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I am a middle child. I grew up smack in the center of a pack of sisters—one two years older, and twins two years younger. Our lives have been a jumble of Barbie dramas, skinned knees, hand-me-downs, invaded privacy and epic catfights. We drive each other crazy—to this day—and we love each other fiercely.

I was not only the middle sister; I was the odd one out. All my sisters resembled my father's side of the family—dark hair, dark eyes, feisty. I was blond, green-eyed and had my unique set of wiles. None of this was lost on my sisters. Nearly from the time we all could speak, they agreed upon and tormented me with one consistent message: You're adopted.

I built my case against theirs: Mom has green eyes. In her childhood pictures, she was blond. And look, there was my birth certificate, with my own tiny, inky footprints, nestled in my baby book on a shelf with all of theirs.

Unfazed, my sisters presented their evidence—the lack of resemblance, the absence of photos with Mom in the hospital—then closed with the clincher: Mom loved me best. I don't remember this exact exchange, but family lore has it I thought a moment, cried "You're right!" and ran wailing to Mom.

Ah, family. Which one doesn't have its own

set of stories of love and rivalry, of heartbreak and joy, of odds overcome and laughs had? They may exasperate, but what holds them together is a glue of love and commitment, reinforced by shared memories, each one with a slightly different take.

And by *family* here, I'm not just talking about sisters and brothers, moms and dads, grandparents and the like. For many, the word connotes a relationship not bound by blood. In our profile story, for example, we'll meet women for whom the term encompasses something else: a neighborhood, an exercise class, even people from a distant land who, in an instant, become "cousins." We'll meet families who work together, eat together and fight the most serious battles of their lives together. We'll show you how to protect your family's future and how to "talk it out" when the going gets rough. We'll tell the stories of extended families as well as families created out of common experience and mutual dedication.

For family is not a specific configuration of people, neatly lined up like four sisters in a row. Family is a bond that transcends definition. Can a high school band be a family? You bet. Can aunts sweep in to raise children when parents cannot? Watch them. Can people in a relationship that defies tradition comprise a family? Brilliantly. Can a woman fall in love with a child she sees on an adoption website and make him her own? She can and she will. Love will do that. It makes families of us all.

I am grateful for all my families—my own children and husband, the in-laws who are always there for us, the friends who are like sisters and, of course, the family I grew up in. I'm even starting to look like them. I have been mistaken for each of my three sisters in recent years, and have even passed for a twin. Yet we never quite escape the pull of family lore. After a service in my hometown church recently, a woman we didn't know commented on our resemblance. "You look so much alike," she marveled. Then she looked at me. "You don't look quite like they do," she said. "Are you related?"

"No," my sisters quickly replied. "She's adopted."

Betty

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MINDS IN MOTION BICYCLE TOUR

Get your mind and body moving on Saturday, June 15, at the Minds in Motion Bicycle Tour. The one-day bike tour offers riders a choice of five levels of difficulty: a 5- to 20-mile family ride, 16 miles of flat terrain, 32 miles with rolling hills and longer climbs, 62 miles of rolling hills and major climbs, and a 100-mile century challenge. Riders receive a free T-shirt, rest stop refreshments, sag wagon support and lunch. The century challenge starts at 7:00 a.m. All other rides begin at 8:00 a.m. at Onalaska Middle School. The cost is \$10 to \$20. Proceeds support children's health, wellness and nutrition throughout the Onalaska School District. For more information, call 608-797-3427 or visit www.mimbiketour.org.

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Don't miss an opportunity for outstanding (and FREE) entertainment and good times outdoors on the banks of the Mississippi at Riverside Park in downtown La Crosse. Now in its 96th season, the La Crosse Concert Band summer concerts take place at 7:30 p.m. every Wednesday evening (excluding July 3) from June 5 through July 24. Check out www.lacrosseconcertband.org for concert themes and this season's lineup of talented conductors and soloists. In the event of rain, the concerts will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Central High School.

WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES



In an effort to raise awareness of sexual assault and domestic violence in our community, Coulee Region men will walk in women's shoes up to two laps (about a mile) around the Riverfest grounds at Riverside Park in La Crosse on Friday, July 5. Event proceeds will be shared by the YWCA of the Coulee Region and the Carilee Fund of Gundersen Health System. On-site registration runs from 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The walk starts at 6:00 p.m.

GET THEE TO THE GREAT RIVER SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL



The 2013 10th Anniversary Season of the Great River Shakespeare Festival (GRSF), a nonprofit, professional theater company in Winona, runs from June 26 through August 4. All performances take place at the Performing Arts Center on the Winona State University campus.

GRSF proudly presents two productions by its professional company: *Twelfth Night*, thought by many to be Shakespeare's best, deepest and most moving comedy, is both a meditation on love and loss and a boisterous, rollicking farce. *King Henry V* resumes the story of Prince Hal, the wayward youth, now England's king. A celebration of the theater itself as well as one of England's most beloved monarchs, *Henry V* provides a mesmerizing blend of action, warfare, romance and humor in one of Shakespeare's most gripping and imaginative plays.

Additionally, GRSF's 2013 season interns and apprentices will perform Shakespeare's dark tragedy *Macbeth*, under the direction of Rick Barbour. Playgoers may expect a full lineup of companion events, including Will's Opening Weekend, Concerts on the Green, the Front Porch Events, Callithump III and more. Check out www.grsf.org for a schedule of plays and events and to purchase tickets.



WE BE DRAGIN'

Mayo Clinic Health System – Franciscan Healthcare will bring dragon boating to La Crosse this summer with the Coulee Region's first-ever Big Blue Dragon Boat Race. The race takes place on July 6 at Riverside Park in conjunction with Riverfest.

Equal parts sporting event and spectacle, dragon boating is a team sport stemming back to ancient China. In the last 25 years, dragon boating has been revitalized to become one of the fastest-growing water sports in the world.

A dragon boat is a long, colorful boat, similar to a racing canoe. Each boat is propelled by a crew of 18 paddlers, a drummer, flag catcher and steer person. Races take place in heats on courses ranging from 250 to 1,000 meters.

The Big Blue Dragon Boat Race is designed to promote fitness and teamwork for everyone in the community, while also raising awareness of breast cancer and celebrating survivors. Dragon boating works well for people of all ages and fitness levels. It provides the benefits of vigorous exercise and is especially helpful in preventing or relieving symptoms of lymphedema, a known side effect of breast surgery or radiation.

For more information, visit www.riverfestlacrosse.com/big-blue. You can also follow breast cancer survivor and paddler Sue Hessel's blog at webedragin.wordpress.com.

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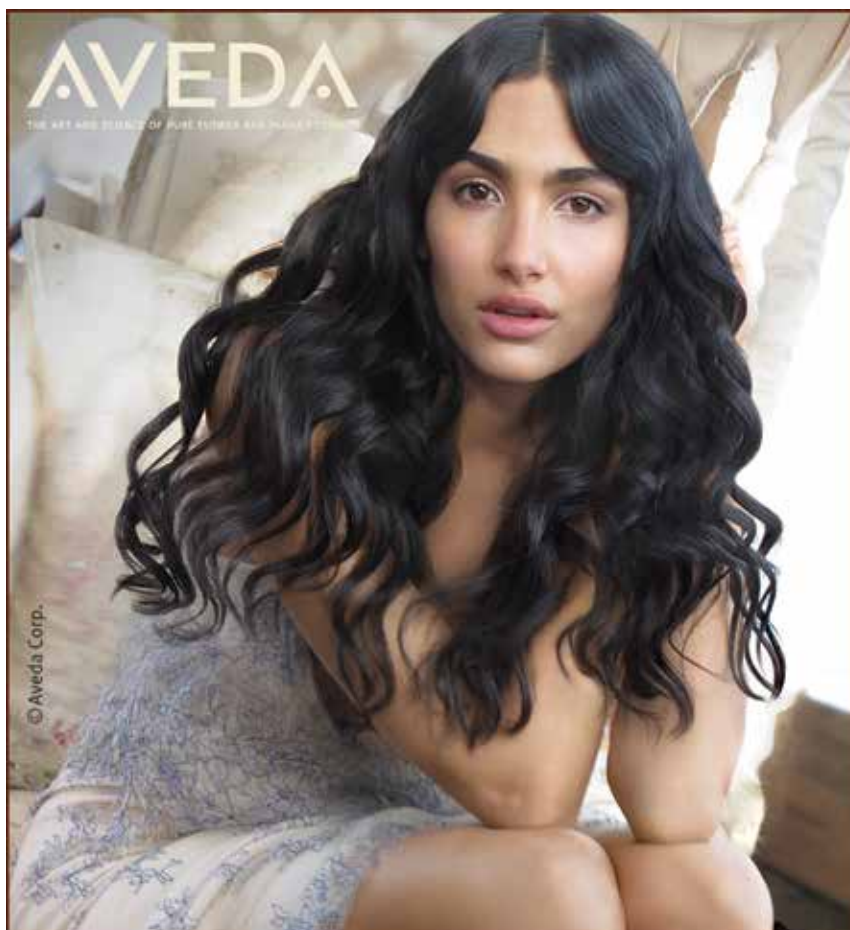


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WE ARE FAMILY

Here's a glimpse at whom women in the Coulee Region call "family."

The term *family* is as diverse in the Coulee Region as it is anywhere else in the nation. We asked our readers to tell us about their own unique families—and they did. Here, in their own words, several Coulee Region women describe those nearest and dearest to them. Not all are blood relatives—family very often means those joined by friendship, common experience or simply love.

One Big Happy Family

Shannon Howard, La Crosse

My husband and I both moved to La Crosse to attend college at Viterbo and UW-La Crosse. We both were born and raised in very small farming towns just outside of La Crosse. La Crosse was plenty big for us and had much to offer. We loved it here!

We got married and bought our first home here. Little did we know that our neighborhood would shortly become our extended family. My husband and I were expecting our first child just a few short months after we bought our home. We would see our neighbors outside and in passing for the first year or so, but as our daughter became more mobile, we started to see more and more of them. Our homes shared an alley, and we would find each other gathering in the evenings and on the weekends. Somehow, we started congregating in our neighbor's garage. People would bring a little snack here and there, and it just kept getting bigger and bigger.

We now get together at "The Garage" every weekend for social gatherings. This neighborhood has now become extended family to all of us; we celebrate every holiday together and often go overboard with decorations and fabulous food. I cannot begin to describe the love this neighborhood shares.

We have since had our second child, and a few other families have joined the neighborhood. What was once a quiet, semi-retired neighborhood is now booming with young children and a lot of energy. It is a great feeling to know that our children are always being looked after and safe. It is hard to describe what we have, but we sure are lucky. I don't think a neighborhood of this caliber is very common.



When the signal is given, Shannon Howard (bottom row, third from left) and her neighbors head to "The Garage" to celebrate friendship and a bond like that of a large, extended family.



A Sisterhood of Support

Barb Erickson, La Crosse

This "family" is a group of women from the Coulee Region who meet two and three times a week to help each other through everyday trials and tribulations. We have been exercising together for 30-plus years, supporting each other emotionally as well as physically through Jazzercise. We are family. Several of us are stronger people because of our bond.

One loss they have seen me through is the passing of my son, Chad Erickson, at the age of 15. He is still very much a part of our family. My grandchildren never had the opportunity to meet their Uncle Chad, but they are some of our strongest supporters for the newest City of La Crosse park. Through stories and pictures, his nieces and nephew have a pretty good idea of what Chad was like. And it's interesting to see how similar they are to him, each in a little different way. Keeping family close is a top priority in our homes.



Above: Barb Erickson's Jazzercise class provides her everything a family does: support, love, laughter and a slew of sisters.

Right: Erickson's grandchildren celebrate the memory of the uncle they never met: Erickson's son, Chad.





Left: Carol Wittenberg (far right) poses with the many cousins from her German grandfather's side of the family. Although many of them could not speak English, they were able to communicate with the many photos they brought with them. Right: Wittenberg's grandmother is the small child at left in this photo, taken in 1914 at the family home in Wentorf, Germany (Wittenberg's great-grandmother is at the far right).

Searching for Connections

Carol Wittenberg, Onalaska

My mother's mother came to America from Wentorf, Germany, in 1925—at age 14—along with her parents and three sisters. My mother's father came in 1922 at age 24 from Lendern, Germany, accompanied only by a brother. Both of them settled near Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

I was very fortunate to spend many hours with my grandmother talking about her life in Germany and the family. She also produced a box of pictures that most of the family had never seen, which proved to be very valuable in remembering those family members. During one of these conversations, she encouraged me to take a trip to Germany and visit her birthplace. I promised her that I would.

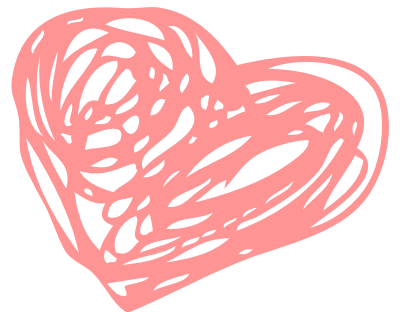
My only link to my grandfather's family was his great-niece Marlene, who had visited from Germany in the late 1960s. She had since married, and the family lost contact with her. I spent about a year searching German records, directories and phone books with no results. It didn't help that I couldn't read German and didn't know her married name. In the meantime, a relative of my grandmother's brother-in-law, Hans, had contacted me through Ancestry.com—he was interested in the part of his family that had come to America. I realized that he might be able to find her. Within hours, he emailed back that he found Marlene and a phone number! The trip to Germany was becoming a reality.

Between Hans and Marlene, the first eight days of our trip were planned. Hans picked us up from the airport and made arrangements with a resident of Wentorf to escort us to my grandmother's land. The house had been moved, and we were unable to find out where, but standing on the land where my grandmother was born gave me a feeling that is very difficult to put into words, but strongly felt in my

heart. We were also able to visit the church that they attended and other villages that family had lived in. Hans was able to find much information on my great-grandparents, but we were unable to find any living family members.

In the meantime, Marlene and her son Soeren had arranged not only to visit the land where my grandfather was born, but to visit the family farm that he grew up on, and which is still being tended by his family. Marlene also arranged for the family to meet us. Several family members came to greet us with pictures, stories and a lot of smiles. One young "cousin" couldn't wait to tell her classmates about the visit from family from America.

My husband, Tom, and I spent the last few days in Hamburg and visited the port of BallinStadt, where both my grandparents had boarded a ship for their journey to America. Standing on the pier, I remembered my grandmother speaking of the long journey by sea and the sight of the Statue of Liberty when they arrived at Ellis Island. I couldn't help but feel that she was there with me. (crw)



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THINKING ABOUT THE UNTHINKABLE

Estate planning is an essential way to care for your family when you can't.

BY SUSAN SCHUYLER

Contributed photos

If “making a will” is the item you never get around to checking off your to-do list, you are in good company. Wills are the centerpieces of estate planning, and statistics show that many Americans don't have one. In fact, according to a 2011 Forbes.com article, “120,000,000 Americans do not have up-to-date estate plans to protect themselves and their families in the event of sickness, accidents, or untimely death.”

Attorneys Heidi M. Eglash and Julie A. Kuhn, who practice at the Law Office of Heidi M. Eglash in La Crosse, make it their business to change those dismal statistics. “Having an estate plan in order can make a big difference for a family,” says Eglash.

Clearing up the confusion

There are some common misconceptions about estate planning that prevent many of us from weaving this important legal safety net, according to attorney Kuhn. One is that only the wealthy need estate planning. “It's for anybody who wants to provide for family members in the case of incapacity or death,” says Kuhn.

Another misconception, according to Eglash, is that once you're done with your will document, you're done with your plan. “The planning piece suggests that it's an ongoing process,” she says.

More than a will

Although wills are a good starting point, advance directives also are essential centerpieces of estate planning—especially for women. According to Eglash, Wisconsin statute requires two separate advance-directive documents that name an individual or chain of individuals who have full legal authorization to “step up to the plate” to make decisions on your behalf if the need arises: One pertains to your health care decisions and the other pertains to management of your finances and property.

Eglash and Kuhn agree that, statistically, advance directives are especially important for women because they live longer and are likely to end up as caretakers for family or friends. “Not only does it help your own family, but it can help out if you're called on to serve in that role,” says Eglash.

Terms You Should Know

Durable Power of Attorney: This advance directive authorizes another person, called an agent, to act for you in financial matters.¹

Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care: This advance directive gives your agent the authority to make health care decisions for you when you're unable to make them yourself.¹

Living Trust: You create a living trust to control your property while you are alive. The trustee would control your property after you die. An advantage is that property can pass to heirs after you die without going through probate.¹

Living Will: A living will is a separate legal document, not part of your will, that allows you to state in writing your preferences about life-prolonging medical treatment.¹

Probate: The process of the personal representative gathering all the property of someone who died, paying all just debts and taxes, and distributing the balance to the devisees designated in the will or to the heirs as prescribed by the legislature where there is no will or the will is defective.²

Special-Needs Trusts: Most people with physically or mentally challenged children worry about how their deaths will affect their children. Special-needs trusts are a common and effective way for parents to make sure their children are cared for.³

Trust: The legal relationship created by virtue of one party holding legal title to property, whether real or personal, for the benefit of another.²

Will: The legal instrument expressing a person's wishes and directions as to the disposition and distribution of his or her property after death.²

¹Source: State Bar of Wisconsin

²Source: University of Montana Extension

³Source: *The New York Times*



Attorneys Julie A. Kuhn (left) and Heidi M. Eglash (right) specialize in estate law and other family and business legal matters at the Law Office of Heidi M. Eglash in La Crosse. Photos by Janet Mootz Photography.

Also, women are typically economically disadvantaged, which has financial impact on a family and makes estate planning even more important to protect their assets. According to a 2008 article in the journal *Economic Inquiry*, "In general, women tend to have less work experience than men, to be part-time workers, to earn lower wages than men, and to choose jobs that do not offer a pension plan."

Crafting an estate plan also can be empowering for women. "We're seeing more women instigating the planning and taking ownership of it," says Eglash.

A value proposition

It's never too early to begin your estate plan, according to Eglash and Kuhn. Even if you are just out of school, without assets, you can benefit by at least putting some advance directives in place.

There are some do-it-yourself tools to create your estate-planning documents, but an attorney who specializes in estate planning can ensure that you're choosing the right tools for your unique situation.

Eglash admits the cost of creating your estate plan is not insignificant; although individual circumstances may vary, a basic will, advance directive and funeral directive can be prepared for about \$500. However, it can save your heirs thousands in probate

expenses, which can cost up to 3 to 4 percent of your assets. "An upfront expenditure that might be the same cost as a flat-screen TV versus thousands of dollars and disorganization and chaos on the back end—that's a value proposition," says Eglash.

Once you have a plan in place, Eglash and Kuhn suggest reviewing your plan any time you have a major life event, like marriage or divorce. Lacking that, they suggest reviewing your plan roughly every five years as a good rule of thumb.

Eglash and Kuhn offer their top three reasons to start your estate planning today: A plan saves your family a lot of unnecessary heartache and expense; it allows you to set your priorities and values and control the things you've worked hard for; and it protects children from their own spending habits or their own creditors.

Paul Sullivan in *The New York Times* is more blunt in his 2009 article: "One day you will die, so while you're alive, plan for it. If you don't have a proper estate plan, the emotional pain of your passing could be compounded by financial chaos." 

Susan C. Schuyler is a freelance writer and instructor at University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, who, thanks to writing this article, intends to review her financial plan immediately.



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A mother steels herself for the fight of her life.

ANONYMOUS

My nightmare started about a year ago, when my adult child came to me and said, “I’m addicted to heroin and need help stopping.” Immediately, panic filled my mind. I wanted to be sick, but there was no time for that—I needed to keep focused in order to get help.

Reality

We started calling to find out where we could go for help, and were quickly frustrated. My child, who lives out of town, happened to

tell me on a Saturday, and no one was able to help us on a weekend in that city. Everyone said the same thing: “You can continue to use until you can get in on Monday, or try to stop yourself. If you get too sick and need help you will have to go to the emergency ward.” That is reality. The decision was made to stop using immediately and start the withdrawal process. The wait for Monday morning was very long, but at least the slow, painful process had been started.

After a conference with the professionals at the facility we chose, we decided on outpatient treatment. Inpatient treatment—where

the patient stays at the facility and follows an intense treatment program—is definitely preferred and easier, but my child was determined to make outpatient work.

My child's treatment included regular drug testing, weekly doctor appointments and many individual and group counseling sessions. The professionals explained that, at this point, patients are at high risk for overdose if they do use again. And that exact thing happened to a couple of families in our therapy group. This was hard for us to witness, but it also made our child even more determined not to use again.

One key to successful recovery for anyone is changing your group of friends and the people you hang out with. Discovering your drug-using friends aren't real friends, and instead connecting with friends who don't use drugs, is a painful yet important part of the process.

I'm grateful every day that my child asked for help and that I could be there. Heroin addiction is a problem in epidemic proportions, and increasingly so here in the Coulee Region. The roots of addiction vary and can encompass anything from excessive drinking or drug use to heredity and, as was the case for my family, a coping mechanism for dealing with depression, anxiety, mental health issues and a number of other complications. In our case, I knew there was a problem with my

child but didn't know what it was. I just kept encouraging open communication, saying, "You can tell me anything" and "We will always be here to help you," until it all came out in the open, and we could begin to solve it.

Recovery

My family has been successfully recovering for more than a year now, and for my child, there will always be the risk, the temptation and residual complications that come with having been a heroin user. For me, the recovery is ongoing in a much different way.

I am a professional women with a career I love. Normally, I am an outgoing person who feels very comfortable talking about my personal life. This experience changed everything. If this were an illness like cancer, it would be OK to talk about it, but this is different. This is something I feel I have to keep to myself. Yes, there are support groups (which I went to) and counselors (whom I went to), but it is not the same as being able to talk openly to my friends and relatives. Once fun social functions became awkward, and I avoided as many situations as I could. Friends and family interpreted this distance as neglect or uncaring.

Addiction is so difficult to talk about, and the fear of judgment so great. Friends and family who have been understanding and supportive mean the world to me. Addiction is painful for everyone, and the long road of recovery requires a great deal of patience. For our family, the key is to continue the communication while we celebrate successes and work through the hard times. For others, I would give this advice: Don't be judgmental when you hear of others facing addiction in a family member. It could so easily be you. If you are dealing with an addicted loved one, make use of the resources and support around you. I wish there were one exhaustive book that tells you how to deal with heroin addiction in a child, but there isn't—in fact, there are hundreds of resources to sort through when finding what works for you. Don't give up! **(crw)**

Resources

If this happens to you or someone you know, here are some places you can find help:

Mayo Clinic Health System Behavioral Health

212 11th St. S., La Crosse
608-392-9555

Offers outpatient and inpatient services, individual and group counseling and residential treatment programs.

Gundersen Health System Behavioral Health

1900 South Ave., La Crosse
608-775-7991 or 800-362-9567,
ext. 57991

Offers inpatient/residential treatment, intensive outpatient treatment, outpatient treatment, individual and family counseling and medication-assisted treatment.

Coulee Council on Addictions

921 West Ave., La Crosse
608-784-4177

Provides education and prevention resources, information and referrals, assessments, counseling, recovery support and outpatient recovery services.

Could My Child Be Addicted to Heroin?

"You may see the same kind of warning signs as for other drug abuse: changes in personality, greater mood swings, a change in friends, a drop or change in activities, decline in grades, absences in school, withdrawal, depression, etc. If you don't think you are getting the whole truth from your child, seek assistance from a school professional, a therapist, or a drug counselor. The worst thing you can do is nothing."

—Jim Steinhagen, executive director of Youth Services for Hazelden's Center for Youth and Families in Plymouth, Minn., <http://www.hazelden.org/web/public/prev60710.page>

For more information on heroin and other drug addiction, visit

<http://www.hazelden.org/web/public/heroin.page>

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001522.htm>



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SIBLING SUCCESS

A brother-and-sister team embodies family business at its best.

BY MARTHA KEEFFE

Photo by Megan McCluskey, Atypik Studio

Running a business is filled with challenges. Being part of a family can be challenging, too. But when things work well, running a business with your next of kin can be incredibly satisfying, both personally and on the job, says Maria Peterson, who with her brother, Casey Weiss, owns Access Commercial Real Estate (ACRE) in La Crosse.

"We're five-and-a-half years apart in age," explains Peterson, who grew up in La Crosse and graduated from Viterbo University with a degree in Business Management. "We had room to grow, go off to college and learn about ourselves without being in the shadow of one another. We've never really experienced any type of sibling rivalry, and I think that has contributed to how well we relate to each other as adults and as business partners."

Common vision

About six years ago, after having worked in commercial real estate in St. Paul, Weiss recognized a need to make commercial real estate services available to clients in underrepresented markets such as La Crosse, Eau Claire and Rochester. "Casey established ACRE with the idea of offering brokerage services to smaller communities," Peterson says. "He found a niche market that made sense."

"I joined the company to establish it in the La Crosse market, which is now our primary focus," she adds. That simple idea now connects potential buyers from across the country with available properties here in the Midwest. "It was a great idea that continues to flourish."

Complementary skills

Peterson also attributes part of ACRE's success to the fact that she and her brother function as equal partners. They both oversee

the transactions that are made when buying, selling and leasing commercial properties—which range from storefronts and office space to industrial buildings and land—while each contributes to the day-to-day administrative duties necessary for operating a business. As the only employees, they are solely responsible for meeting potential clients, handling existing contracts and managing the promotional and marketing aspects of their company. With such a diverse workload, talking openly and honestly about their expectations—for themselves and the company—is something they strive for. Therefore, they have learned to draw on each other's distinct strengths.

"Casey has a strong financial understanding of the real estate industry and a strong skill set when it comes to negotiating deals and transactions. Due to my background in sales, I'm able to connect with new clients and form lasting relationships with them. My large network also helps us find buyers and tenants for the properties we market, which in turn helps us complete transactions," she says. "Our combined skill sets help us serve the unique needs of each client and focus on the common goal of delivering the best service possible."

Though their keen business sense is pivotal to reaching their goal, family is what helps keep them grounded. Encouragement from their spouses, parents, family and friends—and ongoing jokes born from having grown up in the same family—is what makes it fun. "I'm working with someone I trust, who has the same vested interest," says Peterson. "Plus, it's always fun to be able to celebrate successes with family that shares our enthusiasm." 

Martha Keefe enjoys having the opportunity to highlight successful businesses—and families—in the area.

| ACCOMPLISHMENTS |



Altra Financial Advisors Welcomes Sue Breyer

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FAMILY STORY TIME

**Westby resident Sue Berg preserves
her family history in a recently
published memoir.**

BY LEAH CALL
Contributed photo

Sue Berg of Westby describes her father as talented, self-determined and self-motivated. “If he gets an idea to do something, he does it,” she says.

As the saying goes, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. Two years ago, this Coulee Region woman had the idea to preserve cherished family stories and childhood memories, and she did it. *Solid Roots and Strong Wings: A Memoir of Family Life in Wisconsin*, published in December 2011, is the story of Berg’s childhood along with life accounts of her parents, Clarence and Geraldine [Voeltz] Leupke, and her German ancestors, who settled in Nebraska and later moved to Wisconsin.

The book is a gift to future generations and to Berg’s parents, who didn’t know she wrote it until it was published the day before her mother’s 82nd birthday.

Writing it down

“You talk about it, that someone should write it down, but you don’t do it. Then days go by, years go by, and pretty soon the people that really know the history are gone, and then you are relying on faulty memory,” says Berg.

The task of researching and writing her family memoir took approximately eight months. “I sat down at my computer, and I just started writing,” says Berg. “Of course it wasn’t in the form it ended up in, but it was important to just start writing. I could revise it later.”

Berg, a fifth-grade teacher in Viroqua, grew up with four brothers in Glenwood

City in central Wisconsin. When she decided to write the family memoir, she contacted her brothers and other relatives for information to include in the book. “I initially wrote to all my aunts and uncles and some of my cousins and asked them to please send me memories of my mom and dad,” recalls Berg. “Some of my aunts and uncles are gone, so they couldn’t contribute. Others gave me a lot of food for the book. And my brother Rick contributed a lot, too. He had a lot of stories that I’d forgotten about.”

The story of America

Berg uncovered other stories that bolstered her respect for the hardships her ancestors endured. “If it wouldn’t have been for their perseverance, their hard work, their grit, I might not be here,” says Berg. “That was one of the biggest revelations I had while writing the book.”

Berg notes that stories of ancestors coming to the Coulee Region with nothing and making a life for themselves are typical for many if they investigate it. “It is the story of America, really. It is kind of an inspirational thing for young people.”

Berg’s husband of 37 years, Alan, along with her daughter and three sons, find inspiration in the stories, but also in Berg herself, who had the talent and determination to write it down. **(crw)**

Freelance writer Leah Call enjoys adding chapters to her family’s story with her husband and four kids in Westby.



Berg suggests others interested in documenting their family’s story find a publisher that is experienced in publishing family histories. “They will have tons of ideas that can make your book come alive.” *Solid Roots and Strong Wings*, published by Little Creek Press, can be found at area bookstores and on Amazon.com or by contacting Berg at bergsue@hotmail.com.

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Talking It Out

Counseling opens the lines of communication to make families stronger.

BY SHARI HEGLAND
Contributed photos

Sometimes families need more than love to get through challenges. Sometimes they need the guidance of someone who can take a neutral stance and help everyone communicate more clearly. That someone is a family counselor or therapist.

“One of the unique benefits of family counseling is that it is an opportunity for all family members to have their voices heard and feel understood,” says Ted Stein of Stein Counseling and Consulting Services in Onalaska.

Stein and other therapists say that family counseling can help families navigate many difficult situations, from parent-child conflict and blending families to overcoming trauma or dealing with an addiction within the family.

Working together

In some cases, family therapy is an extension of one family member’s individual therapy. “Often, what is being addressed is an issue for the whole family, and the whole family needs to work together on the issue,” says Mayo Health System child and adolescent clinical therapist Janice Shreier, who believes family therapy is often the best way to address certain challenges, including adolescent eating disorders and drug or alcohol addiction.

“The family is the best support system for that child,” she says, but the family may need to make changes in order to support them.

In cases where there is conflict within the family, the therapy becomes a safe place for all to be heard.

“The therapist sees the unique strengths of each person,” Stein says. “[Family therapy] can begin to help family members understand that what they are talking about has deep meaning.” Arguments over what clothes a child can wear may really stem from emotions around a need for freedom and autonomy or concerns over trust or fear of abandonment.

Focusing on solutions

Mary Cortesi, a therapist with Gundersen Health System in La Crosse, says that in addition to being a neutral mediator, she helps steer families toward focusing on solutions, rather than dwelling on problems.

“We’re not telling people how to parent, but to address new ways that family can resolve conflict and strengthen the relationship,” Cortesi says.

She encourages parents to learn to listen without reaction.

“If you’ve said they can tell you anything, you have to be prepared



Janice Shreier,
Mayo Health System



Ted Stein, Stein
Counseling and Consulting Services



Mary Cortesi,
Gundersen Health System

"Family counseling ... is an opportunity for all family members to have their voices heard and feel understood."

—Ted Stein

for that," she says. "Sometimes they don't want advice, they just want you to hear them. Children will shut down if you respond in a reactive way."

Stein says that family therapy can also help families navigate changes, whether a move, death or other trauma within the family, or the changes that come with blended families when parents remarry.

"We can help look at the interplay between each parent and child," Stein says, and lead the family in establishing guidelines about how involved stepparents will be, what role they will play in discipline and how to back up the primary parent.

"It can help families adjust their way of doing things when they become entrenched in a pattern," he adds.

Getting the most from family therapy

While therapists provide guidance and tools for communication, the real work is still done by the families. In order to truly benefit, counselors say families must put effort into it.

"We don't wave a magic wand in counseling," Cortesi says. "Counseling is as good as you make it."

Most important, Schreier says, is attendance by everyone in the family system. That includes siblings, parents (whether they share a home or not) and sometimes even extended family members, such as grandparents, who play an important role in family life.

"It's really important that parents are on the same page, even if they are living in separate houses," Cortesi agrees.

Family members must be open to feedback, both from the counselor and from others in the family. Stein says it is important also that the family work through what he calls "home experiments," which put the concepts discussed in therapy into practical use.

Choosing the right counselor or therapist is vital. Schreier notes that not all counselors

will do family therapy. She suggests, even when seeking someone for individual therapy, asking about family therapy as well, in case you choose to move in that direction.

Cortesi says families should also ask if the therapist has a background in the specific situation their family is facing, such as eating disorders, mental health disorders like ADHD or OCD, or addictions. "Ask the therapist about their training, how they are going to strengthen your family, and how long the therapy will last," she says.

Ultimately, the goal is that the family will become autonomous and able to face future challenges successfully.

Healthy families

Cortesi says one key to helping families remain healthy is simply time together.

She says research shows that in today's busy environment, parents spend an average of only 12 minutes per day of quality time with their children. Finding ways to extend that time by limiting the use of electronics (by both parents and kids) and making the effort to eat meals as a family opens windows into the lives of the children and provides opportunities to address topics such as bullying and other things that may be happening in a child's life.

Counselors say that children need to see their family and their home as a safe haven.

Cortesi points out that conflict itself is normal. "Healthy families do have conflict," she says. "It is about how they resolve the conflict ... how we adapt and how we come together as a family is key."

"Every family comes in with a different difficulty, pain or suffering that they experience," Stein says. "Through family therapy, we can address that suffering. Family therapy can be a real healing of relationships." **(crw)**

Shari Hegland is a freelance writer who lives in Holmen with her husband and 7-year-old son.

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BACK TO SCHOOL

WSU's Grandparents University lets grandparents and grandkids learn and play together.

BY FRAN RYBARIK

Contributed photos

"We live differently today. This generation of retirees is not the kind of folks who are content to perch in rocking chairs, watching life go by," says Ann Marie Kohner, director of the Retiree Center at Winona State University (WSU), which connects WSU to its retirees through education, service and social activities. "Today grandparents and grandchildren are often separated by thousands of miles and may only get to see each other once or twice a year.

"So, three years ago, we began offering a Grandparents University® program originally developed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison," Kohner continues. "This two-day, dynamic, intergenerational learning experience lets grandparents and grandchildren learn about and from each other while they play and laugh together."

Intergenerational bonding

Grandparents University is open to all grandparents, not just retirees from WSU, and their 8- to 14-year-old grandchildren. Two grandparents may come with one child; two grandchildren may come with one grandparent; or a special godparent, aunt or uncle may bring a child, with the parent's permission. "We have had attendees from as far away as Tennessee and Hawaii," Kohner reports. "We schedule the program during preregistration for the fall semester when basketball clinics are going on, so attendees get a real feel of campus life."



Ann Marie Kohner, director of the Retiree Center at Winona State University

The paired participants who attend on June 20-21, 2013, will choose a major together and attend courses with WSU professors. This year's choices include composite materials, French, family stories, astronomy, photography and an outdoor quest. Some attendees will stay overnight in a campus dorm; some will not.

Participants also have many extracurricular options. They can create crafts in the gazebo, get a backstage tour of the Great River Shakespeare Festival, travel to the Minnesota Marine Art Museum or attend other events in Winona. Outdoor recreation and residence hall staff members plan evening activities that give grandparents a break and often burn lots of youthful energy.

Kohner reports 2013 registration surpassed

that of 2012. "The first year we had 58, last year 54, and this year, we are looking forward to a full house," she says. "The majority of children who attend are 9 to 11 years old. They are old enough to stay away from home, but not too busy with summer schedules."

Rave reviews

Last year, Janet Ruggeberg (pictured above right) and her husband attended with their 8- and 10-year-old grandchildren from River Falls, Wis. "We became soil detectives," Ruggeberg says, "digging for worms and bugs, then looking at everything under a microscope."

Both Kohner and Ruggeberg speak about Grandparents University with passion. Kids get to see their grandparents in a whole new environment; grandparents get to spend time alone with grandkids in a supportive setting; and WSU faculty and staff get to work with people in age groups that are different from their traditional college crowd.

The kids like it, too. Ruggeberg's grandkids were disappointed that another family event was scheduled during this year's Grandparents University. Last year, a 14-year-old proudly read her work in Family Stories. And a child in a previous session wrote: "The best part was keeping the earthworms." *(crw)*

Fran Rybarik writes from her home in La Crescent. She can hardly wait to take her grandsons to Grandparents University in four years.

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A Family Lives Here

The Harters' search for the perfect home ends in Onalaska.

BY HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE

Photos by Janet Mootz Photography

Top: A window decoration expresses exactly how the Harters feel about their new house. Above: Tom and Lisa Harter, along with Owen (7), Eleri (2) and Gwenyth (9). Facing page: A cleverly childproofed railing (left) and a vast play yard (right) ensure many years of freewheeling yet safe play in the Harter home.

Lisa and Tom Harter wanted a forever home, a place where they and their three young children, ages 9, 7 and 2, could put down roots and enjoy life. They found it in an Onalaska split level, far enough off the main road to offer some seclusion, but close enough to other homes to offer the benefits of a neighborhood.

The Harters, originally from the East Coast, moved to the Coulee Region in February 2012, after Tom finished a Ph.D. fellowship in bioethics and accepted a job with Gundersen Health System. After renting a condominium for five months, Tom and Lisa began the process of house hunting, looking at more than 20 properties before making a decision. “We did what we called open-house hopping,” Lisa says. She explains the “foot in the door criteria” that she and Tom established, which included four or five bedrooms, an attached garage, a large yard, a somewhat-finished basement and, ideally, newer construction. They hit the jackpot with their Mary Court home.

Room to grow

Like the homes of many young families, the Harters' home is minimally furnished, not yet showing the years of accumulation. The family room contains a sectional, coffee table

and media unit; the kitchen dining area houses a table and seating; a lower-level room is empty except for Lisa's craft table and storage unit. The open spaces, though, are perfect for toddling feet, playgroups and easy maintenance. As a young couple with children, Tom and Lisa have had little time or resources to furnish a home.

The Harters are the first to recognize how far they have to go, but they take pride in how much they've done to make the home their own. Lisa painted nearly every room and Tom pulled carpet from several rooms on all three levels. Gone is the bright orange family room wall, replaced by a bold warm color called Wine Barrel, which, Tom jokes, "suits me just fine." Most of the work was completed within a two-week time frame, as the Harters were featured on HGTV's *House Hunters* (episode 7307). The show's film crew spent several days with the Harters filming the "hunt," returning two weeks later for the "reveal."

"We've gotten the big work out of the way," says Tom. Over time, they will continue to furnish the house. "We'll put more of our own stamp on the place," adds Lisa. The Harters also want to provide guest space. "We'll probably take part of the playroom and put in a guest area. All our family lives out of state," explains Lisa.

Room for kids

The Harters' son, Owen, was sold on the house even before he saw the extensive backyard play equipment, remarking to the real estate agent that "this is the last house we'll look at." The large backyard connects seamlessly with yards around it, making the

entire block one long ball field with running room aplenty. Initially, Tom considered the lack of fencing a bit strange, but he has grown to enjoy the openness. Inside, on the lower level, a door opens as if to a secret garden, enticing the children down a short flight of steps into a bright yellow room filled with toys. An odd closet, whose mirrored sliding doors are three feet off the ground (the remnant of a remodel by earlier owners), stores games and functions as a dress-up space. "It's like their little cave," says Tom.

The playroom is the kind of space that can grow with the children, becoming either a home theater or a rec room. "We'll take the playroom and turn it into a place for the kids to be with their friends," Lisa envisions.

The Harter children each have their own room, and the older two were allowed to choose their own wall color. Oldest daughter Gwenyth selected a pink called "Birthday Cake," and her furnishings are fit for a princess. Owen's soft blue "Summer Sky" walls are the perfect color for a boy, and he is enthralled with his new bunk beds.

Eleri's room contains no closet, as the previous owners reversed it to become part of the master bedroom. Though for now a closet is unnecessary, Lisa is thinking of an armoire at some point.

Room to be worry-free

Childproofing is evident everywhere, from plug covers to cabinet locks, baby gates and a creative stair rail protector. After the Harters moved in, it wasn't long before a crawling Eleri managed to worm her way through banister rails. Lisa says she immediately covered the

area with "cardboard boxes and whatever I could find." Now, a length of special-order heavy plastic is secured across the railings, highlighted by drawings the children made with black markers. After stepping through the front door, the decorated clear vinyl is a delightful first impression that says, "A family lives here."

As the children grow, Lisa and Tom want some control over entry points, especially since older children may inadvertently leave a door open through which a younger sibling could take flight, so a security system upgrade is likely up next. While not an immediate priority, Tom and Lisa also talk about new doors and a refinished entry.

Room to be a family

Lisa is excited about finally having a place for their wedding presents, some of which had been in boxes for nearly 10 years. Tom is elated to have the "extras" he's never had, such as a fire pit and a deck large enough for furnishings. The multi-level deck includes a two-season room, which will someday include furniture. They adore their high-end kitchen appliances, open-concept floor plan and walkable neighborhood. Bikes are on the agenda, as Tom and Lisa anticipate pedaling for both pleasure and transportation. As the title of their HGTV episode states, "Home Is Where the Harters Are." **(crw)**

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D. is a freelance writer. Her visit with Tom and Lisa brought back memories of her own sparsely furnished first home in La Crosse, the one in which she finally got to unpack her wedding gifts.





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THE FAMILY THAT EATS TOGETHER ... BONDS

**What's for dinner tonight?
Conversation, connection and fun.**

BY JULIE NELSON

Recipes analyzed by Gundersen Lutheran registered dietitians



It's Saturday, the one day the kids are allowed to have a can of pop with their meal. As the last bites of Annie's mac and cheese are being scraped from the bowls, I brace myself for the inevitable. The fizzy drinks ignite a competition for... the longest belch.

While a burping showdown is not to be heralded as the ideal in table manners, it is one of those little traditions that binds us together as a family. We look forward to the times when we can get together and share a few laughs.

In our house, it's rare to have everyone sit down at once for breakfast (especially with teenagers who like to sleep late) or lunch, but we make a point of making supper a family meal as often as possible. It's this time together, the experts say, that help make a family, a family.

"A mealtime is an important opportunity to connect with each

other," says Sheryl Gora-Bollom, M.S., a behavioral therapist at Gundersen Health System. She says it's the ideal situation to catch up and find out what everyone else has been up to during the day and what lies in store for the days ahead. It's a chance to share accomplishments and concerns, to share the latest about Grandma and other extended family and for parents to share their values about everything from table manners to schoolwork to how to treat a friend (or respond to a bully).

"The key in good family time is to connect without distractions," says Gora-Bollom. "Turn off all the electronics and focus on each other. This is the time to talk about pleasant things, not bad grades or other failings. If you don't do this over a mealtime," she says, "when else would you?"



It's not just about eating

Taking the pressure off what is being consumed is another key to creating an enjoyable meal experience. If young children aren't hungry, don't force them to eat and don't make an issue about it, says Diane Hinrichs Kelbel, a registered dietitian with Gundersen Health System. If they get hungry an hour later, warm up the leftovers from the meal or offer them another healthful snack.

She says the same theory holds true for teenage boys in the midst of a growth spurt and teenage girls going through the ups and downs of a menstrual cycle. "A good tip is to look at what is being eaten over the course of a week. Though many people—both kids and adults—will eat lots of meat one day and lots of fruit another, it usually balances out by the end of the week. A good guide is that 80 percent of the food eaten is for nourishment, and the other 20 percent is eaten for other reasons, whether that is a treat, as a reaction to stress or out of boredom."

Studies have shown that children in families who sit down together at least three times a week tend to make healthier food choices, have a more positive relationship with their parents and are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol.

With busy schedules, making every meal a family meal just won't work for most people. But the experts say it's important to do what you can. When teenagers have to miss a meal, save a plate for them, and when they come home, sit down with them while they eat. If you've never done a family meal, tell everyone you're doing spaghetti night and ask when the best night is. Try to get everyone involved, and by all means, don't feel that you have to hold a belching contest. **(crw)**

Julie Nelson is the public relations director for The Salvation Army. She and her husband, Ross Seymour, have two children ages 19 and 16. They all agree that "Pasta Night" is a reason to look forward to Wednesdays.

Family Favorites

On the rare nights we eat in front of the television (think Super Bowl or Survivor finale), this is what we have.

NACHOS

Serves 4.

- 1/3 of a 16-oz. bag Bearitos salt-free corn chips
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1/2 cup dehydrated pinto beans (found at the People's Food Co-op)
- 1/2 of a 16-oz. can black beans, drained
- 2 ripe avocados, peeled and sliced (optional)
- 1 cup of your favorite salsa
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to broil. Pour the pinto beans into the water, stir briefly, add black beans, stir again and let stand for 10 minutes.

Set out four heatproof plates and put a layer of chips (approximately 1 oz.) on each. Drop the bean mixture in equal portions on top of the chips on each plate, spreading out as much as possible. Top with sliced avocados, salsa to taste and cheese. Put under the broiler, checking after 3 minutes, until the cheese is melted.

560 calories, 29g fat, 600mg sodium, 10g fiber, 60g carbohydrate, 20g protein.

SKILLET LASAGNA

Serves 6.

- 1 28-oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 onion, minced
- salt to taste
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/8 tsp. red pepper flakes (or more, for spicier flavor)
- 1 lb. meatloaf mix (1/2 lb. ground beef and 1/2 lb. pork or Italian sausage)
- 8 oz. (approximately 10) curly-edged lasagna noodles, broken into 2-in. lengths
- 8 oz. can tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- pepper
- 8 oz. whole milk ricotta cheese (about 1 cup)
- 1/4 cup minced fresh basil (or 2-3 T dried)

Pour the tomatoes with their juice into a quart-size measuring cup. Add enough water to the tomatoes to measure 4 cups.

Heat the oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add the onion and 1/2 tsp. salt and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.

Stir in the garlic and red pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 15 seconds. Add the meatloaf mix and cook, breaking up the meat into small pieces with a wooden spoon, until no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Add in basil if using dried.

Break up the lasagna noodles over the skillet and distribute evenly. Pour over tomato sauce mixture making sure the noodles are covered. Cover the pan.

Cook until noodles are soft, about 15-20 minutes. Stir occasionally, making sure that the noodles are covered and cooking evenly.

Take off heat and add torn basil leaves (if using fresh) and add small dollops of the ricotta cheese. Cover and let sit for 5 minutes before serving.

487 calories, 25g fat, 667mg sodium, 4g fiber, 41g carbohydrate, 26g protein.

SALAD WITH CAESAR

Serves 4.

This meal is great for the summer. It's easy, healthy and even appeals to the kids.

- 1 10-oz. bag of pre-packaged Romaine mix
- 1/2 head of red lettuce, rinsed and ripped into bite-sized pieces
- 4 4-oz. boneless chicken breasts
- Caesar salad dressing (approximately 1 T per serving)

Place the lettuces on individual plates or in large bowls. Grill the chicken, cut it into slices, place it on top of the lettuce and serve with Caesar salad dressing.

210 calories, 8g fat, 210mg sodium, 1g fiber, 4g carbohydrate, 29g protein.



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Safe, environmentally friendly or just plain fun, these products were picked with family in mind.

Photos by Bruce Defries Photography



2



3



4

1. Step out in style sporting fun flats made from recycled newspaper. All Black “Kitten News,” \$113, from **kick**, downtown La Crosse.

dishtowels, \$6.95 each, from **Honig’s Gifts & Heritage Gallery**, downtown La Crosse.

2. Celebrate an early American tradition—and your family, too—with this red plate, which you can customize by writing family members’ names on the back. Colorful dishtowels complement the kitchen look. Waechtersbach “The Red Plate,” \$38.95; Tag

3. Protect baby’s skin and the earth, too, with locally made all-natural baby wipe solution and a reusable handmade wipe. LüSa Baby Wipe Juice, \$12.75; reusable cloth wipe, \$3.49, from **People’s Food Co-op**, downtown La Crosse.



5



6



7

4. Put your loved ones—including the four-footed kind—in a place of honor in these sophisticated yet playful frames. Mariposa picture frames, \$44 each, from **Touch of Class**, downtown La Crosse.

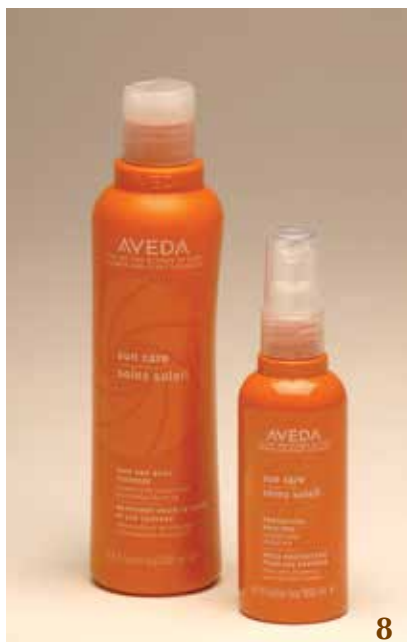
5. Keep summer safe, healthy and fun with pest-beating products specially designed to be safe for children. Clockwise from left: Buzz-Away Extreme Deet-free Natural Insect Repellent, \$16.99; Badger Baby Sunscreen, \$13.35; Burt's Bees Poison Ivy Soap, \$6.69; Bug Band Insect Repelling Band, \$4.95; Badger Anti-Bug Balm, \$7.99, all from **People's Food Co-op**, downtown La Crosse.

6. Every mom needs a way to wind down at day's end. We suggest the Aveda Stress-Fix Kit, \$90, containing Stress-Fix Soaking Salts, Stress-Fix Body Lotion and Stress-Fix Concentrate, from **The Ultimate Salon & Spa**, Onalaska.

7. This trio of products is packaged to be perfect for family travel. From left: Acure Dry Shampoo, \$12.99, allows for fresh hair even while camping; Acure Ultra-Hydrating Body Lotion, \$9.99, offers easy moisturizing; and Skin Fare Topical Nourishment, \$9.99, tends to scraped elbows and skinned knees with a swipe of its biodegradable tube. All products from **People's Food Co-op**, downtown La Crosse.

8. Beat the harsh effects of the sun the natural way—with Aveda Sun Care Hair & Body Cleanser, \$21, and Aveda Sun Care Protective Hair Veil, \$27, from **The Ultimate Salon & Spa**, Onalaska.

9. Comfortable, sporty and summery—why not try these laced-up flats on for size? Camper "Peu Campi," \$165, from **kick**, downtown La Crosse.



8



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THE FAMILY VACATION

Planning is key to making memories and having fun.

BY KIM SEIDEL
Contributed photos

Summertime and family vacations go hand in hand. Yet it's sometimes a challenge just to take children to the swimming pool for the afternoon, much less spend an extended period away from home. For parents who make the effort to plan a getaway—no matter how short or long, near or far, simple or extravagant—they learn the planning pays off.

The family vacation creates special bonds and makes long-lasting memories while exposing children to a variety of fresh experiences and exciting cultures. Smart parents know that kids learn on trips, and they're usually having so much fun they don't realize their brains are soaking up all kinds of new information.

Planning a trip requires time and thought. We turned to the professional travel agents at Travel Leaders/Goli's Avenues of Travel in La Crosse for advice on the family vacation. As mothers and grandmothers, they're experts personally as well as professionally.

Pick your destination

Trips to Disney World, including Disney cruises, and to all-inclusive resorts in Mexico, continue to remain top picks for family vacations. Cruises are also a big hit among families because the gigantic boats offer something for everyone.

For families with children of all ages, large cities offer another great choice, says travel agent Tracey Hummel, mom of two teen daughters. Washington, D.C., New York City and Las Vegas are popular options.

San Diego was a favorite trip for travel agent Jo Ann Buening's family of two children. "It not only has the harbor and zoo, but it was 'California,' and that was so cool for the kids," she says.

More families are planning European vacations, especially those

with teens and older children. "These parents want to give their kids the experience of traveling abroad," Hummel says.

For a more rural-type experience, travel agent Diane Nickelatti's family of three kids enjoyed a trip in the San Antonio, Texas, area. The region offers expansive animal parks with safari-like adventures. Colorado, specifically visiting Estes Park or a staying at a dude ranch, is another great pick for family vacations, she says.

Choose mode of travel

The three most important factors to consider when choosing the mode of travel are time, distance and cost.

If you plan to drive your own vehicle, make sure to allow enough time to spend at the destination. Some families prefer to take their car or van for the freedom of making stops along the way and generally following their own schedule.

If you're booking air schedules, make sure the connecting flights aren't too far apart to allow frustration to creep into the trip, Buening says. If possible, take a nonstop flight to your destination.

If you're traveling by rail, remember that the train experience in itself will compose a huge part of the trip. Trains run at a slower pace; prior to the trip, ensure that the children will appreciate the scenery and stops along the way.

Bypassing boredom

The agents agreed that one of the best ways to prevent boredom is to involve children in the vacation-planning



Need ideas for this summer's family trip? Consider the scenic West (Monument Valley in Utah, p. 41), the much-beloved Disney World (left), the bustle of nearby Chicago (top right) or a tranquil beach (Nags Head, N.C., bottom right).

process. Allow them to choose what they want to do on the trip. "That way, they can't complain that Mom is 'making me' see that monument," Hummel says. "They know they'll get to do their thing, too."

Invite children to help select the destination and mode of travel. As a family, discuss pros and cons and reach conclusions together.

Give family members ownership and responsibility for a fun adventure. Depending on their ages, have each child make a list of clothing and supplies they need to pack. Older children can help their younger siblings get ready for the journey ahead.

Boredom also can easily sneak onto the scene during travel time. Be prepared. While parents may allow electronics some of the way, encourage creativity with games, such as who can find the most state license plates, Nickelatti says.

When Hummel's daughters were younger, they shopped before trips at discount stores. Each girl filled her own backpack with books, puzzles, card games and other activities.

Some families plan their travels around nap times or at night when the children would normally sleep, says travel agent Rachel Gilbertson, who recently drove to Wisconsin Dells with her baby. This tactic works especially well if the family isn't planning any special stops along the way and wants to make good time to reach their destination.

Keep healthy and safe

Nothing ruins a family trip like illness or injury. Keeping everyone healthy and safe begins with the basics: hand-washing at the appropriate times, and even more than usual.

When traveling abroad, obtain information about the safety of the water. When the tap water isn't safe to drink, wrap a towel around the faucet in the hotel room as a reminder, Nickelatti says.

The agents recommend that travelers take their own blankets for airplane flights. Parents who have babies and toddlers may want to pack their own blankets to use on the hotel room's floor when the children crawl around.

Remember to bring enough prescription

medication to last through the trip for family members who need it. Stick to a young child's routine as closely as possible, keeping consistent meal- and bedtimes to help prevent frustrations. Other tips include packing sandwich bags with wholesome snacks, such as crackers and cereal. Stay hydrated. Remember to apply the sun block.

For an overall happy venture, keep in mind each child's limitations. Pace each day. Plan for some downtime. Rather than sight-see all day, give children a break in the hotel pool or allow an afternoon to read a book or take a nap.

"Is the destination safe for my family?" is a common question agents hear from clients. "I tell everyone to use common sense," Hummel says. "You wouldn't walk alone down the street at night, or in a strange place at home, so don't do that while on vacation." **(crw)**

Kim Seidel is a writer and mother of two daughters. She appreciates the tips she learned from the travel agents and plans to use them on her family vacation this summer.



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But community isn't just about a place on a map. It's about the people—the residents, the business owners and the service providers—who make a community come to life. We at *Coulee Region Women* are featuring a special section in this issue, celebrating those who make our own community a better, richer, safer and friendlier place. We've given them a space to tell their own stories, full of passion for what they do and dedication to their own communities.

And as we do, we thank you, our readers, for being a part of our *Coulee Region Women* community, too. Certainly, our area is a richer place because of what we all bring to it.



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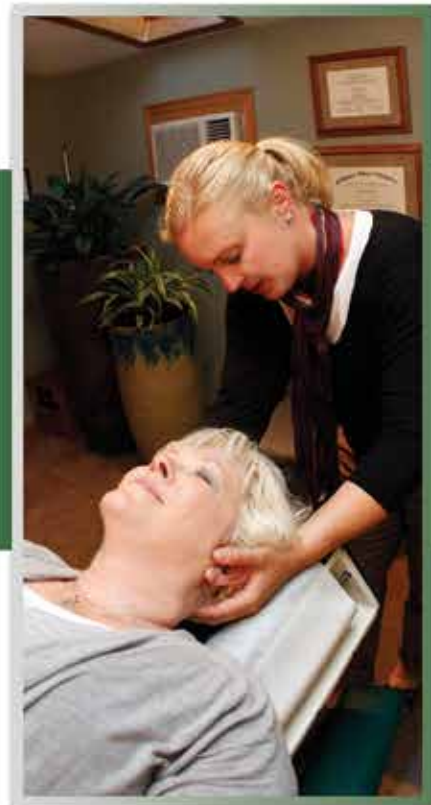
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Our approach is a holistic one, whereby we treat the entire person, not just their symptoms. Through this comprehensive and structured approach, we are better able to help our patients achieve optimal levels of health and wellness.

The doctors in our clinics focus on wellness with specialties ranging from pediatrics and pregnancy care to sports injuries. Some other treatment options we provide are digital x-ray, spinal decompression therapy and nutrition counseling. To learn more about these and other services we provide, please visit us online at www.myspinedoctors.net.

We accept and are in-network with most health insurance plans. We also offer a time of service fee for patients with high deductibles or those with no health insurance.

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Dental procedures may be performed quicker, more effectively and more comfortably thanks to the growing popularity of laser dentistry. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a variety of hard and soft tissue lasers for the treatment of both adults and children. Lasers penetrate the soft tissue while sealing blood vessels and nerve endings; the primary reason why our guests experience virtually no post-operative pain following the use of the laser.

Regenerate
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Many simple cavities can be treated without anesthetic

LANAP
{Laser Assisted New Attachment Procedure}
Gum surgery with no scalpel & no sutures kills bacteria and activates the re-growth of bone and tissues

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Dr. Jon enjoys serving his patient family and continues to seek out new and improved techniques to make every visit to Feist Dental smoother, better and less invasive. Dr. Jon has 4 different lasers, each optimized for specific dental procedures. Lasers are very selective and conservative and only remove the diseased tissue, so they are a safe and effective treatment for a wide range of dental procedures.



LASERS



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10 Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy

gundersenhealth.org/obstetrics

GUNDERSEN HEALTH SYSTEM®

Like all parents-to-be, you want the best chance for a healthy pregnancy. Generally speaking, the better your overall health, the better your pregnancy, delivery and recuperation will be.

Gundersen Health System's New Life Family Center offers you these tips:

1. If you're thinking about getting pregnant, start with a visit with your health care provider for a checkup and to discuss any health issues or questions you might have.
2. Learn all you can about pregnancy, birth and parenting—talk to new parents and your own parents, read books or take classes.
3. Change any unhealthy habits. If you smoke, stop. Don't drink any alcohol and limit caffeine while trying to get pregnant, during pregnancy and while breast-feeding.
4. Start taking a multivitamin or prenatal vitamin with folic acid, which is very important for the development of your fetus.
5. Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet rich in fruit, vegetables and whole grains. Avoid sushi, raw or undercooked meat, and unpasteurized dairy products to minimize risk of bacterial infection. Limit fish to two to three meals a week.
6. Forget the adage that you're eating for two. You'll need to add only 300-500 calories a day during pregnancy. A woman of normal weight should gain only 20-30 pounds. Carrying too much extra weight during pregnancy can lead to gestational diabetes and high blood pressure.
7. Daily, moderate, low-impact exercise such as walking, swimming or yoga will help you stay in shape during pregnancy, reduce labor complications and length and help you get back into shape quicker after the baby is born.
8. Avoid environmental hazards such as harsh cleaning supplies, paint, solvents and kitty litter used by an outdoor cat (indoor cats with current shots pose no risk).
9. Talk with your health care provider about safe over-the-counter medications and non-medicinal remedies for common illnesses such as colds, nausea, heartburn, constipation or headache.
10. Develop a birth plan and share it with those who will be involved.

Birth plan

As you start to plan your pregnancy, there are some things to consider. For your prenatal and obstetrical care, for example, do you prefer an obstetrician, certified nurse-midwife or family medicine physician? Can your hospital or birthing center safely support your plan if you want a vaginal birth, C-section, natural birth or water birth, or if you should need medical intervention?

Does your hospital or birth center offer prenatal services such as:

- prenatal care coordination
- childbirth classes
- ultrasound and other prenatal screenings





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Emily Doherty is a native of La Crosse. After training at Euphoria Institute in Las Vegas, she moved back to her hometown to help women enhance and showcase their Natural Beauty.

"Women are caregivers by nature, yet we rarely take time to nurture ourselves. How many times do we tell our girlfriends, 'You should treat yourself—you deserve it'? My advice is to take the advice you give your girlfriends!"

Natural Beauty LLC offers several anti-aging noninvasive skincare treatments that will leave your skin glowing. Emily uses a combination of organic and medical-grade products to help clients achieve their goals. And let's not forget the luscious eyelash extensions that have been Emily's specialty for the last six years!



hidden valley Designs

www.hiddenvalleydesigns.com
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I am Sheryl Rupprecht, owner of Hidden Valley Designs, a full-service window treatment business. I come to your home or business to do a free analysis making window transformation a painless project, including installation.

Years of experience and continual training for myself and assistant, Nikki Kraus, set us apart from the rest. I am the Showcase Hunter Douglas Dealer and motorized specialist in our area and am also a Women Owned Small Business Certified for commercial work.

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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 x221 for an appointment with a Licensed Professional Counselor or Marriage & Family Therapist.

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Subscribe to the FREE "Divorce Busting" newsletter at www.divorcebusting.com, the website for people who want a more loving relationship. Also visit www.effectivebehavior.com and Subscribe to the FREE "Marriage Advice" newsletter from the Coulee Region's

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I have been building my Mary Kay business for 15 years. I have enjoyed the freedom and flexibility of being an independent business owner while earning an executive income. This flexibility allowed me to be at home with my children and, now, my grandchild. I love working with gals of all ages—beauty has no age, and I would love to enhance your beauty from the outside. Please call me for your free consultation.



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Kathy Roth-Owner

The passion to provide customers with the right materials for their project has been vested in me even before working my first job. Immersed in the industry since childhood, when my father owned Roth's Flor-Mart, I grew up knowing I would one day work there, too. Continuing in my father's footsteps, I ventured on my own with Flooring Interiors in 2003. This has allowed me to provide the highest quality of service that customers are looking for in the home-building and remodeling process. These 30 years in the industry have provided me with vast product and design knowledge. Every project provides a new challenge and an opportunity to illustrate just how much potential every home has.

I thrive on the opportunity to collaborate with customers while combining my creativity with the boundless product options in our showroom. Whether a customer comes in with a design in mind or is looking for inspiration, I have the passion and commitment to guide every customer through each stage of the process until the job is complete. I am just as committed to the success of a project as the customer. I look forward to helping customers make their dream home a reality. I am dedicated to guiding each customer through the wide variety of selections in our showroom to find the right fit for any project, style and budget.



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Erica Black

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I started Critter Comfort Pet Care in August 2012 and have been absolutely loving my job and my clients ever since. I offer pet-sitting services in the client's home, as well as dog-walking and house-sitting services. I love all animals, so whether you have a large snake, a ferret or a dog, I would love to care for it! I am fully insured and have experience with medications.

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My husband, Greg, and I were repurposing, recycling and reusing what some considered "junk" long before it was the hot trend that it is today. As we see it, people from all walks of life are now turning on to what we've known all along—junking is cool!

Many of our customers affectionately know us as Granny Fay and The Junk Hunk. Together we scour yard sales, flea markets, online ads and more for the eclectic items you'll find in our store. Some are ready to sell just as they are, while others we paint, build, weld, sew or otherwise transform into one-of-a-kind treasures.

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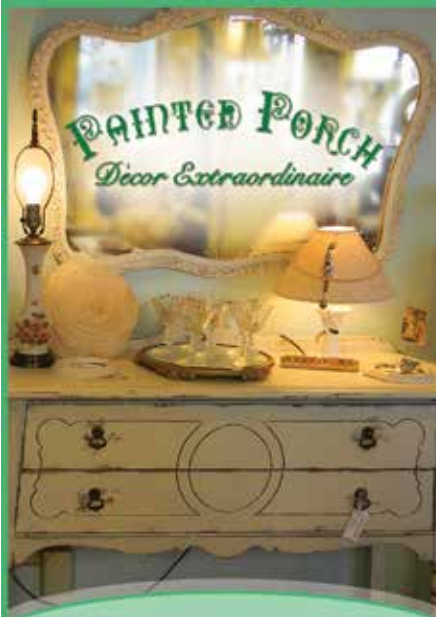
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Taking the time to look your best says you care – about yourself, about others, and about the causes in which you are passionate. It makes a statement about you. There really is something about the way a quality, well-cut garment, in a luxurious fabric, can make you feel — and Etcetera showcases that.

How can you not be inspired when you know you have the ability to change lives and build confidence in the women you help style in Etcetera clothing and accessories?

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We're literally the homegrown kid. We started in the mid-1970s with only a few people interested in healthy, nutritious food. We now have more than 6,000 members/owners. Sure, other retailers have come and gone in La Crosse, and maybe you've had your head turned by some fancy stores, but People's Food Co-op has always been here, consistently providing quality food at decent prices. We represent the community of La Crosse. Anyone can shop at the Co-op and anyone can join. We feature local and organic produce, bulk spices, grains and flours, fair trade coffee, a large vitamin and wellness department, and a meat and fish department.

Above the Co-op is our bistro, Hackberry's, featuring breakfasts, lunches, weekend brunches—we're now open into the evening.



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pottery

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All Glazed Up!
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When I was 16, a 96-year-old woman gave me a bit of advice. She told me, "Don't get to be my age and have regrets about what you did not do in your life." I never forgot those words, so a few years ago, when I began to feel I was spending too much time at work waiting for my shift to end, I ended my 20-year career as a critical care nurse and opened Generous Earth Pottery in downtown La Crosse—and opened All Glazed Up! less than a year later. I have never regretted this change.

Making pottery has always been a love of mine. The ability to create something from a lump of clay is simply joyful. Pottery requires being completely present in the moment, and for that reason many find it, as I do, very therapeutic and relaxing.

At Generous Earth Pottery, we have more than 60 students, and most have never touched clay before coming to us. Many who have joined our community of potters have come looking for something new and different to try, and due to the addictive qualities of creating pottery, most never leave.

Both shops are successful in terms of being places where anyone can come, without any previous knowledge of pottery or art, and begin to create. At Generous Earth Pottery and All Glazed Up!, we pride ourselves on being comfortable environments, where it just feels good to be.

-Karen Bressi



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Amy Kepler is owner/operator of Coulee Region Adult Day Center. Coulee Region Adult Day Center provides adult day services, in-home care, shower service and overnight respite for anyone over the age of 18, elderly and/or disabled.

“To the world you may be one person, to one person you may be the world.” That’s the adage Amy strives to live by, and is likely why the business is such a success. Amy Kepler started Coulee Region Adult Day Center in Onalaska March 2011 with only five clients and now has grown to expand to serve over 70 clients. In November 2011 Amy bought an adult day center location in Sparta and added an adult family group home in Onalaska in September 2011.

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Edward Jones provides financial services for individual investors in the United States and, through its affiliate, in Canada. Every aspect of the firm's business, from the types of investment options offered to the location of branch offices, is designed to cater to individual investors in the communities in which they live and work. The firm's 12,000-plus financial advisors work directly with nearly 7 million clients to understand their personal goals—from college savings to retirement—and create long-term strategies for their investments that emphasize a well-balanced portfolio and a buy-and-hold strategy. **Edward Jones** embraces the importance of building long-term, face-to-face relationships with clients, helping them to understand and make sense of the investment options available today.

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to Work For 2012" list, marking its 13th appearance on this prestigious list. The firm's interactive website is located at www.edwardjones.com, and its recruiting website is www.careers.edwardjones.com.

Margaret Severson has represented Edward Jones as a financial advisor since January 1999. Margaret attended UW-Stout and Concordia University Wisconsin Mequon in Madison, and has earned her AAMS standing. She is active in the community through the Viroqua Area Rotary Club (having served as president in 2005-2006), the Viroqua Main Street Chamber (a board member for five years), the Wisconsin Women's Alliance and the Lion's

Club. She and her husband have lived in the area since 1996, and they have three children attending Viroqua Public Schools. The entire family stays busy through school activities and community involvement.

Amy Stodola has been a financial advisor with Edward Jones since January 2005. A UW-La Crosse alum, Amy has earned her Accredited Asset Management Specialist (AAMS) standing. Amy is a Chamber of Commerce Ambassador, a member of Women in Networking and Support (WINS) and Women's Alliance of La Crosse (WAL), secretary of the 7 Rivers Referral Group, a Horse Sense board member and a member of Rotary East. She also volunteers her time with the Women's Fund of Greater La Crosse. A La Crosse resident since 2000, Amy enjoys taking in everything the region has to offer with her husband, Vince, and her young sons, Broderick and Jack.



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Attorney Heidi Eglash established her law office in 2005 to provide personalized, efficient, timely and effective legal services to individuals and businesses in the Coulee Region. By focusing on issues that impact every life and by delivering education, advice and solutions along with high-quality service, Attorney Eglash laid the groundwork for close and longstanding relationships with her firm's clients, as well as for growth.

In 2007, the firm grew from a solo practice and by 2009, moved to the Spruce Center to offer greater comfort, convenience and improved technology to its clientele. With those changes came the addition to the firm of Attorneys Julie Kuhn, Joe Geraldson and Brian Barton, along with legal support professionals Leila Maidana-Holen, Cinda Chorski and Dan Springer, which allowed the firm to expand its services greatly.

Eglash counts the firm's accomplishments not only in terms of favorable outcomes and completed cases or services, but also in terms of clients' expressions of thanks and looks of relief. "If our clients feel that we represented them well and with compassion and that they were glad to have entrusted their legal concerns to us" says Eglash, "then we've fulfilled our purpose as trusted advisors and advocates. This is what inspires all of us at Eglash Law Office to serve our clients and our community."




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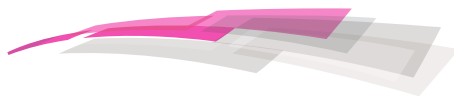
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

American Association of University Women (AAUW) 2nd Sat. of each month (Sept.-May), 9:30 a.m., 608-788-7439, aauw-wi.org.

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

Children's Museum of La Crosse weekly programming:

Save-On-Sundays \$1.00 off admission every Sun., noon to 5 p.m.

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

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

Little Learners for ages 1-7 with adult, every Thurs., 10:30 a.m. Museum closed July 4

Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW) 4th Tues. of each month, Nell's City Grill, 1111 3rd St. S., La Crosse, 5:30 p.m., judy.mills@wibuildingsupply.com.

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

La Crosse Concert Band 2013 every Wed., 7:30 p.m., June 5-July 24, excluding July 3, Riverside Park, La Crosse, rain site Central High School, lacrosseconcertband.org.

La Crosse Toastmasters Club 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, 7 p.m., Gundersen Health System Urgent Care Bldg., Basement, 1830 S. Ave., La Crosse. NAMI Family Support Group 2nd Mon. of each month, 6:30 p.m., South Side Neighborhood Center, 1300 S. 6th St.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Women in Networking and Support (WINS) 2nd Wed. of each month, 4 Sisters, noon-1 p.m., Shari Hopkins, 608-784-3904, shopkins@couleebank.net.

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

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

CALENDAR EVENTS

June 8, Young Eagles EAA Free Airplane Rides, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., La Crosse Municipal Airport.

June 8, Mississippi Valley Mayhem Roller Derby, 7 p.m., Green Island Ice Arena, La Crosse, mvmderby.com.

June 8-9, Senior Expo, Valley View Mall Center Court, www.myvalleyview.com.

June 9, YMCA Got Energy? Triathlon, 7 a.m., Lake Neshonoc, West Salem, 608-783-9622, laxymca.org.

June 12, American Red Cross Blood Drive, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Valley View Mall.

June 15, Minds in Motion Bicycle Tour, 7 a.m. Century Challenge, 8 a.m. all other rides, Onalaska Middle School, mimbiketour.org.

June 15, Bluff Country Garden Tour, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Houston County, Minn., bluffcountryartistsgallery.org or 507-894-4745.

June 17-19, Amazing Castle day camp, 8:30-11:30 a.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse, ages 4-5, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

June 22, Rockland Progress Days, Rockland, Wis.

June 24, Riverfront Community Classic Golf Outing, Cedar Creek Golf Club, Onalaska, 608-785-3534.

June 24-27, Spanish day camp, 8:30-11:30 a.m. ages 4-6, 1:30-4:30 p.m., ages 7-9, Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

June 26-Aug. 4, Great River Shakespeare Festival, Winona State University, grsf.org.

June 28, Wine, Women and Wellness, 6-8 p.m., Windy Ridge Ranch, Hokah, www.touchmoments.org.

June 29, Mississippi Valley Mayhem Roller Derby, 7 p.m., Green Island Ice Arena, La Crosse, mvmderby.com.

July 3-6, Riverfest, Riverside Park, La Crosse.

July 4, La Crosse Jaycees Fireworks, 10:00 p.m., Riverside Park, La Crosse.

July 5, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, 6 p.m., Riverfest Grounds, Riverside Park, La Crosse.

July 6, Big Blue Dragon Boat Race, Riverside Park, riverfestlacrosse.com/big-blue.

July 8-10, Little Artists day camp, 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 4-5, Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

July 8-10, My Story By Me day camp, 1:30-4:30 p.m., ages 6-8, Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

July 10-12, Viroqua Bluegrass Festival.

July 11-13, Krazy Daze, 8 a.m. Thurs. Fri., 10 a.m. Sat., downtown La Crosse, lacrossedowntown.com.

July 12-14, Summer Sidewalk Sales, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

July 12-14, Trempealeau Lions Catfish Days, Trempealeau.

July 12, *Wind of a Thousand Tales*, 7 p.m., La Crosse Community Theatre, Weber Center for the Performing Arts, La Crosse.

July 13, Youth Outdoor Fest, 11 a.m., Pettibone Park, La Crosse.

July 13, Hixon House Ice Cream Social, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Hixon House, La Crosse.

July 13, Mississippi Valley Mayhem Roller Derby, 7 p.m., Green Island Ice Arena, La Crosse, mvmderby.com.

July 15-17, Out of This World day camp, 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 4-5, Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

July 19-21, La Crosse Interstate Fair, West Salem Fairgrounds, West Salem.

July 19, *William's Window*, 7 p.m., Theatre for Youth Performance, La Crosse Community Theatre, Weber Center for the Performing Arts, La Crosse.

July 20, Rail Fair at Copeland Park, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Copeland Park, La Crosse.

July 22-25, Spanish day camp, 8:30-11:30 a.m. ages 4-5, 1:30-4:30 p.m. ages 7-9, Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

July 27-28, AAUW Art Fair on the Green, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sun., UW-La Crosse Campus.

July 29-31, I Dig Dinos day camp, 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 4-5, Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

July 29-31, Dragonflies/Dinosaurs day camp, 1:30-4:30 p.m., ages 6-8, Children's Museum of La Crosse, pre-registration required, funmuseum.org.

July 29-Sept. 20, Back to School Celebration, Valley View Mall, myvalleyview.com.

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



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