

Coulee Region Women

AREA HOME AND LIVING MAGAZINE

Bridging **GENERATIONS** WHO ARE THE DERBY GIRLS?

*Miss Wisconsin
Connects Generations*

Common Ground at
Root Note café

Like Mother, Like Daughter

7 Lessons to Live By

APRIL/MAY 2010

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TMJ stands for Temporomandibular Joints.

These are two joints that connect your jaw to your skull and when they are out of place, they can cause:

- Clicking or popping of the jaw joints
- Cracked Teeth
- Pain in or around the jaw joints
- Locking or limited opening
- Severely Worn Teeth
- Headaches, Pain around the eyes
- Dizziness
- Ear Ringing
- Clenching or grinding
- Neck and shoulder pain

Muscle Spasms go hand in hand with the displaced joint. Because the nerves and muscles are very complex, when they are in spasm in the jaw joint area, the problems can extend into other areas of the body. It is for this reason that the symptoms masquerade as so many other conditions, making people travel from doctor to doctor in search of relief. It is estimated that 45 to 50 million Americans suffer from one or more of the above symptoms and many never think to seek a neuromuscular dentist for help.

How can the position of my teeth affect the jaw joint?

Each jaw joint is like a ball and socket. When this joint functions properly, a thin cartilage disc moves smoothly between the ball and socket. This thin disc acts like a cushion allowing the TMJ joint to move smoothly. Each disc is held in place and guided by a muscle. If your bite is not right, the joint is actually pulled out of alignment and usually the disc is pulled forward. Since the disc is no longer acting like a cushion, the joint itself now rubs against the bony socket. Mild displacement causes popping/ clicking noises in the joint and more severe displacement causes pain and eventual permanent damage to the joint.

So an unstable bite can cause jaw joint displacement, muscle strain and pain. When the jaw joint is displaced for an extended time, the body begins to compensate and adapt by involving the muscles of the neck, back, and often the arms, pelvis, and legs.



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Pictured on the cover and above is Susan Crutchfield, English department chair at UW-La Crosse and skater for Mississippi Valley Mayhem. Hair by Bellissimo—Jane Olson and makeup by Mary Kay—Trudy Swenson
Photo on cover and above taken by Janet Mootz Photography
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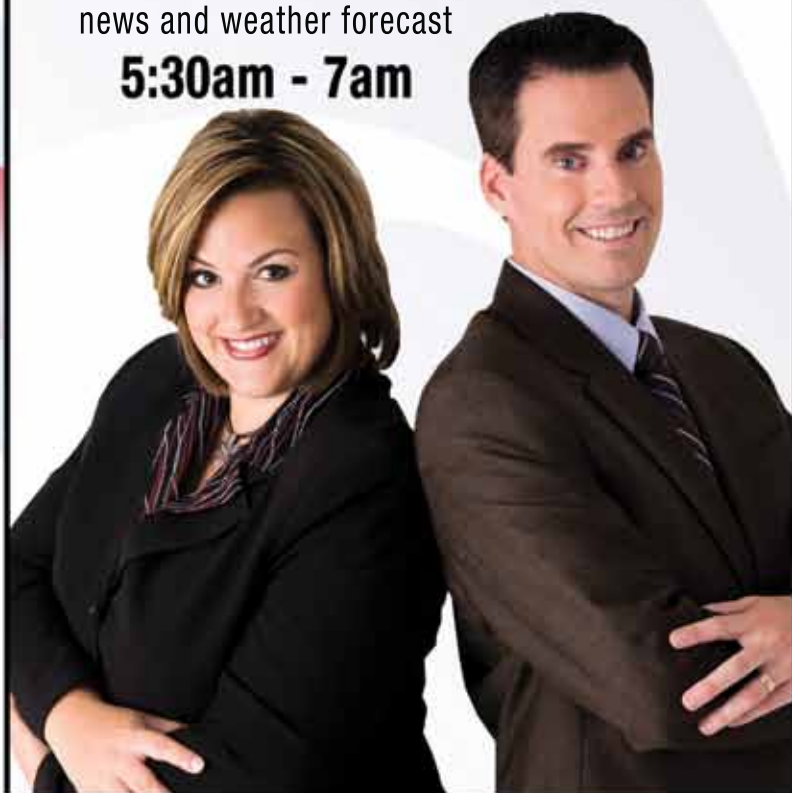
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AREA HOME AND HEALTHY LIVING MAGAZINE

ISSUE 49, VOLUME 9, NUMBER 1
APRIL/MAY 2010

PUBLISHERS
Diane Raaum, Doug Solinger

EDITOR
Betty Christiansen

DESIGNER
Renee Chrz, Innovative Graphics, LLC

MARKETING ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVES

Carol Schank
Claire Ristow-Seib

WEB MASTER
Mader Web Design LLC

PROOFREADING
Mary Malahy

PHOTOGRAPHY
Janet Mootz

DISTRIBUTION
Citywide Marketing Services, L.L.C.

Coulee Region Women is published six times per year by Coulee Region Communications, L.L.C.
816 2nd Avenue S., Suite 600, Onalaska, WI 54650.
Subscriptions available for \$17.95 per year (six issues).

Send check to the address above.
All unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
Coulee Region Women assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials.

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Coulee Region Women magazine does not necessarily endorse the claims or contents of advertising or editorial materials.
Printed at Crescent Printing Company, Onalaska, WI.
Printed in the U.S.A.

For advertising information
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In my bedroom, I have a dresser that belonged to my Czech great-grandmother, Philomena Trutnovsky. It's made of a richly grained oak and topped with a mirror clouded with age, and it only recently came into my possession, after my sister, who lovingly refinished it, decided it was time to pass it along.

An inanimate object can hold a surprising number of stories. Every time I walk into my room, every time I open a drawer to select a scarf or a sweater, I am reminded of Philomena's stories—which are also my own. A stencil on the back of the mirror bearing the words "Scotland, South Dakota" reveals that this was a piece bought after she emigrated from Bohemia, during a happy stay in a Czech community on the Great Plains.

Then, the dresser accompanied her and her small family—including my young grandmother—to a farm her gambling husband won in a card game. Located deep in the woods of northern Wisconsin, the "farm" consisted of nothing more than a barn, and the move to it set off a long era of hard times. The stories that follow of her, my grandmother and great-aunts, and my mother and her siblings could fill a book.

Hearing these stories, only recently being told, I realize how much I am like my forebears. I also realize how much I have to learn from them, and I listen to them closely, picking up clues about my heritage and myself. The dresser stands as a solid reminder of where—and whom—I come from. We have talked about re-silvering that old mirror, but I don't think we will. I prefer to gaze into the cloudy, dappled surface and think of all the women—my women—who have seen their own reflections there.

Our theme this issue is "Bridging Generations," and in it you'll find stories about young women, older women and women in between—as well as activities that bring them together. Their common denominators range from cross-generational volunteering to career choices to roller derby (yes, roller derby). Here, we also profile women who have reached a hand out across the generations in generous and tender ways, whether opening a home to an ailing parent or creating opportunities for children and seniors to interact. You'll meet up-and-coming entrepreneurs as well as retired women who won't let age stop them. And we'll all benefit from the valuable life lessons shared by one remarkable woman reflecting on her younger years—as a Nazi resistor in World War II.

As you read the stories shared in this issue, I also invite you to peer into the cloudy mirror of your own heritage. Who are the women looking back at you? And what stories are they longing to tell?

Betty

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THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND

Join *Coulee Region Women* on Saturday, April 17, to celebrate friendship and benefit the

Women's Fund of the La Crosse Community Foundation at the seventh annual Thank You for Being a Friend event. The event will take place 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Drugan's Castle Mound in Holmen, on Highway 35.

The Women's Fund exists to enrich the lives of women and girls so they can do the same. Cheryl Hanson, of the International Friendship Gardens Executive Committee, will speak about the gardens and the six Sister Cities they represent. The afternoon will also include a hors d'oeuvre luncheon, entertainment, silent auction and door prizes. Tickets are \$20 each or \$35 for two. They are available at Travel Leaders/Goli's Avenues of Travel, Grounded Specialty Coffee, Honig's Gift Shop and Howes Diamond Jewelers in downtown La Crosse, Sunshine Floral in north La Crosse and Drugan's Castle Mound in Holmen.

La Crosse's Sister Cities are Bantry, Ireland; Dubna, Russia; Epinal, France; Førde, Norway; Friedberg, Germany and Louyang, China. These relationships are intended to promote diversity in health care, education, sports, the arts, government agencies, public policy and business.



WOMEN BUILD WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Ladies, Habitat for Humanity needs you! Join women around the region for the chance to participate in the La Crosse area's second annual Women Build Week. Women of all skill levels are welcome. Last year, more than 7,000 women participated at more than 200 Habitat for Humanity sites around the country. The building will take place on May 1, 7 and 8 at 914 Hope Court in Holmen. Men are welcome to participate as well, but not with the building. Instead, they may provide snacks and lunch for the volunteers. If you're interested, please contact Rachael at volunteer@habitatlacrosse.org or 608-785-2373 to ensure there will be a spot for you.

CELEBRATE NORWEGIAN HISTORY WITH FAMILY FUN

Syttende Mai marks Norway's independence from Sweden and will be celebrated in Spring Grove, Minn., and Westby, Wis., May 14-16. Westby's ongoing events include arts and crafts tents, a carnival, woodcarving and Norwegian baking demonstrations. Friday will feature a kickoff breakfast and an old-time music show. On Saturday there will be a kiddie parade, bike tour, walk/run marathon, and Saturday night entertainment. The festivities will conclude on Sunday with a car show, parade and church dinners. For more information, visit www.westbywi.com.

Spring Grove's events will include a kickoff banquet on May 8. Saturday, May 15, will include a breakfast followed by a parade at 1 p.m. Other events include Mutton Busting for kids, a Buddy Holly tribute band, crafts fair, flea market, soapbox derby, motocross and a classic car show. Admission buttons are \$7. Go to www.sgsyttendemai.org to learn more.



HONOR LOCAL HEROES WITH THE FREEDOM HONOR FLIGHT

On May 8, the Freedom Honor Flight will honor the sacrifices veterans have made by flying these heroes to Washington, D.C., to visit their war memorials. The public is encouraged to see the heroes off at Colgan Air (2709 Fanta Reed Rd., La Crosse) and come back in the evening for a celebration at Colgan Air. The flight should land around 9 p.m. The group hopes to give all veterans who are willing and able a chance to see the memorial for the war in which they served. They are starting with World War II veterans, giving priority to terminally ill veterans regardless of time of service. The group hopes to eventually expand to other veterans. Those who wish to contribute to this cause are encouraged to visit www.freedomhonorflight.org/donate.php or mail donations to P.O. Box 505, La Crosse, WI 54602.



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In the early years of marriage, women are the relationship caretakers. They carefully monitor their relationships to make sure there is enough closeness and connection. If not, women will do what they can to try to fix things. If their husbands aren't responsive, women become extremely unhappy and start complaining about everything under the sun...things that need to get done around the house, responsibilities pertaining to the children, how free time is spent, and so on. Unfortunately, when women complain, men generally retreat and the marriage deteriorates even more.

After years of trying to successfully improve things, a woman eventually surrenders and convinces herself that change isn't possible. She ends up believing there's absolutely nothing she can do because everything she's tried has not worked. That's when she begins to carefully map out the logistics of what she considers to be the inevitable - getting a divorce.

While she is planning her escape, she no longer tries to improve her relationship or modify her partner's behavior in any way. She resigns herself to living in silent desperation until "D Day."

Unfortunately, her husband views his wife's silence as an indication that "everything is fine." After all, the "nagging" has ceased. That's why, when she finally breaks the news of the impending divorce, her shell-shocked partner replies, "I had no idea you were unhappy."

Then, even when her husband undergoes real and lasting changes, it's often too late. The same impenetrable wall that for years shielded her from pain now prevents her from truly recognizing his genuine willingness to change. The relationship is now in the danger zone.

If you are a woman who fits this description, please don't give up. I have seen so many men make amazing changes once they truly understand how unhappy their wives have been. Sometimes men are slow to catch on, but when they do, their determination to turn things around can be astounding. I have seen many couples strengthen their marriage successfully even though it seemed an impossible feat. Give your husband another chance. Let him prove to you that things can be different. Keep your family together. Divorce is not a simple answer. It causes unimaginable pain and suffering. It takes an enormous amount of energy to face each day. Why not take this energy and learn some new skills and make your marriage what you've wanted it to be for so long?

If you're a man reading this and your wife has been complaining or nagging, thank her. It means she still cares about you and your marriage. She's working hard to make your love stronger. Spend time with her. Talk to her. Compliment her. Pay attention. Take her seriously. Show her that she is the most important thing in the world to you.

Perhaps your wife is no longer open to your advances because she's a soon to be walk-away wife. If so, don't crowd her. Don't push. Be patient. If you demonstrate you can change and she still has eyes...and a heart, you might just convince her to give your marriage another try.

For additional support, give us a call right away at 608.785.7000 x21 for an appointment with a Licensed Professional Counselor or Marriage & Family Therapist.

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SKATE TECHTONICS

Ideas about women, age and sport shift in a new age
of roller derby.

by **MARTHA KEEFFE**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Roller skating: for some women in our community, it's a passion, a priority right up there with family and jobs. And this is not the typical glide-around-the-rink type of skating, either, but rather muscle-burning sprints that require a mouth guard, nerve and plenty of sweat. These women know how to skate, and when they do, they skate hard, fast and with a purpose.

Wearing kneepads, wrist guards and helmets, they jostle, outmaneuver and race for points against their competition. When they fall, they fall hard but recover quickly. They make hopping over a downed skater seem routine even while wearing fishnet stockings or a pair of neon striped knee-highs. And if a skater manages to come out of the fray unscathed, that's a bonus.

"It's not the typical sport," says Marghie Arttus, aka "Hiss'n Kitten" and vice president for the La Crosse Skating Sirens. "And I like that."

Welcome to world of women's flat track roller derby.

So what exactly is roller derby?

First of all, this is not the roller derby of the 1970s, stresses Arttus. Back then, women skated on a slanted rink, where openly sordid activity was the draw. "In the '70s, skaters would ham it up. They would punch each other and pull hair," says Amanda Boucher, "The Ambusher" and cofounder of the Mississippi Valley Mayhem. "Now the focus is on athletics and community."

Set on a flat track, two five-player teams compete in a "bout," or series of races. Skaters work together to score points via their "jammer" as the team's blockers and pivot form a pack in order



Women like Sabrina Scott make hopping over a downed skater seem routine even while wearing fishnet stockings or a pair of neon striped knee-highs.

to stop the opposing team's jammer from advancing. Once a jammer initially works her way through the pack, she is free to score one point for each opposing player she passes while dodging legs, ducking under arms or getting propelled forward through the jam by a teammate.



Left and right: The Skating Sirens are one of the two women's flat track roller derby teams in La Crosse. **Center:** Marghie Arttus reaches out to a new generation of roller derby fans through the Skating Sirens Kids Club.

"Hitting with hips and shoulders is permitted, though players tend to use more strategy and positional blocking to keep opponents from scoring," says Melanie Larivee, aka "SkinKitty," a hospice care worker, mother of seven, jammer and president of the La Crosse Skating Sirens. "But it's still very physical with constant hitting. And we do like to brag about our bruises."

Even so, there are enough women out there willing to take a hit to fill the rosters of two local, independent, nonaffiliated teams.

Who are these women, anyway?

"If you took a sampling of the women in our league," says Boucher, "You'd find college students, stay-at-home moms and professionals. It's fun to see all them all come together as a team."

Teachers, hairstylists and even a certified public accountant round out the mix of players, with some of them sporting tattoos and piercings while others opt for pullovers and blouses. "We have some women who are really quite quiet," adds Boucher, "and others who are boisterous. It provides a way for the shy ones to come out of their shells and a venue for those who are less inhibited to entertain their fans."

And considering that skating abilities range from novice to expert and ages run from 19 to 40-something, it's amazing how well these women mesh, especially when such a wide variety of personalities have the makings of a sleepover nightmare.

"But that's what makes it so awesome," says Larivee. "You can take two completely different people, share a unique interest and become friends."

In addition, women of all sizes, body shapes and fitness levels fill the derby stage and skate unabashed, proud of showing off what they've got. "Even among the elite teams, this sport has the most diverse body shapes and sizes of any other women's sport I know of," says Susan Crutchfield, aka "Bride of Spankenstein," who in addition to playing blocker for the Mayhem chairs the English department at UW-La Crosse. "And we're proud of our big thighs and booties. We need them for hip checks and booty blocks!"

"Roller derby takes an attitude, not a size," comments Arttus. "I have met a lot of derby players that are super small to very large. It takes the desire to want to skate and become a great derby player. A lot of people that I have talked to were nervous before their first bout, but after the adrenaline kicks in, they forget about their fears."

Kristie Nystrom, aka "Girlie Bash'em," a blocker for the Mayhem who homeschools her children, ages 7, 9 and 11, agrees. "To be in roller derby you need to be a little bit crazy. Just not certifiably so."

It's all about desire

After seeing the Mayhem skate at the Omni Center in Onalaska, Nystrom was instantly hooked. "Yeah!" she recalls saying. "I totally want to do that." Desire

overrode naiveté, and though she hadn't been on skates since she was a kid, she had an attitude that wouldn't let her give up. "I didn't want to be the old lady who came to practice once, then quit," she says.

That dedication to the sport and to the people who support it is what keeps the wheels of roller derby spinning, despite the physical demands, weekend travel and personal expense. "I'm like the injury of the team," admits Larivee, who has not only had her share of bruises, but has suffered a head injury and a broken nose. "I am more aggressive, but with the Sirens I can be competitive, I can be myself. I love the camaraderie. It's like being part of one large family."

And because that family extends to spouses, children and friends as well as the community, derby teams strive to strike a balance between the gritty derby attitude and the sensibilities of the community. "I have to admit I like the spectacle of it all and the cheekiness of the wordplay in the names," says Crutchfield, but she also recognizes that she is a role model for her students and younger teammates.

"It's part of our mission to be family friendly," says Nystrom, when asked how teams respond to negative reactions about derby attire, stage names and, frankly, the idea of women on skates bashing into one another. "We understand the community we live in," she says. "It's hard to be a role model if you are hanging out of your outfit, and it's hard to be taken legitimately if you're questionable."

Therefore, emphasis is placed on being visible, active participants in parades, festivals and charitable events such as Bowl for Kids' Sake, Operation Homefront and the Polar Plunge. The Sirens have even started the area's first junior roller derby league for girls 9 to 17. In exchange, the exposure has significantly increased interest in the sport of roller derby, giving women an unexpected place to meet new people, boost their fitness levels and raise their self-esteem. Says Nystrom about her newfound passion, "For sure, my life would be a lot less interesting."

For bout schedules, or to find out how you can skate, visit www.mississippivalleymayhem.com and www.skatingsirens.com. ❀



Mississippi Valley Mayhem jammer Kayla Wagner works her way through the pack. The Mayhem has recently been accepted to the Apprentice Program of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association, the sports' international governing body.

Martha Keffe lives and writes in La Crosse and welcomes any chance to write about (and try!) offbeat topics.

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Miss Wisconsin's platform is changing lives.

by **HEIDI OVERSON**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Imagine yourself as a little girl playing dress-up, putting on your mother's best dress, her lipstick and perfume, and her high-heeled shoes. You may have worn sparkling clip-on earrings and a sash made out of toilet paper, water-colored with "Miss America" or "Miss Wisconsin," badly misspelled. You dreamed of being a princess—a royal, charming figure who waves, throws kisses and smiles at her adoring public.

Not many little girls grow to realize that dream, but Kristina Smaby, Miss Wisconsin 2009, has, and she is having the time of her life. Since the 23-year-old Holmen native was crowned Miss Wisconsin in June 2009, she has embarked on endless adventures,

representing the state with her charm, warm smile, enthusiasm, kindness and sincerity. With a natural ability to relate to people of all ages, Smaby has proven to be a good role model to all the children she has met. Most important to her, however, is the opportunity she's had to share and promote her personal platform, "Connecting Generations."

The beginning

Smaby never fathomed that when she started Connecting Generations in 2003, she would have such a wonderful opportunity to share it with so many people—statewide and nationally—as

Miss Wisconsin. Her intergenerational outreach program has been a lifelong journey. When she was in fifth grade, she spent time at the Alzheimer's home across the street from her house. She loved being with the residents and listening to their stories. When Smaby was in junior high, her mother chose to stay home to take care of her children and her own father, Don, who came to live with them. Smaby formed a very close relationship with her grandfather, and he became an exceptional part of her life. It was hard for Smaby when he passed away in 2000, but "it helped me realize at a very young age that life is a process," she says.

Smaby missed him terribly, but she was determined to do something in his memory. She wanted others to experience what she had: a special companionship, the opportunity to learn about another's life experiences and a deep and loving respect for elders. As a junior in high school, Smaby started Connecting Generations.

The fruit of her labor

Today, the program is still going strong. Children sign up to participate through Misty's Dance Studio in Onalaska, where Smaby used to teach dance. A variety show is put together, and the group travels to nursing homes, assisted living homes and Alzheimer's homes, as well as to civic events. When the group is done performing, they visit with the residents and elderly, and the bonds begin to form. There is a lot of laughter and hugging.

"The interactions that occur during these visits make everyone smile," says Smaby. "The moments that strike me the most are the simple moments that happen between an older adult and a child. If you're putting older adults into situations where there are children, they're invigorated by the kids' undeniable energy. They help each other draw it out."

Smaby also organized an intergenerational fair and an intergenerational prom, held at Viterbo University in April 2009, complete with a DJ, food, decorations, lights and prom royalty. More than 800 people attended, all dressed up and ready to dance. She hopes to hold another prom in the near future.

The success of the program and

the events encourages Smaby and the participants. Life lessons are being learned, but so much more is happening. "The children bloom," says Smaby. "They learn how to respect, how to have fun with someone older, and they learn confidence."

Dreaming even bigger

The enthusiasm shown by all involved has shown Smaby she is really on to something. Her dream is to open a national chain of intergenerational family support centers that provide integrated child and adult care. As a Viterbo student of business (she graduates in December 2010), she has already done research and completed essays on her goal, and she is very optimistic about her plans. She has received a lot of support and genuine interest from the people in the Coulee Region, which she is grateful for.

"There is a growing need for something different. So many adults don't want to go into a standard nursing home or assisted living place," says Smaby. "There are a growing number of multi-generational homes, too, mostly due to the economy. More adult day cares are needed as the baby boomers age. We need more options."

She plans on visiting the St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Milwaukee, where since 1999, older adults, people with special needs and children have been learning and growing together on a daily basis. The testimonies from parents and children are phenomenal; the life-changing experiences and forming of relationships can only be described as beautiful.

Smaby would like to see our society respect and care for our elders as other countries do. "Nursing homes in China, for example, are nonexistent. It is unheard of; they care (for) and honor their elders. In Hawaii, the Polynesian culture views the family as sacred. There is a universal connection they associate with each family member. Family is what life is all about."

Smaby has been asked many times why she cares so much. "It all comes back to my grandpa Don and what he instilled in my heart. That relationship is available to all of us," Smaby says. "I am proud of the success of my platform. While I love being Miss Wisconsin, I also love being known as 'that Connecting Generations girl.'"



While carrying out her duties as Miss Wisconsin 2009, Smaby looks forward to pursuing her platform—bringing children and the elderly together.

People cannot live without people. Smaby sees our society as being too busy. "Life is complex. There's the never-ending quest for more money and more technology. Children are consumed with their video games for hours on end. If we lived more simple lives, we would have less burdens and more peace. To stay simple means to slow down and take care of our own. We need to help our elders find a purpose. For elders, having children look at them and talk to them—even ask them for help with their homework—helps them feel like they have a purpose in life. In some cases, it gives them back the joy they were missing."

For now, Smaby will continue with her Miss Wisconsin duties, which she loves. But she knows that the end of her reign will come quickly. When the lights, glamour and busyness are over, she realizes that her platform—her heart—is what will remain, and that is the legacy she wants to leave behind. ♣

Heidi Overson currently has her 83-year-old mother living with her and her family. Her mother is flourishing, and Heidi knows it is due to the loving interaction she has on a daily basis with her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren.

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TUNING INTO YOUR TEEN

Communication is essential when raising tweens and teens.

Here's how to do it.

by **KIM SEIDEL**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



A vital key to raising your children well through their tween and teen years is keeping communication lines open. But when your child begins to focus more on friends than family, this can take extra—often Herculean—effort on your part. Local experts offer these tips for connecting with your child.

Set limits around technology

In the past few years, social media technology—cell phones with texting, e-mail, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and more has made parent-teen communication even more challenging.

Teens texting nearly 24/7 is common, and in some cases, “out of control,” says Fran Swift, parent educator at Family Resource Center in La Crosse. She advises that parents set limits on texting and use of other social media early on, before the habit becomes unmanageable.

Texting gives tweens and teens a quick and easy way to stay “in the loop” with their peer group. Think back to when you were a teen. You would probably agree that having a cell phone would’ve been much more fun than taking your turn on the family’s wall telephone. And while social networking brings some benefits to today’s teens, connecting them with friends and providing social awareness, teens need parents to set boundaries and model behavior in this area, too, Swift says.

Limits can include no phones after a certain time in the evening (so teens can’t text all night) and no phones during family functions (so teens actually speak with others around them in person).

“Reserving dinner as a time when even a parent doesn’t talk or

text on the phone is as important as not using the cell phone while driving kids in the car, shopping with them or other activities,” Swift says. “We need to model appropriate behaviors and attentive listening opportunities if we want conversation to happen with our teens.”

Use technology to your advantage to bond with your teen. “Texting or e-mailing him a note might be more meaningful and resonate more at that age than direct conversation,” Swift says. If you see that he responded kindly to his sister, for example, recognize that behavior with a friendly text message or e-mail.

Reserve time at the table

Even with busy schedules, family dinners provide some of the best times to engage in friendly dialogue, says Cindy Ericksen, a licensed marriage and family therapist at Stein Counseling and Consulting Services in Onalaska. “Family dinners help to maintain a sense of support, love and cohesion in a family,” she says.

Teen years can be scary for the child and parents. Eating together—without technology present—can help build stronger bonds and provide opportunities for communication, she adds.

“Have a conversation, not an interrogation, at the dinner table,” Swift says. Both women suggest talking about light current events, rather than a difficult homework assignment. Use news of the day or hobbies as a springboard for conversation.

Know when to talk

Knowing when to talk to your teen is important, Swift says. Studies show that teens are most alert at night. Your teen usually



Fran Swift, Family Resource Center



Cindy Ericksen, Stein Counseling and Consulting Services

will be most talkative and open with you in the evening.

Avoid discussions with your teen in the early mornings, when she already has a million thoughts running through her head, from what to wear to a test coming up. Also avoid talking too much with your teen immediately after she comes home from school or a social event.

“Don’t appear to be too eager, because teens don’t like that,” Swift says. “Don’t push them by asking them too many questions. Give some time to let the conversation unfold.”

Engage in “action talk”

To successfully parent your teen, Swift and Ericksen suggest “action talk.” That’s simultaneously doing an activity with your teen and having a conversation.

While driving him in the car, doing dishes, cleaning closets or doing yard work together, you can talk with your teen where he doesn’t feel so “hemmed in,” Swift says.

The point is to engage in a project while conversing, rather than announcing that “we’re going to have a talk,” she adds. “That is never a good idea. Parents need to take a more subtle approach.”

Watching movies or shows together can open up topics for discussions that are less personal but still relevant, says Swift. If your teen is watching a television show that you disagree about, watch it with her. Ask her what she enjoys about it. Do the same with music. Listen to songs that your teen enjoys. Ask her what she loves about the music she downloaded to her iPod.

Show empathy and listen

Showing empathy to your teen helps to quell his negative emotions. If he’s slamming books down on the table after school, offer an empathetic response, such as “It looks like you’ve had a hard day.” If you yell at him to stop throwing his books around, his frustration will rise, and you may likely end up in a fight. “Just listening to them calms them

down, rather than fueling their fire,” Swift says.

Listening is an important component of keeping communication lines open, Ericksen says. When your teen asks your permission, don’t jump to “no” too soon. Even though you may not approve of his plans, allow your teen to share his ideas with you.

“Just because you’re listening to your teen does not mean that you’re agreeing with him. It will be easier for him to hear ‘no’ for an answer if he knows you have heard him out before you made your decision,” she adds. “Arguments often start because a child feels they’re not being listened to.”

After listening to a request, a parent doesn’t need to give an answer right away, Ericksen says. Tell your teen you need a day or two to think about it, and you will discuss at that time. “Parents often forget that they’re the boss. They can walk away from arguments and postpone making decisions until they are ready.”

Once you have made a decision, stick with it, Ericksen says. Be kind but firm about declining your teen’s request, and acknowledge his disappointment.

Have fun together

During the teen years, parents often forget to have fun with their child, Ericksen says. Enjoy these special years and make an effort to experience fun together. Discover your son’s or daughter’s interests and spend time with them sharing activities. Ericksen, for example, helped her son build a skate park in their community.

Set aside a day or even a half day for family time, Swift says. No texting allowed during this period. “Making a connection with them is what you’re looking for.” ❖

Kim Seidel, the mother of two daughters, including a tween, specializes in writing about parenting, health and wellness, and family life.

communication *is key*



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ROOM FOR ONE MORE

Taking in an elderly parent has challenges, but great rewards.

by **THERESA WASHBURN**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Life has changed considerably for Peg Pieper (**left**) since her mother, Reta, moved in with her. For starters, she's learned to slow down and take in life more fully.

Peg Pieper hoped a project would occupy her mother. But Parkinson's disease had had its way with Reta, and when Pieper returned to check on her progress—the simple task of labeling old photos—she discovered her mother had written each name down on the back at least 10 times.

“She got stuck,” Pieper explains. “It’s a term used for Parkinson’s patients—their brain just gets stuck.”

It would take experience to learn that projects need to be handed out when the medications were at the right level. It would take time to understand the depth of care her mother would need, how much of the day she would want her daughter close by and how long simple daily tasks would take. But Peg Pieper learned to find that time, because 15 months prior, she and her husband said yes to bringing her mother into their home.

Time to change

“This isn’t for everybody,” Pieper warns. “It takes time, and it changes the pattern of your life, but we could do it, and we wanted to do it.”

According to 2008 census numbers, there are 4.2 million people over the age of 85 and 36.7 million people over the age of 65 in the United States. So it’s no wonder that increasing numbers of people find themselves considering care options for their aging parents, particularly when, as in Pieper’s case, that parent has lost the ability to care for herself.

Pieper’s working situation helped solidify the move toward in-home care. She has her own business, which allows her to do some work from home, and when she needs to be at job sites, she employs trained caregivers to be with her mother. “I found good people, and she likes them. That’s a blessing,” she says.

Pieper encourages communication with siblings and spouse before any decisions about parental care are made. “The spouse must agree,” she says. “This will change their life, too.”

The gift of time

While the demands of in-home care can range from running to doctors’ appointments to sorting weekly medicines, and from bathing and dressing to cutting food at mealtimes, the rewards are subtle yet evident.

“Sometimes I have to slow down; I have to just sit with her,” Pieper says. “We have a big front porch, and she likes to sit in the rocking chair. We find ourselves just doing nothing, smelling the freshly cut hay, listening to the birds. We don’t even need to talk. She helps me remember to slow down.”

The two women also find reading together a joy. “We go to the library together. I read to her, it’s a shared activity, we laugh at the funny parts and we have our favorite books.”

When New Year’s Eve arrived this year, Pieper and her husband turned down an invitation to celebrate with friends because they could not find a caregiver. Pieper was disappointed at first, but she knew that Parkinson’s would eventually take Reta from them, that this new year might be one of the few left.

“I do miss some things,” she admits. “We don’t go out as much anymore, but I wouldn’t change this. I am glad we did it. I’m glad we did this for her.” ❀

Theresa Washburn works as a communications consultant to the Franciscan Spirituality Center. She leads a women’s writing group and writes for fun, healing and to make connections to the world.

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BRIDGING THE WORKPLACE GENERATION GAP

Communication and respect are key to harmony on the job.

by **LINDSAY BONNAR**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Employees today can span four different generations, each with its own set of values and perspectives. Learning to work with your coworkers, then, can be a challenge.

Occasional conflicts and controversy are perhaps inevitable in such environments. And that's where Barb Larsen comes in. With nearly 25 years of helping businesses and classrooms find solutions to many kinds of issues, Larsen is no stranger to multigenerational workforces. In fact, bridging generation gaps is her "signature program."

"Even though you know who your grandparents are, or your parents, you really didn't know what they grew up with, or what they didn't grow up with. That's what shapes a person," explains Larsen. Understanding the different generations is just the first step in Larsen's workshop, designed to help employers and employees work better together. She aims to help people "learn, recognize and understand the differences, then find ways to communicate and work together."

Meet the team

The four generations in today's workforce are Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y (or Millennials). The Traditionalists are 65 and older and, according to Larsen's statistics, make up 12 percent of today's workforce. They lived through the Great Depression and other hardships, and they often thrive on working "harder and faster." But they may also resist change.

Baby Boomers, age 44 to 64, make up 48 percent of the workforce. They tend to be independent and optimistic, and they want work that is both challenging and personally satisfying. They "live to work," says Larsen.

Generation X, age 28 to 43, make up about 6 percent of the workforce. Larsen finds that they are more geared toward a "work to live" ethic, embracing change and seeking creative and challenging environments.

The Millennial generation, age 8 to 27 years, is three times larger than Generation X, with 80 million entering adulthood in the next decade. Larsen says that they want to find work that has meaning for them and will "respect (other people) after being respected."

Although Larsen can list many reasons for the behavior differences among the generations, two of them probably sum up them all. First, the younger generations were raised in a time of fast changes, with more freedoms and flexibility. The older generations had to "climb the ladder over a long period with no advancement for some time" and are likely to resist change.

Climbing out of the gap

Kristy Walz, a professional development specialist and business coach, encourages people to abandon assumptions about coworkers of any age. "Every generation has been saddled with blanket stereotypes based on the time period in which they were born," she says. "Some are positive, but we tend to focus on the negative."

For example, "Older generations are categorized as technophobes that need formality and order," Walz says. "Younger generations are seen as technology dependent and casual." She encourages focusing on what each generation can learn from the other. "I really respect people who break



Barb Larsen, Business and Training Professional



Kristy Walz, Professional Development Specialist and Business Coach

those molds and adapt to change or adopt admirable values attributed to a generation other than their own."

Walz finds that, in order to understand and better work with coworkers of different generations, communication is key—and it goes both ways. "We can learn a lot about what's important to someone from a different generation by listening, rather than just hearing. People reveal amazing things about their passions and priorities in the words they choose and the stories they share."

The importance of communication is evident on a less personal level, too. "Because of our rapidly advancing technology, there are lots of words, phrases and abbreviations that deserve explanation when they're used between generations," she adds.

Finding middle ground

Jessica Siebenbruner, psychology professor at Winona State University, has had her students respond very well to education on generational differences.

"I think the biggest benefit (is) introducing the students to the idea that every generation may have different values, motivations and skills, and that these potential generational differences may impact interactions with others, especially in the workplace," she says. "I would hope that with this greater awareness, the students would be able to better interact with individuals of varying ages."

Larsen presented at the State Board of Professional Women Conference in September. Attorney Dawn M. Harris says, "It got people thinking and

discussing, and I sincerely believe it has led to positive growth in the leadership of that organization." She adds: "For example, younger generations wanted to streamline communication and be more efficient, whereas older generations wanted to spend more time in meetings. It was opening a middle ground for compromise."

It all comes down to respect for different backgrounds and outlooks on work and life, Walz says. "We are shaped by the world around us—technological changes, world events, politics, ideas of what it means to be a family," she says. "Realizing that our life experiences change as the world around us changes can help bridge the generational gap." ❖

Lindsay Bonnar enjoys a work environment with many different generations.

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2009 TINY TIM GALA BENEFIT AND FESTIVAL OF TREES RAISE \$60,000

The 23rd annual Tiny Tim Gala Benefit and first Festival of Trees raised a record \$60,000 last November to benefit four local health-related programs. Recipients included St. Clare Health Mission, receiving a \$20,000 donation; the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater La Crosse, which received \$10,000; the Riverfront Foundation, receiving \$15,000 and SafePath, a fund for Franciscan Skemp's domestic and sexual abuse patients, which received a \$15,000 donation.

Save the date for the 2010 Tiny Tim Gala Benefit and Festival of Trees, to be held November 12 and 13.



CLINICAL BREAST RADIOLOGIST JOINS GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN

Roxana Leinbach, M.D., recently joined Gundersen Lutheran's Norma J. Vinger Center for Breast Care, where she is sub-specializing in breast imaging.

Following fellowship training, Dr. Leinbach will be one of four clinical breast radiologists at Gundersen Lutheran. Because clinical breast radiologists can detect very small tumors and lumps, hospitals in 19 surrounding counties often have their mammograms read by Gundersen Lutheran's specialists.

Dr. Leinbach earned her medical degree from the University of Iowa, Iowa City. She completed an internship and residency at the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics. To learn more, visit gundluth.org/breastcare.



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For brides who want a unique local source for their wedding invitations, Weddings by Nancy has launched a new division, Robins Egg Fine Papers. Designed, printed and managed locally, the invitations are printed with soy-based inks and recycled-content paper. The designs are trendy, stylish and unique. They include an exclusive "La Crosse" line using artwork and illustrations from historic downtown. They also have a unique line of "circle" invitations and many more. All invitation sets can be tailored using your wedding colors. Pricing starts at \$4 per invite set. View the line today at www.weddingsbynancy.com/robinsegg or call 608-796-2257.



2ND STREET HAIR GALLERY CELEBRATES 18-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

2nd Street Hair Gallery, located at 129 Vine St., La Crosse, is celebrating its 18th anniversary. Owners Kim Clark, Sue Erickson, Electa Gilster, Christie Pryzwojske and Terry Schleifer have successfully worked together along with Tammy Cooper, Trish Foust, Kari Nelson, Lisa Ann Schmitz and Tina Sweeney to serve all ages and provide all salon services, including their latest addition of hair extensions. For an appointment, call 608-791-2100.



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A NEW FASHION BOUTIQUE OPENS IN DOWNTOWN LA CROSSE

Lark, a women's apparel and accessories boutique, opened April 1 at 319 Main St. in historic downtown La Crosse. The boutique is proud to showcase the work of local and independent designers in addition to owner Andrea Fisher's clothing collection. She designs for women who want unique, fine-quality fashions with a beautiful fit and attention to detail. Distinctive and stylish hand-crafted jewelry and accessories from local artisans will also be offered.

Fisher likes to design with someone in mind—you. Being the source of inspiration, shoppers are sure to find something they like!

RETIREMENT A GO-GO

Today's seniors are active in ways they'd never imagined.

by **JULIE NELSON**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Nancy Ashby is 85 years old and has arthritis. Because she likes to keep as limber as possible, exercise is an important part of her week. That's why you'll often find her in the fitness center ... using the Wii. To borrow a phrase, this is not your grandmother's retirement.

Playing computer-generated games such as bowling is only one option available to seniors at Eagle Crest apartments. A fitness center, a movie theater, a salon, card groups, book clubs, knitting circles, computers connected to the Internet, a worship service, visiting speakers and outside excursions—these are all available to residents of the Onalaska senior apartment complex. People now are living longer, healthier lives. They are used to being active, and they expect to remain active in their retirement years.

So much to do, and time to do it

Elaine Skarstad served for many years as a church choir director and always assumed that, in retirement, she would happily leave that part of her life behind her. She will tell you that music, and God, had other plans for her. Skarstad started volunteering to direct a choir at Eagle Crest after she moved there when the facility opened in December 2007. "We put on four concerts a year, and we're actually halfway decent," she says of the choir.

"The programs offered here are all driven by the residents," says Donna Brogan, the Life Enrichment Coordinator at Eagle Crest. "I can come up with what I think are some good ideas, but if the residents don't like them, they won't come. This is their home, and if they don't like what's being offered, it's not worth it, because it's not enriching their lives."

Resident-driven programming is also at the core of the activities available at the Franciscan Skemp Village Apartments. "I think the options today are more user friendly than they were 10 or 20 years ago," says Jan Pohlman, the Activity and Volunteer Coordinator. "Our services are helping people live longer, and they're having more fun doing it."

Keeping that youthful energy

The programming coordinators try to offer a range of activities that allow people to keep and improve what they already have. Exercise equipment and classes promote flexibility, and even a bus trip to a museum requires the use of motor skills and balance. Movies, speakers, trivia games, crossword puzzles, card games and more allow people to continue learning and stretching their mental powers. "I learned to play bridge after I moved here two years ago," says Eagle Crest resident Barb Lemon, who turns 71 in April.

The assisted living and independent living apartment complexes are also social places. With all the activities, it's easy to meet people and find someone with common interests. Skarstad and her husband moved to Onalaska from St. Louis because it is halfway between where each of their children live. She and her husband unpacked their bags not knowing another person in the area. Now Skarstad is good friends with Judy Johnson, another Eagle Crest resident who was born and raised in the area. The Johnsons are making sure the Skarstads are getting connected to the community.

Of course, not everyone enjoys being on the go all the time, or even spending all their time socializing, and that's fine, too. The activities and gatherings are all optional; no one is required to attend anything.

"We all like to have control over our lives," says Franciscan's Pohlman. "As we age, we usually can't control as much as we'd like. People who move to some type of senior housing are usually giving up a lot, like an entire house and many possessions. It's quite a transition. By letting people choose how they would like to spend their time, they tend to be happier, especially if they are the type that enjoy the social activities."

Bringing youthful energy in

Interacting with other generations is also a good way to keep mentally sharp and feeling young. Barb Lemon moved to Onalaska after her son moved here and started a family. Now she and her husband are close enough to baby-sit for their grandchild twice a week.

At Franciscan's Village apartments, volunteers from local high schools and from UW-La Crosse regularly come by to play games with the residents, bringing with them a youthful enthusiasm and a fresh perspective. "The college students are especially interested in the personal histories of the residents," says Pohlman. "We have a resident whose family once owned a button factory, so that story was a hit with the students. It's fun for the residents to share their history with another generation. It's quite a difference to compare folks who once had six people using a party line with the students who now each carry a cell phone around in their pockets and have three or four different phone numbers just within their family!"

Retirement options are also a big change among generations. Today's seniors likely grew up watching their parents or grandparents stay at home until they went kicking and screaming into the nursing home. Today, people can choose from independent living, assisted living or nursing care, depending on their needs. Many facilities are now offering specialized care for those with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia. At all these places, the emphasis is on socialization, life-enriching opportunities, choice and control over your own life.

Good health key to quality living

By living in a senior housing complex, many individuals are actually able to improve their health. With fitness rooms and qualified staff in the same building, for example, one never has to venture out in cold weather or on ice to stay fit. Brogan says she's seen residents at Eagle Crest who are able to leave their walkers behind and walk on their own.

If one of your worst fears of retirement is becoming isolated or having nothing to do, you may be surprised at what awaits you. "Sometimes I can't find enough people to attend my programs," says Brogan, "because they are all so busy. They volunteer in the community, they go shopping, they go on bus trips to various places, they visit their grandchildren and they take part in their own social activities here. Sometimes they just don't have time



Residents gather around a common project at Eagle Crest, a retirement residence in Onalaska where social activities abound.



A hat show offers women at Eagle Crest an opportunity to socialize and have some fun. Amenities range from a fitness center and Internet access to card groups and knitting circles.

to take in one more thing!"

Lemon agrees. She never thought she'd be spending her retirement years in Onalaska, Wis., but it's working out far better than anything else she had imagined. "It's wonderful here," she says. "I can't say enough about it. You don't get bored; there is always something to do." ♣

Julie Nelson is an event planner at Riverfront and a mother of two. She thought she was on the go until she met all these women who have retired!



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LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER

Generations blend in a chiropractic team.

by **FRAN RYBARIK**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Carolyn Knapp (**left**) operates Feils Knapp Chiropractic in Onalaska. Her mom, Dr. Diane Feils (**right**), has shown her the ropes.

Diane Feils, D.C., and Carolyn Knapp, D.C., have a lot in common. Besides being mother and daughter, they both knew they wanted to be chiropractors from a young age, they both attended chiropractic school at Northwestern Health Sciences University and they both had good mentors.

"I knew I wanted to be a chiropractor when I was 13 years old," Feils (the mother) relates. "It hit me like a lightning bolt as I sat in my chiropractor's office in Eau Claire." She credits that chiropractor for her success. "He mentored me and helped me develop a focus," she continues. "I learned how to run an office while working there in high school." She also learned how to provide care and how a good adjustment feels.

Feils ran her own chiropractic office in Onalaska for 18 years. When she had an offer to sell her practice, she took an 11-year break to raise her family. But she maintained her license, filled in for other chiropractors on leave and continued to be active in her professional organizations. Currently, Feils is president of the Royal Chiropractic Knights of the Round Table, a prestigious national invitation-only group of extraordinary women chiropractors.

Mentored by a mother

Knapp also grew up knowing she wanted to be a chiropractor. The oldest child in their family, she remembers attending conferences with her mother, listening to presentations on the latest adjustment techniques and visiting with vendors about nutrition when she was 8 years old.

"I should have seen it coming when she did an adjustment on her favorite doll when she was only 5!" Feils jokes. "It's been an honor to mentor her and see her succeed in school, and now start her own business."

It's been a busy year for Knapp. She got married last

September, graduated from Northwestern in November and opened her new chiropractic office—Feils Knapp Chiropractic in downtown Onalaska—this March.

"I bring the latest chiropractic information to my new business," Knapp explains. "I love working with babies and kids and women. My internship with a pediatric chiropractor in the Twin Cities helped me build my skills in these areas. I also offer some specific treatments, like Sacro Occipital Technique, cranial manipulation and muscle testing for food sensitivities. I want to educate my patients proactively about eating, moving and thinking well.

"My mom has mentored me like she was mentored," Knapp continues. "I learned the ropes in her office. Now she's coming out of retirement to work part time in my office."

A tradition of health

"Besides being focused and having good mentors, I think we also have some strong family history guiding us," Feils says. "My grandmother, Frances, returned to Germany just as World War II began. She raised two healthy children there in very poor conditions, because she was wise enough to feed them fresh food, like dandelion greens, and make sure they were exposed to sunshine each day. She was an early user of alternative therapies."

Daughter and mother look forward to their continued collaboration in their chosen profession. They speak highly of each other's talents and laugh about their parallel life experiences.

"We both started our own businesses right out of school, waited five years to get married and married men who have their own businesses," Knapp says. "And we both love to show our patients other ways to be healthy." ❖

Fran Rybarik enjoys learning and writing about all types of healing.



A PLACE FOR TEA AND CHANGE

The 20-something owners of the Root Note café offer up both.

by **MAURA HENN**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Recipes analyzed by Gundersen Lutheran registered dietitians

Co-owners of the Root Note café **(from left)**: Emmy Carlson, Blake Auler-Murphy, Alexandra Johnson, Dane Gonzales and Corrie Brekke

Looking for a café that marries art and music, local foods and quality beverages? Welcome to the Root Note, located at 115 Fourth St. in La Crosse. It's no average coffee shop, but rather a community space providing healthful foods and a variety of musical acts from near and far, as well as a meeting place for students, groups and friends. The five co-owners—Corrie Brekke, Emmy Carlson, Alexandra Johnson, Dane Gonzales and Blake Auler-Murphy—find themselves coming from very different backgrounds, but what also makes their business venture unique is their youthful vision. Each one is under age 30.

An artful approach

Each owner shares a passion for food, coffee, music, art and community involvement, so no one facet outshines the other. “Food is art,” states Auler-Murphy, and it's obvious from the

presentation of the dishes, to the paintings and photographs on the walls, to the music in the air that this relationship between food, art and the senses is something each owner strongly believes in.

If you have been fortunate enough to have visited the Root Note since its opening in February 2008, you would recognize the advancement of the menu. “A large percentage of what we carry is organic, and we are trying our best to work with local growers,” says Brekke. “We try to offer a healthy variety of food, as well as healthy portions. It's nourishing, so people feel good when they are finished eating.”

Not only has the menu grown, but the staff has as well. In the beginning, the owners were the main faces behind the counter, but in the last year, the Root Note has been able to fill several other positions, allowing owners to make time to work on other plans, including outdoor seating in the warmer months and bicycle

delivery. The owners recognize many of their achievements would not be possible without the help of others. "It starts with the people in our lives we have learned from, especially our parents," Carlson shares. "We pay a lot of respect to that."

Finding common ground

The Root Note is also a community space where people from all walks of life can meet and find common ground. "It has always been important to us that we offer something for young people, like Open Mic night, which gives them the opportunity to express themselves," states Johnson.

"Nothing makes me happier than seeing young people with piercings and tattoos interacting with the older people here, and then watching those two people gain an understanding for each other," says Auler-Murphy.

Visit on Thursday's Open Mic night, and you'll see this vision has come true, but it isn't just luck that has made it happen. It's a matter of sincere love and respect, and each owner recognizes that without these two ingredients, the recipe for partnership would not work, and neither would their business. Visiting the Root Note, you would be hard-pressed not to run into someone you know or recognize, and it is this level of familiarity these five individuals are trying to foster in the downtown community.

"We live our mission, rather than putting it up on the door," states Carlson, meaning that they live by example. The Root Note partners with a local CSA (community supported agriculture), which provides local foods as well as free compost pickup, meaning food waste is at a minimum. Every in-house drink or dish is served with reusable plates, glasses and utensils.

Setting sustainable standards

Take-out cups are available, too, but once you are at the Root Note, it is hard to leave. There is plenty of open space and tables to sit at with friends and chat or play board games, but there are also sofas and comfy chairs if you are looking for a quiet nook in which to indulge in a good book and a latte. A seat near the portable pond and fountain, when partnered with the right herbal tea, can surely calm the nerves on any hectic day.

The Root Note owners have also partnered with Whole Tree Architecture and Construction to create a natural wood arch that borders the edge of the music stage, creating the effect of trees growing right out of the floor of the shop and promoting a sustainable method of building. This business venture has been about creating standards and sticking with them. It is not always the easy or inexpensive thing to do, but it sends a message that changes are happening concerning where and how people get their food.

Taking a closer look at how the five partners are conducting their business gives a true insight into the spirit of community and cooperation. "Coffee shops historically are where revolutions begin," says Johnson. "We are changing people's minds and opening them up to new ideas, and that is a revolution."

Sustainability, accountability and acceptance of each other and the variety of people that make up our community is the

standard the Root Note sets. "This place represents something different to everyone who is a part of it," states Gonzales. It takes many notes to make a song, and it takes many hands to create a successful venture. This is one lesson the Root Note has been more than generous to share.

Here are a few of the Root Note's favorite recipes, to be made and enjoyed at home.



Local, organic ingredients make up as much of the menu as possible at the Root Note café.

ROOT NOTE GRANOLA

Makes 18 half-cup servings.

- 4 cups organic rolled oats
- 1 cup organic sunflower seeds
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup organic chopped pecans
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup organic walnuts
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cup organic all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup peanut oil
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Ambrosch honey (a local product)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup maple syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp almond extract

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Mix all dry ingredients together in a large mixing bowl. Set aside.

In a medium saucepan, add all liquids except extracts, heat on medium until all sugars are dissolved and mixture begins to boil. Remove from heat and add extracts and pour over dry ingredients. Mix well and spread onto a large cookie sheet. Bake for approximately 25 minutes, mixing once during baking.

330 calories, 18g fat, 7g protein, 35g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 170mg sodium.



CHAI SHAKE

Makes 2 servings.

- 2 cups organic vanilla ice cream
- 8 oz. Root Note Chai tea, brewed
(or brewed loose-leaf Chai tea of your choice)
- 3 oz. Castle Rock organic half-and-half

Place all ingredients in a blender, and blend until smooth and creamy.

330 calories, 20g fat, 6g protein, 33g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 125mg sodium.

ROOT NOTE ARTICHOKE DIP

Makes 4 servings.

- 8 oz. Organic Valley cream cheese
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup Castle Rock heavy cream
- 1 cup chopped spinach
- 2 T pepperoncini juice
- 1 garlic clove
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated Parmesan
- 1 cup artichoke hearts
- salt and pepper to taste
- plus some love!

Preheat oven 400 degrees.

Mash and mix all ingredients together until cream cheese is incorporated well and mixture is fairly smooth. Scoop into a ceramic baking dish and bake until lightly browned and bubbly. Serve with your favorite variety of artisan bread or a baguette.

340 calories, 31g fat, 11g protein, 7g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 580mg sodium. ❖

Maura Henn is grateful to the Root Note for providing a home for her knitting group to meet each week, as well as for their eclectic collection of teacups.



Photos by LuAnn Dibb

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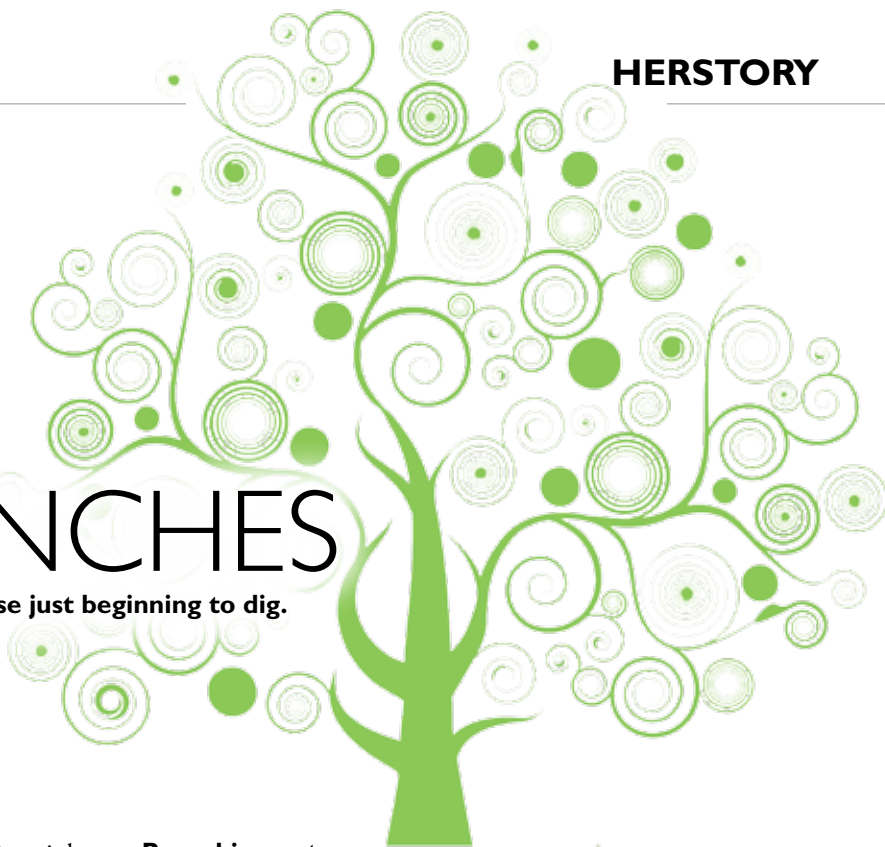


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ONE TREE, MANY BRANCHES

An experienced genealogist offers advice to those just beginning to dig.

by HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE



Carol Wittenberg's children have a standing joke about their mother and cemeteries. "Are we related to anyone in there, and do we need to stop, Mom?" they tease. Wittenberg has been researching her family tree for nine years and has been known to make detours through the headstones, looking for more information to add to her extensive genealogical findings.

Taking root

The best way to initiate your research, Wittenberg instructs, is to begin with yourself and work upward, capturing information about immediate family members as a base. It does not matter if you have little more than a name and birth date, as other information will likely fill in over time.

Wittenberg's interest in her family tree started once she became an empty nester and began digging through old photographs. She loves doing research, she says, and has found details on marriages, births and deaths that no one in her family previously knew about.

Many of Wittenberg's initial discoveries emanated from conversations with her grandmother, a woman who emigrated from Germany as a teenager in 1925 and passed away last year. Her grandmother had revealed little about her past or her family, but new conversations took place as old photos and letters surfaced. Wittenberg said her grandmother "still spoke in a heavy accent," but "she was pretty sharp," and the conversations became a wonderful bonding experience.

Wittenberg points out that a single photograph can disclose significant clues about the people in it. Ideally, the subject will be identified on the back, but, if not, look for dates, the photographer's name (if professional) and even the photo's background to try to pinpoint time period and location. Showing the photograph to extended family members may stir someone's long-buried memory.

Branching out

Wittenberg keeps a notebook for each family surname of her ancestral relatives. In addition, she uses Family Tree Maker software not only to record names, dates and other demographic information, but also to scan photographs and documents. When dealing with new pieces of information from printed sources, such as newspapers, Wittenberg advises to document where you found it so that it can be accurately referenced in the future. Be sure to remember that women likely changed surnames when they married, and that many names evolved in spelling as immigrants moved from place to place.

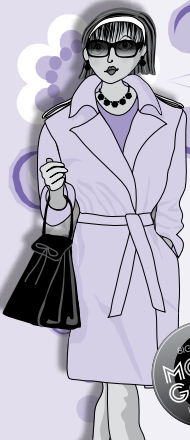
In full bloom

Wittenberg recommends a number of ways to help grow your family tree. Web sites like Ancestry.com, Census.gov and Familysearch.org are great sources for budding genealogists. Locally, the La Crosse Public Library has a wealth of local history sources as well as ways to connect you with genealogy databases and organizations across the country.

Wittenberg looks forward to the day when she can travel to Germany to witness ancestral grounds firsthand, and to meet some long-lost relatives. In the meantime, she has connected with some new members of her extended family and continues to fill tabbed notebooks with all kinds of familial information. And, of course, she'll stop the car at cemetery gates, just in case there's a headstone to photograph, document and preserve for generations to come. ♣

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D., is the executive director at WAFER and an adjunct instructor at Viterbo University. She remembers her father checking phone books on family vacations in hopes of finding Griminger relatives.

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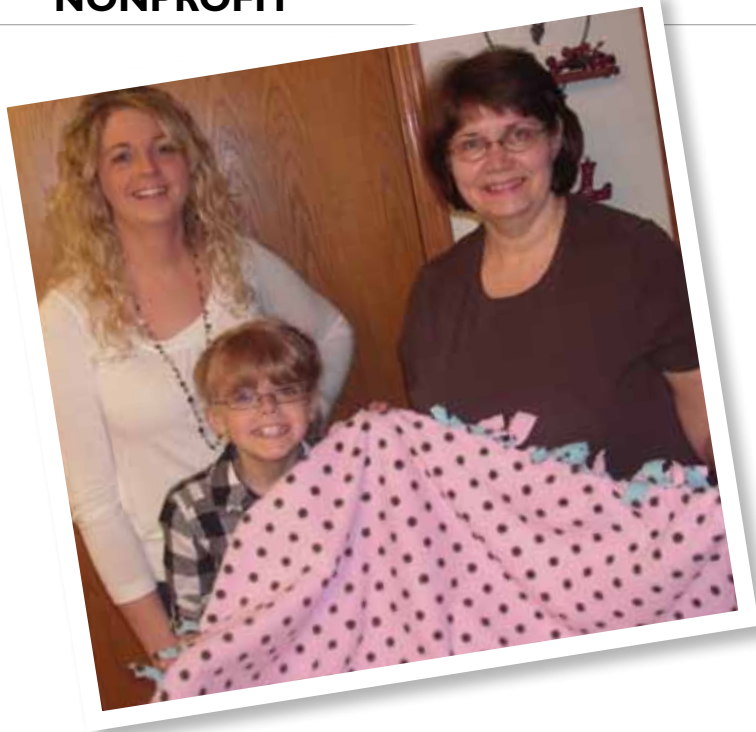
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SERVING SIDE BY SIDE

Volunteer opportunities create relationships between women of all generations.

by **SHARI HEGLAND**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Three generations of women, **(from left)** Maria Freismuth, Kassie Freismuth and Ruth Elsen, have bonded through their involvement in 4-H.

When the Rockland-Fish Creek 4-H Club meets, three generations of Ruth Elsen's family are there, working side by side.

Elsen, 54, has been involved in 4-H in La Crosse County since she first joined as a member at age 5. She became a club leader as soon as she graduated out of the program, leading the club that has included her brothers and sisters, her children and now her granddaughter.

Elsen says the club provides a connection within her family, and it also helps her stay in touch with other youth in the community.

"As a parent or a grandparent, I like getting to know the kids in the community," she says. "You have a different opinion of youth when you're involved with them and you know them."

For her daughter, Maria Freismuth, working alongside her mother and her own daughter, Kassie, has been a wonderful way to learn about each other and pass on family values.

"(Kassie) is a lot like me—that's one thing I've learned," Freismuth says. "She gets a lot of things from me, and I've gotten a lot of things from my mom. That's what I want my daughter to get out of (4-H)—that 'my mom taught me this' or 'my grandma taught me that.'"

You don't have to be part of a multigeneration 4-H family, however, to give or receive the benefits of volunteering with organizations that connect diverse generations.

Role models and listening ears

"Current research emphasizes the importance for youth to have opportunities for long-term consistent relationships with adults other than parents," says Bob Matysik, 4-H and Youth Agent with UW-Extension in La Crosse County. Volunteer leaders in 4-H, Girl Scouts and many other organizations serve

as role models for the young people with whom they interact.

"The more positive role models a girl can have, the greater the sense of confidence, community and connection, and the more people that she knows care about her," says Barbara Wiers, communications manager for Girl Scouts of Wisconsin-Badgerland Council, which includes La Crosse and surrounding counties.

While groups such as Girl Scouts and 4-H provide volunteers an opportunity to work with a number of youth, those seeking a more one-on-one experience can find it through Big Brothers Big Sisters of the 7 Rivers Region. RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program) also links its volunteers, age 55 and better, with individual young people through its Adopted Grandparent and Study Buddy programs.

"It warms my heart to see the caring relationship that has been forged with the students and the volunteers," says Lynnetta Kopp, RSVP executive director.

New perspectives and sharing successes

While some organizations intentionally bring together young people and adults, nearly every volunteer group provides some opportunity to work alongside people of all ages and learn from each other.

"I think adults can be renewed and inspired by the hope and optimism of young people," says Rachael Eaton, volunteer coordinator for Habitat for Humanity, where all ages work together on building sites and in the Habitat ReStore. "We have a number of older, seasoned volunteers both on site and in the ReStore who act as volunteer leaders when new, often young, volunteers start with our organization. They provide valuable insight and training along with the standard orientations that new volunteers receive."

RSVP's Kopp and Beth Twiton, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the 7 Rivers Region, both point out that their volunteers get to experience a bit of childhood over again through their interaction with young people.

"It gives them an opportunity to play, maybe in a different way than they have in their lives otherwise," says Twiton, who notes that Big Sisters may join their matches in watching a Disney movie, going sledding or baking cookies.

Kopp agrees. "It keeps (the volunteers) young," she says. "They get the opportunity to learn from (the children). It is shared learning from each other."

And, of course, volunteers in all of the groups get the satisfaction of seeing the young people they encounter grow and learn.

"For many adults, the rewards come from seeing the youth succeed, whether it's grasping a new idea, discovering a different way to do something or just finishing a project," Matysik says.

Many of those young people continue to share their successes with the adults in their lives long after they have become adults themselves.

Weirs describes Girl Scouts, now in their 30s with children themselves, who regularly check back in with their

former leaders and thank them for the impact they made.

Who can do it?

Are you ready for a chance to interact with young people but don't have kids? It doesn't matter. Think you're too old? Think again. Too young? Wrong. Don't have enough education or money or ...?

None of those things matter. Weirs says about 30 percent of Girl Scout leaders do not have daughters in the program. The biggest requirement, she says, is that you care about the girls.

"I very strongly believe that anyone who is really focused on helping girls grow strong and helping them be the best person they can be, will be a successful volunteer," she says.

"It is important to be appreciative of and open to the experiences, advice and perspective of others," Habitat's Eaton says. "As a volunteer, you have given an incredible gift of yourself—time, talents, enthusiasm—to someone else; the people you meet and the experiences you have are the gifts you receive in return. Just allow yourself to welcome and appreciate those benefits." ♣

Holmen freelance writer Shari Hegland treasures the relationships she developed as both a 4-H member and a 4-H volunteer leader in the past and looks forward to serving again.

A Guide to Intergenerational Volunteer Opportunities

Check the *Coulee Region Women Business & Resource Directory* (www.crwmagazine.com/womens-business-directory.html) for a full list of nonprofit organizations that could use your help. Also consider working with youth or older citizens through your own faith community.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the 7 Rivers Region
www.7riversbbbs.org
 608-782-2227

Girl Scouts of Wisconsin—Badgerland Council
www.gsbadgerland.org
 608-784-3693 or 800-236-2710

La Crosse County 4-H
lacrosse.uwex.edu/4h/index.html
 608-785-9593

Coulee Region RSVP
www.rsvplax.org
 608-785-0500

Habitat for Humanity
www.habitatlacrosse.org
 608-785-2375

La Crosse Area Family YMCA
www.laxymca.org
 608-782-9622

YWCA of the Coulee Region
www.ywcalax.org
 608-781-2783

Coulee Region Humane Society, Inc.
www.couleehumane.com
 608-781-4014

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater La Crosse, Inc.
www.bgcgl.org
 608-782-3926

Myrick Hixon EcoPark
www.mhecopark.org
 608-784-0303



Women dig in to a Habitat for Humanity home building project during Women Build Week 2009.

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Mireille (Mary) Rostad and her husband, Allen Rostad, married in Belgium shortly after World War II. The couple settled in Houston, Minn.



LESSONS TO LIVE BY

Mary Rostad shares words of wisdom from a remarkable life.

by **BETTY CHRISTIANSEN AND DIANE RAAUM**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Mireille Brouillard was born in Brussels, Belgium. As a war bride, her name changed to Mary Rostad, and her life can definitely be broken into the two stages: war and postwar. Our story begins in that first stage, her war life, when at the age of 16, she joined the resistance against Germany during World War II. She began doing undercover work against the Nazis, and two years later left home to continue doing espionage in France. She ran secret messages to undercover agents, covering what ground

she could by day, and sleeping in cars, barns and churches at night. After the war, she transferred to Frankfurt, Germany, where she did counterintelligence work in General Dwight Eisenhower's headquarters.

As the war was ending, she met Allen Rostad, a U.S. soldier and a Minnesota native. In 1946, they were married and she came to the United States, settling in Houston, Minn., where she raised her family and worked for many years as a nurse. In 1986, her work during the war earned her an Ellis Island Medal of Honor, an award that was created to honor those who helped build this country. Fifteen thousand people were nominated for this award, and only 83 were selected, including such prominent people as Jacqueline Kennedy and Muhammad Ali. She has carried the experiences of her younger years throughout her postwar life, and there are many life lessons people of all generations and in all circumstances can learn from them. Here are a few.

Speak up

Everything that Mary did during the war was courageous, but most courageous of all was finally talking about it. For many years, she did not talk about her experiences during the war, which included running messages, distributing newsletters and putting sugar in the gas tanks of German vehicles. Even her own grown children had not realized what she had done.

Mary stresses the importance of speaking up, even though she has only recently begun to share her own stories. "We try really, really fast to forget about the war," she says of war survivors of her own generation as well as present-day soldiers returning from combat. "It isn't a fun thing to remember." But now she speaks up at every invitation that she's given—she says she can't stop. She firmly believes her message must be carried into future generations. "It's why I can't say no."

Learn from older generations

Everything Mary learned about survival in Nazi-occupied Belgium, she learned from her mother, who was a teenager during World War I. "She was fantastic. She knew exactly what we were supposed to expect," says Mary. Her mother knew how to feed her family during strict rations (stock up

on fresh bread loaves, then hang them in clean pillowcases in the attic so they can be soaked and rebaked later; add pulverized eggshells to mashed potatoes for calcium). She knew to remove and hide all brass and copper doorknobs and hardware so the Nazis couldn't requisition them. "No Nazi was going to use her doorknobs to make ammunition!" Mary laughs.

There's a perception that the resistance movement, in general, was fueled by the young. But Mary insists that's not the case. "We did the stupid things," Mary laughs. "But there were an awful lot of brave men and women (of all ages) who did very, very important things," she says, using the farmers who helped hide her as an example. "People you would never guess ... were in the resistance," she says, "some doing very little things and some doing very important things."

Don't dwell on differences

"We didn't really know about the Jewish thing," she says of herself and her Belgian friends as the Holocaust unfolded. "I had Jewish friends, but I never thought of them as Jewish. They were just friends that belonged to another church.

"When they talked about relocating them, I thought it was so cruel," she continues. "Why did they have to move? Young people don't quite grasp what that was all about. I didn't know ... till a long time later." In fact, it wasn't until she was working in Frankfurt that she came to understand the atrocities that had taken place, and why.

Look out for others

Mary left her home with only the clothes on her back and had to rely on the kindness of others for food and shelter during her involvement with the resistance. She left her home and family behind, so as not to endanger them. "When they caught you, they took your whole family," she says. "One morning I left the house as if going to school, and I kept on walking."

Trust—especially yourself

In her work with the underground, Mary met people surreptitiously to pass along sealed, often coded messages. She was only told where to go to meet her contact—

she never knew names, and she never knew the content of the messages she carried. She was forced to trust others—often complete strangers.

She also learned to rely on herself completely, and to think on her feet. Once, while she carried a particularly important message, her train was stopped and she was interrogated by German police. Immediately, she put her hand to her cheek and began to cry, claiming she had a terrible toothache. The police officer pointed her to a nearby first aid station. "I walked in the back and out the front," she says of her narrow escape. "I have no idea what made me do it," she laughs. "I can't cry on demand!" Her knowledge and strength helped others in a great way.

Learn from your past

"It was hard to get used to a normal life after the war," Mary says. She got her job in Frankfurt, filing reports of what had happened in the concentration camps, and it was there that "I learned what really happened to my Jewish friends," she says. "I don't understand how anyone can deny that it happened." Having seen what she did during the war, Mary also believes that there is never an excuse for torture. "Because if we do it, we are like them," she says.

Be humble

When told "You're an amazing woman," Mary is quick to respond: "That's the good company I keep." ❖

Editor Betty Christiansen and publisher Diane Raaum are honored to have met and worked with Mary Rostad, a delightful and inspiring woman.

The Holocaust began in 1933 when Hitler took office in Germany and ended in 1945 when the Nazis were defeated by Allied powers.

An estimated 6 million Jews were killed during the Holocaust—the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany.

—Steve Feinberg, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum



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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., 608-788-7439, www.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, www.lacrossechamber.com.

Children's Museum of La Crosse weekly programming: Creation Station for all ages, every Sat. 10:30-11:30 a.m. and 2-3 p.m.; every Sun. 1-3 p.m.

Save-On-Sundays \$1.00 off admission every Sun, noon to 5 p.m.
Book Swap: On the first Sun. of each month, bring a gently used, clean, children's book from home and swap it for a different book from the museum's collection.

Mt. LeKid Climbing Wall open every Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sun. 1-4 p.m.

A-B-C Learners' Club for ages 1-5 with parent, every Thurs., 10:30-11:15 a.m.

Coulee Region Autism Society for family members, friends and professionals who care for someone on the autism spectrum. 3rd Wed. of each month, Chileda Habilitation Institute, 1825 Victory St., La Crosse. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Child care available, call 608-519-0883. lax-autismgroup@centurytel.net or autismfyi-lacrosse@yahoo.com.

Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW) meets the 4th Tues. of each month, Nell's City Grill, 5:30 p.m. Madalene Buelow, 608-791-5282.

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

La Crosse Noon Business & Professional Women meets the 2nd Thurs. of each month, The Waterfront, noon. Carol Schank, 608-783-0419, cjschank@charter.net.

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) meets the 1st Monday of each month, Olivet Lutheran Church, 6:15 p.m. Holly Zeeb, wxyzeeb@centurytel.net, or Jessica Teff, craigteff@hotmail.com. www.mops.org.

Second Chapter Divorce Recovery, Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 26-May 11, Three Rivers School, 901 Caledonia St., La Crosse, www.secondchapter.com. Child care is provided.

Valley View Kiddie Crew meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month, Valley View Mall Food Court, 10:30-11:30 a.m., with fun and education experiences for children and parents. www.myvalleyview.com.

Women in Networking and Support (WINS) meets the 2nd Wed. of each month, Piggy's, noon-1 p.m. Kay Buck, 608-791-9253, kayv.buck@wellsfargo.com.

CALENDAR EVENTS

April 1, Earth Month Kickoff, 5 p.m., Riverside Park, La Crosse. www.greenlacrosse.com.

April 2, Children's Museum's Easter Egg-stravaganza, 9:30-11:30 a.m. www.funmuseum.org.

April 7, Knitting in Public 2010: Sock Hop! 12-8 p.m., La Crosse Public Library. agoben@lacrosse.lib.wi.us.

April 8-11, *All's Well That Ends Well*, 7:30 p.m. April 8-10, 3 p.m. April 11, Page Theatre, St. Mary's University, Winona.

April 9, Night (out) at the Museum, Children's Museum of La Crosse, 5:30-8 p.m.

April 10, *Miss Nelson Is Missing*, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., Frederick Theatre, Morris Hall, UW-La Crosse.

April 10, Project Funway Fashion Show, 1 p.m., Center Court, Valley View Mall.

April 10, Rockin' in America, Viterbo's Platinum Edition Show Choir, 7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Main Theater, Viterbo University.

April 13, That Takes Ovaries Open Mike and Fundraiser, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo University Fine Arts Center Recital Hall, \$5. Benefit for New Horizons Women's Shelter and Equality Now.

April 15, Home Free Acappella, 7:30 p.m., Heider Center, West Salem, www.heidercenter.org.

April 17, Thank You for Being a Friend, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Drugan's Castle Mound, Holmen.

April 17, Mississippi Valley Mayhem roller derby bout, 7 p.m., Green Island Ice Arena, La Crosse. www.mississippivalleymayhem.com.

April 22, Earth Day Concert with Bill Miller and Dan Sebranek, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Cargill Ballroom, Waterfront Restaurant, La Crosse. www.greenlacrosse.com.

April 23-25, Bluff Country Studio Art Tour, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., southeastern Minnesota. www.bluffcountrystudioarttour.com.

April 23-25, Gingerbread Arts & Crafts Show, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

April 23, Gala Weekend: Jazz Ensemble, Winona State University. www.winona.edu.

April 23-May 2, *Eurydice*, 7:30 p.m. April 23-24 and April 29-May 1, 2 p.m. April 25 and May 2, Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

April 24, *King Arthur's Quest*, Missoula Children's Theater, West Salem, \$6, www.heidercenter.org.

April 24, Earth Fair, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Three Rivers Waldorf School, La Crosse. www.greenlacrosse.com.

April 24, Green Expo, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Lunda Center, Western Technical College, La Crosse. www.greenlacrosse.com.

April 30-May 1, Hans Mayer Earth Day Concert, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Myrick Hixon Ecopark, La Crosse. www.thecopark.org.

April 30-May 2, 100-Mile Garage Sale, Pickwick to Red Wing and Prescott to Fountain City. www.mississippi-river.org/calendar/garagesale.

May 1, Willy Porter, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

May 1, Symphony Orchestra Concert, 3 p.m., Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

May 1, La Crosse County Historical Society Mother/Daughter May Day Tea Party, 2-3:30 p.m., Swarthout Museum, La Crosse Public Library, \$10. RSVP by April 23. 608-792-1982.

May 1-2, La Crosse Fitness Festival, marathon, half-marathon and fitness activities. www.lacrossefitnessfestival.com.

May 2, Winona Symphony Orchestra, 4:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center, Winona State University.

May 2, Mayfair Art Exhibit and Sale, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., West Salem High School, www.heidercenter.org.

May 5, Stay Tuned Show, 7:30 p.m., Main Theater, Viterbo University.

May 7-8, *Three Boomer Broads: What Our Mothers Never Told Us*, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

May 7-9, 13-16, 20-23, *Camelot*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs-Sat, 2 p.m. Sun., La Crosse Community Theatre. www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

May 15, 16th Annual River to Ridge Run/Walk fund-raiser for Myrick Hixon EcoPark, 9 a.m. walk, 10 a.m. challenge run, Riverside Park. www.myrickecopark.com.

May 15, Mississippi Valley Mayhem roller derby bout, 7 p.m., Green Island Ice Arena, La Crosse. www.mississippivalleymayhem.com.

May 16, Riverside Family Fun Fair, Riverside Park, www.explorelacrosse.com.

May 22, RSVP presents: Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader? 1 p.m., Center Court, Valley View Mall.

May 27, Coulee Region Professional Women's Cruising for Scholarships, American Marine, near airport, 5-9PM, Tickets \$15, call Madalene at 608-791-5282 or email at mbuelow@fsa.org. Get more details on Facebook.

May 29, Blues Bash, 2-11 p.m., Trempealeau Hotel, www.trempealeauhotel.com.

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

www.iHateheadaches.org



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