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women

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Pictured above:

Diana Pronschinske with daughters, Erica and Anna

Photo by Megan McCluskey, Atypik Studio

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Back when I was in college—a good 20 years ago, long before email or Facebook or cell phones—my father wrote letters to me nearly every week. Now, he was not a great literary type (his “office” was the cab of a county highway maintenance truck), but every Thursday without fail, he’d pull his truck over during a break and hand-write a two-page letter on the back of blank hourly log sheets.

They were always printed, in a combination of capital and lowercase letters that my sisters and I had long ago noticed bore a striking resemblance to the penmanship of Santa Claus, who also wrote us long letters as thank-yous for cookies and milk, and to relate the annual activities of folks at the North Pole. The letters I received in college told of the happenings of the week at my parents’ newly emptied nest: the fund-raising suppers, the high school basketball games, the fish caught and, always, the bowling scores of the Wednesday night league from the Luck-E Tavern.

But somewhere in the weekly update, my dad would pause and tell me, also, how the light appeared as it angled in through the windshield of the county truck, how nice it was to stop for a little break and how he sure was proud of all his girls. He always signed off the same way—with “Dad” printed in capital letters, the final “D” with a smiling face, or

sometimes configured into a little character with buttons popping off his shirt from pride. There was also a note at the bottom to remember to pass the letter on to my younger sisters, who attended the same school, when I was done reading it.

These days, my parents now visit with my children via iChat, my mom is more likely to email than call and certainly no one writes letters anymore. But I have kept Dad’s letters as a dear reminder of who we were, what was happening and how a simple ritual—now lost—became a chronicle of love.

In this issue of *Coulee Region Women*, we celebrate communication in all its forms, from the unique ways women pass along stories and traditions to conversing in an electronic age. You’ll learn how to master social networking with grace, how to let your clothes speak your style and where to go when only face-to-face friend time will do. You’ll even discover countless ways to resurrect the charm of good old-fashioned letter writing.

Communication is about sharing ourselves with others. Whether expressed in a 140-character opinion, a heart-to-heart conversation over coffee or the capturing of sunlight on a Thursday afternoon, in crooked handwriting on found paper, it’s a statement of who we are, what is happening and, at its best, of love.

Betty

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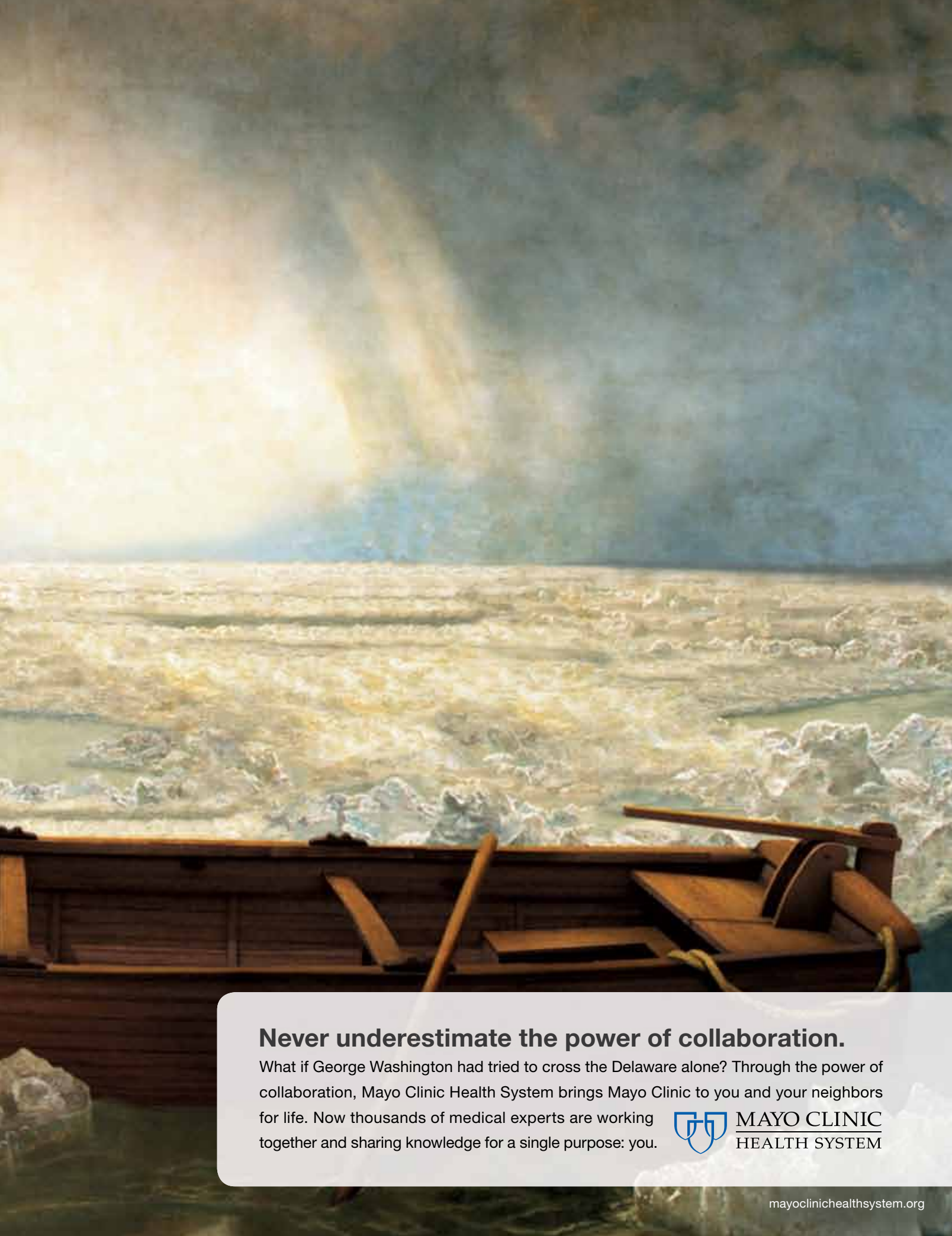
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GO RED TO GET HEALTHY

Learn about heart disease during the La Crosse Go Red Luncheon, an event that strives to help women stay heart healthy through knowledge. The Go Red movement harnesses the energy, passion and power women have to band together and collectively

wipe out heart disease. The luncheon, sponsored by Macy's and Merck and featuring speakers and a silent auction, will provide tips and information on healthy eating, exercise and risk factor reduction, such as smoking cessation, weight maintenance, blood pressure control and blood cholesterol management. The luncheon is held Wednesday, July 27, at the Cargill Room in the Waterfront Restaurant, La Crosse. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m., and the luncheon is held noon to 1 p.m. Reservations must be made prior to the event. Contact Renee Davis at The American Heart Association at 715-829-2841 or Anne Casey at 507-993-2137 for reservations and more information. Wear red to the luncheon to support the cause!

BREAK OUT THE HEELS, BOYS

There is an old saying: "You can't really understand another person's experience until you've walked a mile in their shoes." Men in the area are being asked to do just that. Walk a Mile in Her Shoes is a men's march in high heels that raises awareness of sexual assault and domestic violence in our community. On Thursday, June 30, participants will meet at Riverside Park to don their heels (provided at the event) and walk two laps (one mile) around the park. Proceeds will go to the YWCA of the Coulee Region and the Carilee Fund of Gundersen Lutheran Medical Foundation. Check-in is from 2 to 5:30 p.m. The walk begins at 6 p.m. Women are also encouraged to join the walk. For more information, visit www.gundluth.org/walkamile.



SHAKESPEARE COMES TO LIFE



Take a trip to scenic Winona, Minn. to see Shakespeare's plays during the Great River Shakespeare Festival. From June 22 to July 31, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Henry IV, Part 1* and Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt's *The Fantasticks* will be performed at Winona State University's Performing Arts Center. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* weaves three stories of love, curiosity and magic in Shakespeare's greatest comedy, reminding us of the abiding power of imagination and the resilience of the human spirit. *King Henry IV, Part 1* is a historical play that focuses on a rebellion against its title character. *The Fantasticks*, Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt's classic American musical, allies two matchmaking fathers who conspire to get their children together and succeed, but eventually the couple grows restless and strays. *King Lear*, the 2011 Apprentice/Intern Company project, will be performed in the Winona State University Dorothy B. Magnus Studio Theatre during the last week of the Festival, July 24 to July 30. For more information, visit www.grsf.org or call 507-474-7900.



ART, AIR AND THE FAIR

The 53rd Art Fair on the Green,

sponsored by the La Crosse branch of AAUW, will be held Saturday, July 30, and Sunday, July 31, on the UW-La Crosse campus lawns at 16th and State Streets. Professional artists from around the country will display a wide variety of artwork available for purchase, including sculpture, jewelry, photography, woodwork, paintings, fiber art, pottery and more. The fair will also feature artwork by La Crosse area high school students, a raffle of artwork and live music. All proceeds go toward scholarships for area high school students, as well as for students currently attending La Crosse's three local colleges and universities. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, contact Pat Staupe, Art Fair Chairman, at pstaupe@centurytel.net or 608-788-7439. Admission is \$4 for adults and free for children 12 and under.

KNIT IT TO THE RIVER

Knitters, take note: The annual Knit in Public Day will be celebrated June 11 at the La Crosse Main Library at 800 Main Street from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Knitters of all skill levels are welcome to watch demonstrations on dyeing, spinning and knitting techniques, participate in a yarn swap and, of course, knit in public. Stop in at the library any time before June 11 to add your stitches to the 3,500-foot-long Knit to the River project—a scarf that will be extended from the library down Main Street to Riverside Park at 3 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

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WOMEN'S WAYS OF COMMUNICATING

When it comes to communication,
women have a unique role and style.

BY SUSAN C. SCHUYLER

You Just Don't Understand. *What Men Say, What Women Hear. Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus.* These book titles characterize conversations between men and women as a right to bear arms.

Many of these titles share a familiar theme: Women are better communicators than men, so it's a woman's job to lead in relationships. That's not fair, according to Dena Huisman, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies at UW-La Crosse. "That vocabulary perpetuates that one sex is better and one is worse, but it also perpetuates that differences matter more than similarities," she says.

This contentious mentality, known to communication scholars as the male deficit model, is a relatively recent phenomenon, born of research conducted in the 1970s and 1980s. Julia Wood, in her book *Gendered Lives*, says this model assumes that women's ways of forming relationships are the right ways, and men's styles of building relationships are inadequate. We often see this model play out in popular sitcoms, according to Huisman. "In all the TV shows, the man doesn't know how to communicate, and the woman is always rolling her eyes."

How we differ

Recently, researchers began to challenge this theory, which gave way to the alternate paths model, which claims both sexes' communication styles are valid, just different. Huisman explains how it works using friendship as a context. "Men do friendship in powerful and emotionally connected ways—not by sitting around and talking about their friendship and sharing personal secrets, but by doing things together," she says.

Theories aside, research confirms that women and men behave differently when they communicate. In language, for example, sociolinguistics researcher Robin Lakoff, at the University of California-Berkeley, finds that women use a larger number of

words than men to describe things that interest them, like color descriptions. Lakoff also contends that women are more likely than men to end a statement with rising intonation, making a statement sound more like a question.

Nonverbal cues, which communication scholars estimate convey up to 93 percent of the meaning in our conversations, also differ by gender. In general, women use more facial expressions than men. More specifically, women smile more often and engage in more eye contact, according to many gender communication textbooks.

It's all about family

As in many social sciences, theorists debate whether these communication differences are mostly biological or learned. However, they agree we likely learn most about being male and female from our families. According to *Communication and the Sexes* by Barbara Bate

Both sexes' communication styles are valid, just different.



and Judy Bowker, “the family may be the most significant context in which we learn about sex and gender.”

Families use stories not only to shape us as sexual beings, but also as human beings. In the journal *Sex Roles*, the authors of the article “Gender Differences in Family Stories” propose that storytelling, which has long been a topic of interest among anthropologists, is an opportunity to share family values and lessons growing up.

Huisman focused her doctoral dissertation research on family storytelling as a means of maintaining long-term family identity over multiple generations. In her research, she found differences in the roles men and women play in telling these family stories.

Gender and family stories

Huisman says women take on the role of “kin keeper” in families: “There’s usually that one female figure who keeps tabs on when the events are, when the birthdays are and when the family reunions are going to be.” She is also the one who collects the photos, newspaper clippings and journals to capture the family’s history.

This kin keeper passes the stories and artifacts to the next generation, to the oldest or geographically nearest daughter, who carries stories of daily family life and traditions to the next generation. Women’s storytelling tends to revolve around the daily routines of being a family. For example, one woman in Huisman’s research told the story of her Italian immigrant grandmother with limited English language skills trying to buy a colander in a New York shop by saying to the clerk, “spaghetti in, water out.”

Huisman says men, on the other hand, are the ones who keep track of the humorous and epic family tales: “Men tend to want to hold the floor and keep the floor. So men like to tell stories that will keep and hold the audience.” The man’s story in the same Italian immigrant family might revolve around the larger struggles to immigrate and find work in a strange new place.

These differences in story content may be attributed to women’s traditionally domestic role. “Women have been tied to the local and everyday. When your life revolves around the more domestic stuff, that’s the stuff you remember, and that’s the stuff you want to



Bedtime stories are a common form of communication between parents and children.

pass down,” she says.

In the *Sex Roles* journal article referenced earlier, the authors support Huisman’s findings about gender differences in family story content: “When adults were asked to recount childhood memories, males were more likely to include themes of mastery and striving for success, and women were more likely to use direct expression of emotion.” Also, fathers tended to tell stories with stronger themes of achievement than mothers.

There are also gender differences present as stories are being told, Huisman says. Often, as men tell a story, women chime in with details, which is highlighted in the vignettes of older couples telling stories in the classic film, *When Harry Met Sally*.

Bedtime stories

Another storytelling opportunity in which gender matters occurs when parents tuck their children in at night. Bedtime stories are among

the most popular discourse activities between parents and their children. In analyzing recorded texts of mothers and fathers telling their children stories, the authors of an article in the journal *Women and Language* found interesting gender differences. Mothers tended to talk more, use more linguistic features like emotional expression, ask more questions and exhibit a more narrative style than fathers.

Although studying gender communication differences is fascinating, Huisman reminds us that it is what we have in common that matters most—the love and compassion that inspires us to communicate in the first place. (crw)

Susan C. Schuyler is a freelance writer who loves her job as an instructor in the Department of Communication Studies at UW-L because she can think and talk about cool stuff like this all day long.

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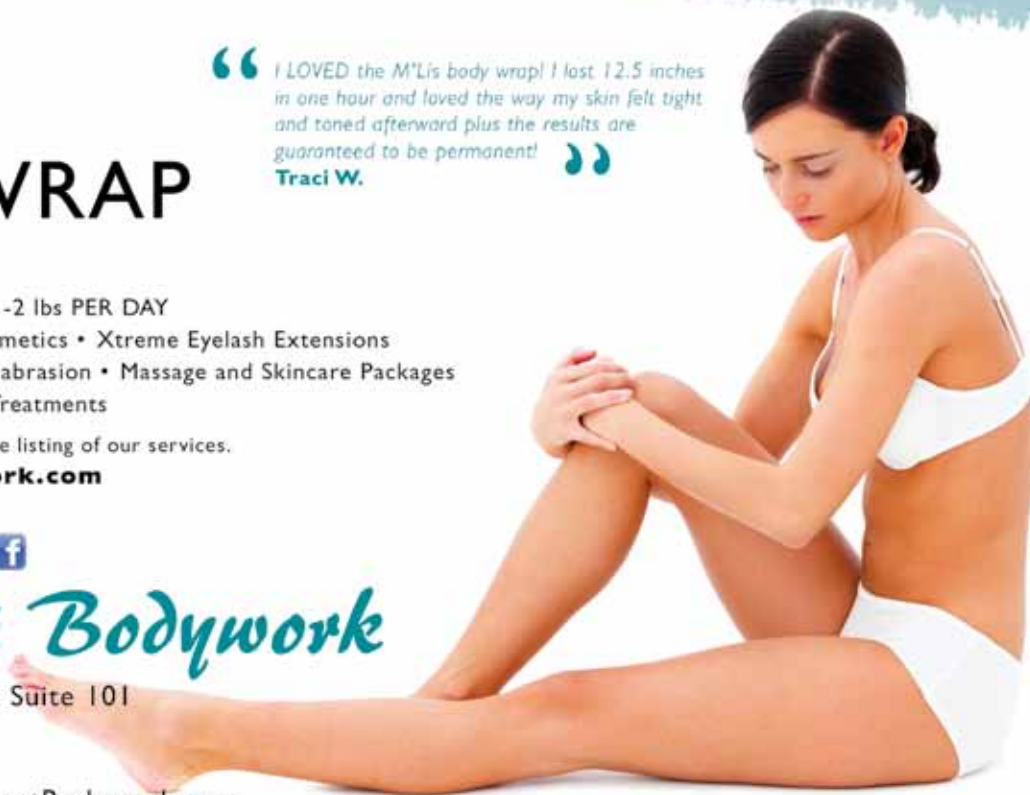
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THE ART AND BUSINESS OF COMMUNICATION

Two area women use communication skills to help others succeed.

BY LEAH CALL

Photos by Janet Mootz Photography

We communicate every day. Through the written and spoken word, we educate, inform, persuade, make a sale or lose one. Effective communications is an art. It's a skill that some women in the Coulee Region have mastered to help area businesses, organizations and foundations achieve success.

Annette Mikat connects with the public

One of those communication masters is Annette Mikat, owner of Mikat Public Relations, a public relations (PR) firm she has run from her La Crosse-based home office since 1996.

A native of Utah, Mikat (pictured above with client Brent Smith of Johns, Flaherty & Collins, SC) began her career in communications first as a reporter at a newspaper, then at a National Public Radio station in Utah. After earning a master's degree in communications,

she went on to work in public relations for businesses and then at a PR firm in Salt Lake City. When her husband's career ambitions catapulted the couple to La Crosse, Mikat saw an opportunity to launch her own PR firm.

PR is often misunderstood, says Mikat. "I define it as building relationships with the public to manage your success. Oftentimes it is confused with marketing because a lot of the tools we use are the same."

Mikat continues, "A lot of people think PR is just sending out a news release. A news release is a tool in the realm of media relations, which is an important component of public relations, but there are also employee relations, donor relations, member relations, government relations, investor relations. PR captures all of that."

Making connections between businesses and customers, between employers and employees, and between nonprofits and members or

donors is something Mikat loves about the work she does.

She also enjoys applying a skill she has honed over the years. “I spent four years of my life in college learning how to write well. I love the writing. I get to write for a lot of different audiences and industries.”

Mikat works primarily with established businesses. Her niche is professional services and nonprofits. “That is where I naturally gravitate. I like those areas because, with the right clients in the professional services area and with nonprofits, you are doing good things. There are a lot of intrinsic rewards in that.”

For women thinking of a career in communications or public relations, Mikat suggests this: “Learn to write, be really critical of your own writing and proofread it over and over.”

While writing well is paramount in the public relations arena, critical thinking also plays a role. “There is a lot of strategy, a lot of creativity that goes into it. You need to be able to get into other people’s shoes,” adds Mikat.

Mikat feels fortunate to earn a living doing what she loves. Perhaps that’s why she graciously offers her talents to local nonprofit organizations such as the Women’s Fund of Greater La Crosse and the Salvation Army.

One volunteer opportunity particularly important to her is with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF), which she became involved in after her 11-year-old daughter, Anna, was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. “That turned our world upside down,” recalls Mikat, who was invited to be on the JDRF board. “That invitation might not have come without my PR background. Now I’m helping JDRF with fund-raising and building awareness for my daughter and for other kids. I went from feeling helpless to feeling like I could help find a cure—I can see it on the horizon before Anna goes to college. PR has given me some amazing opportunities, and that is very meaningful to me.”

Melissa Schultz attends to the details

Behind every successful business, organization and event is someone minding the details. Sixteen years ago, Melissa Schultz made a business around doing just that. Schultz handles day-to-day administrative tasks



Melissa Schultz (*left*) minds the administrative details for a number of clients. Here, she consults with Sara Battison, Chief Development Officer of the Family and Children’s Center and president of the Women’s Fund of Greater La Crosse.

and provides support services to businesses, individuals and nonprofits in La Crosse and beyond through her company, Melissa’s Administrative and Coordinating Services.

“I take care of the details in the background to allow my clients to focus on what they are good at,” says Schultz. “It’s fun to see the stress lift off them. It is very satisfying to see them succeed and grow.”

Exceptional work speaks for itself, and Schultz says she has found all of her clients through word of mouth. Among those clients is the Women’s Fund of Greater La Crosse. For seven years, Schultz has provided services to the Women’s Fund of Greater La Crosse: arranging meetings, taking minutes, communicating with volunteers, processing donations and financial reports, and coordinating events. The rewards of her work with them go beyond financial. “I’ve learned so much. The Women’s Fund is all about helping other women grow. There is such support there. We all work so well together. I’m proud to work with them,” says Schultz.

The power of technology—Skype, email, cell phones—allows Schultz to provide top-notch virtual services to clients throughout the state and the nation. Her services range from personal assistance to project management and bookkeeping to event planning. “I have one client that is in the thick of things with

what is going on politically in the state, and I got a call the other night at nine. I have a lot of flexibility for my clients.”

Owning her own business means Schultz has flexibility for family as well. “I’ve always tried to maintain a level of professionalism,” she says. “My clients know they are getting quality work. But one of the things I love about the work I do is that when my kids have something going on, I can schedule time off.”

Schultz says the support of her family, particularly her husband, has played a vital role in her success. That support remains as she continues to grow her business with a constant focus on providing exceptional service to her clients.

To other women considering starting a similar business, she offers this advice: “Develop a plan. Set some goals. Research it, research it and research it some more. Talk to other people in your network and get some feedback. They may have some ideas for you and can help you make connections.” **(crw)**

Leah Call writes for businesses, organizations and publications from her home office in Westby. She feels fortunate to have met Melissa and Annette and admires their talent and energy.



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MAKING CONNECTIONS, WOMAN TO WOMAN

Area networking groups link women and help their businesses grow.

BY LINDSAY BONNAR

Contributed photo

If you're a woman in business, marketing yourself and networking can be made easier—and much more fun—through a women's business group. The Coulee Region offers several opportunities for women of all occupations, from designers to bankers to mothers, to gather and share their skills and life lessons with others through such groups.

"We all use each others' services; it's a cool way to advertise what you do in your business," says Kay Buck, cofounder of Women in Networking and Support (WINS). WINS, along with other networking groups, such as Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW, pictured above) and the Wisconsin Women's Alliance (WWA), are all local or state-affiliated networking groups that have formed after being part of national organizations. Women of Worth (WOW) is a new group that offers opportunities for networking as well as informational programs.

Thriving over time

"CRPW is just kind of an organically grown, local bunch of women," says longtime member Madalene Buelow. "It's a way to network and meet like women. We have helped people grow

their business just by word of mouth."

CRPW broke away from the American Business Women's Association (ABWA) approximately four years ago. "With a history of 20-plus years, we figured we could do it on our own," Buelow states. Since the break from the national organization—and being able to offer lower membership fees—CRPW has seen its membership numbers nearly double and has attracted younger women.

"Some women's organizations allow only one type of businesswoman," such as florists or designers, says Buelow. "We embrace everybody."

WINS was also formed about four years ago, when the local chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) closed. Buck recalls that NAWBO was strong in the area for many years. When the local and national dues got to be too high for many women, chapter member numbers dwindled, and NAWBO had to shut down.

Buck recalls that the board members "decided we were really going to miss this group," and then thought, "Well, why can't we still have a group?"

Networking, camaraderie & support

Buck and other members considered what the organization's most valuable benefits were. What women most wanted, they realized, was networking, camaraderie and support. Thus, WINS was born, a relaxed, dues-free, monthly gathering of 30 to 40 women who meet for lunch, talk about their businesses and network with other working women.

The newest of the groups, WWA, split from Business Professional Women (BPW) a year or two ago. "We've grown a lot in the last couple of years," says WWA-La Crosse president Dawn Harris. "I think it's been the strength of our organization locally. I think it's the women that we have in the group—they're very diverse in age and professional backgrounds—and I also think it's been the quality of the programming [at meetings]."

WWA has about 40 members, which Harris attributes to reasonable dues, as well as being "able to make the state structure more amenable to the modern professional woman."

"We try to promote women, not just professional women," Harris says.

Giving a leg up

CRPW and WWA also give back to the community in the form of scholarships—as Buelow likes to say, "women giving back to women." In this way, members give a "leg up" to high school girls who are near graduation or to nontraditional students. This year, CRPW is awarding four \$500 scholarships.

WWA relies on an annual fund-raiser to raise money for its scholarship program. They plan to award \$1,000 in scholarships this year. Says Harris, "We are looking for someone who is pursuing ongoing study of some kind," whether a master's, bachelor's or even associate's degree. "It's a very broad-based scholarship concept."

These groups also seek other ways to give to the community. During their December meeting, WINS members gather donations of cash or other items for New Horizons, the women's shelter in La Crosse. CRPW members have donated pajamas to, and

have rung the bell for, the Salvation Army, as well as donated phone cards to New Horizons during the holidays.

"It's been a great group of women," says Harris of WWA members. "They're very easy to know and they are very supportive, and I really enjoy the diverse age group."

"My favorite thing is the support network," Buck says. "Some of these ladies have become close friends." **(CRW)**

For more information on these groups, contact:

CRPW—Madeline Buelow
mbuelow@fspa.org, 608-791-5282

WINS—Kay Buck
kay.v.buck@wellsfargo.com, 608-791-9253

WOW—Debbie Lee
debbielee@westlandinsurance.com,
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Graphic artist and freelance writer Lindsay Bonnar is grateful for local networking groups and the wonderful women in them.



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THE ETIQUETTE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Let these six concepts guide your social networking.

BY MELISSA HANSON
Photo by Janet Mootz Photography

Etiquette isn't just about silverware usage and skirt hem lengths anymore. The rise of social media has ushered in a whole new set of standards for the technologically active. Whether you're using social media to connect with friends or to maintain relationships with clients, social media etiquette can make or break your online identity. Catherine Tryon, a social media marketing consultant for Green Gorilla Marketing and owner of Catherine Tryon Consulting, gives us the low-down on social media manners. Let's break it down into six simple ideas.

1 To friend or not to friend

If you've ever felt obligated to accept a friend request on Facebook, you're not alone. Liberate yourself from guilt-induced friendships; Tryon says it's okay to deny requests and even to unfriend discreetly. On the other hand, if you're the one requesting a friendship, don't assume others will remember your name or recognize you from a one-inch photo. Be courteous and include a personal message.

Generally, workplace relationships and personal content don't mix. So, choose the appropriate social media outlet based on the nature of the relationship.

2 To thine own self be true

Once you form an online connection, realize it's you others want to stay in touch with—not your kids, your pets or even a cartoon character with whom you share a striking resemblance. It's acceptable to share photos of loved ones, but when it comes

to your avatar, opt for a clear photo of yourself.

Businesses, too, will benefit from letting followers know there is a person behind the content they view. Tryon suggests using a professional photo of yourself—not a logo—for your avatar. "We want to do business with people," she explains, "not logos."

3 Dot your i's and cross your t's

Tryon warns that half of employers check social media sites when considering job applicants, and many will deny jobs based on what they find online. Excessive cursing, grammatical errors and frequent misspellings diminish credibility and close doors. So before you share, review content for errors and potentially offensive comments.

For professionals, typos and other errors will tarnish the reputation you've labored to create. Squeaky-clean content that is consistent both on- and offline is critical to



Catherine Tryon

maintain credibility.

Give and take

According to Tryon, social media is all about community and forming connections, so participate in the conversation. "If you like something," Tryon says, "say so!" Everyone likes to receive comments, and people will be much more likely to comment on your witty posts and pretty photos when you are kind enough to do the same.

Business professionals beware: Traditional marketing tactics don't work with social media users. Overt marketing tactics are seen as spam and will chase followers away. Instead, form a social media community with those who are already interested in your business.

Be it ever so humble

Social media users want to be engaged in conversation, so approach posts with a healthy dose of modesty and give others a reason to interact. Stay away from self-promotion, resist the urge to air personal grievances and don't get too pushy with requests to support your cause.

The key to social media marketing is to engage your fans with content that is entertaining and valuable. If they like your message, they will share it with others. "You can't force it," Tryon cautions, "going viral just happens."

All social media's a stage

When you're face to face with a computer screen, you may overlook the fact that your posts are available for all

the world to see. Regardless of security settings, you can't know where your content will end up. If you wouldn't print it in the newspaper or share it with your boss, you shouldn't broadcast it on social media outlets, either.

With these simple tips, you can confidently tackle a range of social media outlets with style and grace. To learn more about the dos and don'ts of social media marketing, visit www.GreenGorillaMarketing.com. 

Melissa Hanson is a freelance writer who delights in social media for its endless supply of witty prose in bite-size pieces.



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BRINGING LEARNING TO *Life*

**A longstanding women's study club
carries on a tradition of education.**

BY SHARI HEGLAND
Contributed photo

More than a hundred years ago, English and Scottish settlers in the rural area outside Onalaska felt a need to expand opportunities for learning and education among area residents. The result was an organization that has brought books, discussions and ideas to generations of women.

Originally founded in 1901 as the Campbell Library Association, the organization that is now the Fauver Hill Study Club is one of the oldest rural women's clubs in the state.

The Campbell Library Association was part of a countywide traveling library system that provided books to members in rural locations. There was even a wheeled cart to transport the books. In addition to a book collection that eventually numbered 500 or more, the organization held regular meetings to discuss specific books or topics of the day. A club history book, written in 2001 by members Irene Radcliffe and Eleanor Robinson, points out, "While the original purpose of the Club was to read, study and decide on books to be acquired for the libraries, study for self-improvement was also important."

"It is the education"

That continues to be the case today for the 20 members who meet monthly for educational programs and to discuss at least one major book study each year.

"It served the same purpose for us in the 1980s and 1970s and today—it is the education," says member Nancy Beguin, who joined the club in 1986 when the Fauver Hill Mothers Club (a group of mothers whose children attended the Fauver Hills school near where Stoney Creek Inn now stands) combined with the study club. "Each time we meet, it's a study—something new."

Topics they have studied at meetings in recent years range from floral arrangement and beekeeping to Medicare fraud and a study of the book *Resilience* by Elizabeth Edwards. Members have also shared interesting stories of their own experiences, including the story of Radcliffe's years as a teacher at Japanese interment camps in Wyoming during World War II.

Florence Spors, a member for 37 years, says that the

club's book discussions provide an opportunity to get much more from reading than she would find on her own.

"I think we're more apt to get interested and dig in and have some personal study when we have contact with others," she says, noting that it is fascinating to hear how differently individuals may react to each book. For example, "We all had different takes on who Elizabeth Edwards was," she says about their most recent book discussion.

Loving to learn

Today, the club meets monthly in members' homes or at local restaurants, and sometimes takes field trips to other locations for presentations, such as a May visit to Houston, Minn., to learn about owls. Membership is by invitation.

While the members have become friends, the diverse group of former teachers, nurses, elected representatives, businesswomen, writers, homemakers and volunteers are striving to do more than just chat with friends. They love to learn. 

Shari Hegland is a freelance writer and editor in Holmen, Wis., who enjoys learning something new each day, which is one of the joys of this job.



Fauver Hills Study Club, 1915



Saturday Midwifery Appointments Now Available

Mayo Clinic Health System in Onalaska's certified nurse midwives (CNMs) are now offering Saturday morning appointments in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Appointments can be made for prenatal care, annual well-woman exams, maternity counselor visits and nonstress testing.

The department is also pleased to welcome Susan Karimi, CNM. Karimi has 12 years of experience in women's health care. Her special interests include full-scope midwifery care, breastfeeding, alternative therapies and water birth. Karimi provides both well-woman and pregnancy care.

To make an appointment, please call the Onalaska Clinic at 608-392-5003.



Local Speech Pathologist Receives Brain Injury Specialist Certification

Gundersen Lutheran speech-language pathologist Elyse Johnson, MS, CCC-SLP, ACBIS, is now certified as a brain injury specialist through the Brain Injury Association of America.

Johnson joined Gundersen Lutheran in 2009 and is the only certified brain injury specialist in La Crosse. She specializes in helping patients who have suffered from traumatic brain injuries and assisting them with cognitive rehabilitation. "This certification will enhance the services I provide to patients, both at Gundersen Lutheran and at the Brain Injury Support Group, which I facilitate in La Crosse," Johnson explains.

For additional resources, visit gundluth.org/tbi or biaw.org.



Darryle Clott receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor

Darryle Clott was awarded one of the prestigious Ellis Island Medals of Honor this past May for her work as a Holocaust educator. The awards are given to outstanding American citizens who have distinguished themselves through their contributions to this country. Past Ellis Island Medal of Honor recipients include U.S. presidents, Nobel Prize winners, athletes, leaders of industry, artists and others whose work has made a lasting impact on humanity. Clott teaches History of the Holocaust at Viterbo University and also leads Holocaust Educator Workshops. She is also instrumental in bringing Holocaust survivors to the community. To learn more about the awards, visit www.neco.org.



The Wedding Magazine Coulee Region receives a "Best of Division" award

The *Wedding Magazine Coulee Region* received a "Best of Division" award for outstanding achievement in Magazines, Newspapers, and Inserts Category—Fashion/Health/Popular Culture Magazines in the 11th Annual Graphics Excellence Awards, a statewide printing competition hosted by the Printing Industries of Wisconsin.

"This award is really representative of our publication. Each issue is styled based on the same high-quality design standards and strengthened with excellent writing and local wedding industry expertise. We are so proud of our winning team," says Nancy Flottmeyer, co-publisher with Diane Raauum. "It's an honor to be recognized by the industry as a company that produces top quality, award winning-materials," she adds.

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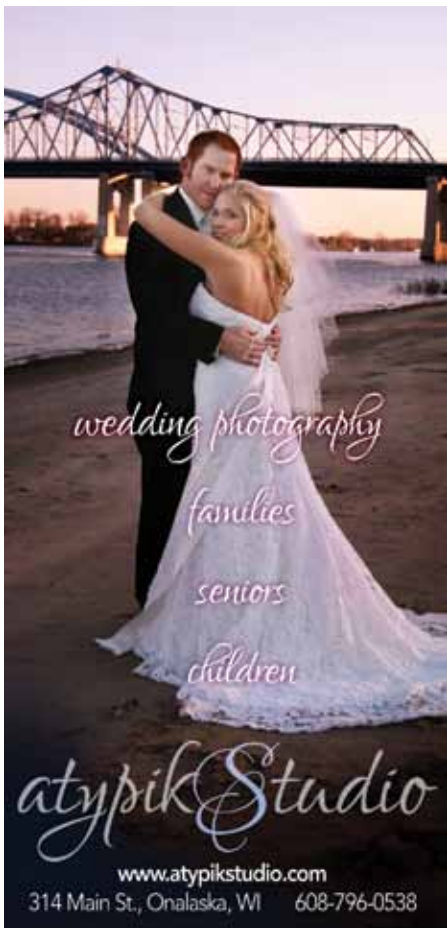
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MEET ME ON THE PORCH

A three-season porch provides a comfortable extension to a home.

BY MICHELLE BYOM

Photos by Megan McCluskey, Atypik Studio

Cute and cozy, Diana and Bruce Pronschinske's three-season porch is the perfect place to cuddle up with a good book on a lazy summer day or host a weekend barbecue with friends. Carefree furniture and accessories add color and pizzazz that's inspiring, yet simple. On a long-awaited spring day, we watch the birds make their rounds from a feeder to the shelter of trees. We listen closely and hear the nearby creek come alive with activity.

For this Holmen family, their three-season porch is a haven from the hustle and bustle of a busy life. It's indoors and yet so close to nature that you can hear, see and even feel it on your face as the breeze floats past. "We included the porch in our building plans so we could experience the feeling of outdoors and open air, but we are also protected from bugs and the weather," Diana says.

When Diana and Bruce moved their family to the area in 2007, they were looking for a place that would have a country



Tiny lights and soft curtains add a carefree, romantic feel to a three-season porch.

feeling reminiscent of their rural roots, but close to schools and conveniences. They chose Lee Estates, a small neighborhood tucked away east of Highway V that is walking and biking distance to schools and downtown. Their wooded backyard provides the privacy and quiet they searched for. “There is truth to the saying ‘location, location, location’ when you are considering a property,” Diana says. “We just love the setting.”

From coffee time to quiet time

The three-season porch outlines the most eastern corner of their Craftsman-inspired home, making it an inviting place to take in the morning sunshine while savoring the day’s first cup of coffee. When the Pronschinske porch is open, it is the hub of their home life. From quiet time to family time and entertaining, Diana admits they thoroughly enjoy this 14-foot by 12-foot space within their home.

Excluding the porch, their home is approximately 2,000 square feet of finished space. It is roomy and open, decorated tastefully in earth tones. That is just the way the Pronschinskes wanted it. “Our goal was to create livable space,” Diana says.

They debated whether or not to go the porch route when they built, and they weighed the option of a four-season room instead of their three-season porch. “Bruce had to talk me into the three-season porch, and I’m so glad he did,” Diana says. “We love the open-air feeling.” In the off months, the porch becomes a secure, covered area for extra storage. “This is one of the best investments we made because it gives our family a place to spend quality time together, which is important to all of us.”

Almost outdoors

“It’s a great place to entertain,” Diana adds. “Everyone who comes here loves it.” From the porch, you can escape to the backyard patio. The gas grill and picnic table stands ready and waiting, and not far off is a gas fire pit. Diana laughs as she



Even while working in the kitchen, Diana Pronschinske is connected to the company of her daughters, Anna and Erica, on the three-season porch.

explains how the gas fire pit might sound like cheating to some, but they enjoy the instant flames at a click and don’t have to worry about smoke, gathering wood or other necessities that go hand in hand with a true fire. “Besides, the gas fireplace is nice to look at from inside the porch, too.” White lights drape from the porch ceiling, adding ambience to evening gatherings.

Diana, Bruce and their daughters, Anna, 14, and Erica, 11, eat many of their meals here or just kick back on a comfortable wicker couch to catch up with each other. “We have what we call our book club here,” Diana says. “Everyone grabs a book, magazine or even some office reading, and we sit together and read. It’s a place to enjoy one another.” Diana said she knew they would relish the porch as a reading area, and it was wired with adequate electricity to accommodate reading lamps.

The siding of their home frames two walls, and the other two walls and ceiling are painted cedar. A built-in ceiling fan helps circulate the air on hot summer days. The floor is a sturdy, no-maintenance decking material. Screened windows are plentiful and help to provide the feeling that you are almost outdoors. A light breeze gently lifts the airy gingham curtains that Diana and her sisters sewed. They are one of several finishing touches that add warmth and charm to this space.

Conversation pieces at bargain prices

“We bought the material for approximately \$2 a yard,” Diana says as she examines the sheer, creamy-colored curtain. She points out the chic and charming porch accessories; some are old and some are new. But whatever it might be, from a refurbished table to a dollar store find of small potted flowers, she exclaims she loves a good bargain. She points out the wooden table, painted lime green, that she scored at a garage sale for \$10. And the four chairs that appear to match the table perfectly cost just \$5 for the set. The table and chairs became another family project. Diana and her sisters transformed the cloth seats with a fun, striped material, and daughter Anna added colorful paint to each chair back.

Guests and even the hostess have an easy walk through the Pronschinskes’ kitchen to access the porch from inside. There’s no need to feel left out if you are the designated dishwasher, because one of the kitchen windows overlooks the porch and can open to its conversation and camaraderie. A word of advice, however: The dishes can wait while you take a break on the porch. (crw)

In writing this story, Michelle Byom enjoyed learning how a cherished space can easily turn a house into a home and bring family and friends together.

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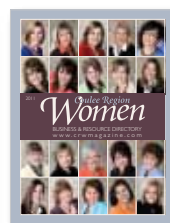
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THE DOCTOR-PATIENT PARTNERSHIP

Get the best medical attention by preparing for your visit.

BY SUSAN HESSEL
Contributed photos

You walk into the doctor's office with questions, but later find yourself trying to remember what was said and kicking yourself for not asking something that slipped your mind.

Worried about a change in your body, you decide to Google your symptoms and what you find convinces you that you have cancer. In your mind, it couldn't be anything else.

You are afraid to tell your doctor that you stopped taking the pills she prescribed but instead are taking herbs and vitamins.

If any of these situations rings true, you are not alone. These experiences happen in some form in just about every doctor's office.

That's why a little preparation before a medical visit helps, whether it is writing down list of your concerns or just reviewing in your own mind why you are at the appointment and what you want to address.

To do that, find a "medical home"—a primary health care professional.

Find a physician who fits you

"It helps to have an established relationship with a physician so that she knows you and you know her," says Dr. Lori Devine, who practices in the Mayo Clinic Health System Center for Women's Health. "The worst thing is realizing in the parking lot that you forgot to ask a question."

Dr. Carrie Gerhard, a Gundersen Lutheran-La Crescent

family practitioner, calls the doctor-patient relationship "a partnership, not a dictatorship."

"Communication is the key to the relationship. It's a conversation between me and the patient about what's going on or about the questions they have," she says. "Building a long-term relationship with a primary care doctor is most important. Pick someone and see that doctor regularly rather than always making quick visits to urgent care."

Prepare for your visit

Prior to an annual visit, the Center for Women's Health sends a questionnaire for women to fill out and bring with them to the appointment. It asks about changes in their health and in the health of family members.

"They can think back about their year and reflect on that year so they are better prepared. Otherwise, they may think about only the last couple months," Dr. Devine says.

It can be equally challenging to remember all that a doctor tells you during an exam. "It helps to take notes or bring a friend or relative with you. A lot of information is discussed," Dr. Gerhard says. "I also write notes and give them to the patient so he or she can remember important points."

Dr. Gerhard also finds it helpful if patients bring their medications, including nonprescription drugs. She also wants



Dr. Carrie Gerhard,
Gundersen Lutheran



Dr. Lori Devine,
Mayo Clinic Health
System Center for
Women's Health

her patients to feel comfortable telling her if they have stopped taking a medication or take new over-the-counter medications.

The two doctors don't want their patients to feel rushed, but they understand there are time constraints—a reason to bring a list of important questions.

Do some research

Both doctors recognize that many patients today spend time on the Internet looking for health information. The web can be helpful, cause more concern or even be misleading, as some sites exist only to sell specific products.

"Some patients want to be prepared so they have good questions to ask the doctor. For other people, looking online creates anxiety," Dr. Devine says.

It is critical that patients find good resources, according to Kaye Crampton, Gundersen Lutheran consumer health librarian. Disease forums may provide good support but not have the latest information about a given disease and its

treatments. A problem that one person posts on a forum may not apply to you, even with the same diagnosis.

"Every single health situation is different and peculiar to the person," she says.

Dr. Gerhard recommends www.familydoctor.org, which is sponsored by the American College of Family Practice. "They can get reputable information without a lot of opinion," she says.

Dr. Devine suggests www.mayoclinic.com, which provides consumer education. "It's a great patient education resource. It's a trusted site."

In the end, a visit to your doctor or other provider is about talking and listening to each other. Dr. Devine goes back to the words of her physician father, who said, "Medicine is easy. All you have to do is sit and listen to the patient telling you what's wrong." **(crw)**

Susan T. Hessel is a La Crosse writer and personal historian who, like us all, is a sometime patient with questions to ask her doctors.


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GRILLS JUST WANNA HAVE fun

Take control of the grill with tips for women ready to play with fire.

BY CHARISH BADZINSKI

Recipes analyzed by Gundersen Lutheran registered dietitians

For many women, having a barbecue means making side dishes under the kitchen lights while the hubby gets the sun-soaked grilling glory. Yet in the end, everyone's there for the grilled food, and the potato salad and greens—while perhaps worthy of barbecue honorable mention—are ultimately eclipsed by that juicy, savory, perfectly grill-marked meat.

So, short of arm-wrestling her significant other for the honor, how's a girl to get control of the grill? It's simple, says local chef-at-large Jim Bressi: Cook better food. "Cook a steak or ribs better than he can, and that's your secret." To accomplish this, says Bressi, you'll have to do away with some common grilling misconceptions.

Grilling Goof #1: Expecting marinades to tenderize meat

Wrong, sort of. Any marinade with acidic products—such as vinegar or lemon juice—can, over the course of three days, turn meat to mush. But most home cooks marinate for an hour or two, during which time the acids actually toughen the meat. "That acid is curing the meat," explains Bressi. "It removes the water and replaces it with a tightened-up, shriveled-up muscle structure." If you don't have time to marinate your meat overnight, Bressi suggests simply removing the acid component from your marinade for greater tenderness.



Grilling Goof #2: Cooking with charcoal

While not a goof for the seasoned grillmistress who understands the nuances of charcoal heat, for beginners, charcoal grilling can be a recipe for disaster. Imagine chicken that's black outside and pink inside. "For control, a gas grill is easier," says Bressi, particularly for the novice. And don't rule out the oven! As with the ribs recipe here, starting in the oven can be the key to falling-off-the-bone tenderness.

Grilling Goof #3: Cooking hot and fast

"Low and slow grilling will get you wonderful results for ribs, bone-in pieces of chicken and fish," says Bressi. Steaks and burgers take best to high heat at first, to seal in the juices, then medium heat. "It all depends on what you're making, but low and slow yields the best flavor for most meats."

In the beginning, hot is good. Get started by cranking up your gas grill to high. Then scrape off any remnants and wipe the char off the grill with wet paper towels. Follow that by rubbing down the grill with paper towels soaked in oil. This will season the grill over time. Then, when the grill is hot, says Bressi, turn down the temperature to the lowest setting it will go, usually about 350°F, versus 600°F on the highest setting. Now you're set for some sizzle.

Grilling Goof #4: Grilling fatty or oily foods

When it comes to grilling, oil equals soot. That's the black film that you see on your veggies or skin-on chicken, and it is not delicious. To prevent it, you have to minimize the amount of fat that drips through the grates. In addition, Bressi cautions, "Zucchini and eggplant have these wonderful sugars in them that bring out great flavors, but too much oil can ruin the flavor of something nice and delicate." Use oil sparingly, but season veggies well with salt and pepper before grilling.

Grilling Goof #5: Getting those dark grill marks

Sure, they look pretty. But charred grill marks are a sign that you have cooked on heat that is far too high, and nasty carcinogens have formed. Instead, "Keep your food on the move," says Bressi, "and aim for light tan grill marks, or light brown at the most."

Overall, Bressi advises beginners, "Don't experiment too much until you get a handle on the grill." And once you get your hands on those grilling tongs, stay at your post. Grill mamas should never leave a hot grill unattended, both for safety reasons, and to ensure you get all that grilling glory you've got coming to you. **(crw)**

DRY RUBBED RIBS

(Better than his!)

Serves 5.

Serve with fresh corn and your favorite potato dish.

- 5 lb. ribs (spare ribs or baby back)
- ½ cup Spice Mix (see recipe below)
- 1 oz. fine sea salt

Lay ribs on a roasting pan and rub salt into them. Allow to sit for 45 minutes. Rub Spice Mix all over ribs on both sides. Place in 325°F oven for 1½ hours. Remove from oven, and finish on the grill over low heat.

Spice Mix (for ribs)

- ¼ cup paprika
- ¼ cup cocoa powder
- 3 T chili powder
- 3 T coriander seeds
- 3 T cumin seeds
- 1 tsp. cinnamon, ground
- 1 tsp. cloves, ground
- 1 tsp. nutmeg, ground

Place all ingredients in a large skillet and toast over medium-high heat for 5 to 8 minutes, tossing or stirring constantly. Remove from heat when smoke appears. Allow spices to cool. Place in a spice grinder and mill into a fine powder. Makes 1 cup. Store any extra in an airtight container for future use.

1,800 calories, 137g fat, 132g protein, 0g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 2,410mg sodium.



GRILLED VEGETABLE SALAD

Serves 6.

- 1 fennel bulb, sliced ½ inch thick
- 1 onion, sliced ½ inch thick
- 1 red pepper, sliced lengthwise ½ inch thick
- 1 yellow pepper, sliced lengthwise ½ inch thick
- 1 garlic bulb (heat in microwave 30 seconds, peel and separate the cloves)
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, slightly chopped
- 1 T balsamic vinegar

Place the vegetables in a mixing bowl, then toss with ¼ cup olive oil and seasoning. Using a grease screen, broiler pan top, or vegetable grilling basket, arrange the vegetables and place them over low flames, turning often and cooking until lightly caramelized with slight blackening on the edges. Return the vegetables to a mixing bowl. While still warm, add the remaining ¼ cup olive oil, basil and vinegar. Toss well and serve.

200 calories, 18g fat, 1g protein, 8g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 410mg sodium.



TOMATO MOZZARELLA SALAD

(He'll need something to do in the kitchen.)

Serves 8.

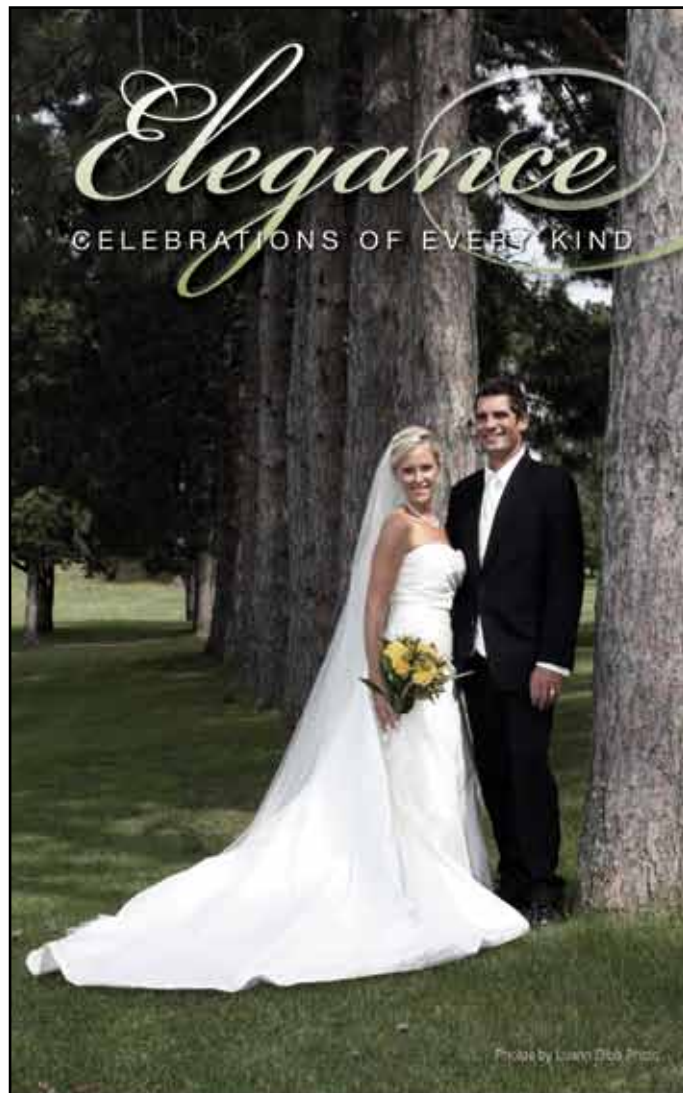
A great accompaniment to your grilled entrée.

- 1 lb. tomatoes (¾-inch dice)
- 1 lb. ciligene (cherry tomato size)
fresh mozzarella balls (Festival Foods carries them)
- 1 tsp. garlic, chopped
- 1 oz. fresh basil (chopped, or fine shred called chiffonade)
- ¼ cup olive oil, extra-virgin cold press
- ½ tsp. fine sea salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper, freshly ground/cracked

Dice the tomatoes and place them in a bowl. Sprinkle with salt and allow to sit for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare all other ingredients. Add everything to the tomatoes and toss together.

230 calories, 20g fat, 10g protein, 3g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 160mg sodium.

Charish Badzinski is grateful for Jim Bressi's advice, as she will never be stuck in the kitchen cooking sides or have to eat soot-covered veggies again.



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Conversation PIECES

**Keep in touch the
old-fashioned way—
write it down.**

BY JESSICA LACANNE
Photos by Jessica LaCanne

Text. Email. Skype. Facebook chat.
Email. Evite. Text. Email.

For many people, getting ideas across on an average day looks something like that. Technology has made communicating easy and lightning quick, but have we lost something by not communicating the old-fashioned way?

You can still get your point across without computers or BlackBerry phones, and with much more style. Local businesses are great places to find greeting cards, invitations, journals and many other items that let you communicate without electronics. Good old pen and paper top the list, but a piece of jewelry or a sign on a desk can communicate ideas just as efficiently as sending a text. Head to these area shops to find the perfect way to say what you mean and mean what you say. **(crw)**

Jessica LaCanne enjoys receiving snail mail and scrapbooking up a storm.



Forget the Evites and send invitations snail mail style with a variety of options from **Honig's Gift Shop** in downtown La Crosse.

Cupcake invitations, \$8.50
Inspiration journal, \$14.95
Address book, \$8.99
Greeting card, \$4.00

A picture is worth a thousand words—say it all with these fun stickers and colorful papers from **Scrappier's Haven** in Winona.

Glossy letter stickers, \$4.99
Sky blue sewn cardstock, \$2.00
Patterned paper with birds, \$.90



Don't miss a single note with these notebooks from **People's Food Co-op**, downtown La Crosse.

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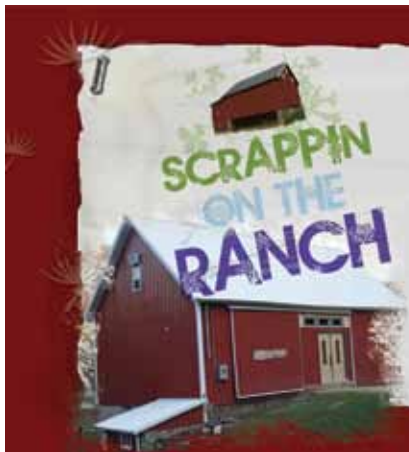
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AND JESSICA LACANNE
Photography by Kelly Ottesen

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This Calvin Klein ensemble shows her sweetest side.

Models: Kate and daughter Addie Connolly
Hair and makeup: Salon Medusa
Kate's outfit: Dale's, downtown La Crosse
Addie's outfit: Macy's, Valley View Mall



All-black accessories transform a bright day dress into a sophisticated evening look.

Edward Mirell necklace
Brighten Krista bag
Brighten Black Rosalia sunglasses
Donald Pliner Verda sandals
S. Sebag bracelet
Touch of Class, downtown La Crosse



Soften a bold look by pairing the dress with a feminine necklace and bracelet.

Ms. Rose bracelet
CreativeJewelrybyMarcia necklace
LARK, downtown La Crosse



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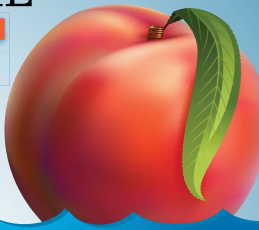


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CHAT ROOMS

Grab a friend and enjoy a quick getaway to the region's best conversation spots.

BY KIM BRASEL
Contributed photos

Despite the myriad opportunities technology offers for connecting with others, there's no replacement for hanging out with a good friend, talking shop over a cup of coffee, lingering over lunch at a favorite restaurant and laughing about shared experiences.

And no matter where you live in the region, there is a coffee shop, wine bar or outdoor space in which to spend some real face time with your friends, sink into a good conversation and perhaps share a favorite pastime, whether scrapbooking or hiking. Each venue boasts its own unique atmosphere, so whether you're looking to linger in a cozy, historic, chic or natural spot, there's a place for you and your friends.

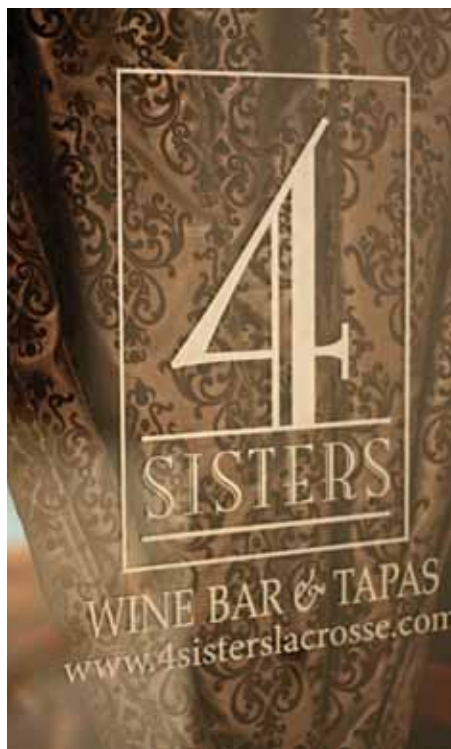
Great atmosphere, great conversations

"Let's bring back the days when social networking was a cocktail party," reads one of the personalized labels created at **UnWine'd** in Onalaska. Owner Ellen Dettman says her place is conducive for chatting and relaxing because, like a cocktail party, the atmosphere is quiet and people don't have to talk over loud music or TVs to be heard.

Folks there share an interest in wine, which leads to conversations between friends and strangers alike. "It's great to see people socializing with the people they know or a stranger sitting next to them because they have that common bond," says Dettman.

If a caffeine infusion is what you need to jumpstart your conversation, java joints abound all over town. From cozy **Bean Juice** in Jackson Plaza to the **Blue Cup Coffee House** in Holmen Square to **Moka**, the popular college hangout on West Avenue in La Crosse, all are great places to enjoy a little coffee and a lot of great chitchat.

Each one has a unique atmosphere conducive to any conversation, whether it's the boho feel of the **Root Note**, the warm and easygoing mood at **Grounded Specialty Coffee** (a popular spot for business meetings as well as high teas) or **The Pearl**, an old-fashioned ice cream parlor and coffee shop that's a particularly great place for a chat because it's quiet, and with its authentic 1930s charm and the likes of Bing Crosby and Benny Goodman playing softly in the background,



it's easy to drift back to the days before email and texting. Chairs and tables on the sidewalk outside make all these downtown La Crosse establishments great spots for people watching, too.

Bond over a common interest

Many friendships are formed over a common interest or hobby, and if that's how you and your cohorts bond best, you'll find numerous places in the region to enjoy the person you're with and the task at hand.

For example, at **Yarnology** in Winona, knitting friends can settle into the living room, an area with a cozy fireplace and comfy couches, to talk and share ideas with other fellow knitters. "It's a good way to relate and strike up conversation because you know you share a common ground with the person next to you," says Kelly Momsen, co-owner of Yarnology.

Also in Winona, **Scrappin on the Ranch** can provide an entire weekend of scrapbooking and quality time with friends. Owner Jolene Danca, a scrapper herself, feels scrapbooking is an activity that lends itself to great conversation because pictures are a great conversation starter. "Pictures bring about stories and one story leads to another, and people make connections with other people," says Danca.

For outdoor enthusiasts, catching up

during a brisk walk around La Crosse's **Riverside Park** or conversing to the quiet babble of a nearby fountain in the **International Friendship Gardens** can combine good conversation with a good workout, or an appreciation of horticulture.

An invitation to linger

"Share a meal, a laugh, a conversation," defines the atmosphere that the four sisters behind **4 Sisters Wine Bar and Tapas** wanted to create. It's a place that invites patrons to relax, linger, and share great food and great conversation, says Kathy Wilhelm, one of the co-owners of the restaurant. "During the day we have knitting groups, church clubs and groups that come in and play games. It's a place that induces people to stay and catch up on life."

So grab a friend, pick a place that suits your style, mood or interest, disconnect from the modern day and reconnect the old-fashioned way—through the art of conversation. At right, is a terrific sampling of our favorite conversation spots throughout the region. **(crw)**

Freelance writer Kim Brasel's favorite place to catch up with friends is The Pearl: coffee, chocolate and ice cream all in one stop. If she ever goes missing, check there first. Better yet, don't.

The CRW Top 20 Conversation Spots

Coffee talk

1. **The Pearl**
207 Pearl St., La Crosse
2. **Root Note**
115 4th St. S., La Crosse
3. **Grounded**
308 Main St., La Crosse
4. **Bean Juice**
1014 19th St. S., La Crosse
5. **JavaVino**
1505 Losey Blvd., La Crosse
6. **Blue Cup Coffee House**
500 N. Holmen Dr., Holmen
7. **Moka**
123 West Ave. N., La Crosse
8. **The Bookshelf and Blue Heron Coffee House**
162 W. 2nd St., Winona
9. **Blooming Grounds Coffee House**
50 E. 3rd St., Winona
10. **Driftless Café**
118 W. Court St., Viroqua

Pour it out

11. **UnWine'd**
9348 State Hwy. 16, Onalaska
12. **4 Sisters Wine Bar and Tapas**
100 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse
13. **Wine Guyz**
122 King St., La Crosse

Multitask

14. **American Scrapbook Company**
900 2nd Ave. S., Onalaska
15. **Scrappin on the Ranch**
27763 Stone Roller Rd., Winona
16. **Yarnology**
79 W. 3rd St., Winona
17. **Riverside Park and International Friendship Gardens**
La Crosse

Linger over lunch

18. **People's Food Co-op and Deli**
315 5th Ave. S., La Crosse
19. **Waterfront Restaurant and Tavern**
328 Front St. S., La Crosse
20. **Acoustic Café**
77 Lafayette St., Winona

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UNFRIENDING FACEBOOK

Follow the high times, rock bottom and recovery of a Facebook addict.

BY ANONYMOUS

I should have known I had a Facebook problem when my internal monologue became a series of status updates.

"Anonymous is loving this weather!"

"Anonymous desperately needs a pedicure and a cappuccino."

"Anonymous is wishing she were on Facebook right now."

Admit you have a problem

I first experimented with Facebook in small doses. Somehow, insidiously, Facebook flooded my veins with such sweet escapism, I began craving it constantly. Not long after joining, I had amassed a friend list of nearly 500, many of whom I couldn't have picked out of a police lineup. I checked the latest Facebook news upon waking, between projects, between emails, between breaths. I couldn't stand being disconnected; I became twitchy, sweaty, desperate. I had friends' status updates sent to my phone via text message; then I upgraded to a smartphone.

Apps, badges, games—I had them all. I became a fan of media, political action groups, restaurants, bars and John Cusack. I sent flair, sent virtual gifts and posted my bra color (you did too). I convinced friends and family to join, even my mother.

Recognize there is more to life

Facebook wasn't a private shame for me; I had enablers. Dear friends of mine would gather in the same room, all of us on our laptops, Facebooking one another rather than talking.

I wish I were joking.

Yet, over time, I began to feel an obligation to post what I was doing, where I was going, what I was thinking. I took photos and posted them on demand, feeling used. I felt guilty if I couldn't contribute in some way, as if I'd let all of those people down, even the ones I didn't

recognize, but felt compelled to friend anyway. I worried that the virtual me was prettier, wittier and more charming than the real me.

More, I noted with increasing frustration that many on my so-called friend list never contributed to Facebook at all; they were Facebook stalkers. But I couldn't stop myself from posting. I started managing my privacy settings, trying to cover my addiction, and I grew angry when Facebook changed their privacy standards.

I blamed Mark Zuckerberg, yet truth be told, I had willingly crawled into the fishbowl. It was my own fault I had nowhere to hide. In a moment of reboot clarity, I realized that in recording every moment of my life for everyone else, the deeper experience of life itself was passing me by.

So I decided to off myself.

Step away from the computer

It wasn't easy. Withdrawal aside, committing Facebook suicide requires several steps and, as when buying a firearm, a waiting period. Facebook issues a guilt trip of epic proportions, showing photos in which you and your closest friends are tagged. "Are you sure you want to leave?" Facebook asks. "Patricia will miss you." "Jane will miss you." "Beth will miss you."

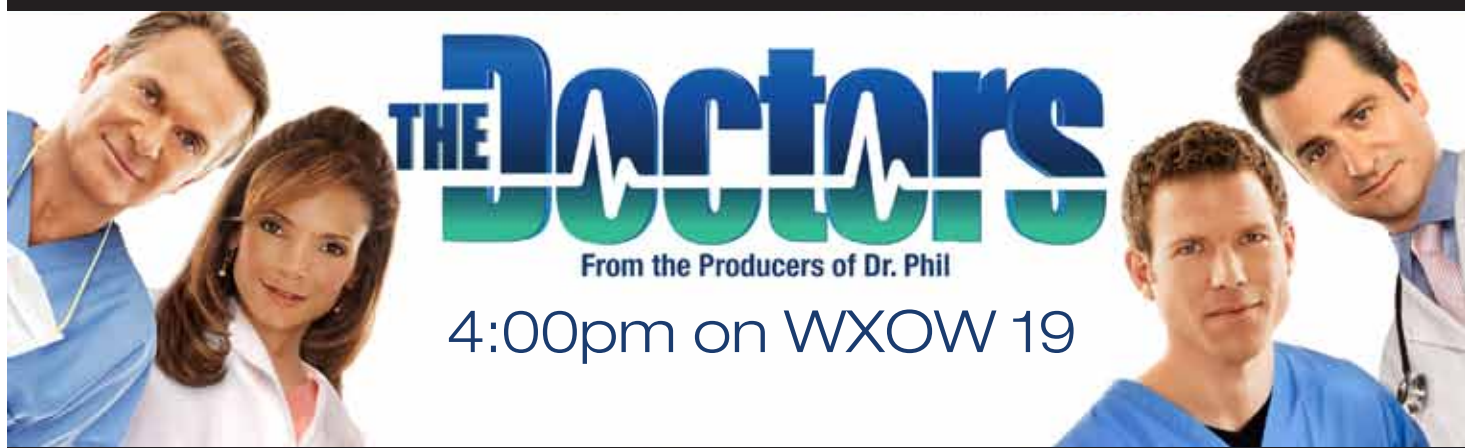
I saw them. I hungered for more virtual voyeurism ... or is it exhibitionism? And then I gritted my teeth and did it. Without warning, I erased my profile.

The next morning, my mother (who only calls when someone dies) phoned me at work, nearly in tears. "What happened to you?" **crw**

In her newly acquired spare time, Anonymous thinks of how she would update her status if she were to rejoin Facebook. Luckily, she still has Twitter.



3:00pm on WXOW 19



4:00pm on WXOW 19



Live at Five

5:00pm on WXOW 19



5:30pm on WXOW 19



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

2nd Sat. of each month (Sept.-May), 9:30 a.m., 608-519-0548, www.aauw-wi.org.

Business Over Breakfast La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce

4th Wed. every month, 7:30-8:45 a.m. Preregister 608-784-4807, www.lacrossechamber.com.

Children's Museum of La Crosse weekly programming:

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

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

Wee Move for ages 1-4 with parent, every Wed., 10:30 a.m.

Little Learners for ages 1-4 with parent, every Thurs., 10:30 a.m.

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

Coulee Region Professional Women (CRPW) meets the 4th Tues. of each month, Nell's City Grill, 1111 3rd St. S., La Crosse, 5:30 p.m. Madalene Buelow, 608-791-5282.

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

La Crosse Noon Wisconsin Women's Alliance meets the 2nd Thurs. of each month, noon. Dawn Harris, 608-782-4133, dawn@dmharrislaw.com.

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

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

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

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

CALENDAR EVENTS

June 3-5, June Dairy Days, West Salem Village Park. www.junedairydays.com.

June 4-5, YWCA Garden Fest, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., South Side Oktoberfest Grounds. www.ywcagardenfest.com.

June 6-17, Free gift with Valley View Mall Gift Card purchase, while supplies last. www.myvalleyview.com.

June 11, Knit in Public Day, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., La Crosse Main Library, 800 Main St.

June 12, Trinona triathlon, 7 a.m., Lake Winona. www.trinona.com.

June 15-19, Steamboat Days, Levee Park, Winona. www.winonasteamboatdays.com.

June 17-26, *James and the Giant Peach*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs.-Sat., 2 p.m. Sun., La Crosse Community Theatre. www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

June 18, Freedom Fest, La Crosse Airport. www.freedomfestlacrosse.com.

June 18, Minds in Motion Bike Tour, 8 a.m., Onalaska Middle School. www.mimbiketour.org.

June 21-22, 27-29, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Camp Curiosity "Space Kids" June 21-22, "I Dig Dinos" June 28-29, 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 4-7. www.funmuseum.org.

June 22, American Red Cross Blood Drive, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

June 22-July 31, Great River Shakespeare Festival, Performing Arts Center, Winona State University. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Henry IV, Part 1*, and *The Fantasticks*. www.grsf.org.

June 24, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Freaky Friday "Crime Lab," 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., ages 7-12. www.funmuseum.org.

June 25, Women's Resource Center Tour of Gardens, Winona. www.wrcofwina.org.

June 25, Slice of Life 5K/Run, La Crescent, 507-895-2800.

June 26-July 17, Minnesota Beethoven Festival, Winona, featuring pianist André Watts, Cecelia String Quartet and more. www.mnbeethovenfestival.com.

June 30, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, check-in 2-5:30 p.m., walk begins 6 p.m., Riverside Park. www.gundluth.org/walkamile.

June 30-July 4, Riverfest, 11 a.m.-midnight, Riverside Park, La Crosse. www.riverfestlacrosse.com.

July 2, Chileda Classic Children's Fun Run. www.firstgiving.com/chileda.

July 8-9, Viroqua Bluegrass and Gospel Festival, Vernon County Fairgrounds. www.viroquabluegrass.com.

July 8-10, Summer Sidewalk Sales at Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

July 8-10, Trempealeau Lions Catfish Days, Trempealeau.

July 9, Vulvodynia Support Group meeting, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Pines Room at Stoney Creek Inn, 3060 S. Kinney Coulee Rd., Onalaska. Contact Caroline More, 507-725-8444 for more information. Vulvodynia is a pelvic pain disorder that can range from bothersome to severe, and the group seeks to give women a support network to help them cope.

July 13-17, La Crosse Interstate Fair, West Salem Fairgrounds.

July 14-16, Crazy Days, Downtown La Crosse. www.lacrossedowntown.com.

July 15-17, 22-24, *The Music Man*, Historic Temple Theatre, Viroqua. For information contact Tracy Joholski at tracyjoholski@yahoo.com or call 608-606-4140.

July 16, Rail Fair, 10 a.m.-5p.m., Copeland Park, La Crosse. www.4000foundation.com.

July 18-20, 25-27, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Camp Curiosity "When I Grow Up" July 18-20, "Paws and Claws" July 25-27, 8:30-11:30 a.m., ages 4-7. www.funmuseum.org.

July 27, La Crosse Go Red Luncheon, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Waterfront Restaurant, La Crosse, call 715-829-2841 for reservations.

July 22, 29, Children's Museum of La Crosse's Freaky Friday, July 22 "Road Trip," July 29 "In The Lab," 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., ages 7-12. www.funmuseum.org.

July 30-31, Art Fair on The Green, UW-La Crosse Campus lawns, at 16th and State streets, professional artists, student art and more. Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 608-788-7439.

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

A man and a woman are standing on the deck of a boat, looking out at a large, lush island in the water. The man is wearing a green sweater and the woman is wearing a white sweater. They are both smiling and looking towards the island. The island is covered in green vegetation and has a small white building on top. The water is a deep blue color. In the background, there are mountains and a small white boat on the water.



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