

Inside: Packers President Mark Murphy

# Appleton

April 2025

Monthly



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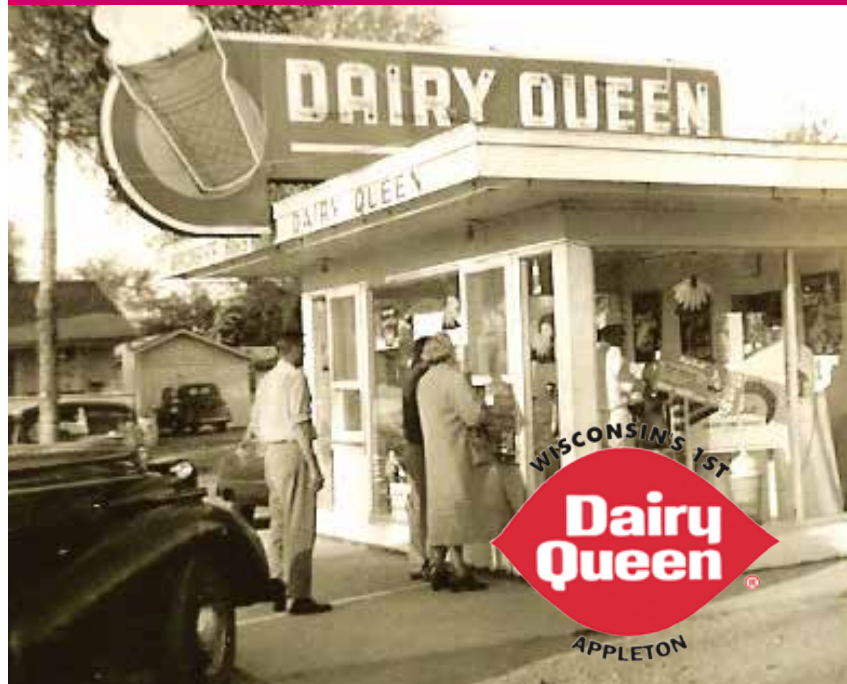
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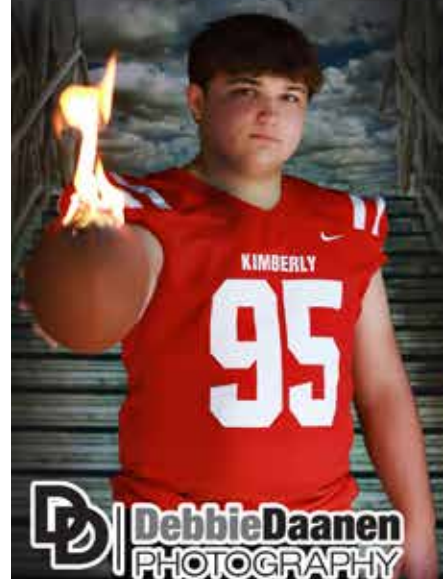
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Monthly

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Welcome to Downtown Appleton—*One Great Place* that embodies the essence of community, quality, and togetherness. As you explore this vibrant Downtown area, you will find a warm, welcoming atmosphere that makes you feel at home.

Spanning a one-mile radius, Downtown Appleton is designed for walkability, making it effortless to explore. Visitors are encouraged to wander College Avenue and beyond, discovering unique shops, diverse dining options, and fun attractions. Downtown Appleton is sure to enchant you with its charm and character.

Downtown Appleton offers an array of boutiques and specialty stores for those who love to shop. Each store has its own distinct personality, offering everything from chic fashions to hand-made treasures. Browsing the local shops, you will quickly understand why Downtown Appleton is known for its support of small businesses and local artisans. Whether you are searching for the perfect gift or treating yourself to something special, you will find it all in the heart of the city.

When it comes to dining, Downtown Appleton does not disappoint. The area

is home to an eclectic mix of restaurants, each offering a unique experience. Satisfy your palate with pastries and coffee from a cozy cafe or dazzle your tastebuds with an upscale fine dining experience. Indulge in international flavors at one of Downtown’s cultural restaurants or enjoy a casual bite at a family-friendly spot. Do not forget to wrap up your dining experience by savoring an indulgent dessert. As you dine throughout Appleton, you’ll notice the warm hospitality and friendly service they are known for.

Downtown Appleton is also a destination brimming with attractions and entertainment. The area offers a range of family-friendly activities, ensuring that visitors of all ages have a memorable experience. Plan a day out with your loved ones, exploring the local museums, attending live performances, or taking part in an Appleton Downtown, Inc. hosted event.

What truly sets Downtown Appleton apart is its sense of community. Whether you are looking to grow your business, explore the many attractions, or settle into a vibrant community, Downtown Appleton welcomes you with open arms.

Whether you are here for the Draft, visiting friends and family or this is where you call home, Downtown Appleton is a place that is not just a destination but a community where lasting memories are made. Discover for yourself why Downtown Appleton truly is *One Great Place*.

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About Us: Appleton Downtown, Inc. (ADI) is a not-for-profit community coalition dedicated to fostering a thriving, safe, and inviting environment. ADI’s mission is to cultivate Downtown Appleton into a vibrant hub for business, learning, living, and leisure. With a focus on economic strength and community vitality, ADI plays a pivotal role in shaping the Downtown landscape.



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# APL APR



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**PRESIDENT/CEO**  
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## EDITOR'S NOTE



# A GAME-CHANGER FOR OUR *Community*

The countdown is on! The NFL draft is coming to our area, and with it, an electrifying wave of excitement, opportunity, and community pride.

For football fans, this is like Christmas in April—except, instead of unwrapping presents, we get to watch the future of the league unfold right in our backyard.

But beyond the draft picks and the highlight reels, this event is a game-changer for our community. Hosting the NFL draft isn't just about welcoming the next generation of football superstars—it's about showcasing our cities on a national stage. The economic boost alone is enough to make a difference, with thousands of visitors filling our hotels, restaurants, and local businesses. This is our moment to shine, to show the world what makes our town special, and to put our passion, hospitality, and spirit on full display.

Tim will cover this for us and give us a heads-up on what to expect (and he's like a kid at Christmas right now). He talks to Mark Murphy, who not only shaped the Packers but also Lambeau Field and the Titledown district. Tim highlights community events, family-friendly activities, and opportunities to engage with the sport at every level, which will make this an unforgettable experience for everyone involved. More importantly, this event will leave a lasting impact—investments in local infrastructure, increased tourism, and the inspiration it provides to young athletes who dream of one day hearing their name called.

So, whether you're a die-hard football fanatic (Tim, we see you) or just here for the energy, let's embrace this moment. The NFL draft is more than a sporting event—it's a celebration of hard work, dreams coming true, and the power of a community rallying together. Let's make it one for the record books!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie LaFreniere".

*Jamie LaFreniere, Editor*

*Thoughts, ideas, and comments can be sent to Jamie at [editor@appletonmonthly.com](mailto:editor@appletonmonthly.com)*

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### **Carly Cerniglia**

Chef/Pastry Chef Carly Cerniglia - A young chef and food photographer interested in fresh, local, and exciting food. Located in Milwaukee, Wis. Follow her culinary adventures on Instagram: @chef.carly. Carly contributes to Appleton Monthly with her Chef's Table, Carly's Pastries articles as well as many other recipes and features.



### **Marissa Laird**

Marissa Laird is a movie lover who lives in Appleton. Her favorite genre is horror, which makes sense since she is obsessed with Halloween. She also enjoys spending time with her husband and their dog, Remi. Marissa contributes to Appleton Monthly with her Movies article.



### **Jenny Jaki**

Jenny is a Vibrant Abstract Artist & Creative Community Leader. She works with creatives of all skill levels to help them achieve their creative goals. Clients can work with Jenny through classes, coaching, or by utilizing her online resources. To learn more go to [jennyjaki.com](http://jennyjaki.com). Jenny contributes to Appleton Monthly with her Arts & Canvas article.



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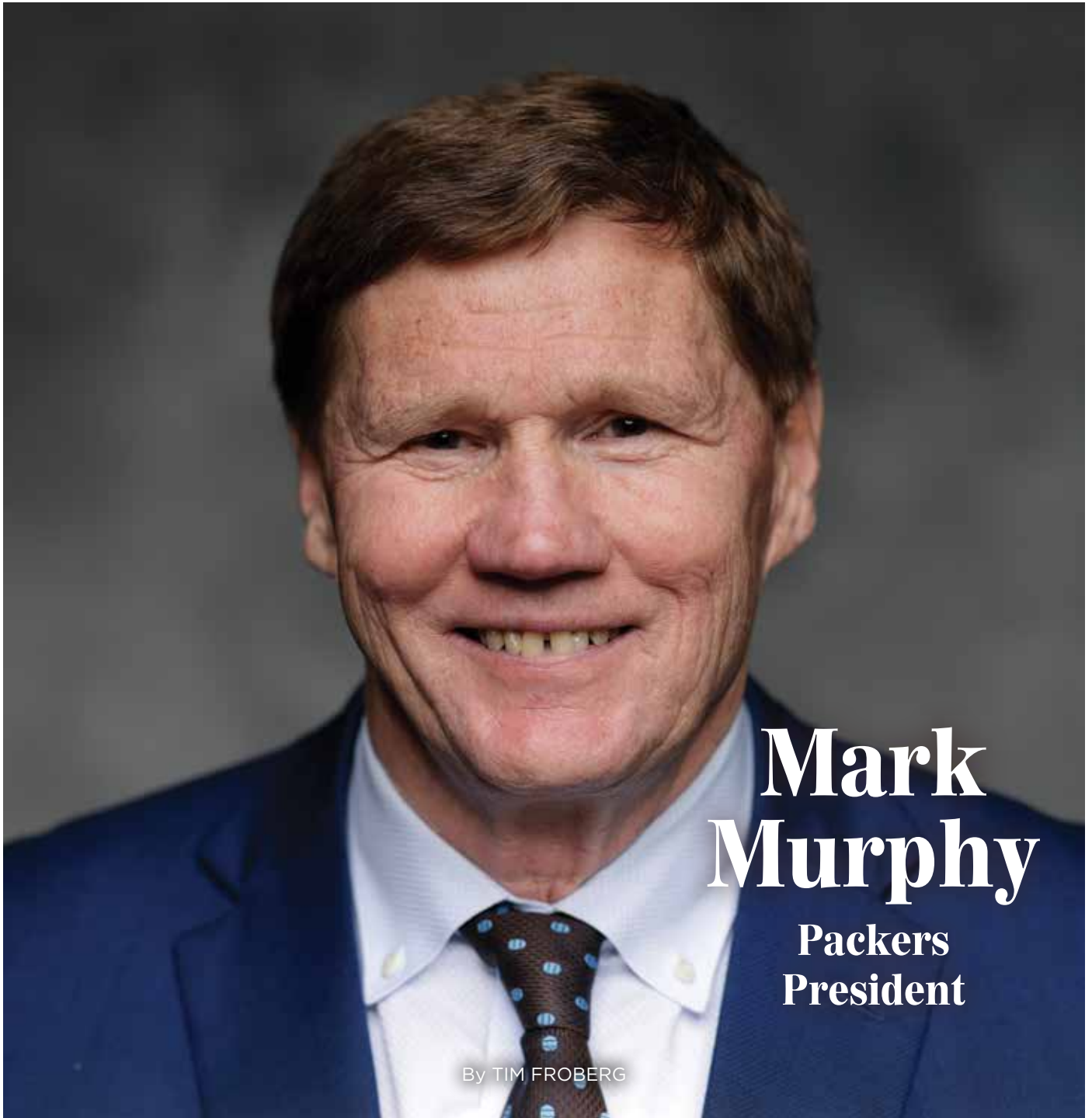
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# VOICE

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**Mark  
Murphy**  
Packers  
President

By TIM FROBERG

# AN NFL LEGACY TO REMEMBER

## MURPHY MADE HIS MARK AS PACKERS PRESIDENT

By TIM FROBERG



All photos provided by the Green Bay Packers

Packers President/CEO Mark Murphy shakes a fan's hand (*Annual Meeting of Shareholders, July 2024*)

**AS A SAFETY IN HIS NFL PLAYING DAYS, MARK MURPHY'S JOB WAS TO PROTECT THE BACK END OF THE DEFENSE AND DELIVER THE BIG PLAY.**

Murphy excelled in the role – earning All-Pro honors – and took the same mentality into running the Green Bay Packers organization.

As the team's president and CEO since 2008, Murphy protected the franchise by keeping it on a progressive path – both on the field and as a multi-billion-dollar business – following Green Bay's resurgence under Bob Harlan.

It could also be said that Murphy delivered the big play. Green Bay won a Super Bowl under Murphy's watch, made substantial upgrades to Lambeau Field, and grew

the franchise economically by playing a key role in the development of a vibrant community and entertainment district known as Tiletown.

Murphy is retiring in July at the age of 70 – the mandatory retirement age for the position according to organizational bylaws – following 17 productive years in Green Bay. He will be succeeded by Ed Policy, a front office executive and the team's current COO and general counsel.

One of Murphy's primary goals when he started his position was to eventually leave the franchise in better shape than it was when he started.

*Mission accomplished.*



Murphy's achievements with the Packers are impressive.

- Green Bay posted an impressive 185-113-2 record during the regular and postseason, a .620 winning percentage that ranks No. 2 in the NFL over that span, made 13 playoff appearances including eight straight from 2009-2016, played in five NFC title games, and won the 2010-11 Super Bowl.
- Murphy needed to find a competent general manager to replace Ted Thompson after Thompson experienced health problems and made a strong hire with well-regarded Brian Gutekunst. Murphy also had the final say in hiring current head coach Matt LaFleur, who has posted a 67-33 regular season record and taken the Packers to the playoffs in five of his six seasons. LaFleur's 67 wins are the second most in NFL history by a coach in his first six years.
- Lambeau Field is one of the most iconic stadiums in professional sports and Murphy maintained it properly. He directed the organization to invest more than \$600 million in innovations and renovations. Murphy and the Packers have added more than 8,000 seats to Lambeau, which has a current capacity of 81,041. The Packers have expanded football facilities to almost double their previous size and built new team offices and meeting rooms, while renovating concession areas and installing five new entrance gates along with two HD video boards and a new sound system.
- Perhaps Murphy's most significant accomplishment was his work with the development of the Titledown district. With Murphy leading the way, the Packers bought 45 acres of land west of Lambeau Field and built it into a humming, team-themed business district.
- Finally, Murphy was instrumental in convincing the NFL to bring the draft to Green Bay for the first time.

"Like any job, you have your good days and your bad days, but this is a pretty special organization, and overall, it's just been a tremendous experience for me," said Murphy, summing up his Packers' tenure.



Mark Murphy (Family Night, August 2017)

## WINNING IT ALL

Murphy started his job smack-dab in the middle of a major team controversy with the daring transition at quarterback in 2008 from NFL legend Brett Favre to promising Aaron Rodgers. Murphy helped the Packers navigate the firestorm and the quarterback switch proved to be the correct move. Green Bay struggled to a 6-10 record in Rodgers' first season as the starter, but Rodgers developed into an elite passer and guided Murphy's Packers to the 2010-11 Super Bowl championship.

"Winning a Super Bowl is really hard to do, so I'm very proud of that, along with the consistent success we've had on the field," Murphy said.

When asked if he had a favorite all-time player in Green Bay, Murphy didn't hesitate with an answer.

"I really appreciate all of our players, but Charles Woodson is someone I have tremendous respect for," Murphy said. "He was not only a great player, but was a real student of the game. We would not have won a Super Bowl championship without him."

## SPRUCING UP LAMBEAU

What's impressive about the expensive Lambeau Field upgrades is that Murphy and the Packers managed to finance them without public tax money. Murphy oversaw two separate stock sales in 2011 and 2021 that have helped fund the renovations.

"This is such a unique organization across all professional sports and Lambeau Field is so crucial to that," Murphy said. "I've tried to make sure that it continues to be a state-of-the-art stadium that NFL fans – and not just Packers fans – want to visit. That's a real source of pride for me.

"We've been able to make changes that provide the fans with the experience they want when they come to an NFL



Mark Murphy and Special Olympics Wisconsin President and CEO Chad Hershner (*Tailgate Tour, April 2024*)

stadium but not take away from what makes Lambeau special. There is not a game day experience in the league that matches it.”

Murphy also did something that no other Packer executive had done. He made Lambeau Field available for non-football events such as sold-out concerts featuring music icons like Kenny Chesney, Paul McCartney, and Billy Joel along with college hockey and professional soccer games.

## LEADING THE WAY WITH TITLETOWN

The Titledown project may go down as Murphy’s crown jewel in terms of Packers’ economic development. Titledown opened in 2017 and is anchored by tenants such as Hinterland Brewery, Lodge Kohler, and Bellin Health Clinic. It contains a popular sledding-tubing hill and skating rink along with a full-length football field lined with artificial turf where fans can toss, kick, and catch a football – just like their heroes across the street at Lambeau.

Murphy said the Packers looked to other sports team developments as inspiration, including Patriot Place -- adjacent to Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Mass.

“Obviously, it was many years in the making and Ed Policy was also very actively involved in this,” said Murphy. “We started looking at it very early in my tenure – just the potential of land around the stadium. And then we started buying the land.

“We saw what some of the other teams around the

league had done. One thing that really caught our interest was what the Patriots had done with Patriot Place. There were a lot of things we really liked about it. They even had a skating rink. But it was kind of a mall next to the stadium. We really wanted ours to be more integrated into the community.

“We really liked the idea of the tubing hill and skating rink and putting the football field in the middle of the development, no private developer had done it. We tried to find the right mix of stores and restaurants. Hinterland was perfect for us and Lodge Kohler and Bellin have been really good for us, too.

“We’ve just opened a new restaurant, BelAir Cantina, and we will probably open Packers Athletic Club, a fitness center, right around the draft.”

Getting the NFL to agree to have the league’s smallest city host the draft is another feather in Murphy’s cap.

“Previously, no one ever envisioned the draft would be going from city to city like it is now,” Murphy said. “Once the league started moving away from New York City, we raised our hand and said, ‘Given our history and tradition, we think Green Bay would be a pretty special place for the draft.’

“The concern was the overall size of the event. Would we have enough hotels for it? I think it’s going to be the biggest event ever held in Green Bay.”

## A TRUE HIDDEN GEM

Murphy was an outstanding performer in his NFL playing days (from 1977-1984) after signing with the



Washington Redskins as an undrafted free agent out of Colgate University. However, Murphy has an interesting draft story.

“George Allen (then Washington’s head coach and GM) didn’t have a lot of draft picks because they traded away a lot of them,” Murphy said. “He really didn’t like rookies. They were interested in me and called and said they were going to fly me to Washington, draft me, and would have a press conference to announce the pick.

“Well, they actually had no intention of drafting me. They just hid me out. They flew me to Washington, D.C., then on the second day of the draft they put me in a van and drove me all around Washington. I had a nice lunch and



Mark Murphy and Beloit Memorial High School principal Emily Pelz (*Tailgate Tour, April 2024*)

---

**“Like any job, you have your good days and your bad days, but this is a pretty special organization and overall, it’s just been a tremendous experience for me.”**

---

got to see a lot of D.C. There were no cell phones back then and the driver of the van kept stopping to make calls on pay phones.

“They finally took me back to the Redskins’ facility and asked me into George Allen’s office. George said, ‘Mark, you weren’t drafted. But we really like you and want you to sign with us as a free agent. Here’s a contract. Why don’t you look it over for a minute and then sign it?’

“And then he turned to his assistant and said: ‘You know, if Mark doesn’t sign with us, let’s get that safety from Oklahoma.’”

Murphy eventually phoned his girlfriend, Laurie (his future wife), who was watching his apartment and Murphy received some startling news.

“She said, ‘Mark, all these teams were calling for you, but they couldn’t get a hold of you.’ So yeah, basically they were hiding me.”

His undrafted status didn’t really matter. Murphy proved to be a top-notch safety in his eight-year NFL playing career spent entirely in Washington. In addition to landing

All-Pro and Pro Bowl honors in 1983, Murphy won a Super Bowl championship in 1982 and led the NFL in interceptions (nine) in 1983.

Playing under Joe Gibbs, Murphy was a Redskins co-captain from 1980-84 and finished with 27 career interceptions – the sixth most in team history.

Murphy is believed to be the only person to win a Super Bowl as both a player and CEO.

“Mark meant a lot to the Redskins’ organization over the years he was here,” said Gibbs in an Associated Press story. “He was a great person along with being one of the brightest and most competitive people we’ve had here with the Redskins.”

Since arriving in Green Bay, Murphy had a pregame ritual of taking a walk around the Lambeau Field parking lot prior to games – just to get a feel for the Packers’ fan experience. The next lap he takes around the stadium on game day may seem like an odd one, since it will be as a fan following 25 years in the NFL as a player and executive.

As for his retirement plans, Murphy said that he and Laurie will likely remain in Green Bay. He also plans to spend plenty of time in Door County, particularly at Maxwelton Braes Golf Course, an 18-hole course in Bailey’s Harbor. He purchased it in 2023 for \$1.04 million in an effort to prevent it from becoming a condo redevelopment. Murphy played the course several times and wanted it to continue to be a part of the community.

Murphy is also a member of several community boards in the Green Bay area and hopes to continue to serve on them.

Murphy will also maintain his close connection with the Packers. He will officially be inducted into the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame on Aug. 28 at the Lambeau Field Atrium.

“It’s just been a tremendous privilege to work for the Green Bay Packers,” Murphy said. “There is no other place like this – with the history and tradition we have here.”

*Tim Froberg has worked as a reporter for the Appleton Post-Crescent, Green Bay News-Chronicle, and Marinette EagleHerald. He won eight Wisconsin Newspaper Association writing awards.*

By BRITTANY FRANCIOSI



51,000

The largest Easter egg hunt in the United States happened at Cypress Gardens Adventure Park in Winter Haven, Fla. on April 1, 2007. Children and adults searched for 501,000 eggs.



In Westphalia, Germany, an Easter fox, or Osterfuchs, once delivered eggs and goodies to children instead of the traditional bunny.



Notre Dame and USC have sent the most players to the NFL in the draft, sending over 500 players each.

The first draft system for the NFL was proposed by the Philadelphia Eagles to even out the playing field among the other owners and teams. February 8, 1936 was the first draft where the teams chose among 90 prospective players.



Easter bonnets are a relatively new addition to the “Sunday best” outfit. The hats were popularized in 1933 when the composer Irving Berlin included them in his song “Easter Parade.”



The largest chocolate egg was produced in Italy in 2011. It holds the Guinness World Record at 34 feet tall and almost 16,000 pounds.



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# MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

By JOSH KRUEGER



Growth and expansion are often key goals for small businesses. One strategic way to achieve these goals is through mergers and acquisitions (M&A). While the concept might seem daunting, understanding the basics can help small business owners navigate this complex process with confidence.

## Understanding Mergers and Acquisitions

Mergers involve the combination of two companies to form a new entity, while acquisitions occur when one company takes over another. Both strategies can offer significant benefits, such as increased market share, diversification, and enhanced operational efficiencies. However, they also come with challenges, including cultural integration and financial risks.

## Benefits of M&A for Small Businesses

*Market Expansion:* M&A can provide

access to new markets and customer bases, helping businesses grow beyond their current geographic or demographic limitations.

*Resource Synergy:* Combining resources, such as technology, expertise, and capital, can lead to improved product offerings and operational efficiencies.

*Competitive Edge:* By merging with or acquiring another company, small businesses can strengthen their competitive position in the market.

*Economies of Scale:* Larger operational scale can reduce costs per unit, leading to higher profitability.

## Key Considerations

*Due Diligence:* Thoroughly investigating the target company's financial health, legal standing, and operational capabilities is crucial to avoid unforeseen liabilities.

*Valuation:* Accurately valuing the target company ensures a fair price and helps in securing financing.

*Cultural Fit:* Assessing the cultural compatibility between the merging entities can prevent integration issues post-merger.

## Legal and Regulatory

*Compliance:* Ensuring all legal and regulatory requirements are met helps to avoid complications during and after the transaction.

## The Role of Community Banks

While navigating the M&A landscape,

small businesses can benefit from the support of community banks. These institutions offer personalized services and local market knowledge, which can be invaluable during the M&A process. Community banks can assist with financing options, provide expert advice, and help facilitate smooth transitions.

Mergers and acquisitions can be powerful tools for small business growth. By understanding the benefits and carefully considering the key factors, business owners can make informed decisions that drive their success. And remember, leveraging the expertise and resources of community banks can make the journey a lot smoother.



*Josh Krueger is a Vice President of Commercial Banking at American National Bank. He is passionate about supporting his community and helping local businesses and entrepreneurs achieve their goals.*

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# Clearing Karma

By ANGELA HALDERSON

Yes, the NFL draft is all a buzz in the Fox Valley. And while the draft marks a time of renewal for teams as they welcome new talent to their rosters, April also symbolizes a time of new beginnings and growth for you. Are you struggling to create a new beginning for yourself? Karmic cycles could block your way.

Karmic cycles are often seen as recurring situations, relationships, or emotional wounds that continue to plague you. This can simply be due to unresolved issues and lessons that haven't been learned. Clearing karmic cycles can be a way to welcome a new path into your life. Clearing old habits involves understanding, healing, and releasing past patterns that may be holding you back. To break free, here are a few steps you can take:

## **Self Awareness**

The first step is to become aware of repeating patterns in your life. These might show up as unhealthy relationships, career struggles, or recurring emotional triggers. Do you frequently find yourself dating losers? Do you become unhappy at each new job? Reflect on your past experiences and see if certain situations keep repeating. Often these patterns stem from unresolved emotions, beliefs, or karma from previous experiences. Ask yourself, "What is the lesson I need to learn here?" or "Why do I keep attracting the same kind of challenges?" Understanding the underlying theme of the cycle helps you see where you need to focus your energy.

## **Forgiveness**

One of the most powerful tools for clearing karmic cycles is forgiveness. Holding onto anger, resentment, or regret keeps you energetically connected to the past. Forgive yourself: shame or guilt ties you to negative karmic patterns you are destined to repeat. Forgive others: this can be difficult, but holding grudges keeps you stuck in the same emotional loop.

## **Limiting Beliefs**

Karmic cycles can be reinforced by subconscious beliefs that limit your potential. These beliefs might have been inherited from family, culture, or past experiences. Examples include "I'm not good enough," or "I always fail," or "I don't deserve love." Challenging and changing these beliefs can help break the cycle. Repeating positive



affirmations can help shift negative thought patterns. "I am worth it" or "I am loved" are powerful thought shifters.

## **Transmute Negative Energy**

Visualize yourself breaking free from old patterns and see yourself stepping into a new, empowered version of you. Find a quiet time in your day. Sit or lay down in quiet contemplation and visualize the new you. Perhaps you'll visualize yourself in a healthier relationship or maybe in a new job where you feel valued. Visualize yourself breaking free from old patterns. See karmic ties being cut and healed.

## **Letting Go**

Karmic cycles often persist because we're attached to specific outcomes or fears. Let go of your attachment to how things "should be" and allow yourself to trust the process. Acceptance and surrender are powerful tools to break the karmic cycle. Karmic cycles thrive on resistance and fear. Be accepting and open to change. The old patterns will start to dissolve.

Clearing karmic cycles is about breaking free from patterns that no longer serve you. Trust your higher self and have faith. Welcome spring as a great time to release old fears and create a new personal roster filled with love, gratitude, acceptance, and hope.

*For help recognizing deep seated emotions, connect with me at [www.strongmeridian.com](http://www.strongmeridian.com).*

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*Angela Halderson is the owner of Strong Meridian, a natural healthcare practice focusing on the root cause of disease. She is a dietitian trained in functional medicine, energy medicine, homeopathy and herbalism. When you are tired of being sick and tired, reach out to [angela@strongmeridian.com](mailto:angela@strongmeridian.com) for a virtual visit or call 920-427-2311.*

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# UPFRONT

## Kendal Koch

Owner  
Mad Apple  
Burgers & Billiard Co.

By TIM FROBERG

In 2017, Kendal Koch brought an intriguing combination of burgers and billiards to Appleton.

The Mad Apple Burger and Billiard Co. is still built around those two elements, but has evolved beyond the original concept. Mad Apple's menu is highlighted by several creative, delicious hamburgers and has since expanded to include steak and fish entrees. The restaurant features daily specials, including a popular Friday night fish fry and Saturday prime rib and surf and turf meals.

Breakfast is served daily and practically all the food – including appetizers, sides, bread, sauces, desserts, and most condiments – is made at the restaurant.

"Aside from our sweet Thai chili sauce, ketchup, and mayo, everything is made from scratch," said Koch. "Nothing comes pre-made. We bake our own bread, buns, and biscuits. We hand-dip, hand-thread and hand-cut. We have our own baker working 10-12 hours a day."

In addition to the 120-seat restaurant, the 14,000-square-foot building – which Koch gutted and completely rebuilt – contains a large billiards area with 15 pool tables. A billiards pro shop, a bar area, a banquet hall and an outdoor seating section complete the building.

Koch grew up in Oshkosh and previously owned the Magnet Billiards and Bar in downtown Oshkosh for 10 years. He closed the 80-year-old establishment in 2019 and decided to focus on Mad Apple, which had previously been the home of restaurants such as Martine's, Old Bavarian, and Blueberry Hill.

Prior to getting into the restaurant business, Koch worked as a plumber for the family business, C.H. Koch Plumbing and Heating.

Photo by Ashley Schmit



### HERE TO STAY

"My wife (Kym) used to come here when it was Martine's and she's the one who suggested I check out the building. When we first opened, there was an article in the 'Post-Crescent's' Buzz section. I remember reading the online comments. One reader was like, 'They will only make it two weeks. That's where restaurants go to die.'

"Even working with the city to get permits, I sensed they were thinking, 'Oh great! Here comes another one in that building.' I think they were tired of dealing with that building. But they were really terrific to work with."

### GOOD VIBES

"I enjoy seeing people from different backgrounds and different experiences in life enjoying things together. Pool is something that brings people together. It's the No. 1 participant sport in the world because everyone has some type of experience with it. I get everybody from doctors and lawyers to truck drivers and janitors. They all come together to play a game of pool, have some laughs, have a beer and some food, and just have fun. Those two things (burger and billiards) really do very well together because you can enjoy them with people of all types."

### A LITTLE NUTTY

"Our best-selling burger is the Mad Apple which features our special barbeque sauce. But the Nut Job is the most talked-about burger and people love it. They're always amazed about the combination of peanut butter and Thai chili sauce and how they work so well together."

### KING OF THE TABLE

"I was not a restaurateur before this. I got into the bar business because I love pool, and I got into the restaurant business because I didn't really care for the bar business, but still wanted to have pool. For the last five years, I've actually been teaching a class on pool at Kimberly High School. It's called 'lifetime sports' and I get three days with three separate classes each semester. It's become one of the favorite classes at Kimberly. My son, Mason, helps me out. He's a professional pool player who was one of 128 invited to the Worlds (pool championships) that were held in Poland and Great Britain."





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# GOOD STUFF

By MEGAN REINHOLD



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By TIM FROBERG

# NFL DRAFT IN GREEN BAY

## IS A WIN-WIN SITUATION FOR WISCONSIN

by TIM FROBERG

**THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE'S TEAM-BUILDING PLAN KNOWN AS THE NFL DRAFT IS COMING SOON TO A STADIUM DISTRICT NEAR YOU.**

Unless you're living off the grid or hibernating with bears, you should know the annual NFL draft will be held in Green Bay – the smallest city in professional sports – for the first time during a historic three-day run on April 24-26 at the Lambeau Field-Titletown-Resch Center campus.

This is big: Godzilla ... King Kong ... Gilbert Brown big.

The NFL draft is generally considered the league's second most prominent event behind the Super Bowl. The ESPN broadcast always draws millions of television viewers (12.1 million watched last year's first round) and armies of die-hard fans to draft sites.

Initial projections are that roughly 250,000 fans, NFL personnel, vendors, and media members will attend the Green Bay draft. That may be a modest prediction, considering the 2024 draft in Detroit set a new attendance record, drawing more than 700,000 to Motown. The Detroit total exceeds Green Bay's entire 2024 home attendance of 622,636 spread out over eight regular-season games at Lambeau.

The draft will generate big bucks for Wisconsin. Its economic impact is estimated to be around \$94 million statewide and \$29 million locally. That means sold-out hotels and jam-packed bars, restaurants, and retail outlets – not only in Green Bay, but in Appleton, Grand Chute, Little Chute, and all around the Fox Cities.

Why do so many crazed NFL fans flock to the draft? It doesn't hurt that it's a freebie with no admission charge. However, fans wishing to attend can't simply waltz into the



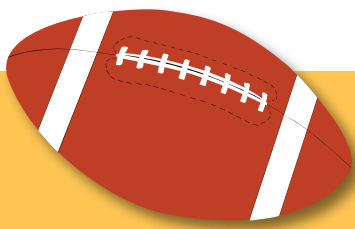
Lambeau-Titletown area. They must gain free entry by registering online at [NFL.com/draftaccess](https://NFL.com/draftaccess) or by downloading the NFL OnePass and registering for an nfl.com account.

Are you fired up about the draft coming to Green Bay? Well, if you have even a lukewarm interest in the NFL, you should be. Since the league switches draft locations each year, this is a once-in-a-lifetime event coming to our little corner of the world.

In the following pages, we'll get you draft-ready, whether you're hitting the Titletown district or attending a television watch party. We'll look at some of the basics in terms of what, where and when to go, check out some fun facts and look back at the draft's history along with some of the Packers' best all-time draft bargains and biggest busts.

If the great Vince Lombardi were still with us, he would likely scan the enormous crowds packed into the Titletown district during the draft and the army of reporters before bellowing, "What the hell is going on out there?"

But knowing what an event of this magnitude means to Packers Nation, Lombardi would probably say it with a smile on his face and pride in his heart.



# FUN FACTS ABOUT NFL DRAFT

## THE ANNUAL NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE DRAFT HAS BECOME AN ENORMOUS PART OF AMERICA'S SPORTS LANDSCAPE.

It is clearly the most popular player selection process of any of the major sports. The opening round of the 2024 draft drew a record 12.1 million television viewers.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers once drafted the wrong player in the first round. According to "Sports Illustrated", the Bucs were on the clock with the 17th overall pick of the 1982 draft and were torn between Bethune Cookman defensive end Booker Reese and Penn State offensive guard Sean Farrell.

In those days, teams placed representatives in the draft theater who received the pick via phone. They would walk to the podium and deliver the selection to then-NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle who would announce the choice.

With the clock ticking down and the Bucs still undecided, Tampa Bay director of player personnel Ken Herock phoned team representative Pat Marcuccillo, whose job it was to deliver the selection, and told him to write the two names on separate cards.

The Bucs decided to go with Reese and Herock phoned Marcuccillo and reportedly told him: "We're not going with Sean Farrell. We're going with Booker Reese." But because of the crowd noise at New York's Sheraton Hotel and a faulty speaker system, Marcuccillo didn't hear the instructions correctly, thought Farrell was the choice and gave Farrell's name to Rozelle.

It was a crazy mistake, but Farrell made the selection worthwhile by becoming a solid offensive line starter in the Tampa Bay trenches for four years. Still, the Bucs were determined to get Reese and traded their first-round pick a year later to acquire him.

- The Packers once drafted a serial killer. His name was Randall Woodfield and he was a wide receiver from Portland State taken in the 17th round of the 1974 draft. Woodfield was waived in training camp that year and went on to a gruesome life of crime. He was dubbed as the "I-5 Killer" and is suspected to have killed as many as 44 people. He has been convicted of one of the murders and is currently imprisoned at Oregon State Penitentiary.
- The draft was held in New York City for 50 consecutive years from 1965-2015 before the league decided to alternate among different cities.
- The Green Bay Packers drafted Matthew McConaughey's father, James McConaughey, a tight end from Kentucky, in the 27th round of the 1953 draft. He was a training camp cut and became a Mississippi businessman before his death in 1992. As for his son? He turned out to be alright, alright, alright.



- In 1944, the Philadelphia Eagles selected Syracuse fullback Norm Michael with a 20th round selection. However, the Eagles were unable to contact Michael who had enlisted in the U.S. Army and quickly forgot about him. Fifty-five years later, an elderly Michael was flipping through a newspaper and saw a list of Syracuse players who had been drafted. To his shock, he learned that he had been drafted by the Eagles.
- One of the players selected in the inaugural NFL draft of 1936 was a defensive end from Alabama, who decided not to pursue a career in the NFL. Instead, he went into coaching and Paul "Bear" Bryant never looked back.
- The Washington Redskins didn't make a first-round selection through the entire 1970s. Former general manager and head coach George Allen loved to wheel and deal and once traded the same draft pick to two different teams prior to the 1974 draft – something the NFL didn't realize until a year later.
- Pittsburgh Steelers receiver Kelvin Kirk was the first player to be named "Mr. Irrelevant" – the name given to the final player selected in each draft – in 1976. Each year, Mr. Irrelevant and his family are invited to Orange County for a week of activities, including a trip to Disneyland. The two most famous Mr. Irrelevants are 49ers quarterback Brock Purdy (2022) and long-time kicker Ryan Succop (2009).

# DRAFT HAS EVOLVED FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

## THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE DRAFT HAS GROWN INTO A MAGNIFICENT MUST-SEE EVENT.

The draft is watched by millions of television viewers, draws enormous online readership and brings hundreds of thousands of football fanatics to draft sites.

But things weren't always that way. The NFL draft – like many mega events – had humble beginnings.

Everyone knows the Philadelphia Eagles were the 2024-25 Super Bowl champions. What most people don't know is that former Eagles co-owner and head coach Bert Bell was the godfather of the NFL draft, the one who got it all started in pre-World War II America.

The Eagles' franchise was launched in 1933, and the team struggled in its early years to win games and draw fans, due largely to its inability to sign top college players. This frustrated Bell to a point where he worked relentlessly to convince fellow league executives to pass a resolution that would institute a college draft in which teams with the worst records would have the first opportunity to sign players.

The inaugural NFL draft was held Feb. 8, 1936 at Philadelphia's Ritz-Carlton Hotel. It was a very different time and a very different draft. The NFL's 14 teams drafted from a pool of only 90 eligible players whose names were scribbled on a chalkboard. No team had formal scouting or public relations departments, and the list of eligible players was compiled from newspaper articles and visits to college campuses.

Player agents didn't exist and neither did television, so the only media coverage came from newspaper reporters who pounded out short stories on their typewriters.

The first-ever draft pick was Jay Berwanger, a Heisman Trophy-winning halfback from the University of Chicago who was selected by Bell's Eagles. Berwanger's life turned out to be far different than today's No. 1 picks who become instant millionaires and are treated like rock stars. In sharp contrast to 2024 top overall choice Caleb Williams, who signed a contract worth \$39 million (including a \$25.5 million signing bonus), Berwanger didn't make a nickel in the NFL. That's because he never played a snap.



Photo provided by Green Bay Packers

(left to right) Mark Murphy, Tony Evers, Troy Streckenbach, Roger Goodell

Instead, he passed on the Eagles' modest contract offer and opted for a career as a foam rubber salesman.

His decision wasn't usual for the time. The NFL was not a glamorous high-paying gig in the 1930s and many athletes opted for more stable professions that provided steady work and larger paychecks. In fact, only 24 of the 81 players selected in the inaugural draft chose to play in the NFL.

The NFL draft didn't initially benefit Bell and the Eagles. Philadelphia finished with losing records in each of the next seven seasons.

The NFL draft evolved over the years, but remained a low-key event until ESPN's decision to televise it in 1980. With fans gaining instant access to the selection process, the draft morphed into a major sports event and became a television ratings champion, featuring live interviews, player profiles, and expert analysis.

The number of rounds has also changed significantly over the years. The first NFL draft consisted of nine rounds, and it expanded to 10 the next year and 20 in 1939. There were as many as 32 rounds in the 1940s and 17 in the 1960s and 1970s before being shortened to 12 in 1977. It was further whittled to eight rounds in 1993 and its current seven rounds in 1994.

Today's draft process is a whole different ball game compared to its early years. Instead of leafing through newspapers, NFL teams employ advanced player personnel departments and spend millions on technology, analytics, and scouting to find the best players possible.

# Starr, Driver were the ultimate draft steals for Pack



Photo provided by Green Bay Packers  
Mark Murphy at the Pedal to the Draft event

THE GREEN BAY PACKERS HAVE WON FOUR SUPER BOWL TITLES AND MORE GAMES THAN ANY NFL FRANCHISE.

SO, THEY KNOW A THING OR TWO ABOUT DRAFTING COLLEGE PROSPECTS.

*Here is a look at some of Green Bay's all-time greatest draft bargains.*

**Bart Starr:** He may have been the least flashy of any of Green Bay's elite quarterbacks, but Starr was the ultimate leader and a wizard in operating Vince Lombardi's short passing game. He won two Super Bowls along with a league MVP award and eventually landed in the NFL Hall of Fame. Not bad for a 17th-round pick in the 1959 NFL draft.

**Donald Driver:** The man known as "Double D" played far above his seventh-round draft status (in 1999) and still holds Packers records for career receptions (743) and receiving yards (10,137). Heck of a dancer, too, as his "Dancing with the Stars" television experience proves.

**Mark Tauscher:** Another seventh-round pick, the home-state product from Auburndale and the University of Wisconsin may have looked like the Michelin Man, but the big fella could move his feet. He was a fixture on the right side of the Packers' offensive line for 11 years.

**Aaron Rodgers:** Most of the players in this group are late-round picks and Rodgers was a first-round selection. But getting him with the 24th overall choice was a bit of a miracle for the Packers considering Rodgers was a top candidate to be the first player taken in the 2005 draft. As we all know, Rodgers became a franchise quarterback and led Green Bay to its only Super Bowl appearance (and win) since the Brett Favre era.

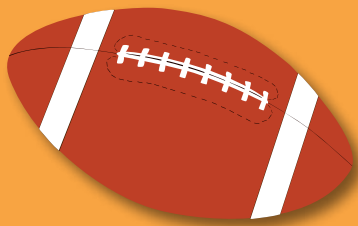
**David Bakhtiari:** Fourth-round selections aren't supposed to be franchise left tackles, but Bakhtiari was just that. He played for 11 years with the Packers and was a five-time All-Pro. I still feel that Rodgers and the Packers would have won at least one more Super Bowl had Bakhtiari not gone down with a career-ending ACL injury on New Years Eve of 2020 – a few weeks prior to the Packers NFC Championship Game loss to Tampa Bay.

**Mark Chmura:** The sixth-round pick from Boston College played a prominent role in Green Bay's explosive passing game of the 1990s. The man known as "Chewy" caught 188 career passes, was a Super Bowl champion, and a three-time Pro Bowler.

**Larry McCarren:** Before launching a successful local broadcasting career and eventually becoming one of the radio voices of the Packers, McCarren was a top-notch center for the franchise. Despite being drafted in the 12th round out of Illinois, "The Rock" was a long-time starter on the Packers' offensive line. He was a two-time Pro Bowler and started 154 of his 162 games in a distinguished 12-year NFL career spent entirely in Green Bay.

**Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila:** The explosive edge rusher known as "KGB" ranks second behind Clay Matthews on the Packers' all-time sack list (74.5) and was a fifth-round heist in the 2000 draft.

**Dorsey Levens:** The fifth-round pick from Notre Dame delivered a pair of 1,000-yard rushing seasons and ranks seventh on Green Bay's all-time rushing list with 3,937 career yards.



# PACKERS HAD THEIR SHARE OF DRAFT BUSTS

**Marco Rivera:** Rivera was a rock-solid offensive guard who played far better than one would expect from a sixth-round selection. He was a two-time All-Pro, a three-time Pro Bowler, and a Super Bowl champion in 2010-11.

**Bryce Paup:** The Packers blew it by not re-signing the outstanding pass rusher to a second contract. The sixth-round pick was very productive in Green Bay (32.5 sacks in four years) and became an NFL star in Buffalo, winning NFL Defensive Player of the Year in 1995.

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO GUARANTEE OF SUCCESS IN THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE DRAFT, REGARDLESS OF WHAT ROUND A PLAYER IS TAKEN.

EVERY DRAFT IS FILLED WITH MISTAKES - SOME THAT SET BACK FRANCHISES FOR YEARS.

*Here is a look at some of the Green Bay Packers' all-time biggest draft busts.*

**Tony Mandarich:** The second overall pick in the 1989 draft, Mandarich was featured on the cover of "Sports Illustrated" and was supposed to be a generational offensive lineman. He wasn't and left Green Bay after four undistinguished seasons. Meanwhile, Barry Sanders, Deion Sanders, and Derrick Thomas – the three players the Packers bypassed for Mandarich – went on to Hall of Fame careers.

**Rich Campbell:** The Packers passed on Hall of Fame safety Ronnie Lott to select the Cal quarterback with the sixth overall pick in the 1981 draft. Campbell never started a game in his five NFL seasons, finishing with a career passer rating of 38.8.

**Bruce Clark:** Clark stated prior to the 1980 draft that he had no intention of playing in Green Bay, but his words didn't prevent Bart Starr from spending the fourth overall pick on the Penn State nose tackle. Clark stayed true to



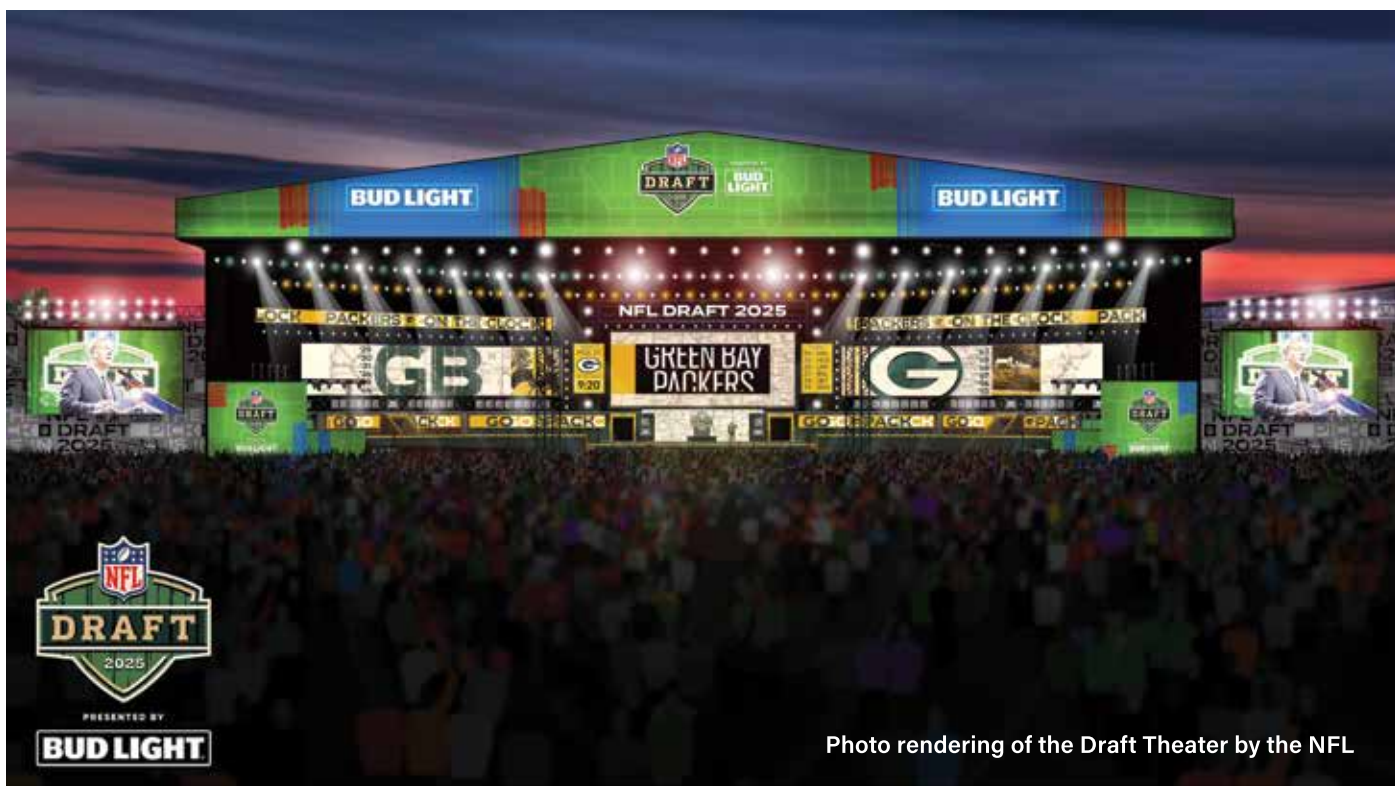


Photo rendering of the Draft Theater by the NFL

his word. He never played a snap in Green Bay and went to the Canadian Football League for two seasons. Green Bay eventually regained the first-rounder by trading Clark to New Orleans, but the pick was several slots lower than the original top-five selection.

**Randy Duncan:** This blunder goes back to Vince Lombardi's first year with the Packers in 1959. Green Bay was looking to rebound from one of its all-time worst seasons (1-10-1) and Duncan was college football's top quarterback. However, the Iowa passer wanted more money than Lombardi cared to spend. Duncan took his game to Canada and never played a snap in Green Bay. His NFL career consisted of just nine games and one TD pass.

**Terrell Buckley.** The flashy Florida State cornerback/returner talked a good game, but was a major disappointment in four unremarkable seasons in Green Bay. The fifth overall choice in the 1992 draft, Buckley lacked size and wasn't the playmaker the Packers envisioned. He

went on to a serviceable 13-year NFL career.

**Jamal Reynolds.** Ron Wolf is an NFL Hall of Fame GM who fortified the Packers for years with shrewd draft selections. Reynolds wasn't one of them. Critics called him "Too Small Jamal" and they were right. Green Bay moved up seven spots in the first round to snag the undersized Reynolds with the 10th overall pick of the 2001 draft. Reynolds finished his Packers career with zero starts and just three sacks.

**Justin Harrell.** Ted Thompson was an expert drafter, but he whiffed early in the 2007 draft by taking the Tennessee defensive lineman with the 17th overall choice. Harrell was injured most of his time in Green Bay and didn't register a single sack in 14 games with the Packers.

**Derek Sherrod.** The Mississippi State offensive lineman was the 32nd overall pick in the 2011 draft but broke his leg his first season and never recovered. His Packers career consisted of 20 games with only one start.

**Brett Conway.** A good rule of thumb in the NFL is to never draft a kicker or punter early. The Packers learned their lesson when Wolf took Conway in the third round of the 1997 draft. Conway was supposed to be Chris Jacke's successor, but he struggled immediately in the preseason and was cut at the end of training camp. His sudden departure paved the way for Ryan Longwell, who became the team's steady kicker for the next nine seasons.

**BJ Sander.** This was a Mike Sherman mistake and another painful reminder that anyone who boots a football is draft-pick poison in the early rounds. Sherman traded up to take the left-footed Sander in the third round of the 2004 draft. Sander lasted just one season, averaging near the bottom of the league in most categories. Call it the "Curse of Ray Stachowitz," another third-round punter (1981) who didn't pan out in Green Bay.

# WHAT TO KNOW IF YOU GO



## THE NFL DRAFT IS A MAGNET FOR DEVOTED FOOTBALL FANS.

IT WILL DRAW THOUSANDS OF VISITORS TO GREEN BAY – NOT ONLY FROM WISCONSIN BUT FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND AROUND THE GLOBE.

*Whether you are driving from Appleton or the Big Apple to catch the 2025 draft, there are some basics you should know. Here is a brief know-before-you-go checklist.*

- The draft will be held on the Lambeau Field-Titletown campus with the Resch Center to be used as well. The stage for the NFL Draft Theater – where the player selections are announced – will be on the northeast corner of the Lambeau parking lots, near the intersection of South Oneida Street and Lombardi Avenue. The campus will include all the Lambeau parking lots along with the Titletown district to the west end of the football field.
- The draft kicks off at 7 p.m. on April 24 with the first round of selections. Rounds two and three follow on April 25 at 7 p.m., while rounds 4-7 are set for April 26 starting at noon.
- The NFL draft is a free event, but attendees need to register online to enter draft grounds. You can do so by going to [nfl.com/draftaccess](https://nfl.com/draftaccess) or by downloading the NFL OnePass app, tapping on the NFL draft button and registering for an NFL.com account. Downloading the NFL OnePass app is free. You will then receive a QR code needed to enter the draft. You will be asked to select which days you plan to attend,





and you must sign the NFL draft assumption of risk release and waiver agreement. You must be 18 or older to download the app and register. Each adult can register up to five minors.

- While registration will get you into the draft, tickets will be required to access the NFL Draft Theater. The OnePass mobile ticketing guide will guide you through the necessary process. Seating is available only for ticket holders, but standing room and seating opportunities will likely become available, especially on Friday and Saturday. Just remember that the NFL OnePass QR code doesn't automatically get you into the NFL Draft Theater. The NFL OnePass app also offers various details about the draft, including a schedule and a map.
- Make sure to hit the NFL Draft Experience: an 800,000 square-foot area on the stadium's west side parking lots and extending to the Titledown district. This is a fun, family-friendly event that also offers free entry for registered visitors. It offers different interactive experiences such as running a 40-yard dash, catching passes, and kicking field goals. It also provides photo ops with NFL Hall of Fame exhibits including the Vince Lombardi Trophy, various Super Bowl rings, and the Heisman Trophy. There is also an autograph stage featuring current NFL players and legends.

*Visitors can attend the NFL Draft Experience from 12 p.m to 10 p.m. on Thursday (April 24) and Friday (April 25) and from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday (April 26). The player appearance schedule will be announced April 14 on the OnePass app.*

- If you can't make it to the Lambeau-Titledown campus, the three-day draft will be televised by ABC, NFL Network, ESPN, and ESPN Deportes.
- With so much traffic heading into the Lambeau Field area, draft attendees may want to take care of various shuttle service opportunities. The Fox Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau is offering shuttles for all three days of the draft. Buzz's Bar and Grill (Freedom, \$50 for round trip) and the Stone Yard (Appleton and Greenville locations, \$60 for round trip) are among the location sites for shuttles.

---

*Tim Froberg is a professional writer who covered the Packers Super Bowl appearances in New Orleans (1997) and San Diego (1998), and has written several feature stories for various Packers Yearbooks.*

# Lifelong Friends & Creatives

By JENNY JAKL



Kara and Whitney are the energetic and warm creatives behind Rainbow Plant Works. I met them this past summer at the Art in The Park show in Appleton. I was immediately drawn to their colorful booth and electric energy. They just had this vibe that made you feel like you wanted to be in their space. It seems their connection was just meant to be. They met in first grade, in Libertyville, Ill., and had an instant connection. Though not always in the same zip code, they remained very close over the last 30+ years having fun and making art. Whitney grew to be a graphic designer, and Kara, an art educator. Rainbow Plant Works is the business they've created together. They think of it as "a reason to enter into art shows, but it also provides us with an excuse to get together to create artisanal, nature-inspired items with a touch of whimsy."

For both Kara and Whitney, their creative journey began at a young age. "We were always super creative in our play, whether it was making funny home videos, signage for lemonade stands, sewing some jazzy outfits, or making one-of-a-kind treasures for our friends and family, we were always creating to make our world a more fun and enjoyable space."

Taking that creative connection and applying a solid entrepreneurial mindset, the two started turning their works into profit in grade school. Their first entrepreneurial adventure was sewing faces and hair onto the fingers of knit gloves. "We began selling them to friends at school and even put an ad in the classified section of our local newspaper."

Kara and Whitney find inspiration in everyday life. "We love functional art, or art that serves a purpose. We inspire

each other by sharing our latest artistic hobby and love talking about it. We also are very inspired by nature and natural surroundings".

On the more serious side of entrepreneurship, they combine Kara's history in art education and Whitney's background in art/design to create e-learning courses.

"The goal is to make education fun and accessible for all. Topics range from art history to tech work-

shops, and career development to historical events and more!

"Art is more fun when you're with your bestie. So that's what we do. We may not live on the same street anymore, but we still talk almost every day, if not twice a day, and bounce ideas off each other. We are each other's biggest cheerleaders. We genuinely love art and having fun and thinking of new ways to spread our joy. Our need to create is never ending.

"Rainbow Plant Works is always open to collaboration! We love having our products in local boutiques, bike shops, and art shows. We've also been working closely with libraries across the country to host our virtual, e-learning events from Curiosity Odyssey."

## Here's how to get connected with Rainbow Plant Works:

[www.rainbowplantworks.com](http://www.rainbowplantworks.com)

*Artisanal, nature-inspired items with a touch of whimsy.*

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[www.dingdongallday.com](http://www.dingdongallday.com)

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[www.curiosityodyssey.org](http://www.curiosityodyssey.org)

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Monday-Thursday 11:00am-10:00pm

Friday & Saturday 11:00am-12:00am

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# NFL DRAFT GIVES MUSIC FANS REASON TO CELEBRATE

By JIM COLLAR

There's far more to the NFL draft than learning where the latest class of college football studs will start their pro careers.

With upwards of 250,000 rabid fans descending on our region, it's bound to be a party like nothing we've seen before. Rest assured, the long weekend will offer just as much to enjoy for those who prefer a kick drum to a kickoff and guitars to the gridiron.

The NFL draft will take over Green Bay from April 24-26, and plenty of great entertainment is expected to come along for the ride. As for the live music scene? Expect it to hit harder than an all-pro linebacker as venues vie to attract the many visitors looking for some fun.

With such large crowds, some of the activity is bound to spill over into the Fox Cities.

Pam Seidl, executive director of the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau, said Green Bay will get all the attention while the draft picks are on stage. Still, the Appleton area will have windows to make some positive impressions before and after the official festivities.

"Wednesday evening could be a great opportunity to showcase our area," she said. "Saturday evening could also be a great opportunity."

Downtown Appleton is expected to have some hustle and bustle on pre-draft Wednesday with live music that will attract both local fans and the many visitors filling our hotels.

If you've experienced Green Bay on game day, you already have a sense of what to expect throughout the stadium district as draft festivities unfold. Just like those pregame tailgates in fall, expect great music to fill the air along with the aroma of beer and bratwurst. Many of the region's most popular bands are booked to appear at bars, restaurants and other venues within a short walk of Lambeau Field over the course of the long weekend.

The high-profile nature of the event will also bring some



chances to experience nationally known performers. The NFL Draft Concert Series will bring top-tier entertainment to the Draft Theater outside Lambeau Field after the last pick on Saturday evening. While the headliner wasn't announced as of the deadline for "Appleton Monthly," the last two drafts had performances including Big Sean, Bazzi, Fall Out Boy, and Motley Crue. The Green Bay concert will be free to attend and open to fans on a first-come, first-served basis.

Yet more great music will draw visitors away from the stadium into Downtown Green Bay. The Draft City Music Fest will be held at Leicht Park. The event will bookend the draft and feature a variety of bands to include national headliners. Draft City Music Fest will also offer food trucks, games, fireworks, and other activities. The first night of the festival takes place on April 23 and resumes on April 26.

Seidl said the benefits to businesses go beyond the many traveling into the region. With the world's eyes on Green Bay, many who call our region home will be quick to join the party. "There's going to be a lot of people who want to get out and have a little fun," she said.

Whether you're a football fan or a music fan, the upcoming NFL draft is indeed a can't-miss prospect.

*Jim Collar is a journalist, lifelong resident of the Fox Cities and a supporter of our local music scene. He previously worked as a reporter for The Post-Crescent and The Oshkosh Northwestern.*

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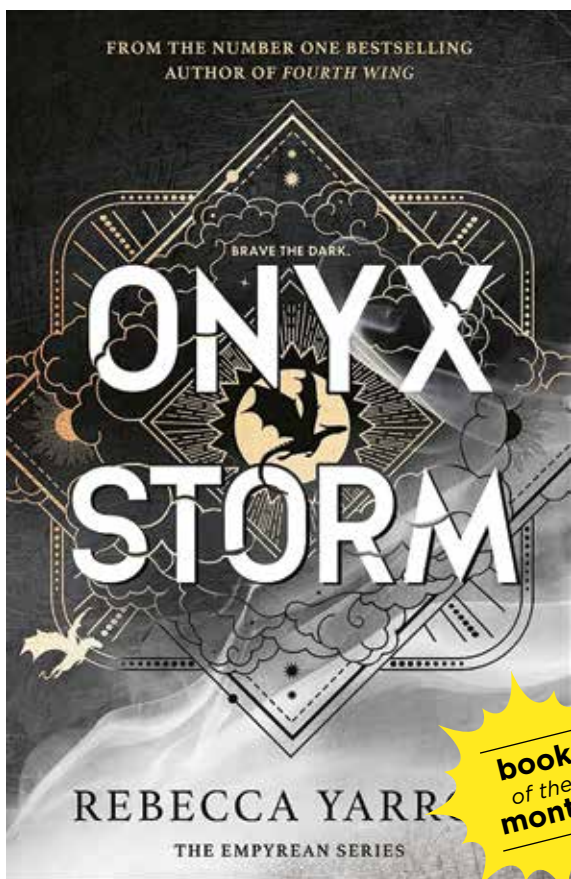
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**Rebecca Yarros**  
*Onyx Storm*  
FANTASY

The much-awaited third book of the Empyrean series has Violet Sorrengail in her 18th month at the Basgiath War College. She's out of time for second guessing herself as the battle has truly begun. She must take her squad outside the Aretian Wards to form allies for Navarre, and as always, it is nearly impossible to know who to trust. With a big storm on the horizon, it is hard to say who will survive. Dive into this fantasy world and join the adventure.



**Kristin Hannah**  
*True Colors*  
CONTEMPORARY WOMEN'S FICTION

"True Colors" dives into the story of the Grey sisters, three very different women with their own journeys. Winona, the oldest, seeks her father's approval the most but can't seem to ever get it. Aurora is the peacekeeper so pushes down her own pain. Vivi Ann is the youngest and the star of the family, adored by everyone who crosses her path. Their whole world changes in an instant, and it turns out the sisters may not be as close as they once were. And forgiveness might not come as easy as it once did.



**Sally Hepworth**  
*The Good Sister*  
PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER

All her life, Fern relied on her older sister Rose. They have dinner together three nights a week, and Rose often checks in on her, knowing that she has sensory issues that affect her day-to-day life. When Fern learns that Rose is unable to get pregnant, she jumps at the chance to help her sister. Fern can have a baby! But as she enacts this secret plan, she finds it a lot more complicated than anticipated. It may shake up her peaceful life a bit too much.

**Riley Sager**  
*The House Across the Lake*  
THRILLER

Casey plans some much-needed quiet time after a series of rough events. But after she saves a drowning woman across the lake, that simply isn't possible anymore.

**Rachel Gillig**  
*Two Twisted Crowns*  
ROMANTIC FANTASY

In this sequel to "One Dark Window," Elspeth and Raven have found all the providence cards except the most important one, the Twin Alders. As they search, they may find a nightmare instead.

**Melissa Larsen**  
*The Lost House*  
CRIME FICTION

The tragic case of a young woman and her infant being found buried in the Icelandic snow remains unsolved. Nearly half a century later, Agnes is hoping to get to the bottom of things and clear her grandfather's name.





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## DAMSEL

(ACTION/ADVENTURE 2024)

STARRING: MILLIE BOBBY BROWN (ELODIE)



In this action-packed fantasy, Elodie agrees to marry a handsome prince only to find she's been sacrificed to a dragon. Alone in a cave, she must fight for her life. Throughout her journey she discovers the secret of the royal family and hopes to escape and expose the truth. But will the

secret die in the cave with her?

## FANTASY ISLAND

(HORROR/FANTASY 2020)

STARRING: LUCY HALE (MELANIE)



What if your fantasy could come true? In this horror movie guests are invited to a remote island to live out their fantasy but it may not be exactly what they wish for. Quickly dreams become nightmares, and the guests need to work together and escape their horrible fate. Failing to do so and they might never leave the island again.

## SECRET SOCIETY OF SECOND-BORN ROYALS

(ACTION/COMEDY 2020)

STARRING: PEYTON ELIZABETH LEE (SAMANTHA)



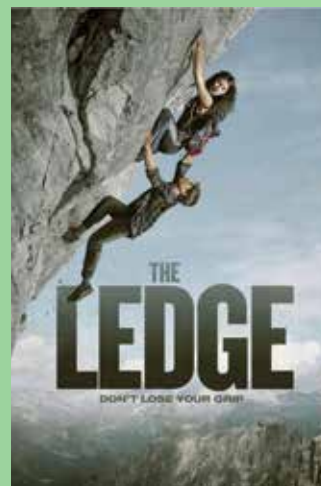
For Samantha, being the second born is all about living in the shadow of her older sister, the soon-to-be queen. She's never had her own purpose until she finds out a huge secret - second born royals have superpowers.

Now Samantha and a group of other second borns have one job - protect the kingdom at all costs. Royalty by day, and superhero by night.

## THE LEDGE

(ACTION 2022)

STARRING: BRITTANY ASHWORTH (KELLY)



Two best friends, Sophia and Kelly, go on a rock-climbing trip when everything takes a turn for the worse. Kelly captures her best friend getting murdered on video. Desperate to destroy the evidence, the killers are now after her. Survival instinct kicks in and Kelly does what she does best - climb. Hoping the killers won't be able to follow

her, she finds herself on a dangerous ledge fighting for her life.

*Marissa Laird is a movie lover who lives in Appleton. Her favorite genre is horror, which makes sense since she is obsessed with Halloween. She also enjoys spending time with her husband and their dog, Remi.*



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# THE MIX



Patience is bitter,  
but its fruit is sweet.

JEAN JACQUES  
ROUSSEAU

The first step towards getting  
somewhere is to decide that you are  
not going to stay where you are.

J.P. MORGAN

*When your back is against  
the wall, you've only got  
one direction to go.*

MARK CUBAN

When you commit to  
something bigger than  
yourself, you rise to a level  
much higher than yourself.

JON GORDON

The future belongs to those  
who believe in the beauty of  
their dreams.

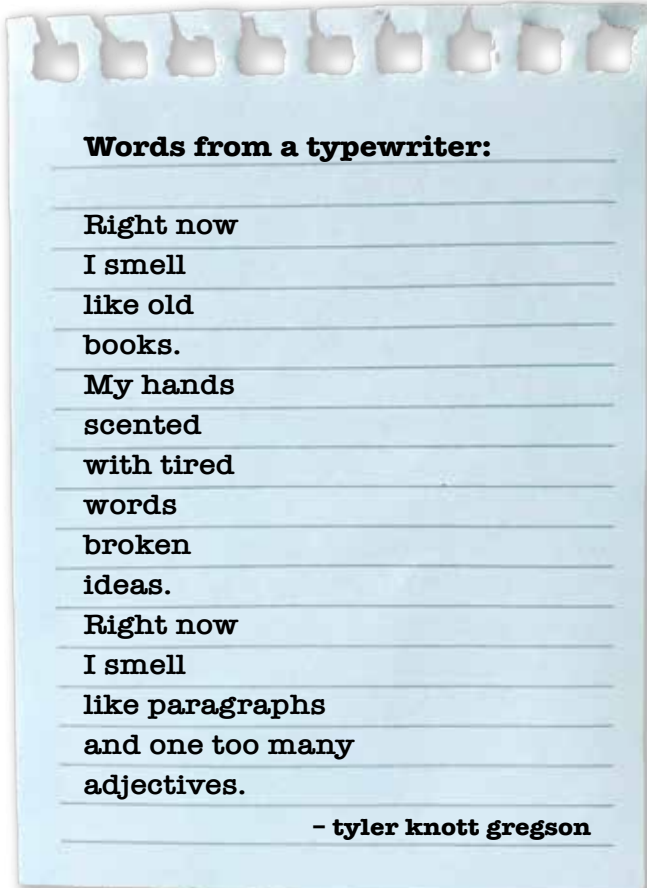
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

As long as readers have an interest in the  
communities they live in, there will be an  
important role for journalists to play.

MIKE JACOBS

*Poetry begins in delight and ends in wisdom.* - ROBERT FROST

words from the typewriter...



*The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do.*

WALTER BAGEHOT

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# THE SCENE

Top 10 reasons to fill up your calendar this month

By MEGAN REINHOLD

## 1. MYSTERY AT THE MUSEUM

Hearthstone Historic House Museum is puzzling all mystery lovers once again on April 19 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., and you can reserve tickets online

[hearthstonemuseum.org/mystery-at-the-museum](http://hearthstonemuseum.org/mystery-at-the-museum)



## 2. SPRING HOLIDAY GIFT AND CRAFT SHOW

Get crafty at the Fox Cities Expo on April 19 for their Holiday Gift & Craft Show from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is a \$5 charge to enter, and children 12 and under get in free with an adult.

[zurkopromotions.com/event/spring-holiday-gift-and-craft-show-at-the-fox-cities-expo-center](http://zurkopromotions.com/event/spring-holiday-gift-and-craft-show-at-the-fox-cities-expo-center)

## 4. FASHION SHOW ON THE AVENUE

Enjoy an evening of fashion on April 10 starting at 7:30 p.m. The latest spring and summer looks are highlighted by a variety of local boutiques. Tickets are available online:

[appletondowntown.org/events/fashion-show-on-the-avenue](http://appletondowntown.org/events/fashion-show-on-the-avenue)



## 3. CELEBRATE EARTH DAY @ BAY BEACH WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

What better place to celebrate Earth Day than beautiful Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary? This free event is filled with tons of activities on April 27 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

[greenbaywi.gov/1418/Bay-Beach-Wildlife-Sanctuary](http://greenbaywi.gov/1418/Bay-Beach-Wildlife-Sanctuary)

## 5. MINI GOLF ON THE TOWN

Putt your way through downtown Appleton, as a handful of bars and restaurants turn into a mini golf course. Food and drinks are offered at each stop on April 12 from 1 to 5 p.m.

[appletondowntown.org/events/mini-golf-on-the-town](http://appletondowntown.org/events/mini-golf-on-the-town)



## 6. CULTURAL CUISINE WALK

On April 19 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., you can take a trip around the world with a wide variety of cuisines in downtown Appleton.

[appletondowntown.org/events/cultural-cuisine-walk](http://appletondowntown.org/events/cultural-cuisine-walk)



## 7. VISIT THE EASTER BUNNY @ GLOBE COFFEE

If your kiddos need to see the Easter Bunny, hop into Globe Coffee in Neenah on April 6 or 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will also be Easter-themed drinks and food available for purchase.

[foxcities.org/events/easter-bunny-at-globe-coffee](http://foxcities.org/events/easter-bunny-at-globe-coffee)

## 9. SPRING BABY FEVER

If you're yearning to see adorable baby farm animals, try Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center's Spring Baby Fever on April 12 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

[farmwisconsin.org/event/spring-baby-fever-2](http://farmwisconsin.org/event/spring-baby-fever-2)



## 8. HELLO SPRING STORY TIME

Kimberly Public Library is springing into story time on Wednesdays in April (16, 23 & 30). They are hosting a spring-themed storytime for preschool-aged children and their caregivers with a different theme each week.

[kimberlypubliclibrary.org/library-events/](http://kimberlypubliclibrary.org/library-events/)

## 10. IRISH ROAD RUMMAGE SALE

Attention all rummagers! Get this on your calendar immediately. The sale runs from April 25-27.

[irishroadrummagesale.square.site](http://irishroadrummagesale.square.site)

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# NFL DRAFT IN GREEN BAY IS HISTORY IN THE MAKING

By TIM FROBERG

Rules and rosters change at an alarming pace in the ever-evolving National Football League.

But the one constant has been the team-building plan known as the NFL draft.

It dates to pre-World War II and has always been the proper way to ensure league parity and competitiveness.

I have always loved the draft. There is an actual word for strange individuals like me who are fascinated with this three-day guessing game. We are draftniks: nerds who spend way too much time analyzing 40-yard dash times along with the floors and upsides of college football prospects.

My draftnik roots go back to junior high when I would try to forecast potential Packers' picks by scouring sports sections of newspapers – yeah, newspapers, remember them?

Joel Buschbaum and Mel Kiper Jr. were the original draftniks and two of my heroes. Buschbaum – an attorney turned draft analyst – was one of the first to put out an annual draft guide which I always purchased. Kiper was a fast-talking, big-haired ESPN announcer whose every breath was devoted to the NFL draft. He remains the world's go-to draft analyst 40-plus years later.

It was tough being a Packers fan back then. I remember reading horror stories about the 1979 draft when Bart Starr ignored the pleas of his top scout (Red Cochran) and passed on Joe Montana in the second and third rounds. Green Bay took future nobodies Steve Atkins and Charles Johnson, while Montana took San Francisco to four Super Bowl wins.

As a journalist, I learned early about the draft's unpredictable nature. The first draft I covered was in 1989 when Green Bay bypassed future NFL legends Barry Sanders, Deion Sanders and Derrick Thomas for a controversial big man billed as the greatest offensive line prospect of all-time.

Tony Mandarich proved to be more myth than blocking monster: an ordinary man behind the curtain pulling the strings to create an image of something far more prolific than he actually was. Mandarich brought with him a circus-like atmosphere that was fun to document as a reporter, but he

will sadly go down as one of the NFL's biggest draft busts.

One of my favorite draft memories was interviewing a skinny, obscure, seventh-round pick from Alcorn State who seemed like a longshot to make the team. Donald Driver made the team – 14 times – and still holds Green Bay records for career receptions and receiving yards.

Another favorite draft memory happened during the Ron Wolf era. The man who brought the Packers back from pro football's dead zone startled local reporters late in his post-draft press conference when he politely asked everyone

to turn off their cameras and tape recorders. Wolf proceeded to ask us (media members) what we thought of the Packers' draft. That led to a lengthy, informal type of conversation you would usually have with friends in a tavern – not in an NFL interview room. The scene wasn't out of character for Wolf, who was always very candid with the media and respectful of the jobs we had to do.

This month's "Appleton Monthly" issue takes an eight-page deep dive into the NFL draft coming to Green Bay for the first time. Our Voice story is also Packers-themed, featuring long-time team president/CEO Mark Murphy.



Pairing the NFL's most storied franchise with an 89-year-old team fortification plan looks like a winning combination to me. If you're on the fence about attending the draft, just go for it. Let's face it: the Super Bowl will never come to Green Bay due to a lack of infrastructure and the cold Wisconsin winter.

But the NFL draft is the next best thing. So why miss out on history? Hit the Titledown campus and show the world what a classy fan base is all about. Tell them this nerdy draftnik from "Appleton Monthly" sent you.

*Tim Froberg is a professional writer who covered the Packers Super Bowl appearances in New Orleans (1997) and San Diego (1998), and has written several feature stories for various Packers Yearbooks.*



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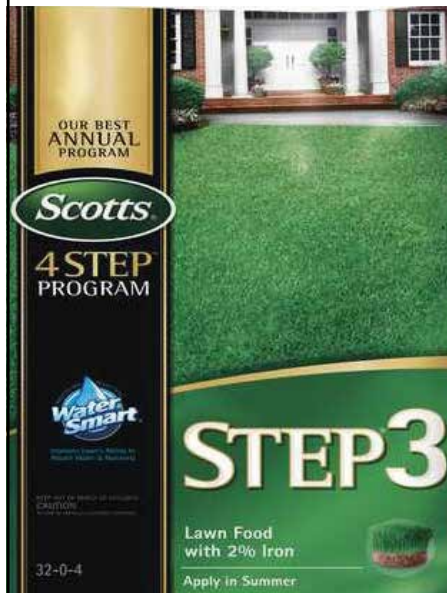
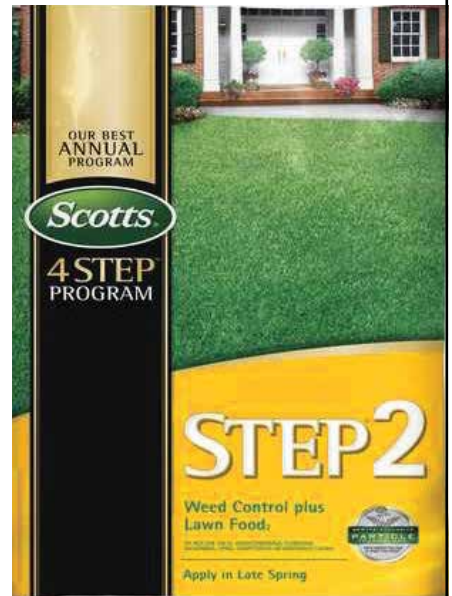
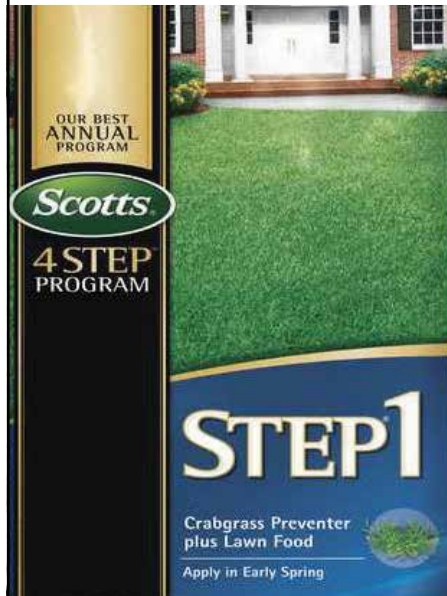
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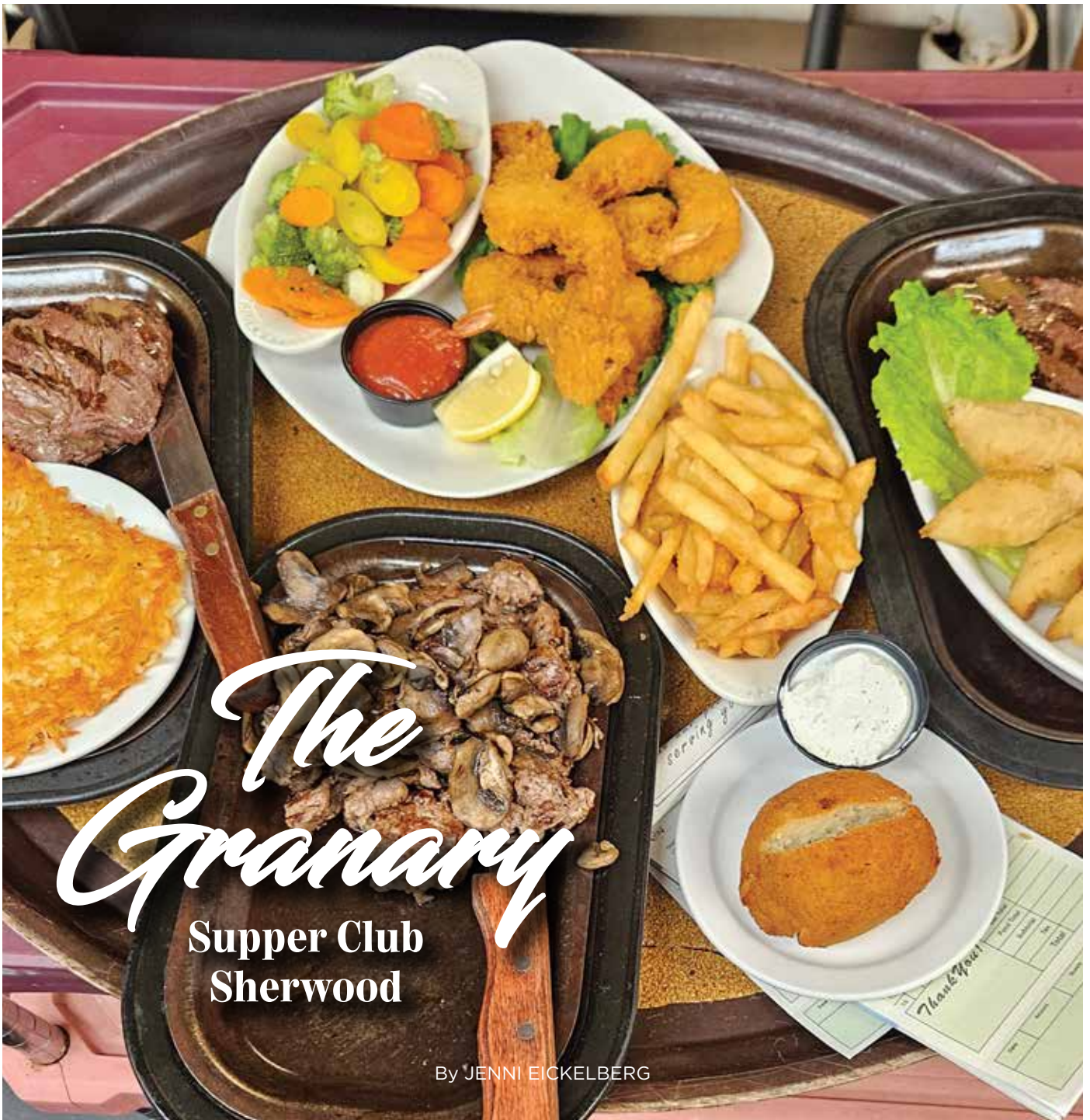


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# TASTE

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*The Granary*  
Supper Club  
Sherwood

By JENNI EICKELBERG

# The Granary Supper Club

By JENNI EICKELBERG

**N**estled in the charming village of Sherwood, just a short drive from the bustling Fox Cities, lies The Granary Supper Club, a hidden gem that epitomizes the essence of a classic supper club. Rayman and Pooja Singh, the passionate new owners, have breathed new life into this beloved establishment, continuing its long heritage as a favorite destination for locals and visitors alike. With a menu that embraces traditional supper club fare like steak, fish, seafood, poultry, and pork combinations, The Granary Supper Club offers a dining experience that is both comforting and indulgent.

Rayman Singh has always dreamed of owning a place where he could get any drink he wanted without having to pay for it. His dream came true when he stumbled into purchasing The Granary Supper Club. Rayman, who has a deep appreciation for the history and tradition of the restaurant, relies on his long-term staff to help run the successful business. Many of the employees have worked here for years, and their friendly demeanor and dedication to excellent service are evident in every interaction. Kim, a key staff member, has been with The Granary for 38 years, continuing her family's legacy at the restaurant.

Rayman is committed to maintaining the restaurant's menu, culture, and traditions while making quality improvements, such as switching to organic food vendors and upgrading the decor. He offered all employees a 10% raise from day one, emphasizing his belief in keeping employees happy is key to ensuring their success. Rayman loves Midwest values, which is why it's so fitting that he purchased a supper club.

Be sure to come hungry, as every delectable meal at The Granary Supper Club comes with their expansive soup and

salad bar. In addition to the usual salad bar accouterments, one can find turkey gizzards as the star. The rotating homemade soups are sure to satisfy everyone, with the salad bar setting the stage for the culinary delights to come.

When it comes to the main course, The Granary Supper Club truly shines. The steaks are a highlight, cooked to perfection and bursting with flavor. Whether you prefer a juicy tenderloin, a hand-cut ribeye, a lean yet succulent tenderloin filet, or a hearty New York Strip, each cut is expertly prepared and served with your choice of homemade sides. The seafood options are equally impressive, with dishes like cold water lobster tail, haddock, walleye, pike, and crispy fried Canadian lake perch showcasing the freshest catches. Each dish is thoughtfully crafted, ensuring every bite is a delight.

No supper club experience would be complete without a visit to the bar, where talented bartenders mix up a variety of affordable classic cocktails. The old fashioned, made from scratch with a secret house-made mix, is a must-try. The bar also offers a selection of wines, beers, and other spirits, ensuring something for everyone.

From the moment you step through the doors, you are greeted by the warm and inviting atmosphere of The Granary Supper Club. Historical photos are scattered throughout the bar area, showcasing the rich history of the building that was built in 1897. Look around the bar area to see various Budweiser antiques. Rayman encourages everyone to "Come and try The Granary





at least once. The taste will bring you back." The restaurant attracts customers from a wide area and hosts special events like holiday buffets, as well as large family and company celebrations. Rayman is dedicated to making The Granary feel like home for every guest.

As you linger in the restaurant, savoring each bite and sip, it becomes clear why this supper club has become such a cherished part of the Sherwood community. The combination of delicious food, friendly service, and a welcoming atmosphere creates an experience that is truly special. Whether you are celebrating a special occasion or simply enjoying a night out, this supper club offers a dining experience that is both memorable and satisfying. Be sure to make the short drive to Sherwood and discover the magic of this exceptional supper club.



*Jenni Eickelberg is a married working mom with two teenagers. She's an Appleton native passionate about food blogging on her "Food for Thought Fox Valley" Facebook group page. In her spare time she loves to read, spend time with her family, volunteer, and travel.*

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# THE ULTIMATE PRETZEL-WRAPPED BEER BRATS

## WITH SMOKY GOUDA BEER CHEESE

By CARLY CERNIGLIA

*These Ultimate Pretzel-Wrapped Beer Brats are the perfect choice for a draft party!* What's more football than soft pretzels, beer, brats, and beer cheese? All these crowd-pleasing favorites are packed into one in this exceptional recipe! Complete a few of the steps the day before for a little party prep, and you'll be sailing into the season with this winner.



Photo by Carly Cerniglia

### INGREDIENTS:

Five brats  
1-2 tablespoons oil (for frying)  
1 12-ounce beer  
1 1-pound loaf frozen white bread dough, thawed  
¼ cup baking soda  
One egg yolk  
Coarse salt (example: kosher)

### DIRECTIONS:

In a cast iron skillet on low, heat the oil. Once hot, add in brats and cook slowly until nice and browned, about 25-30 minutes. Add beer and simmer until the brats are done. Remove brats and continue simmering the beer until it has reduced to 1 cup. Set aside. (Alternatively, you can cook your brats however you like! Just be sure to reduce the beer and taste your cheese sauce for salt.)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper and spray it with cooking spray.

Once your brats are cool enough to handle, divide the loaf of dough into five equal portions. Roll between fingers creating a rope and wrap around a brat. Continue with the remaining brats and dough.

Reduce water to a simmer and stir in baking soda. Carefully drop in two wrapped brats and cook for 20-30 seconds, flipping over halfway through. Remove with a slotted spoon and place on the sprayed, lined sheet pan. Repeat with remaining brats. Brush boiled brats with the egg yolk and sprinkle with kosher salt. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from the oven and serve with the Smoky Gouda Beer Cheese Dip. Enjoy!

### SMOKY GOUDA BEER CHEESE DIP

1 tablespoon butter  
1 tablespoon flour  
1 cup reserved reduced beer (see above)  
1 cup heavy cream  
½ teaspoon garlic powder  
½ teaspoon onion powder  
½ teaspoon smoked paprika  
1/8 teaspoon black pepper  
½ teaspoon Worcestershire  
½ teaspoon whole grain mustard  
8 ounces smoked gouda, shredded  
2 shakes of hot sauce

### Directions:

In a small sauce pot, melt the butter. Whisk in flour and cook, stirring, for 2 to 3 minutes until mixture starts to smell nutty. Gradually add hot, reduced beer while whisking until incorporated. Whisk in heavy cream and heat gently until steaming, stirring occasionally.

Gradually whisk in cheese, adding more cheese once the first addition of cheese has melted. Once it is melted, add the remaining ingredients.

Keep warm until ready to eat, or let it come to room temperature and store it in the refrigerator. Gently reheat on the stovetop or in a crockpot when ready to eat.

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# Draft Coffee

By JASON PATZER

My original plan for this special draft issue was to write about all the places to stop and get good local coffee on your way north and the best mugs to bring with you to keep your coffee hot. However, the NFL will not allow anyone to bring in their own food or beverage. They do promise plenty of concessions, and reportedly, that will include coffee options. Additionally, you will be able to bring in one empty water bottle that you can fill once at multiple different water stations. Now, whether you can use that water bottle as a coffee cup is yet to be determined.

I do want to keep this column draft-themed though, so how about we talk about draft coffee. The term “on tap” used to be strictly reserved for bars and their beer lists, but now it is just as common to hear it at your local coffee shop as it is at your local brew pub. So, what exactly is draft or “on tap” coffee?

It all started with the cold brew boom of the early 2000s. Cold brew, if you aren’t all that familiar, is a process of brewing coffee without using heat, thus the name. It is typically brewed as a concentrate in large quantities. Water is then added to make it the cold brew you enjoy on a hot summer day. Origins of adding nitrogen and serving this on tap are somewhat disputed. Some say it was originated by Stumptown Coffee Roasters in Portland; others say it was Cuvee Coffee in Austin. But either way the process had been around for a long time in the beer industry and almost exclusively for stouts, like Guinness. Sometime in 2012, both in Portland and



Austin, adventurous coffee drinkers were enjoying a brand new creamy, naturally sweet, dairy- and sugar-free treat. Adding nitrogen to the coffee creates thousands of tiny little “microbubbles” that give the coffee a velvety and smooth texture. It also removes oxygen which can help reduce bitterness and enhance and preserve the flavors already present in

the coffee naturally.

OK, so that is all well and good for those folks, but what about us in Fox Valley? Well, as I have stated before, we are very fortunate to have the variety of quality local shops here. So, we’ve got you covered with at least three different choices and multiple locations:

**Acoca** (downtown Appleton) not only offers straight nitro coffee, but you can even get a nitro cold brew float. When I was last there, I was even able to take it up one more notch by getting a cold brew flight. Mine consisted of a regular cold brew, a cold brew with milk, a nitro, and a nitro float. The flight is a great way to see how the nitrogen changes the regular cold brew.

**Seth’s Coffee** (Downtown Appleton, Popp Lane by Fleet Farm, and Little Chute), our own OG specialty coffee shop (and provider of this month’s photos), offers their cold brew as a nitro option at all three locations as well as the Downtown Appleton Farm Market during the summer months.

**Coffee Wizardz** (Downtown Appleton along the river in The Draw building and in Allouez) offers not only nitro cold brew, but also an innovative nitro-infused draft latte. To my knowledge, this is the only place in the area where you can try this textural treat. We already mentioned that the microbubbles give the cold brew a creamy mouthfeel, but Coffee Wizardz takes it a step further by serving their cold brew with milk to make it even creamier.

*Jason Pater has worked in coffee for over 11 years. He started Pater Coffee as a way to continue his passion for coffee after leaving the industry. You can follow him on Facebook & Instagram @patercoffee. Or on his website, patercoffee.com, where he highlights the local coffee community.*



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# CHOCOLATE FOOTBALL CAKE

By CARLY CERNIGLIA

*The perfect draft party ends with the perfect dessert.* This Chocolate Football Cake makes two 8-inch footballs that will be gobbled up in no time. This recipe uses a boxed cake mix to keep things simple, but I've included my secret to the most wonderful chocolate cake: substituting Dr. Pepper for the water in the cake mix! I learned this trick from my friend's mother in middle school, and I've never forgotten it. Once you try it, you'll be hooked!

*This recipe makes two cakes, and serves 12-24*

<b>INGREDIENTS:</b>	4 cups powdered sugar
One box chocolate cake mix and the ingredients required	2 tablespoons cocoa powder
Dr. Pepper soda, the amount needed for water on the box mix	6 tablespoons heavy cream
2 ounces semi-sweet chocolate	2 teaspoons vanilla extract
Two sticks unsalted butter, room temperature	Pinch of salt
	Brown food color
	2 ounces white chocolate

## DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spray two 8-inch cake pans with cooking spray.

Gather your ingredients needed for the box cake mix's recipe. Instead of the amount of water shown, you are going to substitute the Dr. Pepper soda for the water. Make the cake according to box directions, substituting the Dr. Pepper, and divide evenly between the two cake pans. Bake as directed on the box. Once done, let cool for 10 minutes and invert onto a cooling rack. Let cool completely.

In a stand mixer, beat butter until fluffy. Add salt and vanilla and beat until incorporated and fluffy. Melt the semi-sweet chocolate carefully in the microwave and add to butter. Beat until fluffy. Stop the mixer and add cocoa powder. Slowly mix in cocoa powder. Stop the mixer and add powdered sugar. Slowly mix in powdered sugar. Add heavy cream and slowly mix, increasing speed once the heavy cream is worked in. Turn off the mixer and scrape the sides of bowl. Mix on medium for 3-5 minutes until fluffy. Adjust color with brown food color if needed. Frosting will darken a bit as it sits.

Take one cooled cake circle and remove a 1½-inch wide slice from the middle of the cake. Remove the slice and push the two half circles together. Cover the cake with the chocolate frosting.

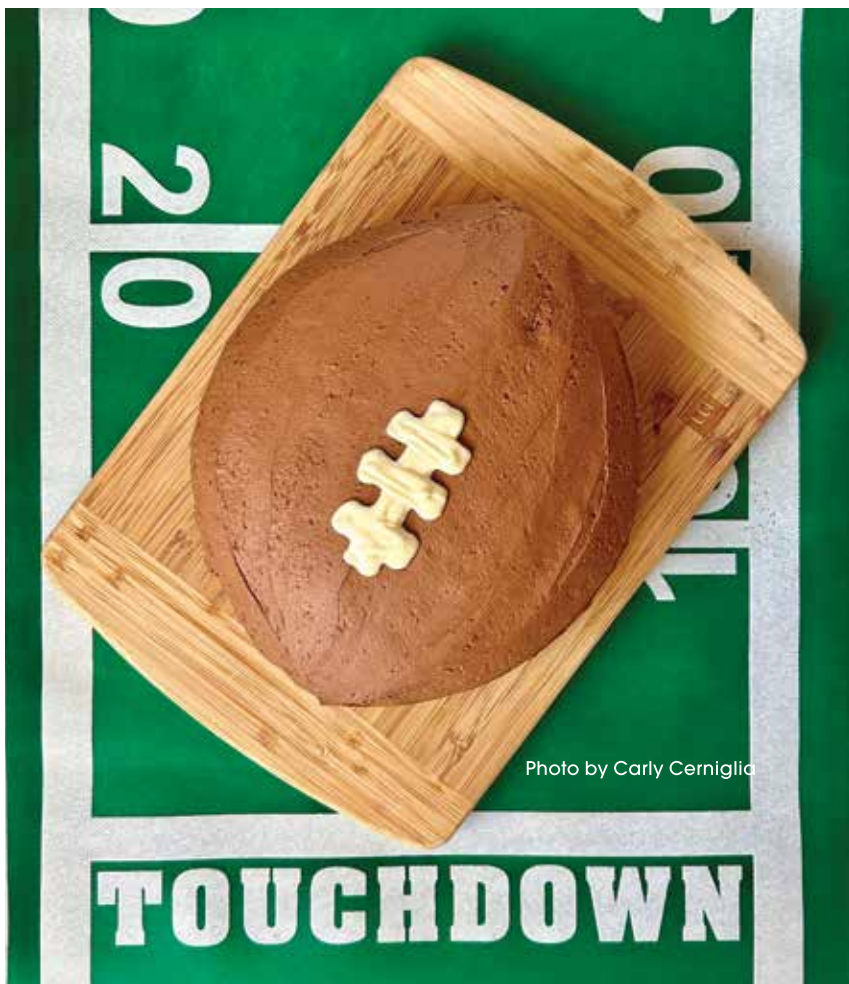


Photo by Carly Cerniglia

Repeat with the second cake circle.

Melt the white chocolate and pipe onto the football cakes to create the laces. Enjoy!

Use leftover frosting on the leftover middle slices for extra cake pieces. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for three to five days. Mix the glaze ingredients, adding water until desired consistency is reached. Pour over the cake and enjoy!



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# JACOBS MEAT MARKET HAS AN INTRIGUING FIRST ROUND PICK

By TIM FROBERG

Brian Gutekunst and the 31 other general managers from the National Football League will be the ones making the personnel selections in April's NFL draft.

Luke Jacobs, though, will have a First Round Pick.

That's the name the owner of Jacobs Meat Market in Appleton has given to a special sausage he will have available for fans at his store during April's NFL draft in Green Bay.

First Round Pick is a tasty knockwurst and Jacobs plans to sell it during draft week and the week after. It is priced at \$6.99 per pound and will come fully cooked and ready to eat.

"It's delicious on a bun with ketchup, mustard, relish and maybe a little sauerkraut," Jacobs said. "It's delicious by itself, too. It's something we don't normally carry, and I thought it would be great for the draft. It's a 10-inch sausage made with beef and pork, smoked to perfection.

"It has a four-hour smoke on it. It's fully cooked and is something you can reheat any way you like. If you're tailgating and want to throw it on the grill for a little bit, you can do that, but it's not something that has to be on the grill for a half hour like a bratwurst.

"If you want to fillet it open and pan fry it on both sides and put it on an open-faced sandwich, you can do that, too. You can even eat it cold."

Knockwurst is a thick sausage similar to bratwurst but is typically heavily seasoned and has more of a kick to it.

"It's a great sausage that is not like your typical bratwurst or something you would eat at any other stadium across the league," Jacobs said. "It has great seasonings and a great smoked flavor to it. It's not something you would typically find."

Jacobs is one of the local business owners in the Fox Cities who recognizes the economic impact of the draft coming to Green Bay for the first time.

"We came up with this because it's kind of a unique thing for the draft to be in Green Bay," Jacobs said. "There are going to be a lot more tourists in town and they're going to be looking for something that is truly Wisconsin.

"In my opinion, nothing says Wisconsin like sausage. You think of Wisconsin, and you think cheese, sausage, and beer. I think people are going to love it. To me, it's like the best of all worlds."

The NFL draft drew more than 700,000 fans, vendors, and NFL personnel to Detroit last season. The initial attendance projection for the Green Bay draft is 250,000, but it may very well exceed that expectation.



The economic impact is estimated at \$20 million locally and \$94 million across the state. Hotels are expected to be sold out at many locations in the Fox Valley, while area restaurants, bars, and various business like Jacobs are expected to do increased business.

"There are going to be a lot of people coming to the area," Jacobs said. "People are going to have their eyes on Green Bay and surrounding areas like Appleton – just like they had their eyes on Detroit last year."

And if they shop at Jacobs Meat Market, NFL fans can get a First Round Pick that will likely be a draft hit.

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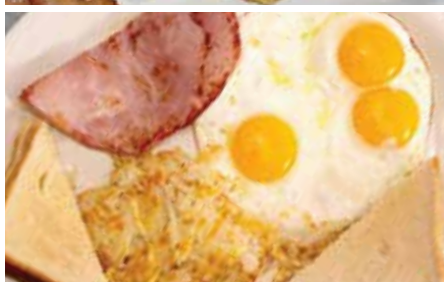


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# The Frozen Tundra

## Famous for Football, and Now for Wine?

By STEVE JOHNSON

**M**illions of football fans will turn their focus to Green Bay later this month. Many will make the journey to visit the hallowed grounds of Lambeau Field, a place that the world has long known as the “Frozen Tundra.”

On December 31, 1967, one of the most iconic football games ever played occurred when the Packers defeated the Cowboys in minus 13-degree weather in what was called the Ice Bowl. From that day on, Green Bay has held its widely recognizable nickname.

While Wisconsin has long been known as the land of award-winning beer, cheese, and championship football, it is now demonstrating its potential for world-class quality wine.

In the recently released movie “Green & Gold”, the story of a Wisconsin farmer and his love of the land and the Packers is beautifully told. It is only fitting that a dairy farmer from Wisconsin has now become known as the grandfather of the new wine region of the northern tier of the United States. His name was Elmer Swenson, a dairy farmer from Osceola, and he was responsible for creating new wine grape varieties that are thriving in this unexpected new wine region.

Believe it or not, from April to October, Green Bay has a nearly identical climate to the world-famous wine regions of Bordeaux, France and Tuscany, Italy as all three lie on the same latitude across the globe. While France and Italy have been growing the classic vinifera vines like merlot and chardonnay for hundreds of years, Wisconsin is now growing a cross of ‘vinifera’ and wild or ‘riparia’ vines that we call La Crescent and Marquette. Vinifera, like merlot and chardonnay, die back to the ground when temperatures reach 0 degrees. However, Elmer Swenson knew this could be a world class wine region by being able to cross the pollen of wild grape vines of Wisconsin with that of European grape vines.

His foresight and ingenuity over the course of nearly 50 years has resulted in thousands of acres of these new grape varieties being planted from Oregon to Wisconsin and New York to Canada. Swenson’s Midwestern work ethic and ingenuity has



led to these grape varieties not only thriving on the Frozen Tundra, but also winning numerous awards in international wine competitions. Just this past month, we were fortunate to be awarded the most medals of any winery east of the Rocky Mountains at the 2025 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, the largest event of its kind in North America.

No one would have predicted that the tiniest market in the nation would evolve into the most iconic professional football team in America with its 13 world championships. It’s only a matter of time when the rest of the wine world will soon recognize the unique quality wines being grown and produced from this unlikely corner of the wine world here on the Frozen Tundra.

*Steve Johnson is co-owner and winemaker of Parallel 44 and Door 44 in Kewaunee and Door Counties. His passion is growing and making wines from Northeast Wisconsin an unexpected but increasingly recognized corner of the wine world.*

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# Lavender Lemonade



Give lemonade an elegant spin that's perfect for brunch, parties, or any spring gathering. This lavender lemonade is not just pretty – it's fragrant, refreshing, and the perfect balance between tart and sweet. This is a non-alcoholic drink but you can add a splash of vodka (or any alcohol you prefer).

*Most types of lavender are edible, but for the best flavor use dried culinary lavender. It's safe to eat and its lightly floral, sweet, and citrusy flavor means it's perfect for lemonade.*

### INGREDIENTS:

*Lavender Syrup:*

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 4 teaspoons dried culinary lavender
- Three sprigs fresh lavender, plus more for garnish

*Lavender Lemonade:*

- 2 cups freshly squeezed lemon juice

Four sprigs mint

1 cup lavender syrup

Lemon slices, for garnish

### DIRECTIONS:

For the lavender syrup, combine the sugar, 1/2 cup water, and the dried and fresh lavender in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a low simmer and stir well until all the sugar has dissolved. Remove from the heat, cover and set aside for 1 hour. Strain the lavender and chill the syrup in the refrigerator until ready to use (it can be stored for up to 1 week).

For the lavender lemonade, combine in a large pitcher the lemon juice, 4 cups water, fresh mint, and lavender syrup. Stir well to combine. Serve in glasses over ice with lemon slices and additional sprigs of fresh lavender.

DRINK

# BREWS



SIP

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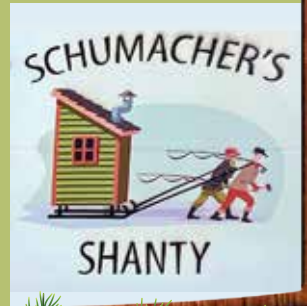
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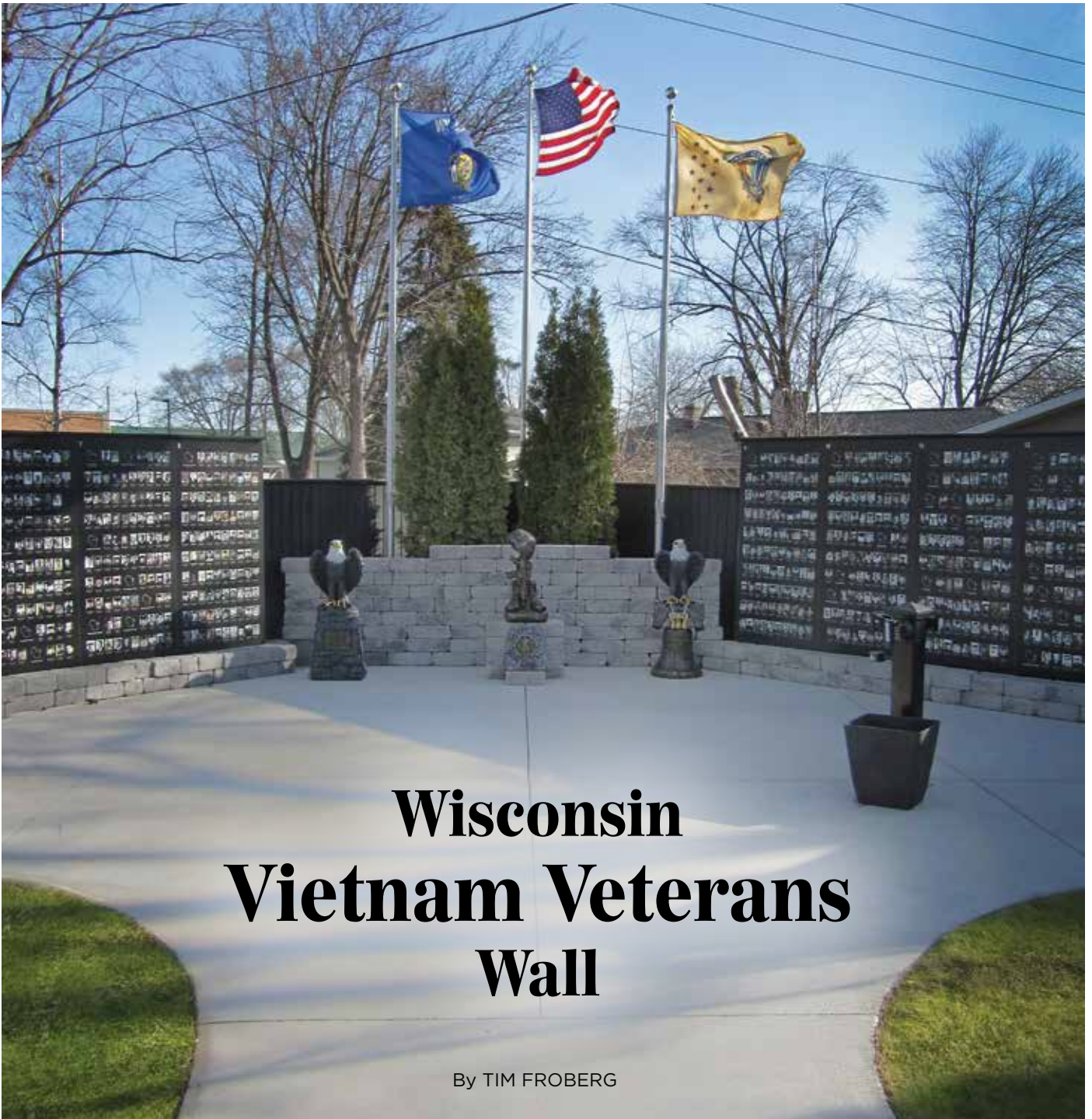
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# MORE

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## Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Wall

By TIM FROBERG

# HONORING THOSE WHO FOUGHT

## VETERANS WALL PAYS TRIBUTE TO WISCONSIN SOLDIERS

By TIM FROBERG

**JACK VOIGHT AND JIM MAROHN PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR THEIR COUNTRY AS SOLDIERS DURING THE VIETNAM WAR.**

The two veterans served their duty and returned home to Outagamie County. Some of their comrades and classmates weren't so fortunate.

Voight is making sure they are not forgotten.

Voight, an Appleton resident and tireless advocate for military veterans, has created an impressive exhibit honoring veterans from Wisconsin who died in the Vietnam War. It is known as the Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Wall and has been installed in the courtyard area near the flag poles at Vets and Friends Coffee House Inc., located at 2508 N. Richmond St.

The memorial wall is a permanent fixture and honors the 1,249 Wisconsin veterans who lost their lives in Vietnam. The wall features 17 large panels and displays photographs of the deceased Wisconsin veterans along with written details about them.

The wall is modeled after a mobile exhibit of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum in Madison. Its "Wisconsin Remembers: A Face for Every Name" banner wall features photos of the 1,161 Wisconsin veterans listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum exhibit – which has been assisted by Wisconsin Public Radio and Wisconsin Public Television – travels from town to town in Wisconsin for temporary stays. Voight says that three of the banner walls have been established. The graphics for the Appleton wall were obtained from the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

The main difference between the two walls is that the Appleton structure is permanent. The project was spearheaded by Voight, a former Wisconsin state treasurer and Appleton City Council president. Voight, a New London native, served as a sergeant in the U.S. Army from 1968-70 and was deployed in Cambodia.

Voight is president of Vets and Friends Coffee House Inc., which is an Appleton-based nonprofit organization striving to make life better for military veterans through





benefits, services, and socialization. It has established a no-charge coffee house for veterans along with a food pantry and offers free meals to veterans on certain days. It is the only nonprofit coffeehouse for veterans in Wisconsin.

The veterans wall cost roughly \$70,000 and was financed largely through donations. The project took about three years to complete.

“The big thing is that I wanted a permanent wall,” said Voight. “We wanted to honor the memory of the veterans who died in Vietnam that were from Wisconsin’s 72 counties.

There was only one county that did not have a veteran who died in the Vietnam War.”

The wall stands 7 feet high and is more than 50 feet in length. It is built of acrylic aluminum with graphics embedded in the material to prevent fading.

Jim Marohn, a Vietnam veteran from Neenah, said, “It’s very important to me, but even more important to Jack (Voight) because he has put his life and limbs into this wall. I have been involved in volunteering for a lot of stuff for Vietnam veterans, but this really hits home. I give so much thanks to Jack. He did a fantastic job.”

The wall is open to the public at any time, including at night when motion detectors turn on lights to illuminate the exhibit.

“That’s what I find to be really impressive – you can go there at night to see it and the lights come on,” said Marohn. “It’s 24/7.”





The wall is open for viewing and will formally be dedicated in a ceremony at Vets and Friends Coffee House on Wednesday, April 30 – the same day the Vietnam War ended 50 years ago. The dedication is open to the public, starts at noon, and will feature various speakers.

“I really think the public should be aware of (the wall), especially with the 50th year anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War,” Voight said. “That’s why we picked that date to dedicate the wall.

“It’s meant to be a somber anniversary of a war that probably shouldn’t have happened, but it did happen, and I served there.

“It’s not a happy occasion, but I’m glad the war ended when it did. It should have never started, but it started. We need to honor the veterans who died there.”

Voight said that many Vietnam veterans have already viewed the wall, and several have been moved emotionally.

“It’s a very impactful exhibit,” said Voight. “We’ve had people who teared up looking at it.”

Marohn is one of them. He had classmates from Neenah High School like John Paulson and Chuck Vander Heyden who died in the Vietnam War along with a friend, John Hartzheim, from Appleton.

Marohn served 13 months in Vietnam. He was deployed as a gunner on a swift boat in Cat Lo, a small town on the Mekong Delta.

“Oh, my goodness, when I just think about the war and people I know who died there, the emotions come out,” said Marohn. “Just talking about this right now – I’m choking up. This wall is very important to me.”

Voight and Marohn will be among the guest speakers at the wall’s formal dedication. Additional speakers scheduled are former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson, retired Rear Admiral Steven Day, Secretary of



Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs James Bond, Vietnam veteran Jerry Ott, President of Wisconsin Hmong Lao Veterans of America Nao Shoua Xiong, and Curator of Exhibits/Wisconsin Veterans Museum Gregory Krueger.

The VFW Post 2778 color guard will present Taps and conduct a 21-gun salute.

*Tim Froberg has worked as a reporter for the Appleton Post-Crescent, Green Bay News-Chronicle, and Marinette EagleHerald. He won eight Wisconsin Newspaper Association writing awards.*

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# Spring Refresh

## Bookcases and Built-ins



By JOEL LAPER

**B**ookcases and built-ins are home features we love these days. They can be a unique way for us to show off our personal sense of decorating and style. These areas are perfect to display books, collections and almost anything you choose to show off your design style.

If your home doesn't have built-ins, don't worry. Display cabinets and bookshelves come in an array of styles sure to match your décor choices. Unlike years back when cabinets were often filled to the max with various collections, today's modern display areas can feel less cluttered with fewer pieces. And by choosing items in complementary tones, you help keep the area interesting, visually clear, and more modern.

If your bookcases are feeling cluttered or you decide to do a full redesign of your display space, first start by removing everything from your shelves to visually declutter and give you a fresh space to design. Go through all your décor and decide which pieces you love and want to re-use and which pieces you are ready to get rid of or donate. Bookcases can easily attract clutter over time and things we do not necessarily need or want anymore. If you have objects that you love, but no longer blend with your new color or design scheme, think of other places in your home you can repurpose them. Picture frames can easily be re-painted to match your new design palette. Bring in books from your collection that have color tones that match your new color choices or simply cover old books in coordinating paper. Stacking books with an object you love is a creative way to elevate and bring prominence to that object.

If the finish on your bookcase feels tired and boring, consider painting. Painting bookcases in complementary colors can really highlight any objects you like to display. Wallpapering the back of the bookcase and painting the frames and shelves is another creative way to spruce up your room and add your personal style. Use small lamps or battery-operated lighting to highlight areas of your shelving. These small lights come in a variety of beautiful finishes, including brushed metals and ceramic, and unique shapes, styles, and sizes.

*When displaying items in bookcases and built-ins, pay attention to a few key design elements:*

- Varying the height of objects is pleasing to the eye and creates visual interest.
- Use complementary color tones or a monotone palette for a more modern aesthetic.
- Group objects in odd numbers.



*I restyled this bookcase to give it a lighter, fresher look for spring. I've hung some of my artwork on the back of the bookcase wall, which is a creative way to display your favorite art and photos that you can switch out when you're ready for a change.*

- Combine objects with different finishes and textures.
- Give yourself time when you decide to re-style your built-ins and bookcases. Display shelves look different depending on what height you look at them, standing versus sitting, so take the time to plan your design. Don't worry if you don't get it right the first time. Take a seat and look at your design. You may need to make several adjustments before achieving the desired look and feel. The fun is in the journey. If you are like me, you will be changing it up again soon.

*Artistry, home design, and cosmetology have all been passions throughout Joel's life. Joel has created art and s of all styles. He enjoys keeping up with the latest design trends.*



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## Honda CR-V is a Solid Choice For Consumers

By TIM FROBERG

Honda has an excellent brand reputation and always seems to know what its customers are seeking.

The Japanese automaker knocked it out of the park when it introduced the Honda CR-V in 1995.

While other companies may laud their vehicles for high performance, off-road capabilities, or all-weather capabilities, Honda has long focused on the CR-V's core components of comfort and convenience.

The CR-V is a practical compact crossover that has a lot going for it. It offers a sporty look, good fuel economy, a smooth ride, and ample interior space. It can fit the space needs of a family of four and has a large 39.3 cubic-foot cargo capacity behind its rear seats – great for hauling luggage or groceries.

For those reasons, the CR-V is one of the top-selling compact SUVs on the market. It ranked second in United States sales for 2024 behind only the Toyota RAV4 and has been Honda's best-selling model in the U.S. since 2017.

The CR-V – also sold as the Honda Breeze in China – was redesigned in 2023 and there are no major changes in the 2025 model. It is considered a very reliable vehicle with a high resale value. A

well-maintained Honda CR-V can last well over 200,000 miles with many owners reporting lifespans beyond 250,000. With proper care and maintenance, you can expect the CR-V to last 15 to 20 years.

“Edmunds” gave the 2025 CR-V a rock-solid 8.1 rating out of 10 on its automotive website, praising its comfortable ride, ample interior space, appealing tech features, and reasonable price. One of its few negatives is that it's not considered the zippiest of cars, clocking in with an average 0-to-60 speed of 8.4 seconds.

“The Honda 2025 CR-V is a standout small SUV,” stated Edmunds in an online review. “You can't do much better than the CR-V. We like the Mazda CX-50 for its sharp styling and peppy performance, but it's not as fuel-efficient and can end up a bit pricier.

“The CR-V is no track star in terms of how it drives, but it feels responsive and composed when compared with other small SUVs. Around corners, the CR-V stays composed and under control. The responsive steering offers enough feedback to give you a good sense of what's happening on the road. For a lot of shoppers, the CR-V will be the most well-rounded choice.”

“Car and Driver” also had good things to say about the CR-V on its website.

“Compact crossovers such as the 2025 Honda CR-V are in high demand, as they offer comfortable seating, decent fuel efficiency, and an easy-to-park profile,” read a Car and Driver online review. “Honda's cheerful entry in this competitive SUV segment earns its place at the top of our list.”

The 2025 Honda CR-V is available in six trim levels: LX, EX, Sports, EX-L, Sport-L, and Sport Touring. The LX, EX, and EX-L trims come with a turbocharged four-cylinder engine, while the Sport, Sport-L and Sport Touring are hybrid models. Front-wheel drive is standard in most CR-V trims with all-wheel drive as an option.

**Price:** \$30,100 to \$41,000.

**Fuel economy:** 28 mpg city, 34 mpg highway.

**Engine:** Turbocharged 1.5-liter with 190 hp, four cylinder.

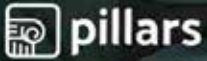
**0 to 60:** 8.4 seconds, 7.6 seconds by the CR-V hybrid.

**Seating:** five seats.

**Drive train:** front-wheel drive, all-wheel drive also available.

**Warranty:** three years, 36,000 miles.

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# NEW WHEDA HOME REPAIR LOAN FOR MIDDLE INCOME FAMILIES

By JENNIFER

Director of Public Relations and Government Affairs for the REALTORS® Association of Northeast Wisconsin

Wisconsin, like much of the country, is facing a housing crisis driven by low inventory and rising home prices. While increasing the production of new homes is critical to addressing this issue, most newly built homes remain unaffordable for first-time buyers and low- to moderate-income households. This underscores the importance of maintaining and preserving our existing housing stock, particularly older homes.

However, home maintenance and repairs can be costly. Historically, federal and state governments have provided financial assistance to low-income households for various home repairs. Recognizing the need for broader support, the Wisconsin Legislature allocated \$50 million last year for low-interest loans aimed at middle-income families who traditionally do not qualify for such assistance. This initiative led to the creation of WHEDA's new loan program, More Like Home.



For more detailed information, visit [morelikehomeloan.wheda.com](https://morelikehomeloan.wheda.com).

## QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be primary residence
- Must be a single-family residence, condo, two-unit, or manufactured home
- Must have been constructed at least 40 years prior to the loan date

Borrowers must fall within income limits – (Outagamie County is \$145,600). Those interested can learn more by visiting [more-like-home-loan-income-limits.pdf](#).

## LOAN AMOUNT:

- May not exceed \$50,000
- Is determined by the specific repair work needed
- The lower-than-market-rate loans have a 30-year payback period

## HOME REPAIRS

- Funds can only be used for qualifying repairs such as roof, windows, exterior doors, heating, electrical, or plumbing systems
- Funds can also be used for removal of environmental contaminants such as lead paint, asbestos or mold
- Must be completed by a licensed and insured contractor

## LENDERS

- Participating lenders will accept applications from qualified borrowers on a first-come, first-serve basis until funds are depleted.
- There are many more lenders than listed on the WHEDA site, so call your local community banks to find out if they are participating in the WHEDA loan program.

Whether you're a homeowner in need of financial support for essential maintenance and repairs or you're considering purchasing a home that requires some work, this new WHEDA loan product offers valuable assistance. It provides an alternative for individuals who previously had only conventional loan options.



## SPRING IT ON. 37 THINGS TO DO.

This May issue will focus on THINGS TO DO THIS SPRING! Plus, it will include a special "In the Garden" with Holly Boetcher on the spring growing season. It never gets old when it comes to things to do at this time of year! GET OUTDOORS!

### Eat. Shop. Play. Discover.

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# Appleton

Monthly

# *I Was Looking for a Furry Companion*

By LAURA OSTER

**I**t was 2014 and I had lived in my house for almost a year and a half. My house had everything I was looking for: a nice-sized garage, a basement to store all my non-essential impulse buys, and a decent-sized backyard. However, I felt it was missing something. I came to realize I had all this yard, but only myself to enjoy it. I needed a furry companion to share it with. After not having a dog for more than 30 years, I was a little nervous, but also excited. I went to the local shelter, Chances Animal Rescue. After walking through an area busy with the sounds of dogs barking, I came across two dogs sharing a kennel. They were quiet, but curious and looked up at me cautiously but also with intrigue. One of them even gave me kisses through the kennel. I knew right then that these two would be my new best friends. After not initially wanting two dogs or puppies, what did I end up with? Two puppies! In the beginning, I constantly asked myself what I had gotten into. But, after time and routine, we established the bond of a lifetime.

All dog owners believe their dog is the perfect dog, and they're right. I feel this is especially true for rescues. Most are given a not-so-good start to life or humans have failed them in some way. Mine were found roaming the backroads of Tennessee, not knowing where their next meal would come from and fighting to survive. It's now a great feeling to provide them with those constants they so desperately needed. When shown patience and love, they reciprocate with their unwavering, unconditional love. It's almost their way of saying 'thank you for saving me!' In fact, if they could talk, I feel this is what they would say. This is why I chose to rescue and give them the amazing life they deserve. I call them my melting pots of unconditional love! They bring me so much joy and I don't want to imagine my life without them.



Laura Oster with her furry companions, Suzzy and Sally

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# Routine Veterinary Care

By DR. SETH OBERSCHLAKE

Routine veterinary care is essential to maintaining the health and well-being of pets throughout their lives. Regular check-ups not only help prevent diseases, but also ensure early detection of potential health issues. Consistent visits to your veterinarian strengthen the veterinary-client-patient relationship (VCPR), which is a legal requirement for prescribing medications and providing medical advice.

One of the primary benefits of routine veterinary care is disease prevention. Vaccinations, parasite control (ticks, fleas, intestinal parasites, mites, etc.), regular dental cleanings, and nutritional counseling all play vital roles in keeping pets healthy. Preventative care helps reduce the risk of serious illnesses that could otherwise lead to costly treatments and a decreased quality of life for pets.

Another critical aspect of routine veterinary visits is the ability to detect diseases early. Pets are masters at hiding signs of illness, and by the time symptoms become obvious, the disease may already be advanced. Regular physical examinations and diagnostic testing allow veterinarians to catch problems such as diabetes, kidney disease, liver



issues, and heart conditions before they become severe. Early intervention often leads to better treatment outcomes and improved longevity.

A strong VCPR is necessary for pet owners to obtain prescription medications legally. In most states, veterinarians cannot prescribe medications or provide medical guidance without first establishing and maintaining this relationship through regular visits. This is similar to how human doctors require regular check-ups to prescribe medications and provide ongoing medical care. Just as we visit our physicians for routine health

assessments and prescriptions, pets also need consistent veterinary visits to ensure they receive proper care and treatment.

Routine wellness blood work is another essential component of veterinary care. Blood tests can reveal underlying health conditions that may not yet be apparent through physical examination alone. These tests provide valuable insights into organ function, immune health, and metabolic status. Baseline blood work also allows veterinarians to monitor changes over time, making it easier to identify developing health issues early and adjust treatment plans accordingly.

By committing to routine veterinary visits, pet owners can proactively safeguard their pets' health, ensure timely access to necessary medications, and strengthen the VCPR. Investing in preventive and early detection measures ultimately leads to a longer, healthier, and happier life for pets.

*Dr. Seth Oberschlake is a 2014 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine. He has worked at Heritage Animal Hospital since 2015 and recently became the sole owner.*

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**Brandy**

Brandy is a 1-year-old Australian shepherd mix with a sweet and sensitive nature, looking for a home to grow her confidence. She has lived well with cats, and would do best with older, respectful children!



**Captain Sparklez**

Captain Sparklez is a 1-year-old Siberian husky mix. He is an outgoing guy who greatly enjoys human attention. He would benefit from a home with an active lifestyle. Captain Sparklez would thrive as your only pet!



**Lynx**

Lynx is a 12-year-old senior cat looking for a soft place to land. She was depressed in the shelter environment, but has come a long way in her loving foster home. She is starting to show her cuddly, affectionate side as she learns to trust. She is looking for a patient, nurturing home.



**Maple Sugar**

Maple Sugar is not only handsome, but he is also sweet as can be! This gentle 7-year-old kitty would love a quiet home where he can get plenty of attention and snuggles. He would be happiest in a home with older children.



# Rhubarb Pie, Anyone?

By HOLLY BOETTCHER

**M**y mother made the best rhubarb custard pie. In spring each year, I craved its mouthwatering sweetness, especially warm and fresh out of the oven.

Rhubarb, often called “pie plant,” is a hardy perennial originating from colder regions of Asia and has been cultivated for over 5,000 years. While widely known as a flavorful ingredient in cooking, it has also been valued historically for its medicinal properties.

It is one of the first garden plants to emerge in spring. It belongs to the buckwheat family, and botanically speaking, rhubarb is a vegetable, however when used for cooking and baking it is considered a fruit. Rhubarb is high in fiber and loaded with calcium and vitamin C.

There are so many uses for rhubarb! Last year my daughter and I made rhubarb salsa, which was a pleasant culinary experience! Everyone knows it can be made into classic desserts such as pies, cobblers, and crumbles, but what about bread, cake, jam, and even cheesecake?

Because of its large leaves, rhubarb can be tucked into a flower bed or landscaping and hold its own. I have a huge patch in one of my flower gardens at our business, and it is a focal point in spring among the tulips and daffodils.

Did you know you can either buy plants, accept some from a friend who divides then shares them, or from seed? Nursery grown plants are virus free, so it is always a good choice. If you decide to plant from some that were dug up by a gardener friend, make sure the plant is vigorous and healthy. Seeds can be harvested from existing plants or purchased through seed catalogs.

All parts of rhubarb contain oxalic acid which is highly concentrated in the leaves, therefore leaves are toxic. Only the stalks are edible.

And it is an old wives’ tale that you should only eat rhubarb in the spring. It does not become poisonous later in the season, but it can become woody or tough.



Rhubarb is easy to grow but needs well drained soil in a sunny location and is not fussy about pH levels. They are heavy feeders, so keep them well fed with a “side dressing” of rotted manure or compost in the spring. Once they send up flowering stems (which turn into seeds) you should break them off, so the plant does not expend energy on seed production.

If you buy plants, wait till the second season to harvest. If from seed, wait until the third year. This ensures your rhubarb plant has plenty of time to develop into healthy plants.

So, get ready this spring for a fresh garden experience by enhancing your garden or landscape with the resilient rhubarb plant. Invigorate your taste buds with a new recipe because it is more than just a plant, it is an endless source of possibilities!

*Holly Boettcher is a Master Gardener & an aspiring Naturalist. Her love for the outdoors and nature shines through in everything she does. Holly & her husband own Whistler's Knoll Vineyard on Highway JJ near Hortonville.*

# DRIVING LESSONS

*Dad, why did you get rid of your red pickup truck? I loved the red truck.*

Oh buddy, I loved it too. But it was falling apart. I know it looked nice on the outside, and no one probably noticed it was falling apart, but I knew it. I could sense it.

Sometimes I could barely even get it running in the morning, day after day after day. Just getting from one thing to the next seemed like too much work for it. Every time I had a mechanic give it a look, some other invisible issue would surface. It was just a matter of time before it gave up the ghost entirely.

The truth is a lot of cars you see around town are like that. You'll see them drive by, just making their way from A to B. And they probably look perfectly fine, just like the red truck did. But we can't hear the rattles or knocks; you never really know, they might be concealing all manner of frustrating maladies if you lift the hood. And sure, there might be temporary fixes – your Grandpa always used to say, a wash and shine seems to make everything else run better. But that likely won't last either. The shine wears off, and all the same junk is still there.

In some cases, you might be able to see the problems right there on the surface. A muffler dragging on the ground, brakes yelping out to be serviced. That's when the trouble is easy to spot. But a lot of times, the issues that cause a lot of stress and uncertainty are known only to the person driving the car, or might not even be known to them. And next thing you know, they're idling on the side of the road, not able to go anywhere.

That's why maintenance is so important, you know? It's important to take care of your vehicle, both the parts other people can see and the parts they can't. It keeps small problems from becoming big ones, and if something unexpected should



## ONE MORE THING

By TYLER SJOSTROM

come up, you'll be much better prepared to address it and continue where you're headed. You always want to keep going, right? You'd hate to be stuck or stranded or feel like there's nowhere you could go.

That's why you've gotta remember, every other car on the road probably

has a problem or two that you can't see. It's important to remember that. That's also why you don't wanna gauge what you're driving against what anyone else is, because what you see only tells half the story. The same creaks and sputters that sometimes happen to your car might be happening to theirs as well. Might even be worse.

That's how it was toward the conclusion of my time with the red truck. I knew things were going to get worse before they ever got better. Every hour, that old truck seemed to be giving up just a little bit more. I'd be just hoping we could limp into the driveway by the end of the day, and that maybe the next would be somehow different. I just never knew how things might go once I'd turned the key.

That's why we don't have the red truck anymore. Not because I didn't like it, but because it really wasn't working for me like it used to. Because the problems you can't see usually become problems you can. And because sometimes, you've just gotta start fresh.

*Dad, are we still talking about your truck?*



*Tyler Sjostrom is an Appleton-based writer who will show you pictures of his kids whether you ask for them or not. Heckle him at [tysjostrom@gmail.com](mailto:tysjostrom@gmail.com) or read more at [tyler-sj.com](http://tyler-sj.com).*



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