO.STARTERS is nowhere near that, with only 10 to 15 percent of new businesses surviving past their second anniversary.”

Taking that step

What makes CO.STARTERS so successful? “Not assuming that your business is a great idea from the start,” says Londre. “That’s why the failure rate is so huge. Most people don’t test their assumptions first. We work with entrepreneurs, so their business idea is tested and verified.”

Mary Larson, a CO.STARTERS group leader, can attest to the value of this new program. “CO.STARTERS is extremely beneficial for a new business owner in that it has allowed me to re-evaluate everyday business practices and ensure that we are on the right track not only to make a living, but to invest primarily in our number one asset, our customers.” She speaks from a place of experience, as co-owner of Full Circle Supply, which provides bulk, natural, refillable

personal care and cleaning products in order to reduce plastic waste in our community.

Taylor Harris, owner of Taylor’d Pet Services, is one of 23 entrepreneurs (twice the anticipated number) participating in Couleecap’s first, highly sought-after CO.STARTERS class. She is particularly interested in the opportunity to learn from and grow alongside other entrepreneurs like herself. “I love finding fun ways to work with other businesses,” Harris explains.

Building a business community

Londre sees this as one of the key benefits of the CO.STARTERS program. “There are always some really amazing synergies that come out of it. You might have an artist sitting next to a software developer, each lending their varied expertise to each other. It enriches everyone.”

Participants are energized. Larson enthusiastically explains, “I am so excited for the opportunity CO.STARTERS brings local, aspiring entrepreneurs. Encouraging and supporting local business is essential to a vibrant, successful community.”

Harris happily adds, “I am most excited about learning how to be a better business owner. I know that CO.STARTERS is a great, fun way to do that.”

For more information on Couleecap’s CO.STARTERS program, visit their website at www.couleeco.com/costarters. 

Andrea Culletto is a freelance journalist living in the Coulee Region. Her writing can also be found at AndreaCulletto.wordpress.com.

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A Pinch of This, a Pinch of That

Add flavor to your meals with herbs—here's how.

BY DEBORAH NERUD

Contributed photos

Recipes analyzed by Gundersen Health System registered dietitians



Seedlings emerge at Knapp Creek Farm and CSA. Herbs started from seedlings will flourish in a pot indoors or a small garden plot outside.

One of the easiest and healthiest ways to add flavor to your cooking is with herbs. Salsa wouldn't be the same without the crisp taste of cilantro, rosemary rounds out garlic potatoes and fresh basil puts homemade tomato sauce over the top.

"Anyone can grow herbs," says Andrea Kane of Knapp Creek Farm and CSA. "All you need is a little pot of dirt, a windowsill and some seeds or starter plants." While most of the herbs the Kane family raises for their CSA live in the ground on their 36-acre Westby farm, Kane says that "you don't need a lot of plants to get the full and delicious benefits from fresh-grown herbs. One or two plants will do it."

Cooking with Herbs—A Handy Guide

Basil—Very aromatic with a slight licorice flavor. Great in any tomato dish, pesto and bruschetta; sprinkle on pasta salads or blend with butter for a tasty spread for corn or bread.

Cilantro—Pungent, herbaceous flavor and scent. The perfect addition to Mexican and Asian fare, especially complementary in spicy foods, cilantro also pairs well with curry. Use cilantro in tomato-, chile- and fruit-based salsas used on toppings on chicken or fish.

Dill—Light and feathery with a strong herb flavor. Best used fresh to flavor sauces, fish and pickles. Very complementary to potatoes, egg salad or chicken salad. It also makes a great mustard dill sauce for salmon.

Parsley—Light and grassy flavor. Can be paired with most recipes and adds some life and zest to typical meals. Primary ingredient in gremolata—a finely chopped flat-leaf parsley, garlic and lemon zest served over your favorite meat.

Marjoram—Flowery and woody. Great addition to marinades, sauces and vinaigrettes. Toss with olive oil and rub on any meat and grill.

Laurie Stiers, MSN, FNP-BC, and owner of HerbsAllAround on La Crosse's North Side, recommends beginning an herb garden with "any of the kitchen spices, which can also be medicinal," such as sage, mint, rosemary, marjoram, savory, oregano, basil (or any of its varieties), parsley or cilantro.

And if you're puzzled about how to use them once you've grown your windowsill crop, use these suggestions provided by the produce experts at People's Food Co-op in La Crosse. Then, try your hand at the recipes that follow.

Oregano—Robust with a slight lemony flavor, pairs well with Mexican and Mediterranean dishes. Also great in marinades and homemade salad dressings including homemade vinaigrette made with good oil, red-wine vinegar and lemon juice. Toss vinaigrette with fresh greens, feta, tomato, kalamata olives and red onion.

Rosemary—Strong with a pine-like flavor. Rub on beef or chicken before grilling or roasting, or stuff in a chicken with a quartered lemon and garlic cloves. Also pairs well with homemade mashed or roasted potatoes.

Sage—Pine-like flavor with some eucalyptus notes. Common herb for a Thanksgiving turkey. Sage can also be used in the following rub: chopped sage leaves, crushed black peppercorns, olive oil and sea salt. Rub on pork and grill.

Mint—Intense spearmint flavor. Add into tea, water or mix in fruit salad. Also complementary to lamb, peas and chocolate.

Thyme—Pungent, woody flavor. Great in sauces, sprinkled on meat and seafood for grilling or used whole when roasting beef or pork in slow cookers.

Chives—Delicate onion flavor. Add to a fried egg; sprinkle over your favorite soup or baked potato.

"YOU GET UP" TEA

Laurie Stiers, HerbsAllAround

Serving size: 1 cup

- 1 tsp. finely crumbled dried calendula flowers
- 1 tsp. crumbled dried catnip leaf
- 1 tsp. dried chamomile buttons (flowers)
- 2 cups filtered water

Simmer herbs in water, covered, until ingredients have completely softened; strain and serve.

0 calories, 0g fat, 0g protein, 0g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 0mg sodium.

BARLEY, FETA AND WALNUT SALAD

Knapp Creek Farm

Serving size: ½ cup

- 1¼ cups pearly barley
- 1 cup walnut halves
- 3 T fresh lemon juice
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ tsp. finely grated lemon zest

Salt and freshly ground pepper

- 1 cup packed flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- ½ cup raisins (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°. In a large saucepan of boiling salted water, cook the barley over high heat until tender, about 25 minutes. Drain barley and rinse under cold water to cool thoroughly. Drain again, shaking out the excess water.

Meanwhile, spread the walnuts in a pie plate and toast for 10-12 minutes, until golden and fragrant. Transfer to a cutting board and let cool. Coarsely chop the nuts.

In a large bowl, whisk the lemon juice with the olive oil, garlic and lemon zest and season with salt and pepper. Add the barley, parsley and feta cheese and toss gently. Add the toasted walnuts and raisins (if using), toss again and serve. The salad can be refrigerated overnight.

250 calories, 16g fat, 6g protein, 25g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 160mg sodium.

GARLIC SCAPE PESTO

Bjorn Bergman, Viroqua Food Co-op Outreach Coordinator

Serving size: 1 tsp.

- 2 cups garlic scapes, roughly chopped
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup walnuts
- ½-¾ cup Driftless Organics Sunflower Oil
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of black pepper

Add garlic scapes, Parmesan, walnuts, salt and black pepper to food processor and pulse until well blended. With processor running, slowly add ½ cup sunflower oil. Once added, stop the processor and scrape sides to make sure all ingredients are incorporated.

Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. If pesto is too thick, add more oil while processor is running.

Process pesto once more until it is creamy, approximately 1 minute.

35 calories, 3g fat, 1g protein, 1g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 10mg sodium.

GARLIC & HERB BUTTER

Knapp Creek Farm

Serving size: 1 tsp.

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 large garlic clove, pressed
- 2/3 cup chopped fresh basil
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ tsp. salt

Stir together butter, garlic, basil, parsley and salt until well blended. Use immediately or cover and chill up to 3 days. For longer storage, form into a log or press into ice cube trays, wrap tightly with plastic wrap and freeze up to 1 month. Delicious on steak, veggies, rolls or pasta. All the herbs can be changed and the options are limitless!

25 calories, 3g fat, 0g protein, 0g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 45mg sodium.

Deborah Nerud, an herb grower and home gardener for 8 years, gets ridiculously excited when the Seed Savers packets show up at People's Food Co-op every spring; she is raising two kids and a 7-year old thyme plant in La Crosse.



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Steppin' Out

Put your best foot forward with fresh spring trends.

Photos by Jen Towner Photography



Whatever the occasion, take the next step in unforgettable footwear from the Coulee Region's favorite shoe sources. From custom-designed classy comfort (AGL Sport Mule from Touch of Class) to show-stopping color (Michael Kors Charm sling from Macy's) or high-performance favorites to get you up and running (Hoka Clifton from Grand Bluff Running), these spring must-haves will take you to the next level.

Michael Kors MK Flex pumps, \$99, **Macy's**, Valley View Mall

Classy

From left: 143 Girl Owanda pump, \$39, **Macy's**, Valley View Mall; Johnston & Murphy Katy Cut Out Ghillie, \$225, **Touch of Class**, downtown La Crosse; Aquatalia Queena wedge sandal, \$395, **Touch of Class**, downtown La Crosse



From left: Hoka Clifton, \$130; Brooks Ghost 7, \$120; Mizuno WaveRider 17, \$120, all from **Grand Bluff Running**, downtown La Crosse

Athletic



Casual

Lauren by Ralph Lauren Charla espadrille wedge sandal, \$69; Sperry Top-Sider Seacoast sneaker, \$60; Kenneth Cole Reaction Pro-Time flat, \$69; all from **Macy's**, Valley View Mall



From left: Attilo Guisti Leombruni (AGL) Sport Mule, \$300, **Touch of Class**, downtown La Crosse; Michael Kors Charm sling platform pumps, \$145, **Macy's**, Valley View Mall; INC Crescente5 two-piece flat, \$79.50, **Macy's**, Valley View Mall

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2015 La Crosse Go Red Executive Leadership Team

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Heart disease is the #1 killer of women. Coulee Region Women magazine is committed to making women aware of the importance of heart health and making your journey a healthy one. The Executive Leadership Team of the American Heart Association's La Crosse Go Red Luncheon has made it their mission as well to help fight heart disease. Please join us at the luncheon to learn how to make your heart journey a healthy one.

La Crosse Go Red for Women Luncheon

June 17, 2015
The Cargill Room at the Waterfront

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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, Pogreba Restaurant, 5:30 p.m. Linda O'Connell, linda@take5productions.net.

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., 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, Fayze'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, 608-526-2127, dlee@coverainsurance.com.

Women's Alliance of La Crosse (WAL) 2nd Thurs. of each month, noon, The Waterfront Restaurant, Patti Bartsch, 608-799-8326, nu@naturallyunbridled.com.

CALENDAR EVENTS

Mar. 18-Apr. 4, Photos with the Easter Bunny, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Apr. 2, Revitalizing Retirement: Keys to Building & Maintaining Your Successful Retirement and Estate Plan, 8:30-10 a.m., Cabin Coffee, La Crosse.

Apr. 2-4, Easter EGG-stravaganza, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thurs., 8:30-10 a.m. Fri.-Sat., Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-reg/pre-pay required, www.funmuseum.org.

Apr. 3-4, Easter Gift Show, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Apr. 4, Coe Swindell, 7 p.m., La Crosse Center, www.lacrossecenter.com.

Apr. 4, Michael Martin Murphey Concert, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, www.thepumphouse.org.

Apr. 9, MISSION: Autism, La Crosse Area Autism Foundation, 6-8 p.m., Radisson Hotel Conference

Room, La Crosse, www.laxautism.org, support@laxautism.org.

Apr. 10 & 24, Night Out at the Museum, 5:30-8 p.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse, www.funmuseum.org.

Apr. 11, *In One Basket*, 11 a.m., & 1 p.m., Frederick Theatre, Morris Hall, UW-La Crosse.

Apr. 11, Platinum Edition Celebration 2015 Variety Show, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts Center, La Crosse.

Apr. 11, Harmonious Wall Concert, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, www.thepumphouse.org.

Apr. 11, Rockin' for Autism, La Crosse Area Autism Foundation, 8 p.m., Kelsey's Bar, Tomah, bus service 7:15 at SNAP Fitness Bluffsides, www.laxautism.org, support@laxautism.org.

Apr. 11-12, Omni Center Spring Gift and Craft Show, Onalaska Omni Center.

Apr. 12, Hear, Here Launch Party, 2-6 p.m., Pamperin Tobacco Company Building, www.hearherelacrosse.org.

Apr. 14, The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts Center, La Crosse.

Apr. 16, Earth Fair, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Myrick Park, La Crosse.

Apr. 17-19, River Trail Cycles Annual Spring Sale, www.rivertrailcycles.com.

Apr. 17-19, Mother's Day Gift Show, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Apr. 17-19 & 24-26, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 7:30 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., Viterbo Fine Arts Center, La Crosse.

Apr. 18, Ball in the House, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts Center, La Crosse.

Apr. 18, Old School Variety Show, 7:30 p.m., Heider Center, West Salem, www.heidercenter.org.

Apr. 19, *The Berenstain Bears Live!*, 3 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts Center, La Crosse.

Apr. 22, Korean Percussion Ensemble Concert, 7:30 p.m., Annett Recital Hall, UW-La Crosse Center for the Arts.

Apr. 24-26, Apr. 30-May 2, *The Tempest*, 7:30 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., Toland Theatre, UW-La Crosse Center for the Arts.

Apr. 28, La Crosse Area Epilepsy Education & Support Group Meeting, English Lutheran Church, janemeyer@wisc.edu.

May 1, Festival Foods Grandad Half Marathon, 8 a.m., Grandad Bluff, La Crosse.

May 1-2, Living Your Life as Spiritual Practice conference, 1 p.m. Fri.-6 p.m. Sat., Franciscan Spirituality Center, La Crosse, www.fscenter.org.

May 2, Kentucky Derby Jubilee, HorseSense for Special Riders, \$35, 2-6 p.m., Freight House, La Crosse, info@hssr.org, 608-317-0714.

May 2, Missoula Children's Theatre Presents *Black Beard the Pirate*, 1 & 4 p.m., Heider Center, West Salem, www.heidercenter.org.

May 2, Willy Porter Concert, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, www.thepumphouse.org.

May 2, La Crosse Symphony presents Springtime in Paris, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo Fine Arts Center.

May 6, Blood Drive, Center Court, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

May 7, Revitalizing Retirement: Keys to Building & Maintaining Your Successful Retirement and Estate Plan, 8:30-10 a.m., Cabin Coffee, La Crosse.

May 8-10, 14-16, & 22-24, Jesus Christ Superstar, 7:30 p.m. Fri.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., La Crosse Community Theatre, www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

May 9, Who Will Be Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?, 10 a.m.-noon, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

May 10-17, Summer Fun Show, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

May 21-24, Carnival, JC Penny Parking Lot, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.



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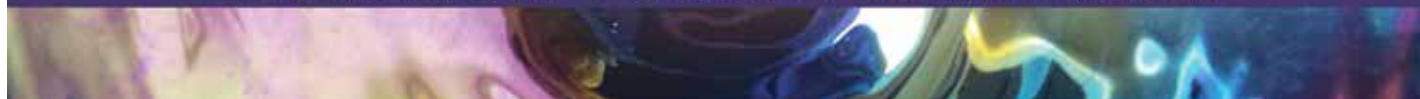
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