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women

HOME AND HEALTHY LIVING MAGAZINE

Women in the *Arts*

Misty Lown

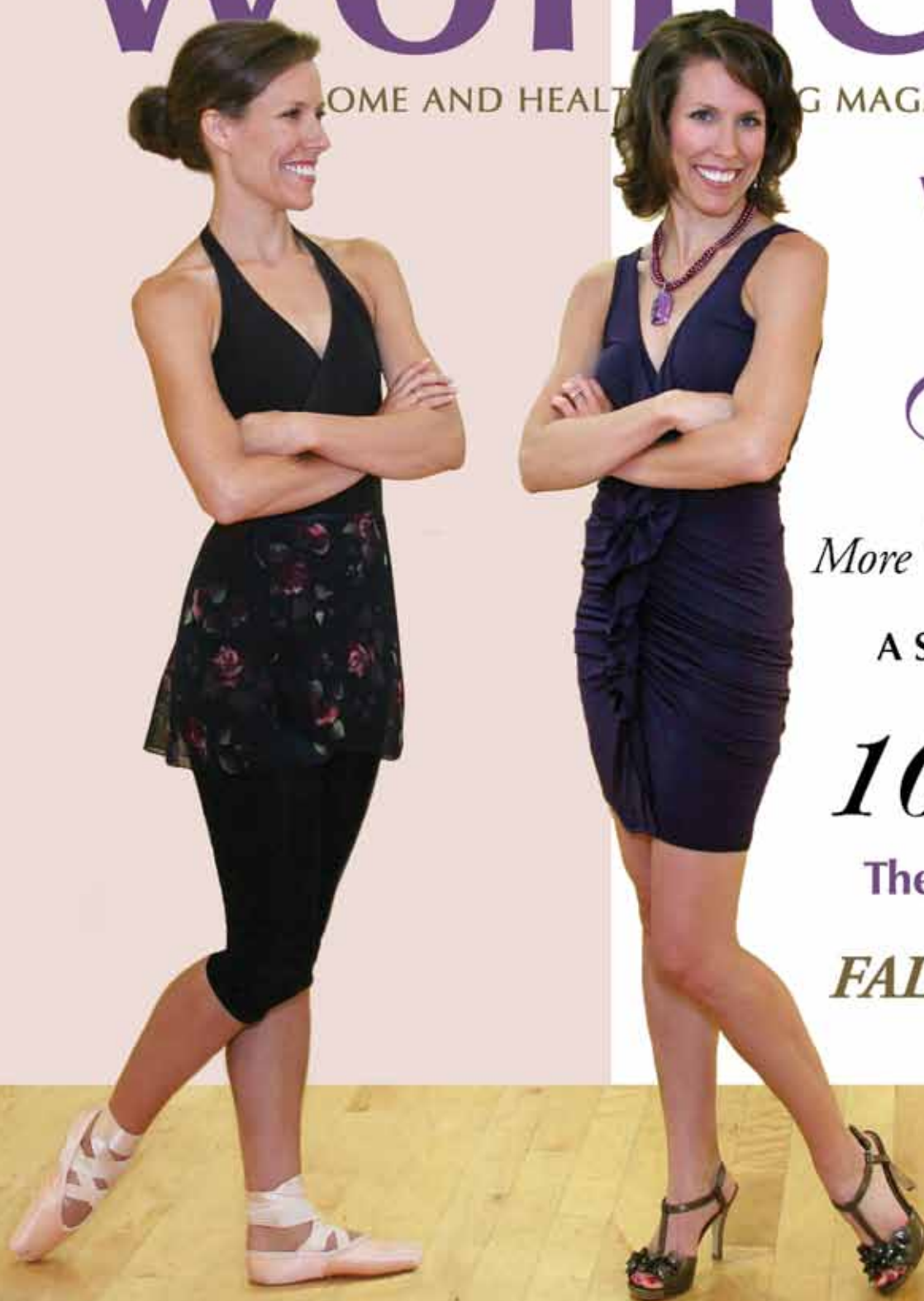
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Pictured on cover and above:

Misty Lown, owner of Misty's Dance Unlimited, LLC

Photo by Megan McCluskey, Atypik Studio

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Editor Betty Christiansen with (from left) daughters Ivy (2), Elin (2 months) and son, Eliot (4).

Thank goodness for the arts. I say this from the perspective of a woman who, growing up, had academic aptitude but no talent whatsoever when it came to sports—the one arena in which a high school kid in a very small town could be guaranteed popularity and fame.

I could not—and still cannot—catch a ball or make a basket, and adult attempts at playing softball or beach volleyball have earned me goodhearted chiding from my more athletic peers. Thankfully, I had the arts. And because I learned to appreciate them then, I still enjoy them now.

What I couldn't do on a court, I could do on stage. The teamwork skills I never developed in basketball emerged through band and choir. Though desperately uncoordinated on a playing field, I had rhythm and grace on my side in danceline. I can't swing a bat, but I can read music, sing in harmony and speak in public, animatedly and with a minimum of fear.

I admire my more athletically skilled friends, but I'm equally glad I had an avenue through which to explore my own talents fully, despite the fact that my school was so small. The arts gave me a place where I could shine and still be “cool.” They introduced me to a much-needed circle of like-minded

friends. Best of all, they taught me to appreciate art in all its forms, a lifelong gift that outlasts worn-out knees and achy backs. The arts are facing hard times these days, especially in schools, where art programs—even such standards as band and choir—are first on the line to be cut when budgets are strained. But my hope is that they will always be an option for my children, too, whether or not they inherit the athletic ability of their mother. We cannot underestimate the skills they support—self-confidence, social development, a special kind of teamwork.

The women featured in this issue of *Coulee Region Women* do not have to be convinced of this. They are the ones who bring art to our area, whether through dance, studio art or music. They are often the ones who keep alive the arts organizations that define and enrich our community—the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra, the Pump House and the Viterbo Fine Arts Center, for examples. And, like dance instructor Misty Lown and artist and educator Betty Kendrick, they are also the ones who ensure a love of arts is ignited in future generations. Please join us on an art-filled tour through the Coulee Region. May you find something in it that resonates with your own artist's soul.

Betty

coulee region women

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Be sure to sign up as a fan at www.crwmagazine.com to share your thoughts on our stories and learn more about upcoming events.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a brown blazer over a pink top and a colorful beaded necklace, stands outdoors with her hands clasped. In the background, there is a large, abstract sculpture and some greenery.

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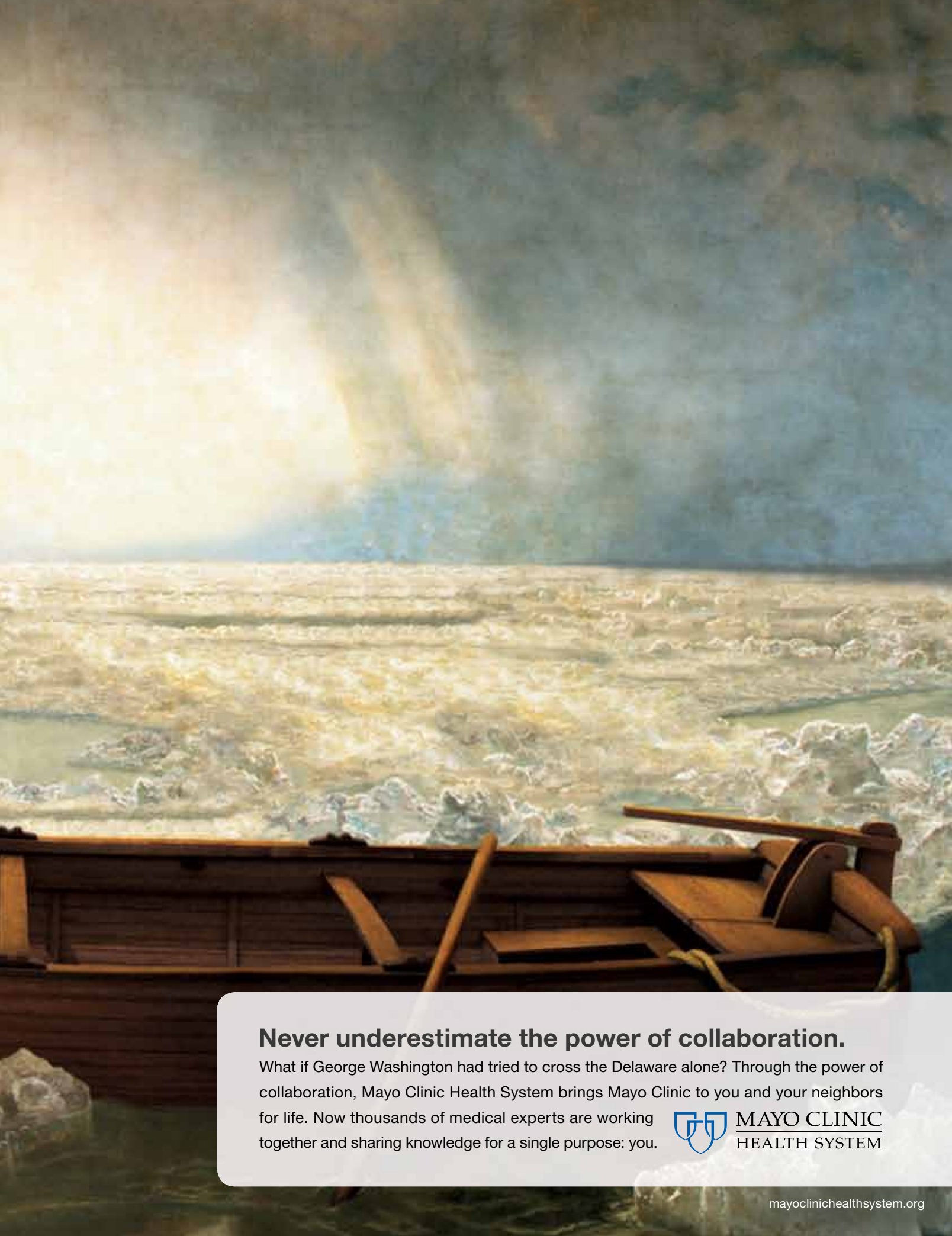
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A NEW STAGE IN THE LIFE OF LCT

The La Crosse Community Theatre has been a beloved community tradition for nearly 50 years, residing in various locations before settling temporarily in its current space on Fifth Avenue in downtown La Crosse. Looking ahead to the next 50 years—or more—the theatre is planning a state-of-the-art new facility on the Mississippi River that is designed to make an artistic, architectural and economic impact that will enrich the La Crosse community. In the heart of the La Crosse Arts District, the new home of LCT will feature greater accessibility for patrons, expanded seating, astounding acoustics and a larger lobby for socializing. In addition, the new space will allow for a larger stage, an additional “black box” theatre and plenty of room to facilitate new educational opportunities, especially for youth.

Executive director David Kilpatrick notes that what has led up to this point in LCT’s history has been a serendipitous combination of circumstances, people and community involvement. “The special magic that has brought us to this moment is incomparable,” he says. “And amid it all, we’re still creating the good, quality work we’ve always done.”

LCT hopes to break ground for its new home sometime in 2012. Having launched an ambitious capital campaign just this summer, and thanks to strong community support, the theatre is already more than halfway to its financial goal. You can help by visiting www.newlct.org to learn more about the project and to make a contribution, or by calling 608-784-9292. And while waiting for the new facility to materialize, you can sit back and enjoy LCT’s 2011-2012 season, which begins Sept. 9 with *The Wizard of Oz*. For more information, go to www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org or call 608-784-9292.



CELEBRITY PIE

On Aug. 18, approximately 20 local celebrities will put their baking talent to work and participate in the 4th Annual YWCA Celebrity Pie Auction to benefit YWCA programs. The event will be held at 6 p.m. at the Freight House. Each celebrity will bake, buy or otherwise create a pie and present it at the live auction. Each pie is “sweetened” with some attractive incentives—for example, the winners of pies baked by *Coulee Region Women* editor, Betty Christiansen, and publisher, Diane Raaum, will be featured in an article in an upcoming issue.

ART ON THE RIVER

New York may have the Met, Washington the Smithsonian, but here in the Coulee Region lies an art treasure of our own: the Minnesota Marine Art Museum. Established in 2006, the museum, located in Winona, Minn., features not only fine art from local artists such as sculptor Leo Smith (Fountain City, Wis.), but also historical marine art, Hudson River School works and pieces by masters Picasso, O’Keeffe, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro and Van Gogh. Stop in this fall to enjoy special exhibitions on America’s Great Rivers (including photographs by Ansel Adams) and works inspired by the “Raging Red and Mighty Mississippi” rivers. New exhibitions opening in September include “Flow,” a selection of works from the Sheldon Museum of Art at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and “Portrait and Place,” by area photographers Drake Hokanson and James Bowey. For more information, visit www.minnesotamarineart.org or call 866-940-6626.

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THE CLASSROOM *is her stage*

In dance and in life,
Misty Lown reaches out to others.

BY JESSIE FOSS
Photos by Megan McCluskey, Atypik Studio



More than just great dancing. The words grace the walls and are synonymous with Misty's Dance Unlimited, LLC. But for Misty Lown, owner of the dance studio, they're much more than words. It's how she teaches. It's her motto. It's the way she lives her life.

"We produce excellent dancers," Lown says of her studio. "But we want it to be about more, about other things that add value to the rest of [the dancers'] lives, qualities that will last far beyond the classroom."

Lown's mission to leave an impact on her community—she is a lifelong La Crosse-area resident—is exemplified not only through her devotion to her students, but also through the ways her studio reaches out to others. For example, over the past year, Misty's held a drive to collect shoes for those in need. Lown brought 57 pairs of shoes to an unofficial tent city in Haiti, her senior-level dancers brought 72 pairs to the Bahamas and 47 pairs of shoes were donated to third-graders at Franklin Elementary in La Crosse.

Misty's has also produced an event called Dancing with the La Crosse Stars, which has raised \$185,000 for the local Red Cross in the past five years, including \$85,000 last year alone.

Initiatives like these are what makes Misty's an appealing place for dance parents like Leah Koscianski.

"Misty has shown us that we can make a difference in the community we live in, as well as the world we live in," she says. "She shows us by example what it means to put yourself out there and work for what you want."



Through dance instruction and community involvement, Misty Lown seeks to make a positive impact in her students' lives, so they in turn can make a positive impact in the lives of others.

First steps

Lown's drive stems in part from a hand up she was given when first starting out. Lown reigned as Miss La Crosse/Oktoberfest when she was 21 years old, the same time Deak Swanson was Festmaster. The two spent time riding a float together, and it was then Lown told Swanson of her dream to open her own dance studio.

Swanson went on to give Lown a job while she was still in college, then bought land for and built Lown's first studio. She began Misty's Dance Unlimited in 1998.

"He leased me the building on a handshake," Lown says. "He gave me a huge opportunity."

Lown stayed at that building for nine years and moved once more before settling into her 11,000-square-foot building located on 12th Avenue in Onalaska four years ago. The building is home to 750 dancers who participate in 190 classes each week.

Lown began dancing as a 3-year-old who suffered from asthma and a club foot. She praises ballet as a therapeutic way to help straighten her turned-in foot. She continued dancing and began teaching at 16, a passion that continued when she went on to college at UW-La Crosse.

While there, Lown spent the school year teaching and took the summers to enhance her own dancing. She has continuing education credits from Harvard University, London Contemporary Dance Centre and Colorado College.

Revelations

She was midway through college when she made the decision that would shape her life and career.

Lown was accepted to dance with Alvin Ailey American Dance Center's training program located in New York City. Lown took in a show, and it was during the company's performance of *Revelations*—its most famous—that Lown began thinking.

"The performance was amazing," she says. "But I started to wonder how much of this will the audience remember in a week, in a month, in a year, in 10 years?"

She knew that, as a teacher, the impact she could have on her students would be remembered for more than a week, a month, a year and even 10 years. It was then that Lown made what she calls a paradigm shift.

"When I made the decision [to teach rather than perform], everything in my life headed in that direction," Lown says. "It

was a call on the heart. I knew the classroom would be my stage."

Grace and gratitude

And what a stage it has been. Lown's idea that she could leave a lasting impact on her students now seems prophetic when current and former students speak about her.

"I do not know what I did to have been blessed to have Misty in my life, but I do know that I can safely say that without her I am not sure if I would be here today," says former student Liz Camacho.

Camacho credits Lown with helping her out of a dark, depression-filled life at the age of 16. Seven years later, Camacho is nearly a college graduate and credits many of her accomplishments to Lown's care and dedication.

"To this day, I do not know a single person other than Misty who would devote so much time to helping someone," Camacho says. "Without her, I would not be the person that I am today and accomplished the things that I have."

Lown attributes her successes to God and the people around her.

"I give God credit," she says. "And, I'm thankful. This is bigger than I could muster up on my own personal strength or skill."

While her name is on the door, Lown, a mother of five, gives a lot of credit to the people around her, including her husband, Mitch, her family and those who work with her.

"My husband and family are so supportive. They give my dreams and hopes for the studio wings, so to speak," she says. "With five little ones at home, it would be a real challenge to do what I do without their support. And my kids, well, they are the world to me."

Looking to the future, Lown would like to expand her studio's outreach programs, which offer dance opportunities to those in rural areas. Currently, an outreach is operated in St. Charles, Minn. She would also like to offer full-time employment to more teachers and continue to have a positive impact on dancers, who can in turn have a positive impact on their communities. **(crw)**

Jessie Foss was born with two left feet, making her a dance instructor's nightmare. She sticks to less coordinated forms of entertainment.

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A Sister ACT

The Viterbo Fine Arts Center celebrates 40 years of theater, music and dance.

BY JULIE NELSON
Contributed photos

The year was 1985 and Hal Holbrook was backstage at the Viterbo Fine Arts Center, transforming himself into Mark Twain. Sister Marie Leon La Croix “happened” to be nearby and introduced herself to the famous actor. Sister La Croix was marveling that such a big-name actor was appearing at such a small school, and Holbrook was marveling that such a small school offered such a great facility. “[Holbrook] told me he usually performs in much larger venues, many of them famous, in places all around the world,” says Sister La Croix. “He said this was the nicest he had ever used.”

If Sister La Croix was not at her humblest, she can be forgiven; she is one of the four women who created the Viterbo Fine Arts Center.

The Fine Arts Center turns 40 this year, and in that time, area arts patrons have had the opportunity to see acts and performances ranging from Broadway touring groups, to Vincent Price, to children’s ballet, to speakers on the Holocaust, to the Harlem Spiritual Ensemble, to the Bulgarian State Folk Female Choir, to hundreds of students performing in all varieties of theater, music and dance.

“What that building has brought to La Crosse ...” reflects Sister La Croix. “It’s really been a great source of intellectual and spiritual opportunities for education and growth.” She notes that many doctors have chosen to practice in this community because of the cultural experiences available at the Fine Arts Center, and she observes how interest in the arts has grown since 1971. “When I first came to town, there was no Community Theatre, no Pump House and no major in theater offered at [UW] La Crosse.”

Tin chairs and four spotlights

When Sister La Croix first came to town in 1954, there wasn’t much at Viterbo, either. Men on campus were rare, and students were primarily interested in nursing. Sister La Croix was hired to start a theater department. She had a gym to use for performances, some tin chairs for the audience and four spotlights. The green room/dressing room/makeup room was a converted storage room. Never one to turn down a challenge, she plunged in and started presenting theater in the

round, casting female students for most of the roles and recruiting men off the street for the others. She chose plays with strong scripts, made the most of her skills in costuming and staged such works as *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *As You Like It*. The new theater department did a readers' theater and invited audience discussion afterward. They invited high school groups to attend special performances. They got good reviews and they developed an audience.

In time, Sister La Croix was sharing the same complaint as the heads of the music department, Cyrilla Barr, and the art department, Sister Carlene Unser: They needed more space! The president of Viterbo, Sister Grace McDonald, agreed, and she tasked the three with designing a performing arts center that would encourage students and audiences to experience and enjoy the arts.

A dream space

Sister La Croix claims the three of them were only creating a dream space for their own needs; it was the spirit of God that was planning for the future. "I remember when the hole was dug for the building, and Sister Grace said to me, 'Why didn't you tell me it was going to be that big?'"

Sister La Croix visited many landmark performance centers in researching what was needed for the Viterbo design, including the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., and more. She learned about lighting and rigging and saw one theater that had to be gutted three times before the acoustics were right.

When Viterbo's building opened in the fall of 1970, it was a showpiece. "The acoustics are perfect," says Sister La Croix. "The panels on the wall, the wood in the chairs, everything is designed for the acoustics." Then there are the amenities behind the scenes. "I went berserk when I designed the dressing room," she confesses. "It has enough stations so that 75 people can put on makeup at once. When outside groups come in, they cannot get over that."

While the community was anxious to see the new building, the staff was exhausted. All the planning and moving had left little time for creativity. But the public (and Father Finucan, who was now the college president)



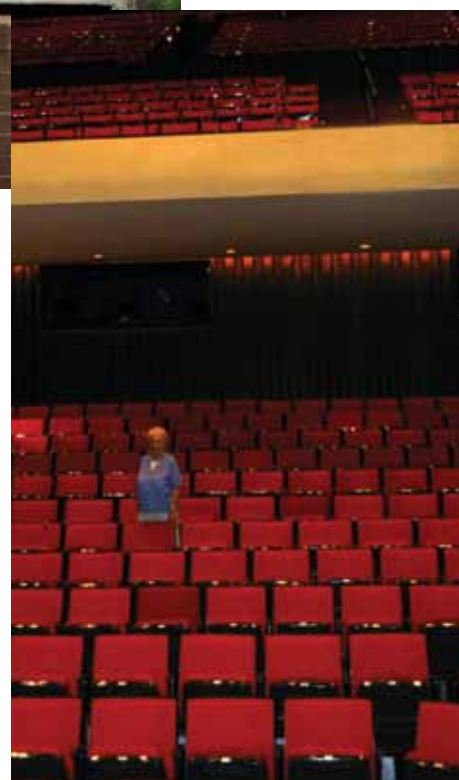
called. On March 25, 1971, Viterbo's theater department staged *Macbeth*, and two weeks later the music department presented *The Messiah*. The summer was even more hectic with Viterbo staging one of its most popular shows ever—*The Sound of Music*—with nuns from the FSPA cast in as many roles as possible. "I think we could have run that show for 10 weekends," says Sister La Croix.

You have to have faith

The stage has offered its big moments with big stars, but the most rewarding part of being a fine arts teacher is often the smaller moments. Nancy Allen is a music education professor and the director of Viterbo's show choir, the Platinum Edition. She says her favorite part of each show comes after the kids have put in the hard work in rehearsal, have given it their all for the performance and are taking their final bows. "When their faces come up, they are grinning from ear to ear," says Allen. "That's the moment they realize all they are capable of. I wait for that moment every time."

The Viterbo Fine Arts Center has grown considerably in its 40-year history. When the doors opened for classes that first fall, a total of 69 arts students were rambling around its four floors of classroom space. Today, there are 84 students in the theater department alone, and the department leaders are once again feeling cramped for space.

Sister La Croix is now 93 years old and



Above: Sister La Croix was the main force behind the Viterbo Fine Arts Center. **Facing page:** Viterbo presented the opera *The Marriage of Figaro* in its Fine Arts Center in February.

just over 5 feet tall. She says there is nothing remarkable about a tiny nun pulling together a huge fine arts center. She says everyone is capable of more than they might imagine, given the right circumstances. "You have to have a dream. You have to have courage. You have to love to work and you have to have faith." (crw)

Julie Nelson is the public relations director for The Salvation Army. She has enjoyed several shows at Viterbo over the years and wishes she, too, could have seen the 1971 production of *The Sound of Music*.

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BY MAURA HENN
Contributed photos

If the idea of buying local is dear to your heart, especially when it comes to supporting local artists, you're in luck. Artists throughout the Coulee Region have found exciting ways to sell their art through unique collaborative efforts. These are winning combinations in many ways: Artists build a community among themselves and have a new way to market their art, and art lovers find a wide variety of one-of-a-kind items in one shop or with one click of the mouse. Join us on a quick tour of art-shopping opportunities in La Crosse and beyond.

Funk E. Arts

Your first stop is Funk E. Arts, located at 531 Main St. in La Crosse, in the lower level of Honig's Gift Shop. Sarah Sheehan, owner of Honig's, has collaborated with local artists Opal Tulpo, Georgina Kingsley and Kim Grathen to create a consignment shop that displays and sells locally made handcrafted items. Tulpo, Kingsley and Grathen were struggling to find the right

place to show their work, and when Sheehan caught word of their search, she offered to open up space in her shop. Open since June 1, Funk E. Arts (a play on Sheehan's maiden name, Funke) boasts 12 local artists offering pottery, photography, needle-felted crafts, hand-stitched dishtowels, fashion accessories and soap. "The art changes all the time," says Sheehan, "and people like to see change." By opening up space in her own store, Sheehan hopes to inspire support and collaboration in the community among local artisans.

Each artist involved in Funk E. Arts must go through a jury selection process. Anyone can apply, and even if artists are turned down, Kingsley urges them to "keep working and try again." The aim of Funk E. Arts is not only to offer high-quality items, but to foster a network of artists who can assist and help each other. Grathen helps new artists make sure they are correctly pricing their items to account for labor, materials and the consignment commission.



Cooperatives like Funk E. Arts (**top**) and VIVA Gallery Cooperative (**bottom**) give local artists a new way to market their art.

"We are already like a big happy family," states Sheehan of her experience working with the artists. Funk E. Arts is a must-stop on the search for a unique, handmade gift for an eclectic friend or even for yourself. It's open Monday to Friday 9 a.m.-5p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Viva la VIVA

Ready for a road trip? Enjoy a scenic drive to Viroqua and the VIVA Gallery

Cooperative, located at 217 Main St., which has been supporting regional art since 2004. The focus of VIVA (Viroqua Independent Visual Artists) is to showcase and sell locally made fine arts while educating and inspiring patrons. The cooperative houses 16 collaborators ranging from fiber artists to printmakers, watercolor and oil painters, jewelers and botanical illustrators. Pottery, sculpture and an array of greeting cards are also available. Besides selling and displaying art by its members, the gallery holds a First Thursday of the Month Artist Reception to showcase a guest artist from the region. Typically, this artist is not a member of the cooperative, but someone the gallery feels brings a unique perspective to art in the area.

Since VIVA is a cooperative, volunteers help run and maintain the gallery. Liz Quebe, an oil painter, and Angela Feltes, a fiber artist and jewelry maker, are just two of several members who volunteer their time. "It is a work of love," Feltes says about being a member of the gallery. For Quebe, the gallery offers artists the "ability to learn from each other." By sharing the responsibility of maintaining the gallery and supporting each others' work, the artists find more time to focus on their craft. Anne Tedeschi, one of the original five members, finds the greatest benefit of being part of the cooperative is "being in contact with other serious artists, exchanging opinions and learning the business of helping to run the gallery."

A display committee is responsible for rotating and hanging work so each artist remains visible and the look of the gallery stays fresh. Any new artist's work is brought to a jury committee to decide if it is appropriate for VIVA, and once artists join the cooperative, they pay dues and a commission fee, which maintains their space, allows for advertising and helps fund special events.

The VIVA Gallery is located within Viroqua's Main Street Station, a public market housing a bookstore and a cafe as well as many other micro-merchants. VIVA is open Wednesday to Friday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday to Sunday

11 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information, visit www.vivagallery.net.

Something and More

If you'd rather shop from the comfort of your home, visit SomethingandMore.com, a La Crosse-based online consignment shop featuring the products of regional artisans. Co-owners Mari Guckenberger and Lynn Hermann launched the site in 2010, with the goal of finding a new avenue for selling their crafts year-round, rather than exclusively through craft shows.

When Guckenberger retired from her full-time job, she began to dedicate her time to creating Something and More Crafts and Gifts. At first, the two offered membership only to other crafting friends, but word has spread, and now the website has 21 different vendors selling sea glass jewelry, handmade quilts, aprons, e-book covers, wood carvings and much more.

Since the number of artisans is small compared to other online art marketplaces, such as Etsy.com, the owners are able to personalize the site with extensive artisan profiles as well as a section dedicated to crafting tips in case you are interested in trying for yourself some of the techniques you see on the site.

Creating, running and maintaining a merchant website was a new venture for Guckenberger and Hermann, so it has been a learning experience for both women. They have been working on market research to help make the site more popular, as well as advertising with local publications and utilizing online social networking and e-newsletters to help spread the word.

If you are interested in becoming a local vendor with the site, email info@somethingandmore.com with samples of your work. "We could not do this without our vendors," says Hermann, who provide ideas and feedback to this very new, but very local shopping experience. [crw](http://www.crw.com)

Maura Henn is the Cameron Park Farmers Market manager. She is thrilled to be a part of such a vibrant local shopping community.



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The director behind the **ORCHESTRA**

**Tracy Fell keeps the La Crosse Symphony
Orchestra humming along.**

BY FRAN RYBARIK
Contributed photo

While the conductor of an orchestra chooses the music, auditions musicians and leads them in when and how to play, it's the executive director's job to make the performances possible. The orchestra needs a place to practice and perform, sponsors and donors to pay the bills and the musicians, and an audience to enjoy the concerts. For the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra, this is Tracy Fell's role.

In college, Fell dreamed of being an event planner, but when she and her family moved from Illinois to La Crosse six years ago, she found work as the operations manager for the orchestra. Four years later, she became their executive director.

Keeping the music alive

Fell is responsible for the budget, development, administration and operation of the orchestra. "Our budget is around \$600,000 a year," she reports. "Corporate sponsors, local philanthropists and individual donors have really stepped up during this economic downturn."

The organization has been through two years of major transitions—hiring a new conductor, promoting Fell and dealing with the fact that the arts are struggling all over the country. Although they decreased staff, increased the use of volunteers and cut the number of performances for next season, the orchestra remains very much alive.

A vision of the future

The board, conductor Alexander Platt and Fell share a vision: "Our goal is not just to sustain symphonic music in the La Crosse area," Fell explains. "We want to be vital, growing and innovative. I am so impressed with the caliber of this orchestra. We contract 70 paid professional musicians for the season. About 50 travel from places like Madison, Minneapolis, Chicago or Decorah, Iowa. Many teach music. Some also perform with other orchestras."

The orchestra is also active in the community. They perform three "Symphony for Youth" concerts at local schools each year. Through scholarships, they provide private instruction for students learning stringed instruments. Fell also sits on the board for the Arts Alliance of La Crosse, an organization promoting all arts in the Coulee Region.



"We need broad community support to stay vibrant. Children exposed to music become more well-rounded people in life, just as society is enriched by the presence of a symphony orchestra and other arts," Fell states. "If people could donate \$50 a year to their favorite arts organization, we would all be fine."

The 2011-2012 season

Fell describes the orchestra's coming season, which celebrates British composers, with enthusiasm. "The atmosphere at the Cathedral of St Joseph the Workman will be perfect for the Christmas concert," she says. "And I can't wait for our trip to Winona to collaborate with members of the Great River Shakespeare Festival and the Winona Oratorio Chorus Women's Ensemble in a performance of Mendelssohn's magnificent *Midsummer Night's Dream*."

Fell's dream has evolved into so much more than event planning. She partners with the orchestra's board of directors, the conductor, the musicians, their venues and the community to keep symphonies flowing through the Seven Rivers Region. **(crw)**

Fran Rybarik recently retired from her first career in nursing. She plans to attend more performance art events in the area this fall and winter and continue writing.

| ACCOMPLISHMENTS |



Gundersen Lutheran Orthopaedics Team Expands

Autumn Valk, MMS, PA-C, is the newest addition to Gundersen Lutheran's ever-growing Orthopaedics team in La Crosse. With special medical interests in orthopaedic trauma, total joint arthroplasty and articular fractures, Valk is dedicated to helping patients overcome joint pain so they can get back to enjoying life.

Valk completed a Master of Medical Science (MMS) in Physician Assistant Studies at St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo. Prior to joining Gundersen Lutheran, she practiced orthopaedics at Beloit Health Systems.

If joint pain and discomfort are keeping you from doing the things you enjoy most, visit gundluth.org/orthopaedics to learn more.



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Imagine a new kind of prenatal appointment: 90 minutes of time dedicated to your pregnancy and baby's development, an instant support network of women at the same stage of pregnancy as you are and confidence-building education on caring for yourself and your baby. Mayo Clinic Health System in La Crosse now offers CenteringPregnancy—prenatal care in groups. Women with due dates from January 31–March 17, 2012, are invited to join the first CenteringPregnancy group, which will begin meeting in September. To learn more, call 608-392-9866 and speak with a maternity counselor.

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

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BRINGING LIFE INTO *Harmony*

Music therapy provides help and healing for kids and families.

BY KIM SEIDEL
Photo by Kim Seidel



A little girl with a big smile shook her curly blond hair as she pounded eagerly on a small drum. Following instructions from music therapist Amy Schaack, she played “fast and slow” and “stop and go.”

Since Danielle turned 4 recently, Schaack sang “Happy Birthday” while her petite client happily strummed on the guitar. They clapped together in celebration before Schaack led Danielle to her mother in the waiting room of Life in Harmony (LIH) Music Therapy.

The daughter of Stephanie and Rob Lass of Onalaska, Danielle has been meeting with Schaack weekly for two years. When Danielle was about 1 year old, she was diagnosed with Williams syndrome, a rare genetic disorder. After her mother learned that children with this syndrome respond well to music, she connected with Schaack, a talented musician and therapist.

A graduate of UW-Eau Claire, Schaack is a board-certified music therapist and founder of LIH. In January, she opened her clinic on Main Street in Onalaska. With the strong interest in and demand for music therapy in the area, Schaack hired Makenzie Kojis, another board-certified music therapist, to work with her. Prior to operating out of her clinic, Schaack provided in-home services.

Not just fun and games

Music therapy is an allied health profession that utilizes music to work with the physical, psychological, cognitive and social needs of an individual. Music therapy provides alternative paths for communication, such as playing instruments and singing, for those who have challenges expressing themselves in words.

Many people mistakenly believe that music therapy only offers recreation, Schaack says, but literally it isn't all fun and games. As a

music therapist, Schaack assesses the strengths and needs of her clients and develops a treatment plan and goals.

For example, Danielle is preparing with Schaack to attend preschool this fall. Her goals include learning to share, recognizing numbers, letters and colors and following directions. Through musical involvement in a therapeutic setting, a client's abilities are strengthened and transferred to other areas of life, such as school.

Schaack has a special interest in improvisation, song writing and music for emotional expression. Music therapy sessions include creating, singing, moving to and listening to music. In the process, Schaack builds strong relationships with clients and their families, which is especially important because the work at the clinic continues at home in a client's everyday life.

Music heals

Schaack has a lifelong love of music, which she uses in a great variety of ways to help others. When she moved to La Crosse in 2008, she started LIH and primarily serves children with special needs through La Crosse County referrals and private clients. Also in 2008, LIH piloted the first music therapy program at Gundersen Lutheran Hospital, which continues to offer music therapy services to adult and pediatric cancer patients and hospice patients.

Group sessions, inservices and adaptive music lessons are available upon request, as well as interactive music for special events or parties. For more information, visit www.lifeinharmonymt.com. 

Kim Seidel is a writer, wife, mother of two daughters and music lover who lives in Onalaska. For more information, visit www.seidelink.com.

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First, you begin with color.

Whether adding a splash to a neutral space or saturating a room with layers of rich hues (turquoise, red and mustard are favorites this fall), nothing draws you in to a space and delights the eye like vibrant colors. How to use them? Kristin Boettcher of Nordeen Design Gallery advises to keeping large pieces, like sofas, in neutral colors, then adding in colorful “statement pieces” like an ottoman, pillows, vases or art.

Second, add texture. As the folks at Decorum in Onalaska can attest, vases and other objet d’art in interesting patterns and unusual shapes catch the eye and pique curiosity. Appliquéd pillows and cushy throws give a sense of comfort and coziness as well as visual appeal.

Third and most important, surround yourself with pieces you truly enjoy, regardless of style. When it comes to decorating, “the rules are all broken,” says Peggy Rodriguez of Painted Porch in downtown La Crosse. “You can mix traditional with quirky now. Just start with what you love.” 



Clockwise from top left: Celebrate new fall colors with “distressed” **accent pieces**, then add **quirk factor** with a funky clock and hand-painted frames, all from Painted Porch. Mix up your style with funky vases in **ethnic shapes**, add depth with **layers** of pillows and throws, and **introduce texture** with sisal balls and leaf-patterned art, all from Decorum.

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FALL FOR SHOES

As summer transitions to fall, slip these on for size.

BY AMY BATTERAM

Photos by Kelly Ottesen Photography

Put your best foot forward this fall with fantastic shoe styles. Whether you're heading out for a late summer hike, transitioning to your fall wardrobe or stepping into magical slippers for a hot night on the town, look no further than your local merchants to fulfill your shoe fetish.

1. **Merrell-Avian hiking shoe**, \$94.99, Tradehome, Valley View Mall.
2. **Seychelles "Point of No Return,"** \$110; **Ozone ruffle socks**, \$12, Kick, downtown La Crosse.
3. **J-41 beachcomber**, \$59.95, Tradehome, Valley View Mall.
4. **Donald Pliner "Gill" short boot**, Touch of Class, downtown La Crosse.
5. **Frye "Julia Lace,"** \$398, Kick, downtown La Crosse.
6. **Poetic License "Sweet Dreams,"** \$129; **Look from London tights**, \$21, Kick, downtown La Crosse.
7. **Dansko "Veda" oxford shoes**, \$70, Herbergers, Valley View Mall.
8. **Sperry Topsider "Angelfish" boat shoe**, \$74.99, Tradehome, Valley View Mall.
9. **Anne Klein "Enigma,"** \$79.00, Herbergers, Valley View Mall.
10. **Donald Pliner "Monica" bootie**, Touch of Class, downtown La Crosse.
11. **Madden Girl "Hanzel,"** \$49.00, Herbergers, Valley View Mall.
12. **Poetic License "Apple of My Eye,"** \$129, Kick, downtown La Crosse.





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WHERE TO GO

Find dancing, music, great food and more at these Coulee Region favorites.

BY MELISSA HANSON

Contributed photos



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"Classy but not stiff. Fast lunch. Warm atmosphere. Not too pricey." That's how one participant describes Piggy's. For meetings outside the office, Piggy's stands above the rest. Choose between the Smokin' Blues Lounge downstairs for casual fare and a stellar lunch buffet and the sophisticated dining room for a seasonally changing menu upstairs. Whether you're meeting coworkers for a casual lunch or entertaining clients over an elegant dinner, Piggy's is the place to get the job done.



When we decided to feature the best of the Coulee Region's eating and drinking establishments, we consulted the experts—our fans and readers! What we learned is that the Coulee Region has a diverse assortment of venues to satisfy every mood, every taste and every occasion. So regardless of whether you're looking to savor mouthwatering cuisine, enjoy live entertainment or become part of the action, the Coulee Region serves it all.

THE WATERFRONT RESTAURANT AND TAVERN

328 Front St., Suite 101, La Crosse

Best for before or after the show

The perfect accompaniment to the Coulee Region arts scene is the Waterfront Restaurant and Tavern. Whether you choose to enjoy cocktails while listening to regional musicians in the tavern, take in panoramic views of the river from the outdoor patio or enjoy fine American fare in the dining room, the Waterfront is the complete package for ambience, service, cuisine and cocktails before or after the show.

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To get those creative juices flowing, one sometimes needs a good java jolt with a side of wi-fi. If you're looking for just such a muse, survey respondents agree that Grounded is where you'll find it. They rave about the service and praise the dizzying array of drinks hot, cold, blended or iced. Not to miss are the monthly specials: original coffee creations by Grounded staff members. Throw in a charming urban atmosphere, lunch fare and gelato, and you might be inspired to stay all day.



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122 S. Fourth St., La Crosse
Wild card

Sometimes the best of the best can't be categorized. That's what our survey respondents say about Bodega Brew Pub. They love the new menu, the revamped interior and the eclectic range of beers from around the globe. Bodega is a come-as-you-are kind of place where all are welcome to kick back with a book, challenge friends to a board game or people-watch through a bank of windows along Fourth Street. If you haven't been to Bodega Brew Pub lately, stop in for a pint and a sandwich today.



MANNY'S COCINA

301 Hampton Court, Onalaska
Best for original cuisine

When the Coulee Region is in the mood for something new and exciting, they head to Manny's Cocina for authentic coastal-Mexican dishes. One survey participant says, "The menu is spectacular ... everything from the house salad dressing to the stuffed calamari." That's because the Rivera family prides themselves on selecting the freshest foods and preparing them a *la cocina fresco* (made fresh in the kitchen). Manny's Cocina is a taste of tropical Mexico outside your own back door.



IMPULSE

214 Main St., La Crosse
Best for dancing

For a nightclub atmosphere in the heart of La Crosse, Impulse is the place to be and to be seen. You'll feel like you're in a music video with eight wide-screen televisions streaming videos all around the expansive dance floor and live DJs playing music of all genres every Thursday, Friday and Saturday. So put on those dancing shoes and make your way to Impulse for economical drink specials and a hot dance scene every weekend.



DISCIASCIO'S RESTAURANT

110 Central Ave., Coon Valley
Best hideaway

When Lou and Martha DiSciascio moved to Coon Valley 24 years ago, they set out to create a restaurant they would enjoy eating at—a low-key, romantic, hidden gem of a destination. DiSciascio's serves traditional Italian cooking and specialty veal dishes in a quaint setting. Whether your aim is a scenic drive or the anonymity that comes with getting away, take the short drive to DiSciascio's, dubbed a "best kept secret" by one survey participant. You won't be disappointed.



FREIGHT HOUSE RESTAURANT

107 Vine St., La Crosse
Best for live music

Step into this historic site that celebrates La Crosse's past as a railroad hub and be transported to relaxed sophistication. Music lovers agree it's the Freight House's ambience that makes it one of the best spots in the area for enjoying live musical entertainment every Friday and Saturday evening. So ease into a seat near the large fireplace, order up an appetizer and a flight of wines and lose yourself in the melodic stylings of regional artists.

Melissa Hanson aims to visit each and every one of the Coulee Region's eating and drinking establishments. She has her favorites, but she's not telling.

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A MOST AMAZING GALLERY

A love of arts has led Toni Asher to direct the Pump House Regional Arts Center.

BY KRISTY WALZ
Contributed photos

“We’ve been told that it’s the most amazing art gallery between Minneapolis and Madison,” Toni Asher beams from behind her desk at the Pump House Regional Arts Center. In her role as executive director, Asher is surrounded by people who appreciate visual and performing art—5,000 people per month, according to the counters on the Pump House doors. “Some of that is staff or volunteers coming in and out,” Asher says. “But even if half of that is visitors, that’s 2,500 people a month coming to the Pump House for art exhibits, plays, poetry readings, films or classes. It shows that our community values art.”

Daughter of Marilyn Wood, a long-respected local dance instructor, Asher grew up in La Crosse and was drawn back to the area later in life. “My mom instilled a love of arts in me. I had my own studios here and in Denver, and I have a business background, so the Pump House is a natural fit. I’ve been able to pour myself into this place. Some people say that the Pump House is my baby.”

Having raised six children, Asher is a capable and passionate guardian, interacting naturally with patrons, staff, volunteers and board members alike. “There’s an energy that’s created in this building—the arts inspire us. People are attracted to the arts.”

Inspiring a culture of creative thinkers

The downtown La Crosse arts center is a combination of two historic La Crosse buildings. The former water pumping station has been improved with salvaged material from the city post office building that was torn down in the 1970s. “The lettering on the theater door reads ‘Witness Room,’ a door downstairs says ‘211.

Clerk of Courts,’ and the wood that makes the upstairs railing was all reclaimed from the old post office.” Asher explains. “It’s a large part of our identity and something that makes the Pump House really unique and innovative.”

Established in 1977, the Pump House celebrates the arts—and artists—in all their forms. Home to three art galleries with rotating exhibits, it also offers classes in the visual arts, as well as art education scholarships. The Pump House hosts music concerts with local, national and international performers, as well as intimate theater performances, the Pump House Reading Series and the Pump House Film Society. Famously, it was behind the public art installment Herons of La Crosse, and it is currently collaborating with the La Crosse Community Theatre to develop Spotlight Academy of the Dramatic Arts, an educational opportunity for young actors.

Asher’s commitment to innovation and collaboration guides the Pump House programming. “We don’t create programs or events and then hope to fill them. We look at what the community wants and needs and develop cultural programming around that.”

But Asher’s vision is greater than a single program or event. “Arts play an essential role in the development of creative abilities. They define the future for our children and the quality of life for our community. To me, the Pump House is much bigger than an art exhibit or a concert. It’s the ability to inspire people to go on and create—to develop a culture of creative thinkers.” *(crw)*

Kristy Walz enjoys visual arts and performances at the Pump House and was inspired by her interview with Toni Asher.

The La Crosse Area Builders Association proudly presents the award winning homes from the 2011 Parade of Homes. Judges voted on the winners in the price division categories. Attendees of this year's event voted for the People's Choice Award by filling out their ticket and turning it in after the tour.

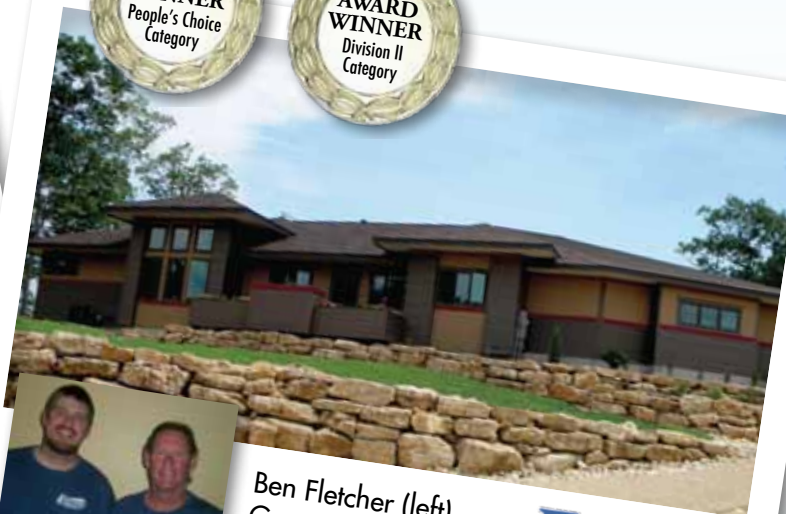
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10 FOODIE FINDS UNDER \$10

For food enthusiasts, the Coulee Region offers delicious and economical gastronomic pleasures.

BY CHARISH BADZINSKI

Photos by Charish Badzinski

Recipes analyzed by Gundersen Lutheran registered dietitians

In the early '80s, food started to become far more than a way to fuel the engine. It became television star, radio personality, writers' muse and paparazzi target. Those of us who caught the fever were dubbed "foodies," a title we wear proudly. Since then, food has become a hobby and even a passion for us, and knowing where to get the best food—or how to find hidden gastronomic gems—has become a source of pride. But foodie finds aren't relegated to large cities. In fact, right here in the Coulee Region, you'll find food that is authentic, original, and lip-quivering, eye-rolling good.

To narrow down the choices to 10 foodie finds, we assembled a team of local foodies who have crunched, munched and brunched their way to foodie status. Because great food doesn't have to be expensive, and we're all looking to stretch our dollar these days, we

limited them to \$10 or less. In no particular order, here's what we found:

1. Dim Sum—Cha Guan Tea Shop, 400 Main St., Ste. 102, La Crosse

Hidden in the Doerflinger Building, Cha Guan offers a lot of dim sum for your budget, and all of it is delicious. For \$9.50, we got five vegetable dumplings, a bowl of shrimp dumpling soup and three red bean paste buns.

2. Pho Soup—Hmong's Golden Egg Rolls, 929 State St., La Crosse

This traditional Vietnamese beef broth noodle soup is a meal in itself. Choose meatballs and thinly sliced brisket or crab and shrimp; \$6.79-\$8.79. Each comes with a plate of fresh toppings you add yourself and a wide selection of condiments.

3. Gyros—Big Mama's Gyro's, Third and Jackson St., La Crosse

Parked unassumingly outside Dave's Guitar Shop, this seasonal food truck dishes out gyros to a loyal lunch crowd Tuesday through Saturday for a mere \$5.50.

4. Dancing Tuna—Yoko's House, 200 Main St., La Crosse

Forget raw fish. Imagine sushi dipped in batter and dropped in the state fair deep-fat fryer. This foodie find is tempura style, fully cooked and served warm; \$9.95.

5. Walnut Burger—Trempealeau Hotel, 11332 Main St., Trempealeau

Now that the Hotel distributes its famous burger, some foodies argue it's been found enough—but it is still delicious and original. To get the full effect, eat it at the source: Slouch in an Adirondack chair on the porch and watch the Mighty Miss roll by; \$7.99.

6. Reuben Slider—Bodega Brewpub, 122 S. Fourth St., La Crosse

Get the same corned beef that made McBob's in Milwaukee famous for just \$4 on Wednesdays. Slider in name only, this sandwich, paired with \$1 chips, is a meal.

7. Pumpkin Pecan Pancakes—Hackberry's Bistro, 315 Fifth Ave. S., La Crosse

The kind of breakfast you crave on a cool morning; so good it's welcome year-round; \$6.99. True foodies will splurge on real maple syrup; \$3.

8. Bacon-Wrapped Wisconsin Curds—Pogreba Restaurant, 1232 Avon St., La Crosse

One of the area's newest restaurants offers a stunning "Why didn't I think of that?" twist on an old favorite: Wisconsin white cheddar cheese curds wrapped in smoked bacon, served with jalapeno cream cheese. Angioplasty not included; \$7.

9. Empanada Najel—4 Sisters Wine Bar and Tapas, 100 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse

Puffed pastry filled with lean ground beef and gruyere cheese; what's not to love? \$7.50.

10. Tacos de Carnitas—Tres Compadres, 115 Fifth Ave. S., La Crosse

Super slow-cooked, tender and garlicky michoacan-style pork is the star of these soft tacos, served as simply as street food: wrapped in aluminum foil. Top with pico de gallo and tomatillo salsa; \$7.99.

This list is anything but exhaustive, and foodie finds are ever-emerging. Should you fancy yourself a foodie, your mission, if you choose to accept, is to continue this research on your own. (crw)

Charish Badzinski had a great time researching this article, but hopes her next assignment is on workout trends. She blogs about food and travel at <http://rollerbaggoddess.blogspot.com/>.



Traditional Vietnamese pho soup is a meal in itself.

PHO SOUP

This is the traditional pho recipe with beef, shared by Hmong's Golden Egg Rolls in La Crosse. The beef paste, pho seasoning, fresh rice noodles and condiments can all be found at local Asian groceries.

Serves 12.

3	lb. beef brisket
$\frac{3}{4}$	cups beef paste
$\frac{1}{4}$	of a 1.5-oz. pho spice seasoning packet
2	gallons water
2	T salt
$1\frac{1}{4}$	lb. fresh rice noodles for pho

Bring 1 gallon of water and brisket to a boil, cooking about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, or until meat is tender. Remove the brisket from the broth and slice thinly. Stir the pho seasonings, salt and beef paste into the broth, add 1 more gallon water and bring to a boil, boiling for 15 minutes.

Bring remaining gallon of water to a boil. Using a handheld strainer or wire skimmer, dip a single serving of pho noodles into the boiling water for a few seconds, until noodles are hot. Place into bowl with 3 oz. sliced brisket, and or to taste (you will have extra brisket) pour broth over the top. Top each bowl with green and yellow onion and cilantro and allow guests to garnish to taste with beef paste, sriracha (a chili sauce), sugar, soy sauce, fish sauce, hoisin, lettuce, thai basil, sliced jalapeno, lime and crunchy bean sprouts.

195 calories, 9g fat, 11g protein, 17g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 421mg sodium.

CHINESE DUMPLINGS

This recipe is shared by Cha Guan Tea Shop.

Serves 5.

Dumpling Dough

3	cups all-purpose flour
Up to 1	cup cold water
1	egg
$\frac{1}{4}$	tsp. salt



At Cha Guan, the small dishes known as dim sum, includes red bean paste buns, shrimp dumpling soup and Chinese dumplings (back).

Combine salt, egg and flour, then slowly add the water into the flour until you form a smooth dough. Cover the dough and let it rest 30-45 minutes.

Knead the dough until it forms a smooth ball. Divide the dough into 5-6 big balls. Roll each ball extremely thin and cut it into 10-12 circles, each about 3 inches in diameter.

Dumpling Filling

- 1 cup ground pork or chicken
- 1 T soy sauce
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 T white sugar
- 1 tsp. ginger powder
- 1 T tapioca flour (found at local Asian groceries)
- 3 T cold water
- 1 green onion, finely minced
- ½ cup finely shredded carrot or cabbage
- 2 T sesame oil or vegetable oil

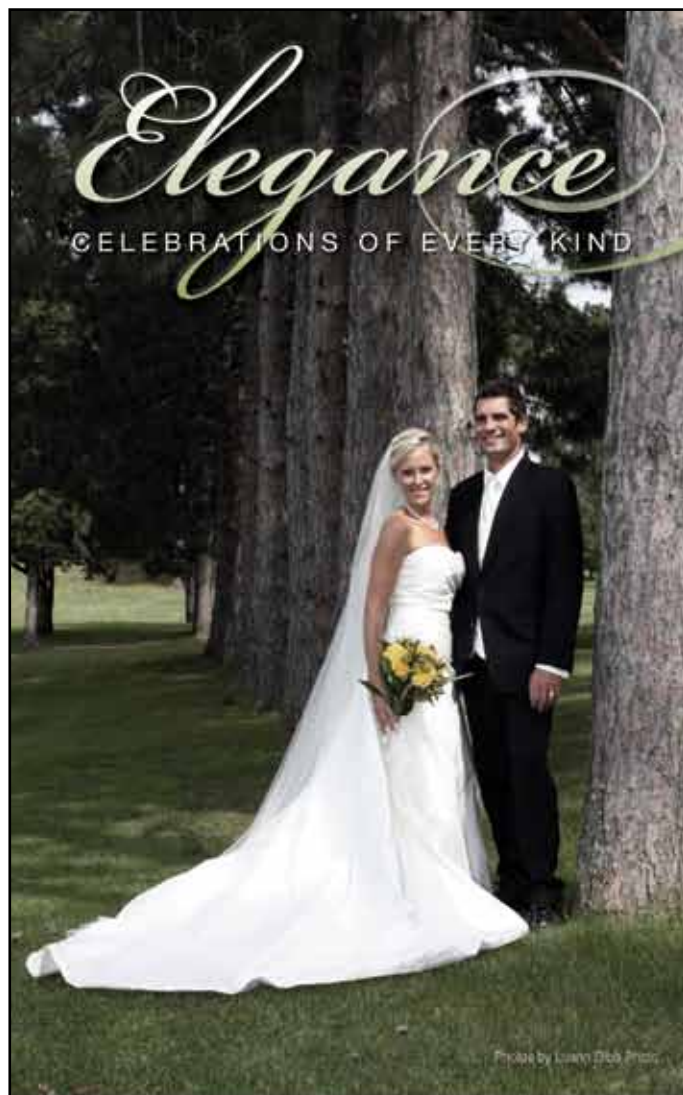
Prepare the filling while the dough is resting. Combine the soy sauce, salt, sugar, ginger, tapioca flour, water and meat and mix well. Add the green onion, carrot or cabbage and oil. Mix well.

Place about 1 T of the uncooked meat filling into the middle of each dough wrapper. Wet the edges of the dumpling with water. Fold the dough over the filling into a half moon shape. Shape and pinch the edges to seal.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over medium heat. Add 1 tsp. oil and add half of the dumplings. Slowly stir the dumplings to prevent them from sticking together.

When water comes to a boil again, add ½ cup cold water and slowly stir the dumplings again. Bring to a boil yet again, and add another ½ cup of cold water. When pot boils again, the dumplings are ready to eat. Repeat with remaining half of dumplings.

490 calories, 17g fat, 21g protein, 63g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 900mg sodium.



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HERSTORY

Artist Betty Kendrick poses by *Table Offerings*, a piece from her *Egyptian Series*, worked in oil slick crayons.

BEHIND THE BREWERY

An educator at heart, artist Betty Kendrick encourages others.

BY SUSAN HESSEL

Contributed photos

Early in her career as art coordinator for three schools in Pennsylvania, Betty Kendrick found herself looked upon a little suspiciously by parents who thought their kids should be taught to copy something that their teacher drew, not be encouraged to create their own work. “It made me uptight to tell children what to draw,” Kendrick says. “It’s not a natural part of doing art.”

More than a half-century after that first job, the fire still burns in Kendrick to encourage others to create art. And she still produces her own.

An artist and teacher

“I’ve always thought of myself primarily as an art educator,” Kendrick says. “But you must be an artist to teach art.”

Betty Kendrick and her husband, Dale, came to La Crosse in the early 1960s. Dale was a professor at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, where Betty filled in for a year and also taught summer art courses for children and classes for adults, encouraging them “to really look at art. You have to look at things to draw them.”

The Kendricks were among three couples who started the Art Fair on the Green on the UW-La Crosse campus in 1967. Now sponsored by the American Association of University Women, it is the largest juried art show in the region. In those early years, the Kendricks balanced son Roch or daughter Dunnell on a hip while showing their work at art fairs in La Crosse and elsewhere in the Midwest.

They also were known for their Behind the Brewery Gallery, opened in 1969. For a time, it was the only place in La Crosse selling art supplies and displaying works from artists from outside

the area. Kendrick also displayed her own paintings and fiber art.

From concept to completion

Kendrick juggled the gallery’s schedule around the needs of their kids. “Three-year-old Dunnell learned to say ‘Phthalocyanine blue,’” Kendrick says. “She wanted to be a part of it. She just loved the gallery, and Roch, too, was eager to help repair and explore the hillside that went down toward the slough.” The gallery’s location allowed the family close proximity to the Mississippi River, where, after hours, they enjoyed life on their Boat House.

Those early art experiences rubbed off on Dunnell, who became an art teacher, and Roch, an engineer who died in an accident in 2009.

Betty continues to make art, “reinventing myself,” as she puts it, as a knitting artist. She’s come full circle from her early fiber works. Each year, she attends an annual knitting retreat in central Wisconsin conducted by the daughter of Elizabeth Zimmermann, author of *Knitting Without Tears*.

“It is very soothing for me to knit. One of Elizabeth Zimmermann’s mantras is to ‘knit on, with confidence and hope, through all crises,’” Kendrick says. “When everything goes to hell in a hand basket, pick up your knitting.”

The greatest satisfaction for her today, as it was a half century ago, is “taking an idea from concept to completion.” **(crw)**

Susan T. Hessel is a writer and personal historian who has known and admired Betty Kendrick practically from the time she moved to La Crosse in 1974.

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LONDON CALLING

If the royal wedding left you longing for London, consider stopping by.

BY HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE

You might not be able to visit the queen

when you arrive in London, but you can hang out in her neighborhood. London, and its outlying areas, is filled with more than 2,000 years' worth of historical sites, beautiful gardens, traditional foods, exciting shopping and fine theater.

To plan your trip, consider working with a travel agency like Travel Leaders/Goli's Avenues of Travel to help you plan an itinerary, ensure you hit all the top attractions and avoid, as Travel Leaders agents advise, "spending half your day wondering what to do next." If you choose not to go with a structured group, you still can include preplanned tours, which zip you straight to the entry of major attractions, bypassing long entry waits. Travel Leaders agents also recommend purchasing a London Pass before you leave, a "smart card" that gains you entrance to 55 London tourist attractions, saving you money and the frustration of a ticket line.

If you arrange your own trip, begin your visit with an overview of the city and its sights on a jump-on-jump-off double-decker bus. England native Carole Gibb says it's a "good way to get a lot of London in a short amount of time." Even free tours, like Sandleman's New London



The Tower of London is a historic site not to be missed.



Changing of the guard.



Top: Buckingham Palace. **Bottom:** Palace of Westminster.

Walking Tour, will fill you in on the major sites, all while providing you with informative and entertaining anecdotes. Gibb also recommends finding themed tours, such as those featuring Jack the Ripper, Harry Potter or the royal wedding.

History, Harrods and a spot of tea

No matter what route you take, make St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and the Buckingham Palace changing of the guard part of your itinerary. At the top of the list, though, is the Tower of London. Be sure to get one of the Beefeaters there to tell you about the Tower, Gibb suggests. Also not to be missed are London's theaters, many of which are in

majestic old buildings. "You can go to TKTS in Leicester Square to get half-price tickets," the agents suggest, and, if time permits, include a behind-the-scenes tour of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. For a bit of nature, visit one of the area's fine gardens, especially Kew, one of the world's top botanical gardens, or stroll the nearly 300 acres of the formally planted Kensington Gardens.

Of course, all that sightseeing requires some refueling, and, while England may not be known for its gastronomical undertakings, it's worth sampling the country's traditional foods. Many hotels include breakfast, but for lunch, try packing a picnic from Marks & Spencer, then enjoying it in any one of

London's nearly 2,000 public places. High tea is a London must, especially in wonderful hotels like the Ritz, the Chesterfield Mayfair and the Montague on the Gardens. At the end of the day, head for a pub in Shepherd Market for pub food and ale. Above all, Gibb admonishes, take time to walk through the impressive food area at the luxury department store Harrods. "You can't go to London without going to Harrods," she says.

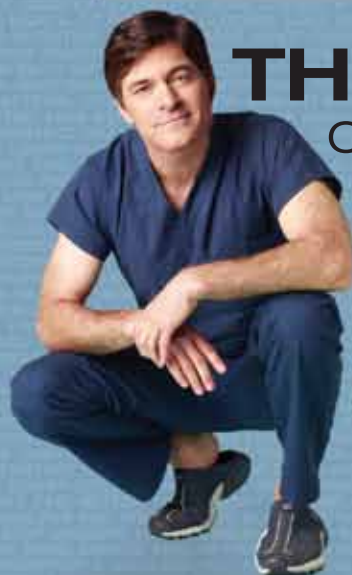
The highlight of many vacation trips is the shopping, and London won't disappoint. To get started, head for any "High Street," the somewhat generic term for major business and shop thoroughfares. For example, emulate Kate Middleton and spend your time on King's Road or go all-out at the designer shops on Bond Street. For antiques and vintage, wander the Portobello Market and, for a whiff of perfumed air, join the crowd at the Columbia Road Flower Market. Covent Garden, originally a produce market, now houses cafes, market stalls and entertainment.

End your vacation with a view from the London Eye (be sure to purchase an advance ticket). From the top of this enormous Ferris wheel, point to all the sites you visited and all those you can't wait to see on your next trip to London. **(crw)**

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D., is the executive director at WAFER Food Pantry and thinks London is simply supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.

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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:

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 1-4 with parent, every Fri., 10:30 a.m.

Little Learners for ages 1-4 with parent, every Thurs., 10:30 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, 1111 3rd St. S., La Crosse, 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 Wisconsin Women's Alliance meets the 2nd Thurs. of each month, noon. Dawn Harris, 608-782-4133, dawn@dmharrislaw.com.

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) meets the 1st Monday of each month, Olivet Lutheran Church, 6:15 p.m. Holly Zeeb, wxyzeeb@centurytel.net, www.olivetlutheran.org/small-groups/mops.

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.

WAFER Food Pantry, Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m.-12:45 p.m., Mon., Tues., Thurs. 4-8 p.m. 608-782-6003. www.waferlacrosse.org.

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

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

CALENDAR EVENTS

July 29-Aug. 13, Free school supplies gift with purchase, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Aug. 4-6, Salvation Army "Friends in Deed" Back-to-School clothing drive, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Aug. 4-7, Great River Jazz Fest, La Crosse Center, 608-781-1190, www.lacrossejazz.com.

Aug. 6, Taste of Winona and Arts Auction, 5:30-10 p.m., Winona County History Center, <http://7riversbbbs.org/TasteofWinonaTasteofWinona2011.html>.

Aug. 8-10, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Camp Curiosity "Discovering Dinosaurs," 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages

4-7, \$55 for museum members/\$65 for nonmembers, preregistration and prepayment required.

Aug. 12, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Freaky Friday, 10:30 a.m., preregistration and prepayment required.

Aug. 12-14, Irishfest, Oktoberfest Grounds, La Crosse, www.irishfestlax.org.

Aug. 15-17, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Camp Curiosity "Heroes Among Us," 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 4-7, \$55 for museum members/\$65 for nonmembers, preregistration and prepayment required.

Aug. 18, YWCA Celebrity Pie Auction fund-raiser for YWCA programs, 6 p.m., the Freight House.

Aug. 19, ZCare Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser, 7-10 a.m., Valley View Mall food court, www.myvalleyview.com.

Aug. 19, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Freaky Friday, 10:30 a.m., preregistration and prepayment required.

Aug. 19-21, Goodview Days, Goodview, Minn., www.goodviewdays.com.

Aug. 19-21, Kornfest, Village Park, Holmen, www.holmenwi.com.

Aug. 19-21, Sand on the Riverfront, 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Riverside Park, www.riverfrontinc.org.

Aug. 22-24, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Camp Curiosity "Nifty Nature," 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 4-7, \$55 for museum members/\$65 for nonmembers, preregistration and prepayment required.

Aug. 26-28, Great River Folk Festival, UW-La Crosse Campus, www.greatriverfolkfest.org.

Aug. 26-28, Healthy Living Expo, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 1-4, Sesame Street Live *Elmo Makes Music*, La Crosse Center, 7 p.m. Thurs.-Fri., 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., 800-745-3000.

Sept. 1-5, Bicycle Festival, La Crosse, www.bicyclelacrosse.org.

Sept. 2-4, Western Wisconsin High School Regional Rodeo, Coulee Region Riders Club, Holmen, www.ridersclub.org.

Sept. 9-10, La Crosse Storytelling Festival, Myrick Park, La Crosse, www.lacrossestoryfest.com.

Sept. 9-11, Home-Based Business Expo, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 10, Steppin' Out in Pink breast cancer walk, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Gundersen Lutheran campus, La Crosse, www.gundluth.org/steppinout.

Sept. 9-11, Garland Days, 357 Garland St., West Salem, www.westsalemwi.com.

Sept. 9-11, La Crosse Storytelling Festival, Myrick Park, www.lacrossestoryfest.com.

Sept. 9-Oct. 2, *The Wizard of Oz*, La Crosse Community Theatre, www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

Sept. 15, Resurrection Dance Theater of Haiti, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo University, La Crosse.

Sept. 15-18, Applefest, La Crescent, Minn. www.applefestusa.com.

Sept. 16, Terrance Simien and the Zydeco Experience, 7:30 p.m., Page Theatre, St. Mary's University, Winona.

Sept. 16-18, Gingerbread Arts & Crafts Fair, Valley View Mall, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 17, Electronics Recycling Event, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Valley View Mall parking lot, www.myvalleyview.com.

Sept. 18, Tri-Quest, Drugan's Castle Mound, Holmen, www.tri-quest.org.

Sept. 23-Oct. 1, Oktoberfest, Oktoberfest grounds, La Crosse, www.oktoberfestusa.com.

Oct. 8, Historic Downtown Day, La Crosse.

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



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