

Coulee Region Woman

AREA HOME AND HEALTH MAGAZINE

ALL NATURAL

MEET **3** NATURAL WOMEN

Woman's Outdoor Guide

3 Fresh Spring
Cover-Ups | Sew Green,
Sew Fun

Inside



FEBRUARY/MARCH 2010

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The Care You Deserve!

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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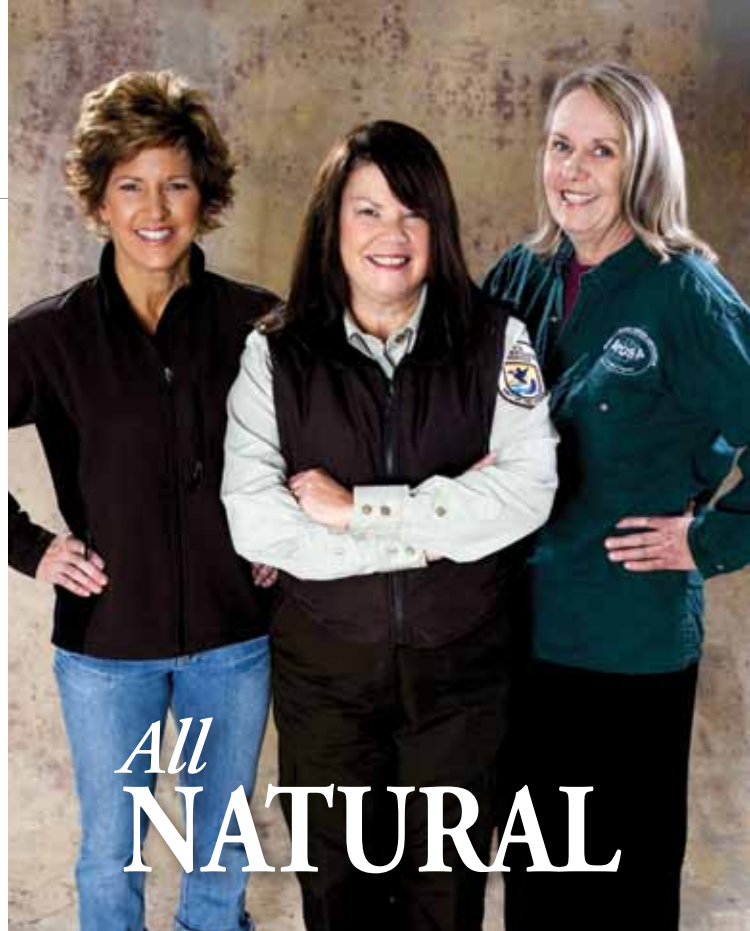
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Photos by Janet Mootz Photography
Hair by The Salon and makeup by Mary Kay—Trudy Swenson

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Coulee Region Women

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PHOTO BY MELISSA HANSON



Editor Betty Christiansen shows off a bag she made for a staff sewing project. Want to try one for yourself? Go to www.crwmagazine.com.

Before I moved to La Crosse, I spent several years in New York. Most of that time, my husband and I lived on the fringes of Manhattan, but for a very precious year and a half, we moved upstate an hour or so, to an area nestled between the Hudson River and the foothills of the Catskill Mountains, a range known as the Shawangunks.

It was beautiful.

I grew up in the farmlands of northern Wisconsin, where the geography is pretty, but fairly flat. Every day of the year and a half we spent in the "Gunks" took my breath away. I'd rise early in the morning and drive my husband over the Hudson to Poughkeepsie, where he caught the train that took him into the city. The drive home was my favorite part of the day. As I wound my way uphill and down, around gentle curves and hairpin turns, the mountains were an ever-changing panorama before me, steadily shifting as I maneuvered through many points of view. I was always filled with an expansive feeling on that drive, and I'd arrive home in awe of the beauty of the place, and believing that anything was possible.

Then we moved. "Home" for my husband was the Coulee Region, and that's where we went. I'd been to La Crosse before, and I liked it just fine, but I was brokenhearted to leave the mountains and the river. As we settled in, however, I was surprised to discover I hadn't left my beloved landscape behind—not at all. Driving over the Mississippi River into La Crosse, the bluffs soared before me, and I discovered that wherever in town I drove, they were there, like good friends, with a spirit and a majesty all their own.

So began my love story of the bluff country. I am sure you have your own.

This issue is full of such love stories, celebrating the love of nature—and specifically, the love of *our* nature—here in the Coulee Region. Join us as we go "all natural," and prepare to meet women whose business is nature, whether protecting it, working with it or exploring it. You'll see how nature calls to us most when we're immersed in it—while swooshing down snow-covered mountains, when escaping to its quietest corners, even in the intimacy of birth.

You'll find this is a very hands-on issue, too—we beckon you outside with an outdoor adventure guide, into the kitchen with recipes focused on sustainable eating and into the sewing room for an afternoon of repurposing clothing. Let's go *au naturel*—there's nothing like it!

Betty

CARE THAT INSPIRES *beautiful futures*

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breast cancer in the eye. It's our job to help
them see way beyond it."

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Breast Surgeon

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SEARCHING FOR LOVE

The 20th annual Valentine Ball, benefiting the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra, will be held on Saturday, Feb. 13, in the Cargill Room at Riverfront Center. Treat your sweetheart to one of La Crosse's most elegant nights out on the town, featuring fine dining, great entertainment, dancing, and live and silent auctions. Debuting at the Valentine Ball this year is LSO's very own Jesus Arellano and his popular band 3 Beers Til Dubuque. For more information, visit www.lacrossesymphony.org, call the symphony office at 608-783-2121 or e-mail tracyf@lacrossesymphony.org.



KIDS AND KICKING BEAR

Kids and the outdoors naturally go together, and Kicking Bear Camp, based out of La Crescent, Minn., offers kids an opportunity to explore nature through camping experiences throughout the country—while also making friends, developing relationships with adult role models and learning outdoor skills such as camping, archery and hunting. Designed to bring kids, adult mentors and nature together, Kicking Bear Camp seeks to show youth a better way of life while providing them with a weekend of fun to experience new things and meet new friends.

On Saturday, March 28, you can help by attending the second annual Kicking Bear Fund-Raiser at the Omni Center in Onalaska. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., with cocktails at 5 p.m. and a dinner at 6 p.m. The event will feature a raffle, silent auction and lots of door prizes. Looking for a more hands-on way to help? Visit www.kickingbear.org to discover how you can become a mentor to a child.

GRANDMAS GONE WILD FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

Few people cherish children more than grandmas, and this spring, children throughout the area will benefit from the goodwill of Grandmas Gone Wild at their third annual fund-raising event. This year's event, scheduled for April 17, will focus on raising money for the La Crosse Family and Children's Center "Healthy Families" program, which seeks to prevent child abuse and neglect in the La Crosse area. The event will be held 3-11 p.m. at the Crazy Horse Saloon in West Salem, and will feature great food and drink, raffles, a silent auction, cash prizes, live music and more. Money raised will go directly to Healthy Families, assisting children in the community who are at risk of abuse and abusive situations.

In the fall of 2007, a group of friends gathered for coffee and some laughs, and what emerged was a plan to help others in the La Crosse community—through the Grandmas Gone Wild fund-raising events. Each year, this event raises money for an area charity—visit their Web site, www.lacrosseeggw.com, to nominate your favorite.

FISHING FOR OPPORTUNITIES

What's a great way to get kids outside, teach them about the environment and develop an interest in nature and conservation? Visit a fish hatchery—and the Coulee Region is fortunate to be home to one in Genoa, Wis. With a mission of recovering threatened and endangered aquatic species, restoring threatened fish populations and providing fish for recreational fishing on public lands, the hatchery plays an important role in preserving our natural fish population as well as promoting fishing as sport.

Each May, the Genoa Fish Hatchery also hosts a Kids' Fishing Day, at which young anglers can learn about fishing ethics, conservation, jig making, fish cleaning and fish anatomy, behavior and habitats. And of course, they get to fish—for rainbow trout in a stocked pond. For more information, and for the dates of upcoming hatchery events, visit www.fws.gov/midwest/Genoa.

You Complete the Circle of Friends



The YWCA of the Coulee Region is pleased to host our 7th annual Circle of Friends event. This is an opportunity to learn about programs and services of the YWCA and network with philanthropic women and men from the Seven Rivers Region.

Funds raised by guests at this luncheon event support the YWCA's programs for abused and neglected children; services for homeless women and their families; youth initiatives; and programs which enrich the lives of women, children, youth and families living within the Greater La Crosse area.

Join Us!

TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2010

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

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For Marriages & Couples:

Walk Away Wife Syndrome

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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Women are instrumental in protecting the Coulee Region's natural spaces, from forests to rivers to fields. Three of them are **(from left)** Kathy Frise of the Mississippi Valley Conservancy, Pam Thiel of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and Bonnie Wideman of the Midwest Organic Services Association (MOSA).

NATURAL WOMEN

Meet three local women who work to preserve the nature they love.

by **KIM SEIDEL**

PHOTOS BY JANET MOOTZ PHOTOGRAPHY



From its rivers to its prairies and its pastures, the Coulee Region is rich in beautiful natural spaces, which supply its residents with everything from healthy food to outdoor recreation. But preserving these spaces is hard work. Some of that work falls upon the shoulders of three local women, each of whom has made a career out of protecting the area's natural resources.

Organic by nature

Bonnie Wideman loves her work, leading a nonprofit organic certification agency that serves around 1,300 clients. Based in Viroqua, the Midwest Organic Services Association (MOSA) ranks first in the United States for the number of dairy farms it certifies, about 475 in 2009. She is its executive director.

Wideman taught at the Waldorf School in Viroqua for 14 years before she came to MOSA. The school fit into her "green" philosophy and lifestyle. "I was always connected with nature," says

Wideman, who grew up on a farm in Chetek, Wis.

With a strong interest in environmental sciences, she earned a botany degree from UW-Madison in 1972. She married Jeff Wideman in 1983. They spent most of their years together on a 160-acre farm near Soldiers Grove, Wis., where they raised three children, and where Wideman still lives and farms today.

Jeff was working with MOSA as an organic farm inspector when he was diagnosed with cancer in 2002. Wideman left her teaching job to accompany him through his treatments. The experience they shared motivated them to make changes.

"When you go through a journey like that, you weigh all of the decisions you made in life," she says. "We were both committed to spending more time together, and we both wanted to continue farming."

Wideman decided to become an organic farm inspector so she could work with her husband. In the summer of 2005, Wideman had held the position of interim director at MOSA for only

weeks when her husband drowned while vacationing in Hawaii with their son.

"It was a big decision one week after that for MOSA, hiring a recently bereaved widow as executive director. But they had a lot of faith in me," says Wideman. "Having so much work to do at the time of my husband's death helped me survive the experience, as did the support of an incredibly caring community."

Wideman is especially known for her skills in personnel management, which makes up the bulk of her position. "I like the people I work with and the farmers we serve," she says. "The farmers really believe in organic farming. It becomes a way of life for them."

It's always been a way of life for Wideman, who makes her own granolas and breads and has a passion for organic gardening. "I'm of the back-to-the-land generation of the sixties and seventies," Wideman says. "My job with MOSA is a natural outgrowth of my philosophy of life and my background in the environmental sciences."

She and her new partner, Craig Scott, who works on an organic vegetable farm, take care of her farm with its 100 ewes and 20 beef cows. Wideman turned 60 in January, is expecting her first grandchild in February and loves her life.

"I'm really blessed. I like spending time at my job, and I like coming home, driving up to my farm," Wideman says. "I jump on my four-wheeler and call the cows to move them to a new pasture. What's cute is that the sheep are faster than the cows, so I'm often surrounded by hundreds of sheep before the cows come."

Called by the river

As a biologist for more than 35 years, Pam Thiel believes it's her "good fortune" that her work focuses on preserving rivers.

"Rivers are very resilient. I've always had the good fortune of working on the Mississippi and Illinois rivers," says Thiel, project leader and supervisor for the La Crosse U.S. Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office in Onalaska. "The Upper Mississippi is Mark Twain's river, and it's one of the more natural rivers in the United States. It's a magnificent resource, with its high diversity of fish, mussels, amphibians, mammals and birds."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats. In her position, Thiel, an adventurous 60-year-old, frequently travels for her work and oversees a staff of seven. Her office partners with many organizations across Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois and Missouri.

"Partnerships are the hallmark of conservation work in this century," Thiel says. "We can have a bigger impact, pooling more funding and resources, when we all work together."

Partnering with the nearby Genoa National Fish Hatchery, Thiel teams up with others to improve the native mussel population. Thiel also battles a variety of invasive species, including Asian carp, to prevent them from overtaking waterways across the Midwest.

Working on fish passage projects, Thiel strives to either remove dams or create new routes to allow fish to move upstream in waterways as small as those in Dane County to as large as the Red River in North Dakota.

Through another major habitat restoration project, Thiel's office is working with Trout Unlimited and Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois to restore streams in those states. A bigger version of this project is the Fishers and Farmers Partnership for the Upper Mississippi Basin, which is improving water quality by decreasing the amount of sediments going from fields into streams.

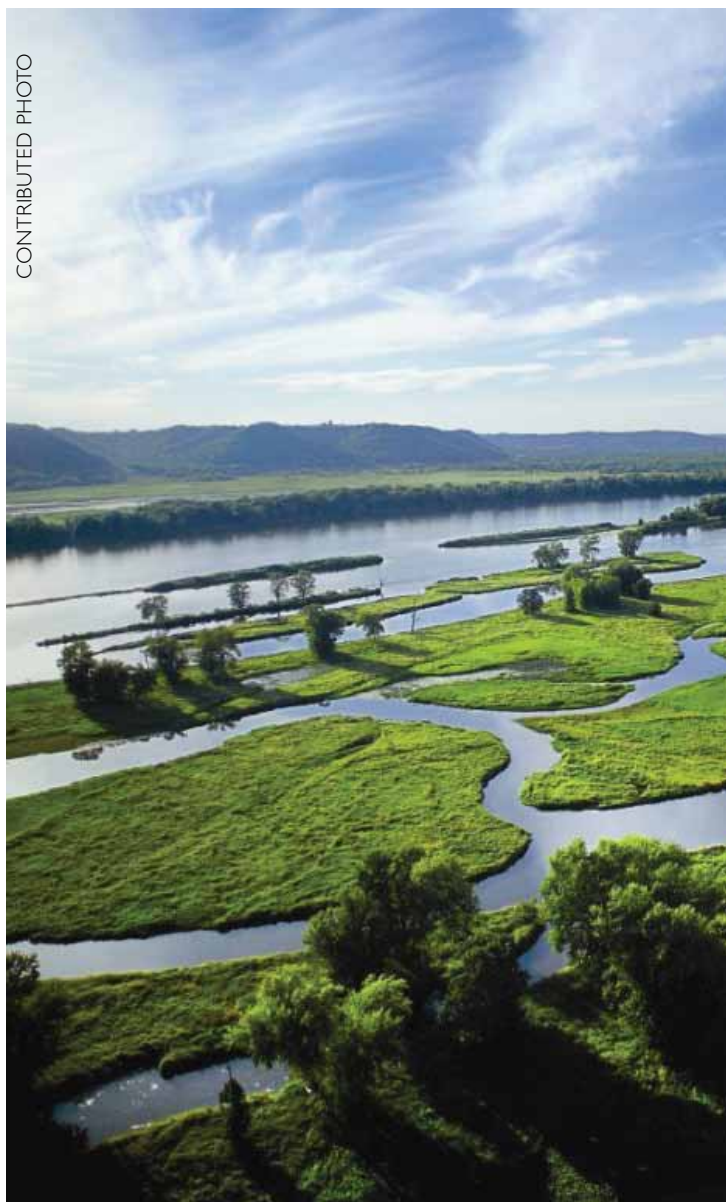
One of Thiel's most gratifying projects involves working on lake sturgeon fish restoration on two Indian reservations by Green Bay and in western Minnesota. "Lake sturgeon have been gone for over 100 years, because of dams, and this fish is culturally

and spiritually important to the tribes," Thiel says. "It's an important part of our work to help restore these fish."

Prior to working with FWS, Thiel was employed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois State Water Survey. She met her husband, John Thiel, also a biologist, while working for a private environmental company in Illinois. They had the opportunity to move to La Crosse, an ideal community for them to live and work. She earned a biology and education degree from Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, and later a master's degree from UW-La Crosse.

Thiel's strong interest in aquatic science

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



This breathtaking view of the Mississippi River backwaters is located just south of Conservancy in and around the river keep the area serene and beautiful.



La Crosse near Goose Island. The properties protected by the Mississippi Valley

study health and fitness at UW-La Crosse. “It seemed I ran through every trail in the forest, and I came out on Bliss Road, completely lost.”

She wasn’t afraid. Instead, she felt in awe of the stunning scenery between the bluffs and the river. “That was a defining moment for me, because it showed me what a cool area this is to live in and how much natural beauty we have here,” says Frise, who graduated in 1987 and made this area her home.

As advancement director for the Mississippi Valley Conservancy (MVC), Frise, 47, works with a dedicated team to preserve the land she treasures and enjoys every day. In addition to trail running, she loves to mountain bike, camp, and Nordic and downhill ski. She’s volunteered with many nature organizations, including as a board member of Hixon Forest and a trail builder for Human Powered Trails. She enjoys spending time with her 11-year-old son in the outdoors as well.

Two years ago, she came to the MVC with

her expertise from 12 years as adult program director for the La Crosse Area Family YMCA. She shares her talents in program and membership development, marketing, fund-raising and special events.

“This amazing organization makes it possible for me and others to be out in the bluff lands; I knew I wanted to be a part of it,” Frise says. MVC is a regional, nonprofit land trust that has permanently protected more than 11,000 acres of bluff lands, prairies, wetlands and streams since it was established in 1997 in La Crosse.

The Conservancy partners with private landowners and local communities on voluntary conservation projects in seven

counties along the Mississippi River: La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon, Crawford, Grant, Buffalo and Trempealeau.

While her downtown office in the U.S. Bank building gives her a great view of bluffs, she most enjoys her work outside. Frise especially loves her outreach work with young people. “With the obesity epidemic, it’s important to get kids off the couch and off the gaming systems,” she says. “We can use these beautiful resources to keep children involved in the outdoors.”

She’s led middle school and at-risk high school students on work projects to improve the land. She finds it satisfying that she’s connected young people to physical labor, directing their energies into a positive outcome.

She’s taken students to work in Mathy Quarry, off County Highway B. There, they pulled invasive weed species from the land and hiked to observe a goat prairie that MVC preserves.

She’s rounded up students for hikes on the Haas Property, behind the Shelby Baseball Fields on Easter Road. It’s one of many out-of-the-way places with beautiful overlooks she loves to share with others. In addition, she’s helped others to learn about the La Crosse River Conservancy located near Onalaska Gunderson Clinic.

“We’re very lucky in this area,” Frise says. “Remember to stop for a moment and look around at what we have here.” ❖

Kim Seidel is a local writer who made a New Year’s resolution to spend more time with her family outdoors after interviewing these inspirational women.

stems from her childhood. She grew up on a farm along Covell Creek, a tributary of the Illinois River. She calls her father “Mr. Science Guy.” Together they would watch the TV show Mr. Wizard and then try experiments in their basement. Her mother loved nature and often took her on hikes to collect leaves and observe wildlife.

Defined by a forest

A “defining moment” for Kathy Frise occurred after she became lost during a run through Hixon Forest in La Crosse.

“I love to explore communities by running through them,” says Frise, who arrived in the Coulee Region in 1981 to

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The organizations featured here make it possible for people to be a part of the bluff lands.

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FOOD FOR YOUR SKIN

LuSa Organics makes body products almost good enough to eat.

by **LEAH CALL**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

You might think you've walked into a commercial kitchen when you step into Rachel Wolf's home studio in Viroqua, Wis., where she makes all-natural soaps, bath salts, lip balms and essential oils under the name of LuSa Organics. You'll find organic fair-trade raw sugar, extra virgin olive oil, rolled oats, various herbs and probably some beeswax and lavender. It's food for your skin.

"When you read the ingredients label of a commercially produced cleansing bar or lotion, ask yourself, 'Would I eat it?'" says Wolf. "Our body is really eating up what we put on it. If it is something you wouldn't choose to eat, it doesn't belong on your skin, either."

Wolf adds that choosing natural and organic products to put on your skin is more about what you are not putting on. "You are not putting synthetic preservatives, carcinogens, toxins on your skin. What you are putting on is like nourishing food for your body."

A family affair

Soap making started as a hobby for Wolf. In 2002, when she left a career in environmental education to be home with her newborn son, she turned her hobby into a home business. It's a family business named after her children, Lupine and Sage, who can regularly be found at work with Mom, labeling products or filling bags.

"When our son was six years old, he launched his own branch in our business, making organic scented sachets. He would blend herbs from the studio or grate soap scraps with his vintage 1980 Snoopy Sno-Cone Machine and make these custom blends in little cotton pouches and sell them.

"It is very much a family business," adds Wolf.

A magical process

Wolf calls soap making a magical process and believes in the power of natural ingredients, like lavender, which is known for having a calming effect. One of her best sellers, Sleeping Potion, made with jojoba oil and essential oils of lavender, tangerine and chamomile, was created to calm a cranky baby.

"When Sage was a newborn, he wasn't the best sleeper. I created that to help me survive the first six months of his life," recalls Wolf. "My experience was that he was still colicky, but it mellowed me out a whole lot, which was great. I realized it was something that was helpful not just for babies and kids, but for adults as well."



Rachel Wolf cuts her organic soap into bars while baby Lupine looks on.

LuSa Organics products are sold online and at food co-ops throughout the upper Midwest. LuSa's special line of organic baby products, with names like Booty Balm, Organic Baby Wipes, Baby Wipe Juice and Cranky Pants Essential Oil Blend, have received national recognition and are sold nationwide. ♣

Leah Call, a freelance writer in Westby, is impressed by the many talented, creative and ambitious women in the Coulee Region.

LuSa Organics Winter Skin Bath Tea

- 2 cups rolled oats
- ½ cup dried calendula flowers
- ¼ cup dried lavender flowers
- ¼ cup dried chamomile flowers
- 4 drops lavender essential oil
- 1 drop patchouli essential oil

Place dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. Stir with clean hands or a wooden spoon to combine. Add essential oils and stir. Store in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid in a dry, dark location. Bath Tea will last at least 1 year.

Using your Bath Tea

Method 1: Tea bag brewing—Fill a reusable cloth tea bag with ¼ cup Bath Tea. Hold bag under running bath water and squeeze to release soothing elements. (You can make your own tea bag by tying a double layer of cheesecloth into a pouch with string or by sewing muslin into a small drawstring bag.)

Method 2: Loose brewing—Scoop ¼ cup Bath Tea into a teapot or cooking pot. Fill pot with hot water, cover and steep until cool. Strain and press out any water. Add water to your bath.

PLAYING WITH A PURPOSE

Shake N' Shed Fitness offers health and fun for everyone.

by **LINDSAY BONNAR**
PHOTO BY DANIEL BALFANZ

Shake N' Shed Fitness, located in a new building recently completed on East Highway 16 in Onalaska, has more to offer than what one may first expect. The owner of the new facility is Amy Zietlow, a woman who says her love of fitness—and so much more—inspired her to start Shake N' Shed Fitness. She also wanted to be able to give back to the community, she says, and to “gear toward a population that is often forgotten.”

Fitness, family and fun

Zietlow sought to create a family-friendly place that focuses on the four primary areas of health: physical, mental, spiritual and social. She also wanted a place where people have so much fun they forget they are working out.

“It’s about variety, playing with a purpose,” Zietlow says. “As a mother of a child with special needs, I am thrilled to offer fitness classes to children, teens and adults with varying degrees of physical disabilities.”

Shake N' Shed also offers classes such as Itsy Bitsy Yoga for parents and their babies, Pre/Post Pegggers yoga for new and expecting moms and Zumba Gold for beginners and active older adults.

In order to offer all of the classes she wanted, Zietlow first needed to become certified to teach them. She, and her oldest daughter, Paula, spent a year traveling all over the United States and Canada to obtain the necessary certifications for things like Piyo and Hip Hop Hustle as well as CPR and Safety First Aid. All three women now teach classes at Shake N' Shed.

“We knew we had deadlines, so we set goals, and we met them no matter how exhausted we were,” Zietlow says.

When Zietlow and Houle finally decided to put their plan for Shake N' Shed into action, they knew exactly what they wanted for their fitness center, from the design down to the names of the various studios.

“We worked with amazing people, really gifted,” Zietlow says of all the people who helped bring Shake N' Shed to life. “They worked so well with our vision and putting it together. We became just a huge family.” Despite a hectic schedule, Shake N' Shed had its grand opening, as planned, in October 2009. The first day of classes was November 2.

“We were all so excited—seeing the final product was exciting for everyone, and there is nothing that we would change,” Zietlow says.



Fun and high-energy group exercise classes are just one of the offerings of Shake N' Shed Fitness.

Diverse classes for diverse clients

Shake N' Shed Fitness features the Jungle—a studio for kids with a climbing wall, swings and classes for youth of all ages. Shake N' Shed also offers an outdoor Boundless Playground, where children of all abilities can play together.

Also at Shake N' Shed Fitness is the Garage, a high-energy studio where classes such as Zumba and Turbo Kick are taught amid lights, fog and upbeat music. The Horizon is a studio for the mind and body, and it is where Piyo and other yoga classes are taught. The outdoor Yoga Garden will also play host to yoga classes in warmer weather.

Zietlow loves to see the excitement in members and makes it a point to let them know that “we’re here for you and what we can do for you.”

More information about Shake N' Shed’s classes and memberships can be found at www.shakenshedfitness.com. ♣

Lindsay Bonnar also enjoys taking group fitness classes, such as yoga and hip-hop, especially in the winter. She is excited to try some of the things Shake N' Shed offers.



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A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO THE OUTDOORS

It's spring in the Coulee Region—let's get moving!

by **MARTHA KEEFFE**

PHOTOS BY JESSIE CONAWAY



Kayaking is a splendid way to explore the natural beauty of the Coulee Region. Groups such as the River Divas offer women the opportunity to get paddling.

It's time to get out of the house, get off the couch and get moving! The La Crosse area has a wealth of outdoor recreational opportunities just waiting to be tried and enjoyed. Here, we have everything you need to get started.

Biking

The Coulee Region is filled with bicycling opportunities, from relaxing cruising-speed tours on crushed limestone trails to heart-pumping hill climbs with exhilarating descents on country roads. Bikers of all abilities are certain to find a route that meets their needs while treating them to the diverse scenery and terrain of the area.

The Great River Trail and Elroy-Sparta State Trail

Following abandoned railroad beds, these multi-use trails offer the perfect venue for casual bikers and families. Level terrain plus easy on-and-off access keeps effort to a minimum. Bicyclists can glide along routes that skirt the Mississippi, wind through river bottoms or open up to quiet prairies. Take an afternoon to ride over the train trestles that dot the Great River State Trail from Onalaska to Trempealeau, a trip that is not only picturesque but culminates

in delicious dining at the Trempealeau Hotel or a picnic in Perrot State Park.

For a bit of adventure, head east to the Elroy-Sparta State Trail. Here, bicyclists can venture through three century-old abandoned train tunnels—the longest, a dark cavern just short of a mile long. Remember to bring a flashlight and listen carefully. Rumor has it that a ghost train still rides these rails.

Road Biking

Smith's Cycling and Fitness in La Crosse and River Trails Cycles in Holmen are two great resources for mapping out road bike routes or for connecting with other cyclists. Here you can get information on weekly group rides ranging from casual rides geared to beginners to fast-paced workouts for the experienced rider. They even offer group rides for women only. In addition, information on organized riding events and clinics is available.

Mountain Biking the Human Powered Trails

Who says you need mountains to mountain bike? With possibly the best off-road trails in the Midwest, you need not travel any

farther than the Human Powered Trails, Inc. (HPT) in La Crosse. Located near the National Weather Station, these well-maintained, single-track, easy-to-follow trails dish up hours of muscle-burning challenges. Bikers thrill at the chance to power up, over and around obstacles, speed down deep valley trails—then crank their way out again—or maneuver through the forest as the trails twist and turn through the trees. Even beginner and intermediate bikers will find true mountain biking terrain that is every bit as interesting, yet less intimidating. Give Smith's or River Trails a call. They'll hook you up with an all-women's off-road group—no machismo required.

Kayaking **River Divas**

Even if you don't own a kayak or have never been in one before, you can still experience the beauty of La Crosse from out on the water. Through its weekly paddling groups, such as the women-only River Divas, Three Rivers Outdoors (3RO) in downtown La Crosse can help familiarize you with the sport. By organizing all-inclusive, introductory paddles to some of the most scenic and least known waterways in the area, 3RO has taken the guesswork out of kayaking by creating a worry-free, nonintimidating environment for beginners. They even transport the gear for you. What do you have to bring? A few good friends, the right attitude and, just in case, a change of clothes.

Beginner/Intermediate Waterways

Now that you're confident with the basic steering strokes, can read the water for obstacles and can safely maneuver around them, you might be ready to head out on your own. Intermediate-level waterways such as the La Crosse River from the Neshonoc Dam to Veteran's Park in West Salem, the Goose Island Park water trail or the Black River from Mindoro to North Bend are just a few of the local options that offer paddlers relaxing, scenic getaways right outside their doorways. With many convenient pullout areas, kayakers can easily determine the length of their trip according to their time constraints and motivation

level. In addition, low water levels, few obstacles and an enticing sand beach make many of these rivers family friendly. And when you need a break, rest your paddle on your boat and take a look around. You might be surprised to find that you have eagles, heron and plenty of fish for company.

Hiking **Hixon Forest**

Whatever your pace, Hixon Forest offers some of the best and most varied hiking opportunities within stomping ground of La Crosse. A series of forested, gently rolling, woodchip-covered trails are available to give less-experienced hikers a manageable taste of the outdoors while encouraging them to explore the bluffs and woodlands beyond these well-known paths.

Human Powered Trails (HPT)

Feeling a bit more inspired? Challenge yourself with a hike at the Human Powered Trails, Inc. Though designed to accommodate enthusiasts of all skill levels, the majority of these hard-packed shared-use trails twist and turn along sloping bluff sides or dip deeply into valley woodlands. Certain to give the average hiker a good workout, the length and terrain of these trails are not so intimidating as to discourage return trips. Plus, an abundance of prairie wildflowers, an endless sea of ferns and the occasional deer, fox or pheasant sighting will make your hike worth the sweat.

Perrot State Park

Situated along the Mississippi River near Trempealeau, Wis., the beautiful Perrot State Park offers a full range of leg-stretching hiking. Gently graded paths parallel the Mississippi River, and trails from 2 to 5 miles long lead hikers along fern-lined trails that roll up and down through a canopy of hardwood and pine forests. And for those wanting the true experience of Perrot, a trip up Brady's Bluff—the park's 520-foot peak—is a must. This steep ascent, which uses a series of narrow paths and wooden stairsteps, not only tests your muscles but cuts through the native grassland goat prairies that are unique to this area. The view of the river valley from this point is a breathtaking reward for your efforts.

Hidden Gems

The following trails have been purchased and are maintained for public use by the Mississippi Valley Conservancy through conservation agreements, private land donations and grants.

La Crosse River Conservancy

This trail is perfect for hikers looking for a level, casual natural area to take an early morning or late afternoon stroll. The path, which cuts through native grasslands, allows hikers to observe prairie wildflowers, waterfowl and wildlife. Continue along the path as it wanders adjacent to the La Crosse River, where the setting is serene and meditative.

Haas Properties

This forested trail, hidden in the bluffs of south La Crosse, provides seasoned hikers with enough of an uphill challenge to make their quads burn. A steep, steadily climbing trail complete with a creek crossing coaxes hikers to the top, where they'll find a panoramic—and not often seen—view of south La Crosse. Relax on the blufftop bench, continue south along the trail to Juniper and Welch peaks, or take the ridgeline trail back down the hill. Not only will you enjoy the view, but the short up-and-down terrain will give a roller-coaster feel to your ascent. ❀

Martha Keeffe lives and writes in La Crosse. She, as well as her husband, Kevin, her daughter, Barrette, and her newly acquired puppy, Gracie, love to explore this region's outdoors.



The region offers a wealth of hiking opportunities for all levels.

PERROT STATE PARK

(Usage fee required)

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www.dnr.state.wi.us/ORG/land/parks/specific/perrot

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EXIT #4

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Left on 108, parking lot and boat landing are on left.
Take-out: Veteran's Park, West Salem
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look left for landing on shore.

LA CROSSE RIVER CONSERVANCY

Hwy. 16 north. Park in lot behind Old Country Buffet.
Access via unmarked trail just east of parking lot or by
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HIXON FOREST

Trailhead location
North on Hwy. 16
Right on Milson Ct.
Follow road approximately ½ mile.
www.myrickecopark.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TRAIL MAPS

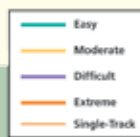
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www.humanpoweredtrails.com
From La Crosse: Take Bliss Rd. (east) up Grandad Bluff.
Take left (north) on Hwy. FA approx. 1 mile to parking lot.



HAAS PROPERTIES

East on Ward Ave., right on Hillview Dr. (south),
left on Park Ln., right on Cliffside Dr., left on Easter Rd.
Follow Easter Rd. up bluff and look for trailhead kiosk and parking lot on right side of road.

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GEAR GUIDE

For outdoor gear, rentals, groups and maps, look no further than these local resources.

Smith's Cycling and Fitness (cycling)

125 7th Street North
La Crosse, WI 54601
608-784-1175
www.smithsbikes.com

River Trail Cycles (cycling)

500 South Holmen Drive
Holmen, WI 54636-7301
608-526-4678
www.rivertrailcycles.com

Outdoor Connection (cycling and kayaking, including equipment rental and instruction)

UW-L Recreational Eagle Center
1601 Badger Street
La Crosse, WI 54601
608-785-8860
open to the public
[www.uwlax.edu/recsports/OC_
EquipmentRental.html](http://www.uwlax.edu/recsports/OC_EquipmentRental.html)

Three Rivers Outdoors (kayaking, hiking and more, including equipment rental, instruction and groups such as River Divas and Paddle Time)

400 Main Street
La Crosse, WI 54601
608-793-1470
608-790-7425 (Jessie Conaway, instructor)
www.threeriversoutdoors.com
info@threeriversoutdoors.com

Coulee Canoe and Kayak Club (kayaking)

Great resource for meeting other fellow paddling enthusiasts and finding paddling hotspots. Offers group kayaking trips.
www.ccakc.org

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ELLEN HIXON'S VISION

One woman's affection for La Crosse saved two of its landmarks.

by **HEIDI OVERSON**

ELLEN HIXON PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY THE LA CROSSE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Thanks to the efforts of Ellen Hixon, Grandad Bluff and Hixon Forest are still enjoyed by Coulee Region residents and visitors today.

He is wise and all-knowing, thanks to the hundreds of years he has looked upon the progression and passing of history in La Crosse and the Coulee Region. He could tell you many stories and leak a multitude of secrets. He is fondly regarded, and, surely, most of you have at least one story to tell about this beloved La Crosse icon: Grandad Bluff.

Our dear bluff and the forest that surrounds him have a bit of tumultuous history. In 1909, they were threatened to be destroyed. The 800-plus-acre property was rumored to have been purchased by a businessman, Norris Bacheller, who intended to remove timber and quarry the bluff. While the sale never actually occurred, the threat of the destruction of Grandad and the surrounding forest spurred a public outcry. Many La Crosse citizens loved the majestic bluff and forest, but perhaps no one as much as Ellen Hixon, widow of lumberman Gideon Hixon.

Hailed as a hero

A woman of romantic and sentimental notions, 72-year-old Hixon roused a small army of local residents, forming a committee that would ultimately save the bluff and forest from certain defamation. Hixon started a fund with her own generous gift of \$12,000, and another \$3,000 was quickly added. On Dec. 9, 1909, \$12,000 was given to the owner of the property, Mrs. Ellis Bliss Usher (who had actually never sold the property to Mr. Bacheller, but must have been considering it), and the deed was transferred to Mrs. Hixon's son Joseph, who then gave the property to the city of La Crosse. The remaining \$3,000 was used to purchase adjoining property and improve roads.

Hixon was hailed as a hero for fighting to keep the much-loved landmark so that "generations of La Crosse boys yet to come might

forever enjoy the delights of pastures and woods and hills where her own fine family of five lusty boys scrambled." Hixon wanted to "do something that will perpetually add to the happiness of all who may hereafter come to live within the steadily expanding boundaries" of La Crosse (*La Crosse Chronicle*, Dec. 12, 1909).

For the love of the region

The reasons for Hixon's love of La Crosse are evident. In 1859, she came from New York to La Crosse to teach school. She soon met Gideon Hixon, one of La Crosse's most affluent lumbermen, and they wed in 1861. Their home was the now-famous Hixon House on the corner of Seventh and Badger streets. Over the years, Hixon had five sons and was a very active woman in La Crosse society. While she was a world traveler, she seemed to never take the beauty of the area for granted, striving to make it an even better place. Taking advantage of nature and location, she enjoyed watching her sons explore the splendor of what La Crosse had to offer. She died peacefully on Oct. 10, 1913, with those sons by her side.

Due to Hixon's vision and generosity, La Crosse still enjoys the breathtaking view from Grandad Bluff and the timeless magnificence of Hixon Forest. We continue to honor her vision by preserving our nature, educating the public on its wildlife and beauty, and watching our own children enjoy the delights of pastures, woods and hills. ♣

Heidi Overson is a writer from rural Coon Valley, Wis. She is indebted to the La Crosse Public Library's Archives Department, who helped her find the wonderful, fragile old newspaper clippings for this article. Unfolding each clipping was like opening a treasure.

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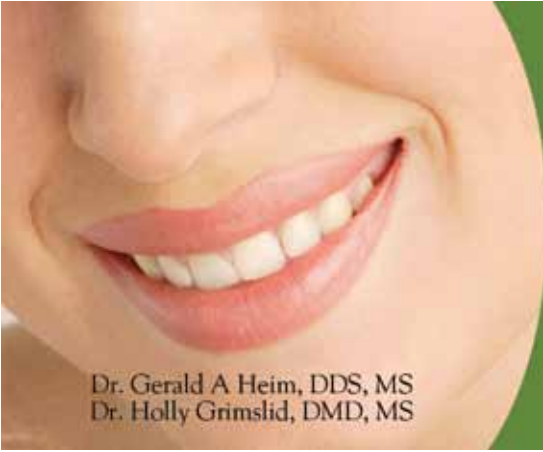
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AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROMISE

Dr. Jeffrey Thompson explains Gundersen Lutheran's green initiative.

by **SUSAN HESSEL**

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Dr. Jeffrey Thompson

Gundersen Lutheran CEO Jeffrey Thompson, M.D., answers questions on Gundersen Lutheran's Environmental Promise, which is dedicated to reducing energy use and costs while encouraging other health care institutions and businesses to do the same.

Why are you and Gundersen Lutheran committed to what you call the Environmental Promise?

JT: Our program has two goals: improve environmental health and reduce the cost of delivering health care. We want to do both and are careful to implement technologies that don't sacrifice one for the other.

Fossil fuel emissions have been shown to have negative effects on the environment and human health. Hospitals are among the most energy-inefficient buildings, consuming 2.5 times more energy per square foot than a typical office building. We need to be better than this.

Also, this program is one mechanism to address the current health care cost crisis. In 2007, we spent \$5 million on energy. Energy prices have been increasing beyond normal inflation, so it makes sense to work on this. Savings are significant, and as a not-for-profit health system, we pass those savings along to patients.

Gundersen Lutheran cut energy costs by about 20 percent in the last year. How?

JT: We started with an energy audit in early 2008 that revealed opportunities to improve. We then launched into an intensive program looking at heating, ventilation, lighting and employee behaviors to identify and implement conservation projects. Many projects involve turning off things when not needed instead of running them 24 hours a day. We invested in high-efficiency lighting, chilled water and boiler systems.

Savings from conservation equates to \$1 million annually compared to 2007.

Have partnerships with outside organizations made a difference in your efforts?

JT: We will never reduce our consumption to zero. We have to offset the energy we use with a clean, renewable supply (wind,

hydropower, biogas, biomass) that we own and are responsible for. We develop partnerships with entities that share ownership of renewable resources.

What kind of leadership role do you see Gundersen Lutheran playing in the community and in the health care community across the country?

JT: We are recognized as a state and national leader in environmental stewardship for health care systems. We are among a select group of health systems on the Department of Energy's Hospital Energy Alliance to help shape the future for energy efficiency in our country's health systems. We also share what we have done with other health care institutions. Despite setting this tone, we seek to learn from others, including local utilities.

Have you seen an impact on employees' own lives from the Gundersen Lutheran Environmental Promise?

JT: We share information with our employees and try to show them how many things we do at work can apply at home. In these times, people are eager to learn new techniques to help the environment and save money.

Do you have any advice for businesses or health care centers?

JT: You can save money and be more environmentally sound. Focus on the goal of reducing energy consumption. Conduct an energy audit of your buildings and then estimate costs and benefits of addressing the opportunities you find. Set priorities based on ease of implementation and payback.

When you hear President Obama speak about his main priorities, he mentions three things: addressing the health care cost crisis, developing energy independence through conservation and renewable supply, and stimulating the economy and job growth. We believe our program encompasses all three objectives. ♣

Susan T. Hessel is a writer, personal historian and someone who wishes she was a lot greener than she is.

THE NATURE OF BEING BORN

Midwives help mothers take control in childbirth—naturally.

by SHARI HEGLAND

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

As women, it can sometimes be difficult to trust our bodies and see them as strong and capable. But when it comes to childbirth, if we give ourselves the chance, we can often be stronger in the face of pain than we realize.

With more than 15 certified nurse midwives (CNMs) and four lactation consultants on staff between La Crosse's two medical systems, women interested in natural childbirth and breastfeeding can find plenty of support and education.

Putting the mother in control

"Anyone who is planning a vaginal birth can have a nonmedicated birth, whether or not the pregnancy is high risk," says Ellen Brodrick, CNM at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare.

The benefits to avoiding medical pain control such as epidural anesthesia and narcotic painkillers can be many, but Brodrick and other midwives point primarily to the increased control the mother has over the process.

"Birth is not an illness. It is just another phase of life and another transition," she says. A nonmedicated birth "is just less medical. It helps the woman feel like she's doing the work rather than being worked on."

Carleen Poellinger, CNM at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, agrees. "They find birth more empowering, and they feel that they have a positive experience with the birth, which leads to

positive feelings about parenting and their skills in parenting," she says.

Women who labor without pain medication or an epidural also typically avoid the need for a catheter and maintain bladder control. They avoid the risk of side effects that can occur with epidurals, including an increased incidence of fever while in labor, a drop in blood pressure or the slight risk of lasting back pain or headaches.

Preparation is key

Many techniques can aid women in managing and coping with the pain of labor. Educating themselves on those techniques, which can include taking classes in breathing methods such as Lamaze or Bradley, can help expectant mothers prepare for their child's birth. Both hospitals offer childbirth classes, and Gundersen Lutheran has DVDs on childbirth preparation that are available to expectant parents. The Coulee Region also has some women who provide services as doulas, or birth assistants, and in teaching hypnobirthing techniques.

"Natural childbirth is a mindset," Poellinger says. "It is preparing your mind and your body for the work that your body is going to do, and figuring out for you what your mindset to cope is going to be. And once women figure that out, they are generally successful."

Ways of coping including the freedom to move around the room, something not possible with an epidural, Brodrick says. Mothers can



ELLEN
BRODRICK
CNM
Franciscan Skemp
Healthcare



CARLEEN
POELLINGER
CNM
Gundersen Lutheran
Medical Center



BETH
PADESKY
Lactation Consultant
Franciscan Skemp
Healthcare



JANE
GROSVOLD
RN, IBCLC
Gundersen Lutheran
Medical Center

bounce or rock on a birthing ball, receive a back massage or warm back compresses, walk around the room and find the most comfortable position.

"We can also facilitate the birth partner and show them how to rub her back, push on the sacral area and do more counter pressure," Brodrick says.

Water therapy can also assist in managing pain. While fewer than 10 percent of the births at Franciscan Skemp are actual water births, "many more women than that get into the Jacuzzi, the shower or the bath for a period of time during the labor," she says.

By using these techniques, midwives at both facilities say that fewer than 30 percent of their patients request or require epidural anesthesia.

After the birth, women who are able to forgo medication often have a quicker recovery. "They are more alert and able to get up and move around sooner," Poellinger says. Babies are also more alert and tend to nurse more strongly immediately after the birth if the mother has not had narcotics. "Babies that go through natural childbirth, because they are more alert, usually do skin-to-skin (contact with the mother) right away," she says.

Breastfeeding a natural choice

A successful first attempt at breastfeeding can set the scene for continued success with the natural method of feeding a baby, which also has benefits for both mother and child.

Beth Padesky, lactation consultant at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare, points out that research has shown that babies who are breastfed have fewer hospitalizations, have fewer childhood illnesses and experience less severe illnesses when they do occur.

"Cost is a huge benefit for parents," she says. "It is cheaper to breastfeed, and it also is cheaper in terms of health care costs."

"We have more and more mothers choosing to breastfeed this year because of the H1N1 protection," says Jane Grosvold, RN and lactation consultant at Gundersen Lutheran, "because the babies can't be vaccinated until they are 6 months of age."

Benefits to the mother include a lower incidence of breast cancer. Breastfeeding can also help many mothers lose their pregnancy weight more quickly, and in the hours and

days immediately following the delivery, breastfeeding helps the mother's uterus to return to its normal size more quickly and reduces postpartum bleeding.

Both Padesky and Grosvold say one key to a successful breastfeeding relationship is that the mother has support from others in the family. "If family members can be supportive and get good information, they can be a great source of support," Grosvold says, adding that these are "not only the husbands, but also other family members who are supporters or have done it themselves."

Advice and support are also available from the lactation consultants at both medical centers. Gundersen Lutheran offers an outpatient lactation clinic for one-on-one advice and assessments. At Franciscan Skemp, new moms and their babies can gather for a weekly group facilitated by Padesky to discuss breastfeeding or other parenting challenges and their babies' development.

A matter of choice

While midwives and lactation consultants in the Coulee Region strongly advocate for natural childbirth and breastfeeding—and have an impressive rate of aiding women in their desires for those outcomes—they say the important thing is for women to be comfortable with their decisions.

"Some people feel more comfortable with interventions. Some women may be very fearful about birth, and they place a lot of faith in technology," Brodrick says. "There are women on the other end of the system who are very suspicious of technology and intervention in birth. Our job as midwives is to offer natural birth and to provide the education to be able to offer that in a hospital setting, but also to honor the choice of women," she adds. "It should be the judicious use of technology and anesthesia for the women who want that, and the hands-on help for the people who want a nonmedicated birth." ❀

Freelance writer Shari Hegland of Holmen was blessed with a quick and medication-free birth when her son was born.



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A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Nature, romance, comfort—these three getaways have it all.

by **JULIE NELSON**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Skijoring is just one of the many outdoor opportunities available at cozy Justin Trails. The Siberian huskies are available upon request.

Disney theme parks and hotels with water parks may have their place, but if you like breathing in fresh air, avoiding crowds, enjoying natural scenery and getting away from the hubbub of everyday life, the vacation spot you're seeking may be less than half an hour away—at a “home away from home.”

Justin Trails, Percheron Paradise and Spring Hollow Cabins are three Coulee Region destinations designed to lure you in. You'll be able to pursue your favorite activities, bring the family (or get away from them) and above all, enjoy the peace and quiet of the bluffs, the rivers and the woodland, all in cabins with furnishings that have you feeling pampered.

Justin Trails

Justin Trails is a bed-and-breakfast on 200 acres just outside Sparta, Wis. Donna and Don Justin got the idea for their business after reading about other area bed-and-breakfasts in a *La Crosse Tribune* article. “I told my husband, ‘That looks like what we've been doing for friends and relatives for free,’” quips Donna. And so the couple began converting the farm that has been in Don's family since 1914 into one of the area's most successful getaways.

Guests stay in the main house or in their own cabins (equipped with such amenities as whirlpools and Internet access) and enjoy their leisure time relaxing and exploring the outdoors. Winter

activities include cross-country skiing, snow tubing, snowshoeing and skijoring—a unique experience in which a dog pulls a skier, exploring the trails as a team. The Justins provide equipment and lessons as needed. Summer visitors can enjoy hiking to Gerry's Peak or Dawn's Pond, bird watching, disc golf and mountain biking. Children climb in a two-story playhouse. Visitors in all seasons are welcome to take the Justin's two Siberian huskies for a walk, or to pet the llamas.

Breakfast at Justin Trails is made from fresh ingredients purchased locally at area food co-ops. Each cabin has a grill for cooking outdoors, and the Justins regularly make recommendations to local restaurants.

The Justins take great care to preserve their farm and the land surrounding it. They have been certified with Travel Green Wisconsin, an organization that scores and recommends tourist destinations based on a variety of eco-friendly practices. For more information, visit them at www.justintrails.com.

Percheron Paradise

Percheron Paradise advertises that is not a bed-and-breakfast, a country inn, a cottage or a condo. It's also not a place to bring the kids. Percheron Paradise is designed for those looking for a romantic getaway. Looking out over their 200-acre property near Norwalk, Wis., owners Tracy and Karl Hackbarth say they have

done their best to locate Percheron Paradise “in the middle of nowhere.” Guests can stay in a bungalow or one of four chalets, each secluded from the other.

“You can’t even see another building when you are here,” says Tracy. “The trees are only a foot away from the deck, and nothing has been mowed. It looks as though each building was just dropped in the middle of the woods.” Inside the chalet, you will find everything you need to relax and forget about the rest of the world. “All you need to bring is whatever food and drink you would like,” says Tracy. “We have the rest, from cheese slicers to ice cream scoops to cookie sheets. We have TVs, DVDs and surround sound—though some people never even turn them on. We also have two-person showers, remote-control fireplaces and large whirlpools.” There are no phones in the chalets, no Internet service and spotty cell phone service. It’s all designed to “take you away.”

“Guests tell us this is the first time they have really relaxed, that they have never talked with each other as much before,” says Tracy. She says they have many repeat customers who have become their friends as well as people who get engaged at Percheron Paradise or who come for birthdays or anniversaries.

Percheron Paradise is open year-round. In the winter, the accommodations include the keys to a four-wheel drive to get to the chalet, and in the summer—Tracy thinks an abundance of Queen Anne’s lace growing on the property is to thank for this—there are no mosquitoes. To learn more, visit their Web site: www.percheronparadise.com.

Spring Hollow Cabin

If spending a lazy day along the Mississippi River with a fishing rod in your hand sounds like the ideal way to spend time off work, Spring Hollow Cabin, near Dakota, Minn., might be the place for you. Of the three options, this is the most affordable, and though it is not the most luxurious, you will still find plenty of amenities.

Spring Hollow Cabin is operated by a mother-daughter team who found themselves with the right combination of property, time and interest to make the

project work. Three years ago, after deciding against opening a bed-and-breakfast (“Do you really want to cook, Mom?”), Debbie Spies and her daughter, Jody Mc Quin, opened their Amish-built cabin to guests. Debbie lives in the main house a quarter mile down the road and is the one who greets most of the guests; Jody lives in La Crescent, works in Caledonia and contributes more to the design and upkeep. A true family affair, their husbands do the plowing and much of the repair work.

Spring Hollow Cabin sleeps four comfortably with a queen-size bed downstairs and two single beds in the loft bedroom. Everything you need to spend the week or weekend is provided, including a full kitchen, washer and dryer, TV and DVD player inside the cabin, and a hot tub, grill and fire ring outside.

The property borders state hunting grounds, and seekers of quarry ranging from morel mushrooms to deer are drawn

to the cabin in season. Fishing enthusiasts take advantage of the Mississippi River, only two miles away.

All guests can enjoy hiking trails, bird watching and the view of the river valley. “We have guests from Milwaukee, New York and Minneapolis who come here to relax,” says Debbie. “An 80-year-old woman from Seattle plans to come this summer and stay for her class reunion. It’s a nice alternative to a hotel.” Find them online at www.springhollowcabin.com.

Each one of the innkeepers say the natural setting is the way they prefer to live themselves, and they do their best to make sure their guests find that same sense of peace. Perhaps an *au naturel* vacation will be your perfect weekend getaway, too. ♣

Julie Nelson likes being outside when the weather is nice and thinks these cabins sound a whole lot better than sleeping in a tent! Julie is a public relations and development specialist.

Privacy is key at the romantic getaway Percheron Paradise. Each of its chalets feels as if it were “dropped in the middle of the woods.”



Birdwatchers, anglers, hunters and nature lovers in general seek out the amenities at simple but sweet Spring Hollow Cabin.





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WHAT'S UP on **Magic 105**
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Carolyn Jenkins, one of the founders of Coulee Partners for Sustainability, is an advocate of sustainability in all areas of living—particularly eating.

EATING FOR A HEALTHIER WORLD

Coulee Partners for Sustainability encourage mindful eating and living.

by **HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE**

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

It's easy to picture retired teacher and principal Carolyn Jenkins in a grade school hallway, encouraging children to do their best, even if it means one small step at a time. She has taken this approach herself when it comes to environmental sustainability, slowly incorporating greener practices into her daily living and sharing her knowledge with others in the community. Her interest, along with that of her husband, Glen, is spurred by a desire to create a healthy environment for future generations, including “the dearest people to us,” her own children and grandchildren.

Jenkins's interest began with food and agriculture, and, as a teacher, she wanted to use her teaching skills as well as her interest in the sciences to create awareness about sustainable practices. She wanted to help others learn about issues such as the potential scarcity of water, obesity, engineered food and decreasing life expectancies. It didn't take long for her to discover the tools with which to base and share her knowledge, primarily using materials from the Northwest Earth Institute and the Natural Step, organizations dedicated to empowering others to lead sustainable lives.

Starting out

When Jenkins began exploring what she ate and how much of it came prepackaged, she saved and sorted her trash for two weeks. She and Glen wanted to find out “who and what we were.” Jenkins was surprised at the quantity of packaging they accumulated, particularly from plastic and cardboard. “It has to stop,” she said, referring to the excess of packaging materials. Her purchases became more “purposeful,” and she began composting, even obtaining a basement unit in order to compost through the winter months.

In 2007, Jenkins, along with about 10 others, started Coulee Partners for Sustainability, a group dedicated to promoting sustainable lifestyles. The group meets monthly to create opportunities for educating the public, networking with other environmental groups, and recognizing green and sustainable practices. (You can learn more about their activities and events at www.cpslax.org.) Jenkins is also coauthoring a book that defines and highlights ways to live sustainably in the Coulee Region.

Spiritual, meaningful meals

As Jenkins increased her knowledge of sustainability, she developed a heightened awareness of not only what she ate, but where her food came from and how it was grown or prepared. She encourages parents and children to cook together, even simple meals, and to make mealtime an “intentional, purposeful time.” She pointed out that many of us eat on the run, grabbing predominantly processed foods that are high in fats and sugars because they are fast and convenient. Instead, she recommends a more European approach to meals in which eating is “a reverent, social and spiritual time.”

To get started on becoming a sustainable eater, Jenkins offers three suggestions:

Stay away from processed foods. The best way to do this is to “shop the perimeter” of the grocery store, choosing 80 percent of your items from the bread, produce, meat and dairy aisles. Look for vegetarian recipes and begin to incorporate them into main meals. Jenkins estimates at least half the dinners she and her husband cook are vegetarian (and delicious). Eat more fruits and vegetables. Ten years from now, Jenkins would like to see our part of the world be one in which everyone breathes clean air, gets enough exercise and eats healthy food. The Coulee Region could become “a vibrant place to be,” Jenkins muses.

Jenkins is open to trying different recipes and encourages others to try new, fresh, healthy ingredients. Cooking a meal from scratch need not be an elaborate process. Be sure to look for fresh, organic foods when possible.

The following recipes are contributed by Monique Hooker, a Coulee Region chef, author and educator who is also committed to sustainable eating practices and using locally grown ingredients. To learn more about Hooker, visit her Web site, www.moniquesuisine.com, and her blog, moniqueskitchen.blogspot.com.

PUREE OF BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

Makes 8 servings.

- 2 T butter
- 1 cup coarsely chopped onions
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 medium butternut squash
- 2 quarts chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 cup heavy cream
- ½ tsp Saigon cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- Salt and pepper to season
- ½ cup sour cream for garnish

Cut the butternut squash in half lengthwise. Oil the cut surface. Place on a baking sheet, cut sides down, and transfer to a 400°F oven. Bake until squash is soft to the touch, about 45 minutes. (This can be done ahead of time.)

In a large sauté pan, heat the butter and add the onion and garlic. Sauté for just a minute, and do not let them brown. Remove the squash from the oven, discard the seeds, scoop out the pulp and add to the onion mixture. Stir well.

Add the broth, bring to a boil, then lower to a simmer. Cook for 15-20 minutes. Puree the soup, return it to the heat, and add the cream. Season with salt, pepper; nutmeg and Saigon cinnamon. Whip the sour cream and place in a bottle with a narrow nozzle. Swirl a little on each serving plate.

210 calories, 3g protein, 17g fat, 14g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 980mg sodium.

PORK CUTLET WITH APPLE CIDER CREAM SAUCE

Makes 6 servings.

- 1½ lb. pork loin
- 2 T butter or oil
- ½ cup onion, finely chopped
- 1 apple, cored and chopped finely
- 2 cups apple cider
- 1 T fresh parsley, chopped
- ½ cup cream (optional)
- Salt and pepper

Garnish (optional)

- 3 apples, cored, peeled and sliced
- 2 T butter
- 2 T maple syrup

Cut the pork loin in 12 slices. Place between plastic wrap and pound gently into cutlets. Heat a sauté pan and add the butter or oil. Brown the cutlets on each side, then transfer to a plate. Add the onion to the pan and sauté until aromatic. Add the chopped apple and apple cider. Cook for 5 minutes. Add the cutlet and cook for another 3 minutes. Transfer the cutlets to a serving platter.

Add cream to the pan and let the sauce reduce until desired thickness. Pour some over the cutlets and sprinkle with fresh chopped parsley. Serve the rest of the sauce on the side. For optional garnish, sauté the sliced apples in

the butter and maple syrup until caramelized, about 2 minutes. Serve with pork cutlets.

480 calories, 23g protein, 31g fat, 30g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 260mg sodium.

GRATED WINTER ROOT VEGETABLE SALAD

Makes 8 servings.

- 1 each of carrot, parsnip, celery root, turnip, rutabaga
- ½ cup slivered almonds, toasted
- ½ cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped green onions

Dressing

- 1 cup apple juice
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- ¾ cup olive, canola or sunflower oil
- 2 T chopped shallots
- 2 T honey
- 1 T Dijon-style mustard

Garnish

- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped

Peel and grate all vegetables. In a large bowl, combine vegetables, almonds, raisins and onions.

To make the dressing, heat and reduce the apple juice to 2 T. Whisk together the vinegar, apple juice, shallots, honey and mustard. Slowly add the oil. Season with salt and pepper. Pour over the vegetables and toss gently. Garnish with parsley.

If you feel you have too much grated vegetable, set some aside for a stir fry at another meal. Leftover dressed salad can also be used for a stir fry. Children love this salad—have them help you make it!

340 calories, 3g protein, 25g fat, 27g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 125mg sodium.

APPLES “TATIN STYLE”

Makes 6 servings.

- 5 large apples (Cortland, Golden or Braeburn)
- 4 oz. butter
- ½ cup honey
- 1 tsp vanilla or cinnamon

Peel and core the apples. Coarsely slice. In a large skillet, melt the butter, and add the honey. Add the apples and the vanilla or cinnamon and gently stir. Continue cooking until all the apples have been coated and start to caramelize and turn darker, about 5 minutes depending upon the apple. Toss gently at all times.

Place apples in a 9-in. pie pan. Bake at 400°F for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool to room temperature and serve with whipped cream or ice cream.

310 calories, 1g protein, 15g fat, 44g carbohydrate, 4g fiber, 110mg sodium. ❖

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D., is the executive director at WAFER and an adjunct instructor at Viterbo University. She has made changes to her food habits since taking Carolyn and Glen Jenkins' seminar titled "Menu for the Future."



Photos by LuAnn Dibb

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by **MELISSA HANSON**

Photos by **JANET MOOTZ PHOTOGRAPHY**

Model **PUJA MEHTA**

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Styling: **RACHAEL SNELL AT SALON SOHO** (La Crosse)

Floral arrangements: **SUNSHINE FLORAL** (La Crosse)

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Right: Mix affordable classics with a

punch-of-power purse—all from TJ Maxx.

Trench, \$20. **Boots**, \$17. **Tote**, \$100. **Umbrella**, \$8.

GET THE LOOK

Retro-inspired pieces, like the classic trench, abound in fashion this spring (think Jackie O. with simplified, clean lines). Breathe new life into your look without deflating your bank account by pairing those updated classics with staples from your wardrobe (like leggings and jeans). Color trends take inspiration from another decade—the '80s. This time around, vibrant colors are slightly softened and are paired with versatile neutrals for restrained punches of color. The timeless aspect of these modernized classics allows you to spend wisely on pieces you'll wear for seasons to come while making use of those you already own. Now that's a breath of fresh air!



Studded details sizzle this spring.





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SEW GREEN, SEW FUN

Save the planet with repurposed clothing.

by **BETTY CHRISTIANSEN**

PHOTOS BY MELISSA HANSON

We all have it—that corner of the closet packed with clothes we will never wear again, but somehow can't get rid of. That box of sheets that are in perfectly good shape, but whose 1970s prints will never again see our beds. Or that stash of vintage linens too beautiful to give to Goodwill, but just collecting dust in the attic.

And chances are, somewhere we also have tucked away a sewing machine, maybe one we used back when we had time to quilt, or when we sewed for small kids. Bring the two together—those old fabrics and that machine—throw in some friends just for fun, and you've got all kinds of new possibilities! The best part: You're doing something good for the planet.

Re-what?

Taking something old (say, a curtain) and using it to make something new (say, a skirt) is called repurposing. It's a great idea for a number of reasons. First, you find a new use for those languishing linens. Second, you add something new to your wardrobe for almost no cost. Consider also that this fabric is being used rather than thrown away, and that nothing new needs to be manufactured or shipped—you get bonus points for being "green." And finally, as a group of *Coulee Region Women* contributors discovered one afternoon, it's a great way to let your creativity soar and have some good fun, too. Don't sew? Just find a friend who does, and you'll be set.

Bag ladies

Our afternoon began with show-and-tell and a flurry of brainstorming. Who knew a placemat could become a purse? What could we do with the linen hoodie with tattered sleeves? Or the tablecloth with fringe? We saw bag handles in inch-wide rickrack, and a coaster became a pocket.

Then, we settled down to construct the project you see here: a simple bag intended to replace those environmentally unfriendly plastic bags so ubiquitous at grocery stores and other shops.

The idea stemmed from a movement called Morsbags, which was started in London, by a woman named Claire Morsman. Horrified by the damage caused to marine life near her houseboat (sea turtles and other creatures ingest plastic bags, mistaking them for jellyfish), she came up with the bag pattern you see here and organized "pods" of people around the world to make them. The most ambitious Morsbaggers engage in what they call "guerilla bagging," handing the bags (made out of repurposed fabric, of course) to shoppers in supermarkets. You can read more about this movement at www.morsbags.com. And you can make your own bag by following the instructions on www.crwmagazine.com.

Then, when you're done, snap a photo of you and your bag and e-mail it to us at info@crwmagazine.com. We'll add it to our Facebook photo gallery! ♣

Betty Christiansen hasn't sewn for years, but the idea of a fun afternoon stitching with her colleagues inspired her to tune up her machine.

Want to learn how to make your own Morsbags?

Visit our Web site at www.crwmagazine.com for step-by-step instructions.

Top right: Writer Maura Henn topstitches a bag handle. **middle right:** The day begins with possibilities as *Coulee Region Women* contributors (**from left**) Heidi Blanke, Carol Schank, Betty Christiansen, Diane Raauum and Maura Henn gather their fabric.



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ACCOMPLISHMENTS



GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN CARDIOLOGIST RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS HONOR

Gundersen Lutheran Heart Institute cardiologist Sampoorima Setty, M.D., FACC, was recently elected a fellow of the American College of Cardiology (ACC). This prestigious designation signifies Dr. Setty's self-discipline and dedication to the highest standards of cardiovascular care for her patients.

Dr. Setty joined Gundersen Lutheran in 2008 and has since become board certified in cardiology, nuclear cardiology and echocardiography. She is one of three female cardiologists caring for patients in the Heart Institute. In the year ahead, Dr. Setty looks forward to expanding cardiac telemedicine and helping Gundersen Lutheran become an accredited chest pain center.



FRANCISCAN SKEMP OPENS CONVENIENT CARE CLINIC IN SOUTHSIDE WALMART

Walmart and Franciscan Skemp Healthcare announced La Crosse's newest offering of health care services: "The Clinic at Walmart," operated by Franciscan Skemp. This convenient care clinic is open in the Walmart Supercenter located at 4622 Mormon Coulee Rd., La Crosse. The clinic will provide fast, affordable access to basic health care services such as checkups, immunizations, screenings and treatment of minor injuries. The clinic will be open for walk-in service Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Check out our video on YouTube.



NEW YORK FASHION IN THE COULEE REGION

The new fashion enterprise JoBa Flat has something to offer every woman in the Coulee Region. Jonella Rademacher and Barb Skogen, who formed the partnership in the summer of 2009, present the latest in fashion from New York City through an Etcetera trunk show. Beautiful fabrics from the best mills in the world, master detailing from New York designers and perfect fit are combined with great customer service. Spring 2010 trends highlight knife-narrow pants and unstructured tops; gathers, yokess and pleats; wide-leg pants and fitted tops; beautiful dresses; metallics and lush tropical prints. Offering something exquisite for every woman, our goal is to become your personal wardrobe consultant. Let us design and transform your look one piece at a time.

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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SPRINGTIME SKIING IN THE NORTHERN ROCKIES

Think ski season is over? The mountains are calling.

by **DIANE RAAUM**
CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

For a change of pace, try your hand at skiing uphill. Alpine touring skis have skins that allow you to walk up the mountain. The skins can then be removed at the top of the hill so that you can ski down.

For the downhill skier who loves to ski but hates cold weather, there is nothing better than springtime in the Northern Rockies. With moderate spring temperatures, abundant snow, sapphire skies and sunshine sparkling on the beautiful snowy landscape, even nonskiers will enjoy it. The Montana Rocky Mountains and the Canadian Rocky Mountains of British Columbia and Alberta, Canada, both offer many ski resorts, with levels of skiing for beginner, intermediate and advanced skiers. Travel is not difficult at this time of year, and the skiing and scenery will not disappoint. Here are a few resorts to consider if you are planning a spring ski trip in the Northern Rockies.

Whitefish Mountain Resort

For more than 60 years, Whitefish Mountain Resort (formerly known as Big Mountain) has been offering skiers a chance to experience and enjoy the Montana Rockies in their entire splendor. Whitefish Mountain Resort is located in beautiful northwest Montana and is a mecca for downhill skiing. The resort offers more than 3,000 acres of skiing terrain. There are

challenging bowls and chutes for the advanced skier and groomed runs for the beginner or intermediate skier. And you can enjoy a view of Glacier National Park at the top of the mountain.

The Mountain Village was recently renovated and consists of the customary tourist shops, condos and restaurants. The Hellroaring Saloon, located in the original 1949 log chalet, was kept in the renovation. It was ranked one of the best après-ski bars in ski country by *Skiing Magazine* and is filled with ski memorabilia and skiers enjoying great food and camaraderie. The nostalgic reaction when entering the building makes you feel like you are walking back in time. The old ski equipment and the photos and magazine articles on the walls give a great history recap of the resort throughout the past 60 years.

Travel is relatively easy as flights are available daily into Glacier International Airport. Amtrak is a great way to travel with family or friends, and it will bring you right into the heart of the town of Whitefish, which is located at the foot of the resort. A free shuttle bus runs up to the mountain throughout the day, so if you are staying in town, it is not even necessary to

obtain a rental car.

There are myriad accommodations offered either on the hill at the mountain resort or just a short distance away in the small, charming town of Whitefish. Accommodations are generally plentiful in the springtime, with the exception of Easter and spring break, so plan accordingly if you are traveling during that time.

The town is very tourist friendly and has a vast array of restaurants and unique shopping. The people in the town will greet you with true Western hospitality. If you have ever had a desire to wear a cowboy hat and boots, Whitefish is the place to put them on.

Fernie Alpine Resort

Fernie Alpine Resort is located right across the Montana border in British Columbia, and is about an hour-and-a-half drive from Whitefish. Fernie Alpine Resort is known for its abundance of snow, with an average snowfall of more than 29 feet a year. There are five enormous bowls to ski and countless glades and chutes, and as the locals say, "Fernie is as steep as you want it to be." Although it is also known for its very rugged and challenging ski runs, there is plenty of varied terrain if you are skiing with beginners or intermediate skiers. The above-tree-line skiing runs offer a panoramic view that showcases the craggy Canadian Rockies, which will leave you speechless. Accommodations are available at the resort

with a variety of options to meet your needs, whether they are ski-in/ski-out, condo-style living or economy rooms.

Sunshine Village

Sunshine Village in Banff, Alberta, is big in every sense, not only in the terrain, but in the number of ski lifts, the size of the mountains, the abundant snowfall—more than 33 feet—and a very long ski season, with the resort staying open until mid-May. It is located on the Continental Divide, and on one ski run, you can actually ski in both Alberta and British Columbia. It offers an unforgettable vacation, with uncrowded slopes and a very European feel.

Although the skiing is spectacular at this resort, the Banff Springs Hotel, located in Banff, might just steal the show and is truly worth seeing. This hotel has been a work in progress for more than 100 years. The marble and granite throughout the hotel are stunning, and it is known worldwide for its beauty and grandeur.

So when the snow has left your part of the country and you feel the urge to get a few more ski runs in, consider heading to the Northern Rockies this year. You will not be disappointed. ♣

Diane Raaum, publisher of Coulee Region Women, is a big fan of skiing and can personally recommend all three of these ski resorts. She particularly enjoys skiing in the springtime in the Northern Rockies.



TIPS FOR SPRING SKIING

- When packing for your spring ski trip, choose clothes that can be worn in layers, as the weather can change quickly at this time of year. You can easily shed or add layers as needed.
- Sunscreen with a high UV rating is a must-have. The sun can be very intense and reflects off the snow, and without proper sunscreen you could become severely sunburned. The same is true of sunglasses: make sure that they have a high UV rating to protect your eyes.
- Pack your passport. Even if you are planning to stay in the States, the snow can vary, and you might want to head into Canada. Passports are now required.



Above: Spring skiing offers warm temperatures and abundant snow. The author is pictured at Whitefish Mountain Resort, which offers more than 3,000 acres of skiing.

Left: The author and her husband enjoy a day of spring skiing at Whitefish Mountain Resort.

Below: Whitefish Mountain Resort



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AU NATUREL

You, too, can eschew the bathing suit in favor of the birthday suit.

by JIG LEE BITS

There is nothing as freeing as skinny dipping. It starts with nearly paralyzing self-consciousness and the internal filibuster:

“Am I *that* girl?”

“I could be that girl. I mean, I’ve always wanted to be that girl.”

“But what if there’s a jellyfish lurking in that water? Will it violate me in some way?”

“I hope there’s a merman. That would be fun.”

“But do mermen exist?”

“What if someone notices I haven’t waxed?”

Then comes the frenzy of clothing removal and the inevitable tangling of various straps and strings around your head that blind you momentarily, and you wind up stumbling around in the sand in panic until you bang your shin on a lawn chair. Oh, yes, you’re terrified, you’re half-naked, and ... well, you’re flailing in the sand like Shamu, the orca whale.

Luckily, no one else has noticed. They’re far ahead of you, tangled in their own fears, dashing toward the water: a parade of pasty, jiggling backsides moving faster than you’ve seen them move since the doorbuster sales on Black Friday. And suddenly, you’re there, the water rushing about you, and you are home at last: Mother Nature cradling you in the palm of her hand. At once you feel a sense of perfection, that you are in your ideal state—

whatever physical form that might take. You are the Heidi Klum of the seas: sleek, sensual, unstoppable, only with a minor shin injury. No waistbands to bind, no tags to itch, no underwires to poke, no panties to ride up, yes, oh yes, heavens to Murgatroyd, yes!

In Oprah Winfrey’s “Step Out of Your Box” episode, four women were challenged to go skinny dipping on camera. One opted out, and I feel for her; she missed a great opportunity. For the three brave enough to overcome their fears, skinny dipping gave them much more than the sensation of water on parts hidden in shame for too long; it gave them the chance to feel comfortable with their bodies. Let’s face it, no matter who we are, we judge our shapes harshly. I have parts that shake and quiver long after my legs have stopped moving, and in spite of whatever sausage casing I’ve installed to hold them into place.

Truth is, I haven’t seen my knees in years

We all wish we had more here, less there, no stretch marks or sagginess or spare tires. But the beauty of choosing your birthday suit over your bathing suit is that no one cares; they’re all too busy in their personal wells of self-consciousness to even notice you in yours. When at last you emerge from the waves, stop giggling and catch your breath, behold, those voices of self-doubt have washed away with the receding waves. There were neither jellyfish nor mermen (sadly). All that is left is you: perfect, beautiful, newly baptized-in-bravery you!

Yes, you are that girl. ♣

Jig Lee Bits skinny dips whenever the opportunity arises, mainly because flab floats, and it’s the only chance she has to see her knees.



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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 autismfily-lacrosse@yahoo.com.

Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW)

meets the 4th Tues. of each month, La Crosse Holiday Inn, 5:30 p.m. February 2010 meeting is a New Member Event open to the public. Come and check us out! Contact Madalene Buelow, 608-791-5282, mbuelow@fspa.org.

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 educational experiences for children and parents. Visit www.myvalleyview.com for upcoming themes.

Women in Networking and Support (WINS) meets the 2nd Wed. of each month, Piggy's, noon-1 p.m. No reservation required, no dues, everyone is welcome to attend. If you would like lunch (your cost), arrive early for buffet. Kay Buck, 608-791-9253, kayv.buck@wellsfargo.com.

CALENDAR EVENTS

Feb. 2, Diva Party Fund-Raiser for Mississippi Valley Mayhem Women's Roller Derby League, 5:30-7 p.m., Lillians, 200 Main St., Powell Place, La Crosse. Katie Herbert Stevenson, sponsorship@mississippivalleymayhem.com.

Feb. 4-6, *Anton in Show Business*, 7:30 p.m. Feb. 4 and 5,

2 p.m. Feb. 6, La Croix Black Box Theatre, Viterbo University.

Feb. 4-6, Aquinas Catholic Schools Education Expo, Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Feb. 4-6, 11-13, 19-20, 5,000 Lbs.: Seven Soldiers' Stories, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

Feb. 9, Theatre Sans Fil: *The Hobbit*, 6:30 p.m.,

Page Theatre, St. Mary's University, Winona.

Feb. 10, *Almost, Maine*, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo University.

Feb. 11-13, Dancescape, 20th Anniversary, 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center, Winona State University.

Feb. 13, Goose Bump Jump, 12 p.m. Lake Lodge, Lake Winona. www.cityofwinona-mn.com.

Feb. 13, Start! Heart Walk, American Heart Association, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Feb. 13, 20th Annual La Crosse Symphony Orchestra Valentine Ball. Call 608-783-2121 or visit www.lacrossesymphony.org for tickets or more details.

Feb. 13, Realtors Rock for a Cause, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., Varsity Club, La Crosse, featuring music by Flashback: Prudential Lovejoy, Inc. presents this fund-raiser to benefit the Sunshine Kids Foundation.

Feb. 19-20, Big Band Cabaret, 7:30 p.m., Valhalla, Cartwright Center, UW-La Crosse.

Feb. 21, Yes Holmen, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Holmen High School, Holmen Area Civic & Commerce Association annual business expo. www.holmenchamber.org.

Feb. 24, The Wallin' Jennys, 7:30 p.m., Page Theatre, St. Mary's University, Winona.

Feb. 26, Lucy Kaplansky, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

Feb. 26-28, Chess, 7:30 p.m. Feb. 26 and 27, 2 p.m. Feb. 28, Fine Arts Center Main Theatre, Viterbo University.

Feb. 26-28, Gingerbread Arts & Crafts Show, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Feb. 26-March 7, *Into the Woods*, 7:30 p.m. Feb. 26-27 and March 4-6, 2 p.m. Feb. 28 and March 7, Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

Feb. 27-28, Sports Card Show, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

Feb. 28, Winona Symphony Orchestra, 4:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center, Winona State University.

March 2, Punch Brothers featuring Chris Thile, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo University.

March 4, The Aluminum Show, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo University.

March 4-8, *Talking With*, 7:30 p.m. Page Theatre, St. Mary's University, Winona.

March 6, Polar Plunge, registration at 9 a.m., plunge at noon, Pettibone Beach, La Crosse.

March 6, MVAC Artifact Show, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

March 9, Winter Concert, 7:30 p.m., Annett Recital Hall, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

March 10, Danu, 7:30 p.m., Page Theatre, St. Mary's University, Winona.

March 12-14, Home & Garden Show, Omni Center, Onalaska.

March 13, Storyhill, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

March 13-14, Ned Kirk, 7:30 p.m. March 13, 3 p.m. March 14, Figiulo Recital Hall, Page Theatre, St. Mary's University, Winona.

March 18-April 3, Visits and photos with the Easter Bunny, Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

March 19-20, *Empty Space Theatre*, 7:30 p.m., La Croix Black Box Theatre, Viterbo University.

March 20, Winona Oratorio Choir: "An Evening at the Opera," 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center, Winona State University.

March 20, Mississippi Valley Mayhem Roller Derby Bout, 7 p.m., Green Island Ice Arena, La Crosse. www.mississippivalleymayhem.com.

March 20-21, Spring Fiber Fiesta Open House & Sale, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Hickory Wind Farm—Alpacas & Fiber, Bangor: Meet alpacas and browse the Hickory Wood Farm Shoppe for unique alpaca products. No dogs, please. 608-486-4868, www.hickorywindfarm.com.

March 25, Ed Asner as FDR, 7:30 p.m., Viterbo University.

March 25-26, UW-L Kinesis Dance Theatre, 7:30 p.m., Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

March 27, Larry Price Trio, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

March 27, Symphony Orchestra Concert, 3 p.m., Annett Recital Hall, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

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