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July 2025

Monthly

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# APL JUL



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ENTREPRENEUR, AUTHOR AND SPEAKER  
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Entrepreneur,  
Author and Speaker  
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## EDITOR'S NOTE



# ENJOY THE *Moment!*

If there's one thing I've learned this summer, it's that my calendar is a liar. It keeps pretending I have time

for everything—grilling, beach days, fireworks, gardening, reading ... Meanwhile, I'm over here just trying to find my lost sunglasses.

Luckily, our magazine is here to help you make the most of every sunshine-filled minute, starting with a toast from Chef Carly, who walks us through how to let wine do the talking—literally. Her food and wine pairings are as thoughtful as they are delicious, and she reminds us that, yes, the chef always deserves a sip for quality control. We don't make the rules, but we will follow them.

If wine is not your vibe, maybe ice cream is. Jenni takes us down a swirl-covered path through the history of the ice cream sundae (spoiler: it started right here in Wisconsin!) and into today's trendiest toppings. Whether you're a vanilla-with-fudge purist or building a three-tier masterpiece with bacon bits and gummy worms, Jenni delivers a whole scoop of joy.

Need a dose of patriotism with your snack? Tim is waving the flag and lighting the fuse in his Fourth of July roundup. He's got the history, the fireworks facts, and the lowdown on where to go locally to celebrate America's birthday in full red-white-and-boom style.

And finally, if your ideal summer moment involves less sparkle and more serenity, we've got you covered with a dreamy picnic guide that might just inspire you to finally use that blanket in your trunk for something other than impromptu car naps. From secret gardens to river views, these spots are pure, unplugged magic.

Here's to a summer full of flavor, fireworks, and finding your perfect moment.

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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### Ashley Schmit

Ashley Schmit, is owner of and full-time photographer at Debbie Daanen Photography. With over 20 years professional photography experience, Ashley stays busy with all sorts of photography projects, including providing the portraits for monthly article subjects to Appleton Monthly.



### Jamie Sheridan

Raised in Wisconsin, Jamie also resided in Minneapolis and Greater Seattle, where she launched her career in communications and freelance editing with several publications. She also enjoys photography, traveling and hiking with her family. Jamie contributes to Appleton Monthly with many feature articles.



### 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 recipes on Chef's Table and Carly's Pastries.

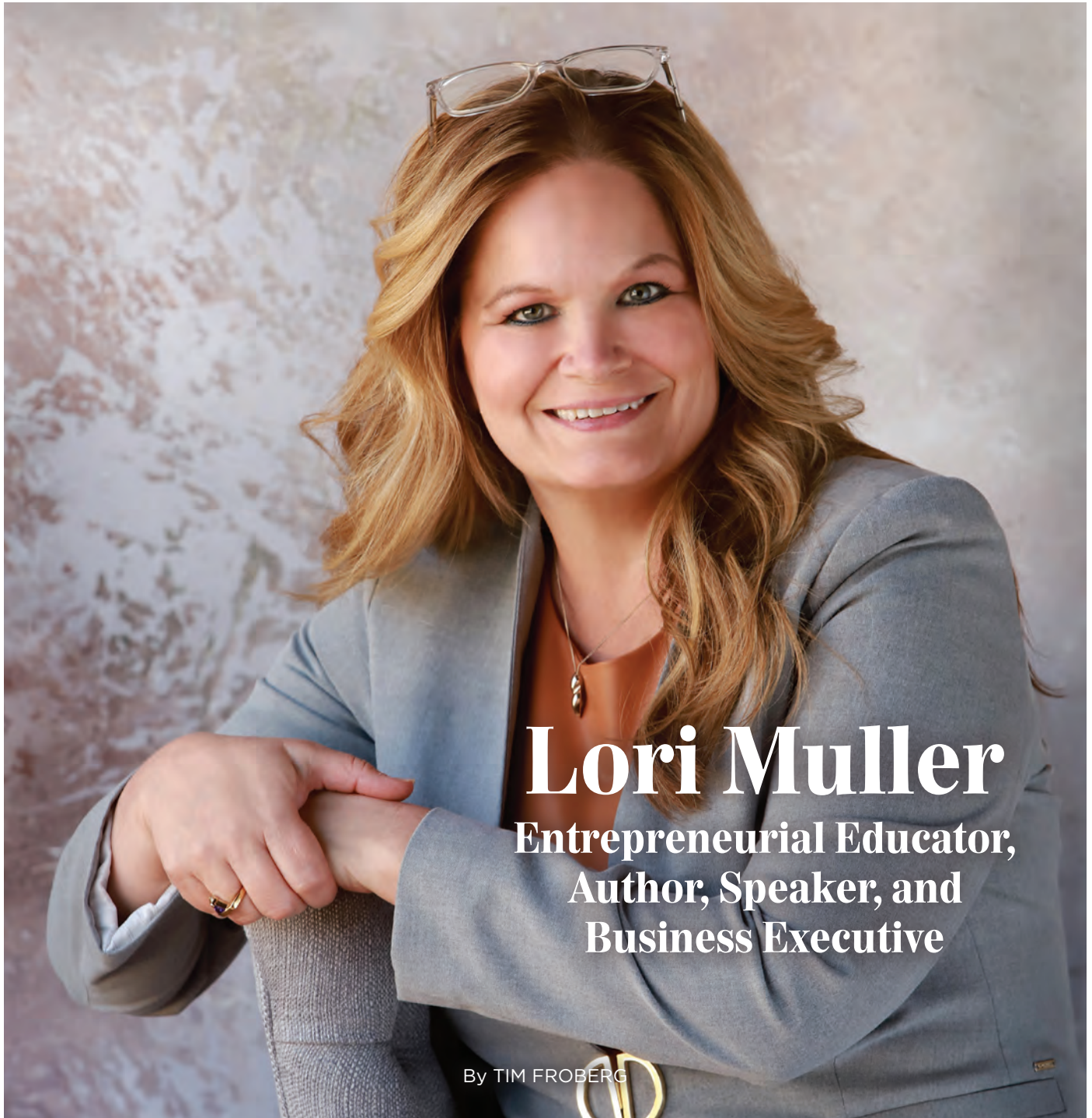


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Library Archives acknowledges  
Appleton Monthly Magazine



# VOICE

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**Lori Muller**  
Entrepreneurial Educator,  
Author, Speaker, and  
Business Executive

By TIM FROBERG



# REACHING HEIGHTS IN REAL ESTATE

## ENTREPRENEUR LEARNED KEY SKILLS IN FIRST JOB

By TIM FROBERG

**S**uccessful entrepreneurs and business leaders seldom start at the top.

Many smart, determined individuals like Lori Muller make Himalayan-like climbs after launching working careers at low-level positions.

Muller learned game-changing skills in her first job that helped her reach career heights she never imagined.

The Oshkosh native has done it all in real estate. She sold houses as an agent, led company teams, owned multiple branches, wrote books, served as a public speaker and worked as a top corporate leader.

Muller has handled the latter role so expertly that her name has appeared on lists including the Swanepoel Top 40 women executives in real estate and Swanepoel's Power 200 top real estate executives. Swanepoel annually ranks the most powerful and influential executives in the residential real estate brokerage industry.

Muller was also a HousingWire Vanguard winner (for outstanding leadership in the housing industry), an RISMedia Achiever (for excellence in the real estate industry) and a Broker of the Year recipient for the Central U.S. Region.

But the roots to her accomplished professional career go back to her first job as a door-to-door salesperson for the Hy-Pro Chemical Company. She sold a cleaning chemical for eight years. Pounding on doors to make a sale wasn't an easy gig, but Muller learned how





to handle rejection, read a prospective customer, and basically sell.

"It was literally knocking on doors," recalled Muller. "I was 19 years old, away from home, and it was the generation of no cell phones. I couldn't just call home if I needed anything. It was an interesting experience.

"What it taught me was that I could only rely on myself. I learned that if someone says, 'no,' it's not a personal rejection. Another important learning lesson was that the first 15 seconds of meeting someone are the most important."

Muller also learned how to rely on her observational skills. Prior to knocking on a door, she would scan the environment around her – much like a detective – and use whatever clues she could collect to assist her in the sale.

"When I was walking up to doors, I would look for different things I could clean because I was selling cleaner, right?" said Muller. "I would look for things like: Is there oil in the driveway? Is their brass kick plate dirty? Are their windows dirty? Does the patio furniture have mold on it? Do they have kids? If the garage door was open, do they play golf?

"I would try and pick up all those little things, so I could go to the door and be a solutionist. I would find a solution to their problem."

Muller turned what could be perceived as a nothing job into a school of knowledge and a money maker.

"When people ask me where I went to college, I always say the 'School of Hard Knocks,'" said Muller with a laugh. "People say, 'Gosh, that was a tough gig.' It was, but I was making a real good living because I was good at it."

That simple yet complex first job led to a distinguished career in the real estate industry that has spanned more than 20 years. Muller used the experience to land a sales job for Bemis Packaging in Oshkosh, then joined Coldwell Banker: The Real Estate Group where she served five years as a realtor and team leader. In 2007, she became a broker and owner of an Exit Elite Realty branch in Appleton – the first established in Wisconsin – and grew that to include two more area operations.

Corporate roles with a large international company followed and Muller kept raising her game by serving on various boards and committees. She has been a past president of the Women's Council of Realtors Wisconsin and has served on different committees of the National Association of Realtors, including the Realtors Political Action Committee.

"I didn't actually get into real estate until I was 33 and wish I would have gotten into it sooner," said Muller, a 1988 Oshkosh West graduate. "The reason I got into real estate was because there were people who nudged me and said, 'Hey, you would be great at real estate.'"

"I was working in corporate America and in a



corporate-structured environment, but I wanted to get back into that entrepreneurial environment. It was the nudge of people believing in me before I even thought about it. I immersed myself in the day-to-day grind of how people buy and sell houses. That gave me a deep appreciation of the power of relationships and the importance of earning profits."

Muller's mantra throughout her real estate career could be summarized in three words: listen, learn, and share.

"I think the reason I've been successful in this career and have taken it to different levels is really just being authentic," Muller said. "I have honed my skills, always tried to learn more and never believed I was the smartest person in the room."

"I'm always investing in myself so I can invest in others and give back. Not letting fear stop me has also been key because fear is temporary, but regret is forever. I never want to have any regrets."

Muller knows how to communicate her knowledge of real estate. She is a John Maxwell-certified mentor, trainer, and coach and has been a featured speaker at many real estate conferences for the past several years, including the National Association of Realtors, the Women's Council of





techniques I was able to draw from my decades of experience.

"That includes one of the toughest sales environments there is – door-to-door sales – and everything in the real-estate industry from running a team to owning multiple brokerages to seeing the big umbrella of the industry as a national leader. I took all of that and kind of wrapped a bow around it."

What is Muller's take on what is currently happening in the real estate industry?

"I think the industry is going through a major transformation with the recent class-action lawsuits that have sparked conversations about transparency and agents being able to articulate their value - and how we as professionals communicate our role during the transaction to show our values," Muller said.

"We're navigating a challenging market. The landscape has low inventory and with interest rates hovering around 7 percent, that's created more cautious buying. It's really slowed the pace of sales in many regions and in the country as a whole. We own a home in Florida and I'm really seeing that shift in Florida, Texas, and California.

"We haven't quite seen any big changes here yet in the Midwest, but there are more homes on the market, the days on the market are increasing and you're not seeing the multiple offers. It's really starting to change. You're seeing

that inventory increase and the conditions shifting to favor buyers. It's not a buyer's market yet, but it's also not ultra-competitive – that frenzy we've seen since basically the pandemic."

When she's not dealing with real estate matters, Muller enjoys golfing, gardening and outdoor activities with her family. She and her husband, Greg, are Black Creek residents. They have three children: Dakota, a Tampa, Fla. resident; Brody, 15, an avid golfer and hockey player who attends Appleton East, and Brooklyn, 13, who attends Xavier Middle School.

---

**"I want to leave the room in a better position than when I got into it. I try to pour all my passion of real estate into it and leave it all on the stage."**

---

*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.*

Realtors and brokers and agents across the country.

"I talk a lot in the realm of females in leadership positions and not just in the real estate industry," she said. "I try to deliver the message of knocking out the imposter syndrome and having the confidence in yourself to know 'Hey, I got this and I have this group behind me supporting me.'"

"I want to leave the room in a better position than when I got into it. I try to pour all my passion of real estate into it and leave it all on the stage."

Muller is also an author. She wrote a book, "Born to Sell: From Zero to Hero: Building Skills for Success" that was released in January. The book focuses on the mindset, habits and tools that drive sales results. It is broken down into 16 chapters, examining matters such as core values, personal branding, sales mastery, mindset shifts, accountability, time management, and self-discovery. The paperback can be purchased on Amazon. "Born to Sell" is the first of a series of books that Muller is writing.

"I actually started writing it about seven years ago and had never finished it," said Muller. "People have joked with me over the years saying that I was born to be in sales. But no, I wasn't born to be in sales. I learned a lot of different traits over the years and took what I've learned and created this blueprint for everyone in sales – whether you're new or a seasoned professional. I've broken it down into real-world strategies, mindset shifts, and skill-building



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By BRITTANY FRANCIOSI



As early as 200 B.C., the Chinese were writing on green bamboo stalks and heating it on coals to dry. Sometimes if left too long over the heat, the wood expanded and even burst with a bang. Chinese scholars noticed that the noises effectively scared off large mountain men.



Ice cream cones were invented in 1904 at the St. Louis World's Fair. The U.S. is the largest consumer of ice cream, with the average person consuming 23 pounds per year.



Independence Day celebrations date back to the 1700s. On July 4, 1777, Philadelphia put together elaborate Independence Day festivities. The celebration included a 13-cannon display, a parade, a fancy dinner, toasts, music, musket salutes, and of course, fireworks.

Frozen treats have been around for centuries. Ancient Romans were believed to eat ice flavored with fruit juice and wines, and Persians were known to enjoy a similar treat called sharbat around the same time. Arabs, who had plentiful dairy herds, adjusted the Persian recipe, adding milk and sugar.



Firework color concoctions are composed of different metal elements. When an element burns, its electrons get excited, and it releases energy in the form of light. Strontium and lithium compounds produce deep reds while copper produces blues.



The largest ice cream sundae was made by Palm Dairies Ltd. in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada on July 24, 1988. It weighed 54,917 pounds including the ice cream, syrup, and toppings.



Soft serve and regular ice cream have the same ingredients. But soft serve machines add extra air while freezing the mixture without a hard freeze afterwards, which creates a soft consistency.



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# MOBILE BANKING SECURITY BEST PRACTICES

By TIFFANY BINISH



As small businesses increasingly embrace mobile banking for its convenience and efficiency, the importance of robust security measures cannot be overstated. Cyber threats are evolving, and safeguarding your financial information is crucial. Here are some best practices to help you navigate the world of mobile banking securely and confidently.

## Utilize Strong, Unique Passwords

Protect your mobile banking accounts with strong, unique passwords. Avoid using easily guessable information such as birthdays or common words. A strong password should include a combination of letters, numbers, and special characters. Consider using a password manager to securely store and manage your passwords.

## Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA)

Two-factor authentication adds an additional layer of security by requiring not only a password, but also a second form of verification, such as

a text message code or a fingerprint scan. This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorized access to your accounts.

## Secure Your Mobile Device

Always lock your mobile device with a PIN, password, or biometric authentication. This precaution ensures that if your device is lost or stolen, unauthorized users cannot access your banking apps. Additionally, keep your device's operating system and apps updated with the latest security patches.

## Be Vigilant Against Phishing Scams

Phishing scams attempt to deceive you into providing sensitive information by posing as a trustworthy entity. Be cautious of unsolicited emails, texts, or calls requesting personal information. Always verify the source before clicking on links or providing any details.

## Use Secure Networks

Avoid using public Wi-Fi networks for mobile banking, as they can be easily compromised. Instead, use a secure, private network or a virtual private network (VPN) to protect your data from potential eavesdroppers.

## Monitor Your Accounts Regularly

Regularly review your bank statements and transaction history for any suspicious activity. Early detection of unauthorized transactions can help mitigate potential damage. Set up account alerts to receive notifications of any unusual activity.

## Educate Your Employees

Ensure that your employees are knowledgeable about mobile

banking security best practices. Regular training sessions can help them recognize potential threats and understand the importance of maintaining security protocols.

## Collaborate with Your Bank

Community banks are dedicated to assisting small businesses in navigating the complexities of mobile banking security. Establishing a strong relationship with your local bank can provide you with tailored guidance and support.

By adhering to these best practices, you can significantly enhance the security of your small business' mobile banking activities. Vigilance and proactive measures are key to protecting your financial information in the digital age.



*Tiffany is AVP of Treasury Management with 20 years of banking experience. She loves to collaborate with businesses to enhance efficiency and protect against fraud. Tiffany is active in our community, serving on the boards of the Ashwaubenon Business Association and Kiwanis Club, and volunteering for Junior Achievement of Wisconsin. In her spare time, she enjoys being outdoors and spending time with her family and friends.*



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# FEED YOUR GUT'S HIDDEN ALLY: MEET AKKERMANSIA

By ANGELA HALDERSON

When it comes to gut health, most people have heard of probiotics like *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium*. But there's another key player gaining attention in the world of microbiome science: *Akkermansia muciniphila*. Though hard to pronounce, this microscopic powerhouse plays a big role in your digestive wellness—and may even help with metabolism, inflammation, and immune function.

## What Is Akkermansia?

*Akkermansia muciniphila* is a beneficial bacterium that lives in the mucus layer of your gut lining. It's unique in that it feeds on mucin, a substance your body naturally produces to protect the intestinal wall. While it might sound strange that a bacterium eats your mucus, this process is a good thing. As *Akkermansia* consumes mucin, it stimulates the body to produce more—keeping the gut lining healthy, tight, and protected.

*Research suggests that people with higher levels of Akkermansia tend to have:*

- Lower levels of inflammation
- Better blood sugar regulation
- Reduced risk of obesity and metabolic disease
- Stronger gut barrier function

On the flip side, low levels of *Akkermansia* are often seen in individuals with inflammatory bowel conditions, insulin resistance, and gut dysbiosis. Have you seen my YouTube and Facebook feed? Then you know my GI Map stool test revealed no detectable levels of *Akkermansia*.

## Can You Rebuild Akkermansia?

Yes—you can feed and support

the growth of your own supply. It responds well to certain prebiotic-rich foods and polyphenols—natural plant compounds that help beneficial bacteria thrive. If, like me, your diet is rich in the following foods, but still struggles to test positive for *Akkermansia*, this bacteria strain is now available as a probiotic. Check out my GI Map results on YouTube to see how I am introducing *Akkermansia* back into my biome.

## Top Foods to Feed Akkermansia

Here are some everyday foods known to nourish *Akkermansia muciniphila*:

- Pomegranate: Rich in ellagitannins and polyphenols
- Cranberries (unsweetened or lightly sweetened): Contain polyphenols that support gut barrier health
- Green tea: Full of polyphenols and antioxidant catechins
- Red grapes and grape skin extract
- Onions, leeks, and garlic: Prebiotic fibers support mucin production
- Polyphenol-rich berries: Especially blueberries and raspberries
- Ground flaxseed: Provides fiber and lignans
- Omega-3 rich foods: Like salmon and walnuts

Diets high in fiber, low in added sugar, and rich in colorful plant foods appear to create the best environment for *Akkermansia* to thrive. Feeding *Akkermansia* should not sound daunting. Need a caffeine kick? Reach for some green tea. That is a one-two punch: feeding *Akkermansia* and

giving you an energy boost. Girls' night out? Cranberry juice and vodka ... in moderation, of course.

## Akkermansia-Boosting Gut Bowl

This easy breakfast bowl includes multiple ingredients known to feed *Akkermansia* while supporting digestion and blood sugar balance.

### Ingredients:

- ½ cup unsweetened plain kefir or plain Greek yogurt (for probiotics)
- ¼ cup pomegranate seeds
- ¼ cup blueberries or raspberries
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed
- 1 tablespoon chopped walnuts
- Sprinkle of cinnamon
- Optional: drizzle of raw honey or a few stevia drops

### Directions:

1. In a bowl, add kefir or yogurt as the base.
2. Top with berries, pomegranate seeds, ground flax, and walnuts.
3. Sprinkle with cinnamon and an optional sweetener.
4. Enjoy it as a nourishing breakfast or afternoon snack.

## Final Thoughts

Rebuilding *Akkermansia muciniphila* takes consistency, not perfection. Including gut-supportive foods regularly—especially those rich in polyphenols and fiber—can help coax this important bacteria back into balance. With every bite, you're not just feeding yourself—you're nurturing your internal ecosystem.

*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.*



# Back-to-School Blitz

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# UPFRONT

## Grace Bauer

Cardiovascular  
Operating Room RN  
St. Elizabeth Hospital

Many words describe Grace Bauer's job – exhilarating, rewarding, and nerve-racking to rattle off a few.

Boring, though, is not one of them.

Bauer is an operating room registered nurse at Ascension NE Wisconsin-St. Elizabeth Hospital in Appleton.

One of her primary duties is to assist surgeons during operations. She is part of the cardiovascular operating room team and often assists with open-heart surgeries, but is also involved with other complex operations.

Bauer has worked as a nurse since 2018. The Kimberly High School graduate started her medical career as an emergency medical technician before getting her LPN (licensed practical nurse) degree at the College of Menominee Nation and her RN at Fox Valley Technical College.

"My great grandma (Ruth) got sick when I was around 14 and I spent a lot of time with her and helped take care of her," said Bauer. "I really liked the feeling that I was helping her in ways that would make her smile. It gave me a purpose. That's what led to me entering the medical field."

Bauer enjoys spending her down time with her two sons, Hudson, 8, and Waylon, 6, who are involved in a variety of sports.

By Tim Froberg  
Photo by Ashley Schmit  
Debbie Daanen Photography



### HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE YOUR JOB?

"Our job is physically demanding and there are definitely high-stress moments. We're very structured, but you still have to be flexible because your schedule can change very quickly. You could be involved in a general operation and then get pulled out and have to get ready for an emergency heart that just came in. You have to be prepared without being prepared. We're always on our toes, always running around. It's very team oriented. We work very closely with our surgeons, anesthesiologists, CRNAs, surgical techs, and our first assists. Our team is very close. We do things together outside of work and have unique conversations because no one else would understand the things we go through."

### HOW TOUGH IS IT DEALING WITH THE WIDE RANGE OF EMOTIONS INVOLVED?

"It's emotional in many different ways. Sometimes we're the first ones to find out that a patient has cancer, or a bad diagnosis. If a patient has a terrible accident, we're the first ones to see them when they wake up. You definitely feel the adrenaline with this job, but I'm an adrenaline person. I really try to keep work at work because if you bring it home with you it really can affect your personal life. I've learned to take a deep breath before going into work because anything can happen."

### WHAT'S YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE IN THE OPERATING ROOM?

"I'll never forget my first open-heart surgery. I've done many of them and it never gets old, never gets boring. Our surgeons are hands-down amazing and it's the most rewarding surgery I've ever experienced. I've done hundreds of other operations, and nothing really compares to it. Besides that, my first organ donation case was unforgettable. It was a blessing to be a part of that. It's a beautiful thing to be able to give life to another person. And for the families of someone who has been lost, it's a beautiful thing for them to be involved, knowing they're saving lives when their loved ones could not be saved. Those are very sad but beautiful cases."

### WHAT WOULD YOU TELL A PERSON FACING AN UPCOMING OPERATION AT ST. ELIZABETH?

"I would say: 'You are in really good hands.' We are very lucky to have the surgeons we have in Appleton. The amount of skill and knowledge our surgeons have is just incredible. Our surgeons and our teams aren't just there for a paycheck. They are dedicated, love what they do, and love their patients. All patients get apprehensive about operations, but they should know they are getting very skilled and loving hands to help them."



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# GOOD STUFF

By MEGAN REINHOLD



## #READINGGOALS

### APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY SUMMER READING PROGRAM

If you love diving into a good book over the summer—or have kids who do—this is the perfect program for you! Head to the Appleton Public Library (or your own local library—many offer similar programs) and pick up or download a reading log. Start tracking your reads beginning June 21. There are options for all ages, from young children to teens and adults. It's a great way to stay inspired and keep those pages turning all summer long!

<https://govalleykids.com/summer-reading-programs/>



## COOL OFF

### KAUKAUNA POOL AND SPLASH PAD

Grab the family or a friend and head to Kaukauna for a refreshing way to beat the heat! The splash pad is open to the public for free during non-pool hours, making it a perfect spot for kids to splash and play. If you want to enjoy both the pool and the splash pad, you can access both during regular pool hours with paid admission. For open times and swimming fees, visit their website.

[kaukauna.gov/aquatic-center](http://kaukauna.gov/aquatic-center)



## TEE TIME

### EAGLE LINKS GOLF COURSE

Looking to try a new golf course this month—or return to an old favorite? Head over to Eagle Links in Kaukauna. With a beautifully maintained course and scenic views, it's a great spot to spend a sunny day on the greens.

[eaglelinksgolfclub.com](http://eaglelinksgolfclub.com)



## MOON WATER CAFÉ

If you're in the mood to try somewhere new—and support a great local business—add Moon Water Café to your list. This cozy hidden gem serves up homemade dishes in a warm, welcoming atmosphere. On sunny summer days, you can also take advantage of their outdoor seating and enjoy your meal in the fresh air.

[facebook.com/MoonWaterCafe](https://facebook.com/MoonWaterCafe)



## PADDLE IN FOX RIVER KAYAKING CO.

If kayaking is on your bucket list, be sure to check out Fox River Kayaking Co. They offer guided tours that let you explore the beauty of the river at your own pace. Visit their website for more information or to book your next adventure on the water.

[foxriverkayakingcompany.com](http://foxriverkayakingcompany.com)



## PARK IT

### STATE PARK PASS

There's so much natural beauty to discover—and a State Park Pass is a great way to make the most of it. If you visit a few parks throughout the year, it is well worth it. A local option is High Cliff State Park, but your pass gives you access to parks all across Wisconsin. Passes cost \$28 for WI residents and can be purchased online or at any state park.

[dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/admission](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/admission)



# TODAY

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4th  
Celebrations!




neuroscience group field

AT FOX CITIES STADIUM

By TIM FROBERG  
Photo By NICK GUENTHER, WISCONSIN TIMBER RATTLES



A vertical graphic of the American flag, showing the blue field with white stars on the left and the red and white stripes on the right.

# CELEBRATE

## AMERICA'S BIRTHDAY IN FOX CITIES

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*FABULOUS FIREWORKS TO  
LIGHT UP LOCAL SKIES*

---

By TIM FROBERG

**BIRTHDAYS BECOME LESSER EVENTS AS PEOPLE AGE, BUT INDEPENDENCE DAY IS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT MATTER.**

We celebrate America's birthday in grand fashion each year on July 4 with celebrations across our nation that include parades, barbecues, festivals, and fireworks.

The United States is turning a spry 249 this year and Uncle Sam loves a good party. So, enjoy your day off from work. Just remember why you have the day off. The Fourth of July is a federal holiday, bringing family, friends, and community members together to commemorate America's independence after breaking away from British rule in 1776.

It is also considered to be a celebration of summer across America. The Fourth of July falls smack-dab in the middle of the warmest of the four seasons and we should enjoy it because everyone knows time moves at warp speed after the Fourth. Blink a few times and suddenly Labor Day is here and that seemingly endless summer is approaching the finish line.

According to polls conducted by Harris and YouGov, the Fourth of July is ranked by Americans as their second favorite holiday behind Christmas ... and for good reason. Everyone loves barbecues, cold drinks, 80-degree weather, and spectacular fireworks shows. The Fourth also provides an opportunity for everyone in our sharply divided nation to agree on one thing: America is awesome.

So, slip on your red, white, and blue party shoes, fellow Cheeseheads, and make sure Old Glory is waving from your front porch.

Here's a brief look at the Fourth of July. Allow me to play U.S. history professor and drop in a few fun facts about our nation's birthday and those IFOs (identified flying objects) known as fireworks. I will also have updates on where to go and what to do on this festive holiday.





## DID YA KNOW?

- The actual vote to approve a resolution of independence from Great Britain by the original 13 colonies took place on July 2, 1776. The final wording was approved two days later, and the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4. It initially began as a letter to King George explaining why the colonies were declaring independence from Great Britain.
- The first Independence Day was actually celebrated July 8, 1776 in Philadelphia. The White House didn't celebrate Independence Day until 1804.
- Thomas Jefferson, who eventually became our country's third president, wrote the majority of the Declaration of Independence. He drafted the statement between June 11-28 and submitted it to John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, who made some revisions before submitting it to the Continental Congress. Jefferson was 33 when he wrote the Declaration of Independence.
- The first of the 54 delegates to sign the Declaration of Independence was John Hancock and he signed it with a large, bold signature. That's why his name is dropped when someone tells you to "put your John Hancock" on a document.
- George Washington is regarded as one of our nation's founding fathers, but the first U.S. president didn't actually sign the Declaration of Independence. He was the commander of the Continental Army and was defending New York City in July of 1776. Washington read the Declaration to his troops five days later on July 9.

## THE BIG BANG-BOOM THEORY

A Fourth of July without fireworks just isn't a Fourth of July.

These amazing aerial displays never seem to get old, but fireworks are actually quite old.

Historians say that fireworks originated in ancient China dating back to 200 BC. It is believed the first natural firecrackers were bamboo stalks that would explode with a bang when thrown into a fire – due to the overheating of the hollow air pockets in the bamboo.

The firecracker-fireworks phenomenon was taken up a notch when Chinese alchemists mixed potassium nitrate, sulfur, and charcoal to produce the first gunpowder. The powder was poured into hollowed out bamboo sticks (and later stiff paper tubes) to form the first man-made fireworks. The Chinese believed fireworks warded off evil spirits but also used them to celebrate weddings, births, and important events. They were eventually launched for entertainment in China's imperial court.

Fireworks made their way to Europe in the 13th century and were used for religious festivals and public entertainment by the 15th century. Famed Italian explorer Marco Polo was fascinated with fireworks and brought them from China to his home in Venice, Italy in his travels around 1292. Italy eventually became the first European country to manufacture fireworks. Various European rulers used fireworks to illuminate their castles, flaunt their riches, and entertain visitors on important occasions.

- Queen Elizabeth I of England was so enamored with fireworks that she created the title "Fire Master of England" to recognize the best fireworks creators. Early U.S. settlers brought fireworks to the new nation, and they were part of the first Independence Day celebration in Philly in 1776.
- Currently, all but three U.S. states – Massachusetts, Delaware, and Ohio – allow consumer fireworks.
- Consumers spend roughly \$662 million on fireworks each year.



## PROCEED WITH CAUTION

Two words should be emphasized when handling fireworks: be careful. In 2023, close to 9,700 Americans were treated in emergency rooms for fireworks-related injuries. Hands and fingers were the most common body parts injured (35%) followed by head, face, and ears (22%). An estimated 42% of emergency room-treated, fireworks-related injuries were burns.

While sparklers are often considered harmless, they can burn as hot as 2,000 degrees F and cause serious damage to the skin.

## TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

The Wisconsin Timber Rattlers put on a terrific show with every home contest, but expect Fang and the Rattlers to have a little more zip on their fastballs when they host Beloit in a 6:40 p.m. game on the Fourth of July.

It will be billed as Military Appreciation Night at Neuroscience Field at Fox Cities Stadium. A post-game fireworks celebration concludes the evening.

"It's Americana – baseball, hotdogs, and fireworks," said Timber Rattlers CEO and president Rob Zerjav. "It's tradition for a lot of people. They want to come out and see baseball and it's an easy way to see fireworks. You don't have to battle the crowds. You have a nice seat for the fireworks.

"It's really a weather-based day for us. If the weather is good, we'll do fantastic. If the weather isn't good, people aren't going to come out."



Nick Guenther, Wisconsin Timber Rattlers

## CELEBRATE IN OUR AREA

**Here is a list of some of the local fireworks shows and celebrations. All the fireworks are Festival Foods Fireworks displays.**

**Appleton:** Appleton will continue its long-standing, early-bird tradition of holding its annual fireworks display on July 3 – a day before Independence Day. It will remain at Memorial Park, starting at 9:45 p.m. No food or alcohol will be available for sale, and alcohol cannot be brought into the park.

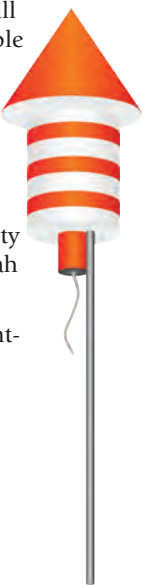
There will be no live music or food and beverage vendors as in past years. The Appleton Jaycees hosted a festival-type event for years before stepping down in 2023. The City of Appleton Parks and Recreation Department is now organizing more of a low-key event.

**Neenah-Menasha:** The Fox Cities' biggest Fourth of July party will be Community Fest: a two-day joint annual celebration shared between neighboring cities Neenah and Menasha on July 3 and 4.

Most of the activities – including live music, concessions, and children's face painting and games – will be at Neenah's Riverside Park and Menasha's Jefferson Park. Fireworks can be seen at both locations at dusk on July 4.

A cookout at Curtis Reed Square and the popular annual Parade of Lights in Neenah highlight the July 3 events.

Live music will be featured at both sites on July 4. Among the bands and acts







## FIREWORKS ON TV

If you don't want to fight the crowds or traffic and can't make it to a local fireworks show, a simple touch of a television remote will allow you to enjoy a few first-rate, big-city displays.

The annual Macy's fireworks show dates to 1958 and it's a sensational show – with live music and more than 60,000 shells and effects launched. It will be broadcast live on NBC starting at 8 p.m. central.

A Capital Fourth – featuring live performers and an outstanding fireworks show – is also a Fourth of July television staple on PBS, broadcast live from Washington, D.C. in the White House area at 7 p.m. (central). It will also be rebroadcast later in the evening.

Meanwhile, the Green Bay "Fireworks Over the Fourth" display will be broadcast live by television station WFRV Local 5.

performing will be Fox Cities Swing Band (Jefferson, 2:30-3:30 p.m.); singer-songwriter David Paul Martin (Riverside, 3:15-4:30 p.m.; Tribute to Elvis (Jefferson, 5-6 p.m.); Time Machine (Jefferson, 6-30-7:30 p.m. and 8-9:50 p.m.); Sly Joe and the Smooth Operators, Riverside, 5-7 p.m.); and the Neenah Community Band (Riverside, 7:45-9 p.m.).

The Webfooters Water Ski Show will also be held from 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Riverside Park and the Venetian boat parade will be held in Neenah prior to the fireworks.

The recreation departments from both cities co-sponsor the event.

"We always refer to it as two communities – one great event," said Michael Kading, parks and recreation director for the city of Neenah. "We're celebrating the greatest event in our nation's history. If you look at the Declaration of Independence, it was marked with fireworks and celebrations. So, we're continuing with that tradition from 1776."

**Green Bay:** The annual Fire over the Fox always draws an enormous crowd and offers a festival-type atmosphere with live music, food, and various events. It is held in downtown Green Bay in the waterfront area at the city deck, Neville Public Museum grounds, and Leicht Memorial Park.

More than 15 food trucks will be on hand and a beverage tent is available. There will be multiple music stages.

It is a free event and most of the activities start at 3 p.m., culminating with the fireworks at 9:45 p.m. Just remember that downtown traffic is usually quite heavy following the fireworks.

**Kimberly:** Kimberly will hold its Independence Day celebration on July 3 at Sunset Park. Live music, craft vendors, and giant inflatables will be part of the fun prior to the fireworks display at 9:30 p.m.

Kimberly Firefighters for Fireworks is hosting the event.

**Oshkosh:** Menominee Park will be the site of the Oshkosh celebration set for July 4. Multiple food trucks will be available, starting at 3 p.m. and the fireworks will launch at dusk.

**New London:** The annual fireworks show and celebration takes place July 4 at its usual home of Hatten Park. Gates open at 6 p.m. and concessions are available. The fireworks start at dusk.

**Hilbert:** A parade, picnic, and fireworks display – all on July 4 – highlight Hilbert's annual Independence Day party. The 11 a.m. parade is one of the largest in Wisconsin and travels down Main Street. A picnic at Civic Park follows and the 9:30 p.m. fireworks wrap up the festivities.

**Waupaca:** All of the events are set for July 4. A 10 a.m. parade from North Main Street proceeding south to Lake Street starts the day of fun. The Knights of Columbus annual chicken barbecue and hamburger lunch follows at South Park at 11 a.m. followed by a 6 p.m. water ski show. The fireworks display at dusk in the Shadow Lake-South Park area highlights the festivities.



# 'SYMPHONY UNDER THE STARS' DEFIES EXPECTATIONS

By JIM COLLAR

Shorts, T-shirts, and baseball caps are typically frowned-upon fashion choices for those enjoying an evening with the symphony. But then again, few orchestral performances feature shredding guitars or the distinctive thud of a well-charged Bratzooka.

It's a concept that Beethoven wouldn't have recognized, but I can't help but think he would have approved.

The Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra will return to Fox Cities Stadium on Saturday, July 26 for "Symphony Under the Stars," an annual concert event that defies expectations in all the best ways. From the ballpark atmosphere to the rock and roll arrangements, it's become a great Fox Valley tradition and one of the most awaited concerts of our summer season.

Accessibility is the most important feature. There are no tickets, and you can also park the car for free. But do arrive well in advance of the 7:30 p.m. start time if you hope to get the best seats.

Jamie LaFreniere, executive director of the orchestra, said a night at the symphony may not always be feasible for many in the community. But thanks to the generous support of sponsors including Network Health and Community First Credit Union, an evening of masterful musical performances is open for everyone to enjoy.

"You can bring your family of six, your office of 10 or your friend group of 20," she said. "We really want people to have a great night, and this event is really about bringing the community together."

LaFreniere, who is also editor in chief at "Appleton Monthly," said the concert is just as much a highlight of the season among the orchestra's 70 or so musicians.

The evening begins with performances from the MacDowell Male Chorus and the Fox Valleyaires. The orchestra starts their program with traditional symphonic music before turning to, shall we say, more familiar compositions. Accompanied by Russ & the Renegades, FVSO's self-created house rock band, the orchestra shows that they, too, have a wilder side with symphonic arrangements of rock and pop favorites.

At a prior performance, a symphony violinist made the bold transformation into country fiddle player during a rendition of "The Devil Went Down to Georgia." The crowd went wild for a stunning performance of Prince's "Purple Rain."

"Last year, we did Metallica's 'Enter Sandman,' and no one had that on their bingo cards," LaFreniere said. "We like to tear down the stereotypes."

It's not a big rock and roll concert without the pyrotechnics. As the music concludes, a stunning fireworks show provides the exclamation point to an incredible evening.



The annual concert has given many people an alluring introduction to our orchestra and a level of talent that's not often found in cities of our size. For regular patrons, the stadium concert has offered a fun and different kind of experience that showcases the versatility of its musicians.

All who attend can expect some pleasant surprises. The richness of orchestral instruments brings a new and exciting quality to contemporary music – and even to the songs that come up most frequently on our playlists.

"When you add that element, you're adding so many layers," LaFreniere said. "It's like experiencing your favorite song again for the first time."





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# REDEFINING DATE NIGHT AT THE FOX CITIES P.A.C.

By DARBY MCCARTHY

For Fox Cities couple Jake and Lane, setting out to plan a date night means seeking something affordable, local, and a little bit different.

That's why, they said, their whole world expanded when they took a chance on their Fox Cities Performing Arts Center.

Through a mix of options including world music, dance, and genre-bending live performances, the couple uncovered a vibrant, inclusive arts scene in their own backyard, as well as new layers of themselves and each other.

"Yeah, it's a reason to dress up and elevate your night out a little bit too... Appleton has great music scenes and great ways to explore the arts," Jake said.

With so many ways to enjoy a night out in the area, the spirit of exploration can be easily piqued. What the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center offers is a personalized reason to lean into that intrigue.

Through a Flex Pass package, patrons are invited to bundle tickets to shows in the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center Boldt Arts Alive! and Menasha Spotlight Series – mix and matching for up to 20% off on whatever catches the eye.

It also allows enthusiasts to select which available seats best suit their tastes, allowing them to sit back and experience the truly dynamic range of available options.

"He's always looking for interesting opportunities, things that are new for both of us," Lane said. "Exploring things that maybe I've had more interest in, he's had more interest in, just kind of being well-rounded as young people: That is important. We like doing that together."



Lane and Jake, Fox Cities P.A.C. Patrons

That spirit of curiosity is the driving inspiration behind a Flex Pass, which gives ticket holders the chance to build their own bundle of shows in advance, curating what's interesting to each person while offering the bonus of money saved.

A Flex Pass combination could include an acclaimed international dance company, a schoolteacher-turned-comedian, and a holiday rock fusion spectacle, for example.

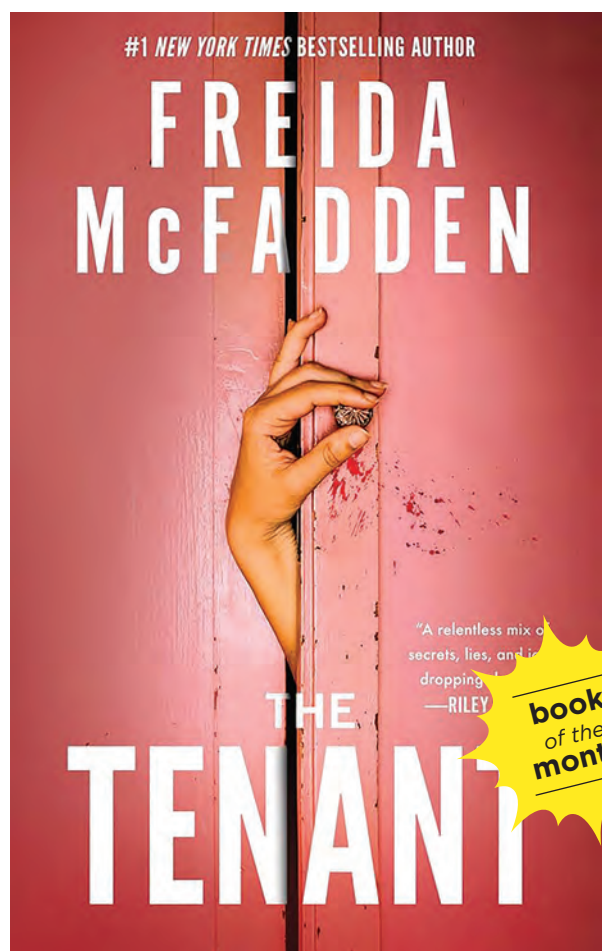
For someone like Jake, who says art emphasis was not part of his upbringing, exposure to a range of live experiences has felt like both a gift and a revelation.

"Seeing anyone indulge in their passions or something they've worked so hard at, no matter what it is, is really cool," Jake said. "So just being able to sit in front of them and soak that in is really awesome."

"There really is something for everyone," Lane agreed.

This season, say yes to more nights out: more shared discoveries, more unexpected beauty, and more of what makes Appleton feel like the vibrant, diverse home it is.

**Visit [foxcitiespac.com/flexpass](https://foxcitiespac.com/flexpass) to build your own adventure. Starting this month, single tickets for Arts Alive! and Spotlight Series shows are also available!**



## Freida McFadden

### *The Tenant*

PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER

Newly engaged couple Blake and Krista are scrambling to stay afloat after Blake is abruptly fired from his high-paying job. In a desperate move, they rent out their spare bedroom. Enter Whitney, a seemingly perfect tenant. But soon after she moves in, strange things begin to happen. Blake starts to question his reality and suspects Whitney may be hiding something. As tension builds, so does the danger. Will he uncover the truth before it's too late?



## Emily Henry

### *Beach Read*

CONTEMPORARY ROMANCE

January is a bestselling romance author who's lost her faith in love. Augustus is a celebrated literary fiction writer with a more serious edge. They couldn't be more different—except that they're spending the summer in neighboring beach houses, both struggling with writer's block. In a twist of inspiration (and maybe desperation), they agree to a challenge: swap genres and write something completely out of their comfort zones. What starts as a quirky deal soon turns into something much more in this witty, heartfelt, and surprisingly deep summer read.



## Lucinda Berry

### *One in Four*

PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER

Dr. Laurel Harlow never imagined herself on a reality TV show—but when she's invited to counsel former child stars battling addiction, she agrees to join the cast. As a chemical dependency counselor with her own past struggles, she seems like the perfect fit. But in true reality show fashion, everyone has secrets. When tragedy strikes, an investigation begins—and it becomes clear that someone on set may be hiding more than just a troubled past. With a potential killer among them, the line between help and harm begins to blur.

## T. Kingfisher

### *The Twisted Ones*

HORROR

Mouse assumes she is simply going to her late Grandmother's house to clear it out. She gets far more than expected when she discovers some dark secrets hidden deep in the woods.

## Lauren Roberts

### *Fearless*

FANTASY

Paedyn and Kai are once again reunited in the final book of the Fearless Trilogy. In a battle of love and obligation, each one of them will need to decide their priorities.

## Carley Fortune

### *This Summer Will Be Different*

CONTEMPORARY ROMANCE

Lucy is hoping to keep her promise, and to also keep some distance between her and Felix this summer. But plans and promises don't always go as expected.







## ROAD TRIPS!

Here we go, discovering the open roads in Wisconsin and the midwest! Our senior editor, Tim Froberg, takes us along for the ride to roads well-traveled and hidden gem destinations in our beautiful state.

It's the perfect time for that breakaway adventure! This must-read August issue will be **Easy to find. Easy to read.**

Plus, we will be featuring the BEST BBQ in the Fox Cities and checking in on the latest in bikes in the marketplace. Join us for your own adventure and travel with Appleton Monthly Magazine.

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# SUMMER 2025 SWIMWEAR TRENDS



By PHYLLIS COLLAR

**I HAVE BEEN WEARING MY FAVORITE BATHING SUIT FOR THREE SUMMERS AND COUNTING.** Wearing this swimsuit, I feel comfortable and confident. I know shopping for bathing suits is grueling, even more so than shopping for a pair of jeans. And what's with the lighting in those dressing rooms?!

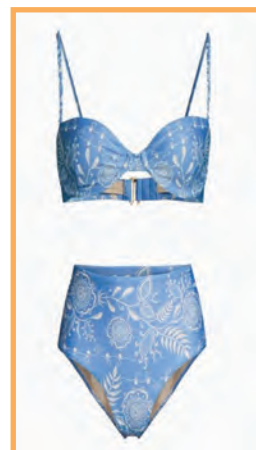
I assure you, one trend that never goes out of style is feeling great in the clothes we wear. Perhaps you will spot a novel version of your favorite swimsuit cut, color, or texture, with or without embellishments this summer! This season, high-impact accents can transform classic silhouettes.



**Frills, pearls, studs, and flowers;** on straps, or somewhere on the torso, these additions enhance a suit's look without sacrificing wearability.



Think bohemian style with a sophisticated touch. Modern silhouettes and simple shapes can be complemented by hand-dyed fabrics, crochet details, and nature-inspired color palettes. Brown is hugely popular this summer.



**Textured swimsuits** tell us that how a swimsuit feels is just as important as how it looks.

**Ruched swimsuits** add dimension to simple silhouettes. With more sculptural and intricate designs, underwire bikinis and draped one-pieces feature gathered details that blend vintage charm with a modern touch.



**Floral patterns, tropical prints, and vibrant colors** are essential for summer swimsuits this year. Diverse color combinations offer a distinctive style for anyone. Prints can be large or small and shapes can be vintage or modern.



There are plenty of suits in the sea this summer, and some are honorable mentions for me. *Enjoy choosing yours this year.*



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# ASK TAMMI

*Got questions for Tammi?*



My husband and I went to dinner at a nice restaurant. When it came time to pay the bill, which was about \$200, the waiter brought over a handheld credit card reader for us to swipe our card. We had not received any itemized bill showing our meal charges. When we inquired about one, he said he could only email us our receipt. Is it wrong for us to want to review our charges before we pay for them?

—Bethany O.

**DEAR BETHANY:** You should have the right to review your bill before you pay it! I have experienced the same issue and will not be going back to the establishment. I might take it a step further and let the manager know your disappointment in not receiving your charges and let them know you won't be returning to dine with them.



Our daughter brought her boyfriend home from college to meet us for the first time. They have been dating for about six months. We cannot pinpoint the specifics, but we just don't feel he is right for her. My wife thinks we should have a conversation with our daughter and express our concerns, but I am not sure that would be appropriate. What are your thoughts on how we can approach this situation? — Larry M.

**DEAR LARRY:** Good question. Since this is the first time you have met him, you should let things play out for now, unless you see some obvious red flags that your daughter is in danger. You have to trust your daughter's decision to date who she chooses. If you have concerns, I would keep a close eye on it and ask more questions; or, visit her at school and see if there truly is anything to be concerned about.

**Send your questions to Tammi, email at [tammi@appletonmonthly.com](mailto:tammi@appletonmonthly.com)**



We recently went on a couple's get-away with friends and one of the wives was on her phone with her adult children many times a day. It was very disruptive to our daily activities, but I didn't want to say anything to her. How can I address this with her for future trips? — Susie J.

**DEAR SUSIE:** I definitely think you need to say something if you plan to travel with this friend in the future. I would consider a couple of things when doing so. First, are the calls she is having with her kids necessary? For example, if the situation is imminent and requires the parent's attention to avoid a crisis, then by all means she should take the call. Second, if they are just chatting, maybe she could remove herself to a more private area to take the call as it is a distraction to the group.



## TURNING THE TABLES ON HUNGER



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Monthly

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# THE SCENE

Top 10 reasons to fill up your calendar this month

By MEGAN REINHOLD

## 1. COMMUNITYFEST

This fun Independence Day celebration takes place on July 3-4 at Riverside Park in Neenah and includes fun activities for all ages.

[ci.neenah.wi.us/departments/parks-recreation/communityfest](http://ci.neenah.wi.us/departments/parks-recreation/communityfest)

## 3. PAPERFEST

This free community event is July 17-20 in Kimberly's Sunset Park. The fun and activities are endless.

[paperfest.com](http://paperfest.com)

## 5. EAA AIRVENTURE

This year EAA AirVenture will be held July 21-27. You are able to claim your tickets online. There is plenty to be seen, and all air fanatics will be in their happy place.

[eaa.org/airventure](http://eaa.org/airventure)



## 7. FOND DU LAC COUNTY FAIR

Everyone loves a fair, and this month you can catch Fond du Lac's July 16-20.

[fonddulacountyfair.com](http://fonddulacountyfair.com)

## 9. MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY

Come on out to the ballpark and cheer on the Timber Rattlers during Military Appreciation Day on July 4. And, of course, expect fabulous fireworks.

[milb.com/wisconsin/ballpark/theme-nights-giveaways](http://milb.com/wisconsin/ballpark/theme-nights-giveaways)



## 2. LIFEST

If you're a fan of Christian music, add Lifest to your summer bucket list. Check the website for the lineup on July 10-13

[lifest.org](http://lifest.org)



## 4. CATFISH CONCERT

Greenville Lions Park is the place to be on July 12. Get your tickets online now for a night of music and fun.

[greenvillelions.wildapricot.org/concert](http://greenvillelions.wildapricot.org/concert)

## 6. ART AT THE PARK

Your new favorite work of art is waiting for you, so head downtown for a wide variety of styles and media on July 26-27.

[troutmuseumart.org/art-at-the-park](http://troutmuseumart.org/art-at-the-park)



## 8. BUILDING FOR KIDS CHILDREN'S PARADE

Do you and your kids want to participate in a parade? This free July 23 event (registration required) is for you!

[buildingforkids.org/childrens-parade](http://buildingforkids.org/childrens-parade)

## 10. MEMORIAL PARK FIREWORKS

Festival Foods will once again supply the fireworks on July 3 and Appleton's Memorial Park will be hopping!

[festfoods.com/fireworks](http://festfoods.com/fireworks)





## FREE MONTHLY EVENTS

**ALL STORES • 9AM - NOON**

**Jul. 12:** Kid's Fishing Day



**Aug. 16:** Touch a Truck Event



**Sep. 27:** Pumpkin Decorating



**Oct. 25:** Trick or Treat



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## Renard's Artisan Cheese: Wine and Beer Pairings

Since 1961, Renard's Cheese has been a family-owned and -operated business that is now in its third generation of cheesemakers. The Renard family is committed to continuing the tradition of hand-crafted specialty cheese while producing quality, gourmet cheese that is perfectly blended.

Renard's **Old-Fashioned Hoop Cheddar** won Best in Class, 1st Place in the 2022 World Championship Cheese Contest! The Hoop Cheddar is known for its rich, intensely tangy, nutty, and slightly salty flavor. It is milder and less sharp than most in this category but carries a pronounced cheddar taste.

- Wine: Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Syrah, Zinfandel, Pinot Noir
- Beer: IPA, Brown Ale, Amber Ale, Porter, Saison

In 2022, Renard's **New World Cheddar** won 2nd Place in the American Cheese Society's Sweet Cheddar category. It's a rich, robust, buttery cheese with a slightly sweet and subtle flavor and creamy texture.

- Wine: Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Riesling, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot
- Beer: IPA, Wheat Beer, Pale Ale, Brown Ale, Saison

**Door County Cherry Cheddar** is a delicacy that combines the savory and tangy notes of white cheddar with the natural sweet-tart flavors of cherries to create a delightful combination. The firm and crumbly texture of the white cheddar highlights the vibrant cherries

studded throughout.

- Wine: Pinot Noir, Riesling, Cabernet Sauvignon, Rosé
- Beer: Amber Ale, Brown Ale, Fruit-infused Beer

**Natural Morel and Leek Monterey Jack Cheese** blends the nutty, earthy flavor of morel mushrooms with the mildly sweet onion-like flavor of leeks, all complemented by the creamy, buttery base of Monterey Jack cheese.

- Wine: Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Prosecco, Pinot Noir
- Beer: Saison, Pilsner, Porter, Amber Ale, Brown Ale

The newest addition to Renard's lineup is **Butterkäse**, a semi-soft cow's milk cheese renowned for its mild, buttery flavor and creamy texture.

- Wine: Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Merlot
- Beer: IPA, Pilsner, Pale Ale, Amber Ale, Porter

**Renard's Legacy Blend** is a hand-crafted harmonious medley of sharp white cheddar and sweet, creamy, and slightly nutty Gouda. You will experience rich, dense flavors from the cheddar and creamy, buttery notes from the Gouda, making for a smooth and delectable experience.

- Wine: Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Prosecco
- Beer: IPA, Brown Ale, Amber Ale, Porter, Stout, Saison

Renard's **2-Year White Sharp Cheddar** is dipped in a protective layer of wax and aged the old-fashioned way for two years. The aging creates a complex flavor profile with a distinctive tanginess. It offers a pronounced sharp, savory, and nutty flavor. The heightened aroma and creamy, firm, crumbly texture gives it a unique quality and mouthfeel that is coveted in a finely aged cheddar.

- Wine: Chardonnay, Riesling, Prosecco, Sauvignon Blanc
- Beers: Belgian Ale, Amber Ale, IPA, Stout

**Terrific Trio Cheese** is a hand-crafted blend of Renard's white cheddar, Gouda, and parmesan. The sharpness of white cheddar mingles with the caramel undertones of Gouda and the richness of parmesan to create a harmonious mix of nutty, buttery, savory, and slightly sweet notes.

- Wine: Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet, Pinot Noir
- Beer: IPA, Oatmeal Stout, Brown Ale, Pilsner, Saison

*Renard's*  
ARTISAN CHEESE

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

# ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

## OUTSIDE SALES

Appleton Monthly is looking for experienced ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES to call on businesses in Appleton and Fox Cities. Full or part time.

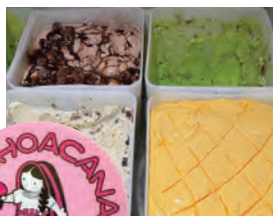
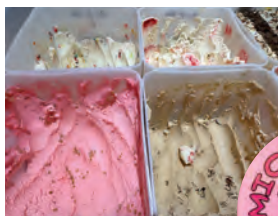
Please send letter or resume to Jon Croce, publisher, at [jcroce@appletonmonthly.com](mailto:jcroce@appletonmonthly.com) 920.707.0013

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Detail of "Loveland Pass in July"  
Painting in Oil  
by Lisa Geiger

"Lead Me"  
Painting in Oil  
by Lisa Geiger

## Meet Lisa Geiger Artist's Reception Friday, July 18 | 3-6pm

*Exhibit on display through August 2nd.*



Lisa Geiger is an artist whose work is deeply rooted in her Catholic faith and reverence for the beauty in nature. Based in Wisconsin, Lisa's work is inspired by Wisconsin's rolling fields, the stillness of northern lakes, and the grandeur of the mountains and foothills of America. Her use of light, texture, and color invites viewers into a moment of reflection.

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# GHOSTS WERE SCARY WITH SCHALOW AT THE HELM

By TIM FROBERG

July has arrived and mid-summer fireworks are popping. We use pyrotechnics to celebrate America's birthday along with other festive summer events.

I like to classify fireworks as either big bang beauties – the spectacular ones that draw the oohs and aahs from the crowd – or disappointing Fourth of July fizzlers.

It's easy to look at the sports world that way, too.

**Big bang beauty:** The stellar coaching career of Kaukauna boys' basketball coach Mike Schalow, who recently announced his retirement after 30 distinguished years with the Ghosts. The Fox Valley is losing one of its elite coaches in the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Hall of Famer. Schalow posted an outstanding 482-246 career record, won two state and six Fox Valley Association titles, and finished with 22 consecutive winning seasons in a powerhouse conference.

The man could coach. He could teach a refrigerator how to play basketball. But Schalow was more than just a skilled coach. As a local sports reporter, I covered many of Schalow's games and found him to be a humble man and a class act who never ducked postgame interviews – even in the wake of crushing defeats.

**Fourth of July fizzler:** Wisconsin joining 40-plus states in approving NIL (Name, Image, Likeness) for high school athletics. Wisconsin's prep governing board, the WIAA, claims NIL will impact only about 1 percent of state athletes and that they have enough rules in place to keep it in check. NIL is not the bogeyman and will not destroy Wisconsin prep sports. Still, it doesn't sit well with me. High school sports is the purest level of organized athletics and should be about learning lessons and the value of teamwork – not money-making opportunities. The latter can wait for an athlete's college years.

**Big bang beauty:** Sal Frelick's heart and hustle. Whether he's making a leaping grab at the top of the fence or diving head-first into third base, Frelick has become my favorite Brewer with his all-out effort and the way he conducts himself. Earlier this season, Frelick shook hands with a World War II veteran who used a wheelchair and called him a "superhero" and a "legend." That's the kind of guy I enjoy rooting for.



**Fourth of July fizzler:** The Devin Williams swap. It's been a trade without a winner. Williams has struggled mightily in the Big Apple and showed little resemblance to the premier closer he was in Milwaukee. Meanwhile, the return hasn't been great for the Brewers. Veteran lefty Nestor Cortes has missed most of the season with an elbow injury, while infielder Caleb Durbin has made just a minimal contribution.

**Big bang beauty:** Matthew Golden's positive first impressions. We'll see what happens when the pads and lights come on, but the first-round pick created plenty of buzz at Green Bay's OTAs. Veteran Romeo Doubs went as far as calling Golden "a stud." That's terrific because the Packers need a stud to solidify their so-so receiving corps and can't wait long on Golden.

**Fourth of July fizzler:** Aaron Rodgers signs with the Steelers. Good luck fitting a 41-year-old loose cannon into a highly structured, no-nonsense team environment. I don't think Mike Tomlin will be scheduling any darkness retreats if Pittsburgh stumbles out to an 0-3 start.

**Big bang beauty:** Tyrese Haliburton. The Indiana Pacers superstar was a legend at Oshkosh North and one of the best to ever bounce a basketball

in these parts. Haliburton's presence in the NBA Finals marked the second straight year that Northeast Wisconsin had a player in the Finals. A year ago, Sam Hauser made a solid contribution off the bench to help the Celtics win the NBA title. Hauser grew up in New London before moving to Stevens Point for his prep years.

**Fourth of July fizzler:** Giannis trade rumors. Let's give this a rest. On what planet would the Bucks receive adequate trade compensation for one of the NBA's elite players?

---

*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.*



# TASTE

SUNDAES! SUNDAES! 54 | SOUP & SALADS 58 | BEER + BREWING 60 | FOOD & DRINK 62



By CARLY CERNIGLIA  
Photo By CARLY CERNIGLIA



# What's for Dinner?

## Delicious Recipes with a Wine to Match

*Photos and recipes by* CARLY CERNIGLIA

My, my, my, where to begin? What's not to love about pairing wine with food? For many years I've been pairing dishes with various types of wine, cocktails, beer – you name it! It's safe to say it comes with the territory of being a chef. I've worked for many restaurants and wine bars and have really grown to love the creativity that pairing wine and food brings.



When it comes to pairing wine, I prefer to start with the wine first, then build the dish around the flavors. I like to taste the wine and let it speak to me; tell me how it feels, what it's thinking, what it wants to eat! More often than not, the wine knows what it wants. If you taste it, think "Man, I'd really like a bite of \_\_\_\_\_ with this," then you're probably right!

Over the next few pages, I've curated eight beautiful food and wine pairings that I hope you enjoy as much as I do. The best part is you don't need the exact brand names I have. These recipes are a great way to start learning how to pair wine and food, and finding what notes work well together. And if you're a little more experienced, I hope they provide a base to get creative and adventurous with your pairings!

This collection of recipes provides you with a few appetizers, entrees, and a dessert to ensure you have a good base for an entire wine-pairing dinner experience. I've also included a variety of dishes that range in origin, season, and mealtime! Who doesn't want to pair wine with lunch?

So, without further ado, it's time to dig out the wine bottle opener, turn on the oven, and get cooking!

And remember: the chef gets a glass while they cook – for quality control, of course.

Enjoy!

*Chef Carly*





# ***Seared White Fish***

## ***with Beurre Monte Sauce***



*Pair with riesling*



A delicate riesling steals the show when paired with a flaky, light fish filet topped with a fluffy beurre monte sauce. The sweetness from the wine pairs wonderfully with the buttery, toasty sauce and earthy broccolini. Beurre monte is an easy sauce that elevates any fish you pair it with. It is created by emulsifying butter and water, creating a thicker texture that helps cling to the fish. You won't be able to get enough of this decadently easy meal!

*Serves three*

### **Ingredients:**

Three pieces of white fish of choice (I used cod), halved  
1-2 tablespoons oil  
Salt and pepper to taste

### *For the Beurre Monte:*

3 tablespoons water  
8 tablespoons butter, cold, cubed

### *To serve:*

Broccolini, steamed  
Potatoes, roasted

### **Directions:**

In a nonstick sauté pan, heat oil until hot. Pat dry the fish with a paper towel and season with salt and pepper. Sear the fish in the pan until golden, flip and continue cooking until the fish reaches 135 degrees F, about 5-7 minutes. Remove the fish from the pan and set aside. Scrape out any large debris left from the fish and add the water. Once simmering, whisk in butter, one cube at a time until it completely melts. Do not stop whisking – this creates the emulsion. Once all your butter has been incorporated (about 5 minutes), remove from heat but keep warm.

Plate the fish and drizzle with the beurre monte. Serve immediately with a glass of riesling. Enjoy!



# Bolognese

## Ingredients:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
2 tablespoons butter  
2 ounces pancetta, diced  
One onion, small diced  
One stalk celery, small diced  
One carrot, small diced  
1 pound ground beef chuck  
½ pound ground pork  
One clove garlic, minced  
One bay leaf  
1 teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon pepper  
1 cup whole milk  
1 cup dry white wine (or red)  
One 28-ounce can Italian plum tomatoes with juices  
¼ teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg  
1 ½ pounds dried pasta, cooked  
Freshly grated parmesan cheese  
Fresh parsley, minced

## Directions:

In a large sauce pot, heat the oil and butter. Add pancetta and onions and cook until onions are caramelized. Add celery and carrot and cook until soft. Add beef and pork, cook until browned. Add garlic, salt, and pepper and cook for 1 minute. Add whole milk and cook until bubbled away completely. Stir occasionally. Once milk is gone, add dry white wine, nutmeg, and the bay leaf. Cook until the wine is gone. Add the tomatoes and simmer uncovered for 3 hours, stirring as needed. Add ½ cup water at a time to keep from sticking if needed (I did not need it). Season with salt and pepper and serve over pasta with plenty of parmesan cheese and a sprinkle of parsley. Serve with a sangiovese and enjoy!

*Pair with sangiovese*

If you love pasta, you'll love this recipe for Bolognese. This hearty meat sauce simmers for 3 hours, creating a velvety rich sauce that pairs beautifully with a glass of sangiovese. Sangiovese's herbal notes help highlight the earthy-sweet richness of the Bolognese. The wine's leathery-tobacco notes also help round out the meal with a body that can hold its own with the hearty pasta dish.

*Serves four to six*



# *French Bistro Salad*

## *with Goat Cheese Toasts*

Nothing pairs quite as beautifully as a sunny day with a French Bistro Salad, goat cheese, and a crisp chardonnay. The delicate bib lettuce is lightly dressed with a tangy house vinaigrette that sings with a subtle tarragon bite. The salad is perfectly balanced by the creamy goat cheese and warm, salty toast; rounded off by cutting through the flavors with the slightly buttery chardonnay. You'll be transported to the French seaside and wearing all white once you take a bite.



*Pair with chardonnay*

### **Ingredients:**

One head bib lettuce  
1 tablespoon minced shallot  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
1 tablespoon fresh chopped parsley  
2 tablespoons house vinaigrette (as follows)

One baguette, sliced  
4 ounces goat cheese, room temperature

### *House Vinaigrette*

¾ cup avocado or canola oil  
¼ cup red wine vinegar  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon pepper  
½ tablespoon dried tarragon  
½ tablespoon dried chives  
½ tablespoon minced shallot  
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

### **Directions:**

In a small frying pan, melt butter. Place baguette slices long side down in the butter and heat until golden. Flip and repeat. Remove from the pan and sprinkle it with a bit of salt. Spread with goat cheese.

Carefully tear the leaves of the bib lettuce off the stem. Wash and thoroughly dry.

In a 16 ounce Mason jar, whisk together house vinaigrette ingredients until thick and emulsified.

In a large bowl, toss lettuce, minced shallot, lemon juice, fresh chopped parsley, and 2 tablespoons of the house vinaigrette until evenly coated.

Arrange the leaves from biggest on the bottom to smallest on the top on the plate. Garnish with extra chopped parsley.

Serve with goat cheese toast and a crisp chardonnay. Enjoy!



# Gambas Al Ajilo

Spanish tapas call for Spanish wines! These gorgeous red shrimps are drenched in a garlicky paprika sauce that is delicious soaked up by a few good slices of baguette. This traditional Spanish tapa is so easy to make and is ready in a matter of minutes. The savory garlic oil, heat from the arbol chiles, and delicate seafood flavor of the shrimp pairs wonderfully with a spicy, dry tempranillo. So, let's do as the Spaniards do and enjoy this wonderful combo.

## Ingredients:

1 pound shrimp - cleaned as preferred  
One head garlic, (about 16 cloves or 2 ounces), minced  
½ cup Spanish olive oil  
1 tablespoon sweet paprika  
2 tablespoons dry Spanish sherry or sherry vinegar  
Zest from one lemon  
4-5 tablespoons freshly chopped parsley  
Two dried arbol chiles, sliced thin  
Salt, to taste  
Pepper, to taste  
Toasted baguette points for serving

## Directions:

In a cast iron skillet, heat oil until warm. Add garlic and cook for about 10 minutes until the garlic is golden brown but not burnt. Add in the sliced arbol chiles and paprika and cook for 15 seconds. Add in the shrimp and cook for 3 minutes. Flip the shrimp and cook for another 3 minutes. Add in sherry and cook until shrimp is cooked through (135 degrees F). Remove from heat and add lemon zest and parsley. Season with salt and pepper.

*Serve hot with the baguette points and tempranillo and enjoy!*



*Pair with tempranillo*



# Dan Dan Style Noodles

## Ingredients:

### *For the Meat Topping:*

1 tablespoon oil  
½ pound ground pork  
1 tablespoon garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon ginger, grated  
1 tablespoon soy sauce  
1 tablespoon Shaoxing Wine (sub dry sherry if needed)  
Pinch white pepper

2 ounces sui mi ya cai (sub rinsed, chopped kimchi or omit)  
2 teaspoons hoisin sauce

### *For the Dan Dan Sauce:*

½ teaspoon five spice powder  
1 teaspoon garlic  
2 tablespoons tahini  
1 ½ tablespoons light soy sauce  
1 teaspoon dark soy sauce (for color, omit if needed)  
3 tablespoons chili oil with chili flakes (or up to ½ cup if you like it extra hot!)  
¼ teaspoon ground sichuan peppercorns (omit if needed)  
2 teaspoon sugar

### *To Serve:*

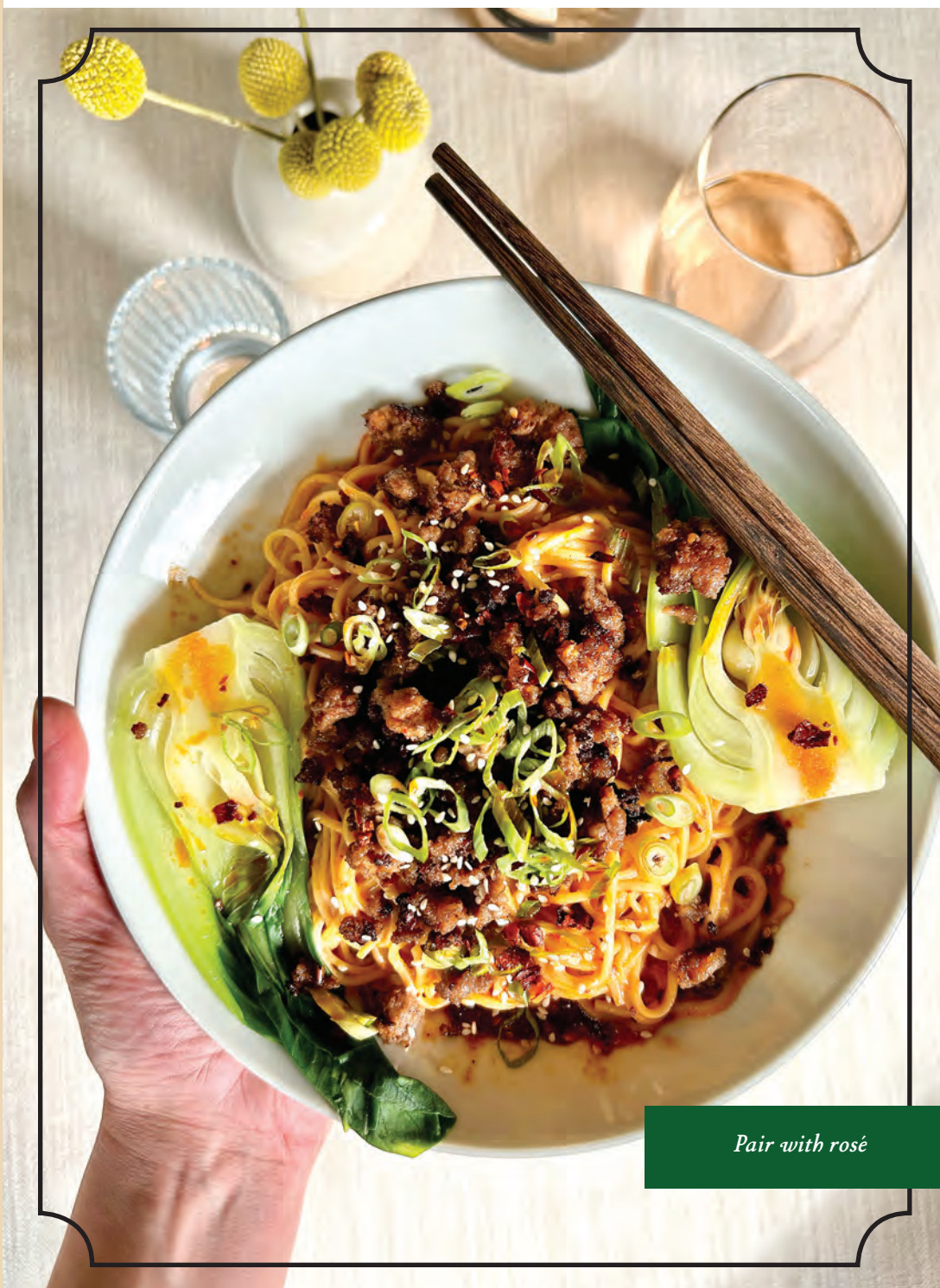
1 pound wheat noodles (sub spaghetti), cooked, ¼ cup cooking water reserved  
Steamed bok choy or spinach  
3 tablespoons dan dan sauce  
Scallions, sliced  
Chopped peanuts

## Directions:

In a medium sized frying pan, heat oil. Once hot, add ground pork. Break apart and cook until brown. Add ginger, garlic, soy sauce, Shaoxing wine, white pepper, and hoisin sauce. Cook, stirring, until meat starts to get crispy. Add sui mi ya cai if using it, and cook until heated. Set aside and keep warm.

In a small bowl, mix dan dan sauce ingredients. When ready to serve, add ¼ cup hot cooking water from the noodles into the sauce. Mix well. Add 3 tablespoons of the sauce to each bowl and top each bowl with hot noodles, then the meat mixture. Garnish with sliced scallions and chopped peanuts. Serve with steamed bok choy. Don't forget a glass of chilled rosé for the perfect accompaniment. Enjoy!

A crisp and refreshing rosé pairs beautifully with these spicy Dan Dan Style Noodles! The intense heat and slightly creamy sauce get cut by the mildly acidic rosé creating a beautiful pairing. These noodles are hot, hot, hot! But don't fret! Simply use less chili oil and adjust to your liking.



*Pair with rosé*







*Pair with merlot*

# Coq Au Vin

This rich wine-based French dish is a delicious meal that's bursting with flavor and comfort. Marinating the chicken in wine before you cook it gives a flavor kick that can't be beat. Pairing the meal with a glass of merlot rounds out the experience with its medium body and chocolate, plum, and bay leaf flavor notes. These notes bring out the earthy mushroom, savory onion, and rich tomato flavors in the sauce.

## Ingredients:

4 ounces pancetta, diced  
One medium onion, sliced  
Four chicken thighs  
Four chicken legs  
1 ½ cup red wine  
1 cup chicken stock  
¼ cup brandy  
Four medium carrots, thick sliced  
Four cloves garlic, minced  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
Eight sprigs fresh thyme  
8 ounces of mushrooms, halved and quartered  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon pepper  
2 tablespoons flour  
2 tablespoons butter, softened  
More fresh thyme for garnish



## Directions:

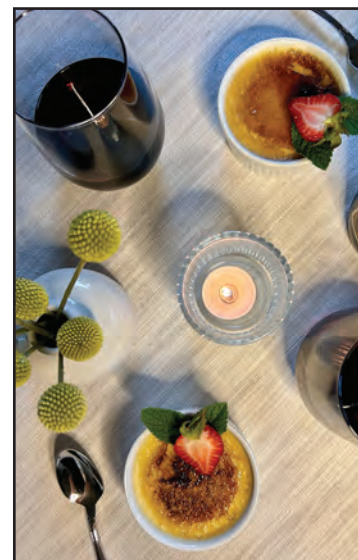
In a large bowl, mix chicken thighs, legs, red wine, chicken stock, and brandy. Let sit.

In a large Dutch oven, fry pancetta until crispy. Remove pancetta and reserve. Remove your chicken pieces from the marinade, saving the marinade for later, and sear the chicken in the pancetta oil. Once seared, remove the chicken and set aside.

Add the carrots and onions to the Dutch oven and cook, stirring often, until the onions start to caramelize (about 8 minutes). Add the garlic and mushrooms and cook for about 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste and the salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, until the tomato paste starts to darken. Add the reserved marinade to the Dutch oven and bring to a simmer for 5 minutes.

Return the chicken to the Dutch oven along with the thyme sprigs. Cover, and simmer for 20 minutes until the chicken reaches 165 degrees F.

In a small bowl mix the flour and softened butter until a paste forms. Whisk this into the sauce, it may be easier to remove the chicken while doing so. Let simmer for about 5 minutes until the sauce starts to thicken. Season with salt and pepper to taste (about 1 teaspoon salt) and add the pancetta back to the sauce. Plate and garnish with more fresh thyme leaves. Serve with a side of mashed potatoes and a glass of merlot. Enjoy!





# Italian Sausages with Peppers And Creamy Polenta

Often overlooked, Lambrusco is a bubbly red wine that pairs beautifully with a fatty meal such as an Italian sausage. Lambrusco has a more “rustic” flavor profile with fruity notes and a sweetness that make it a must-have for this dish. The simplicity of roasting tomato sauce makes this meal sing, while the creamy polenta helps to bulk it up.

## Ingredients:

Five Italian sausages, mild  
One large red onion, sliced  
Four assorted bell peppers, sliced  
Three garlic cloves, minced  
1 tablespoon butter  
One 14-ounce can plain tomato sauce  
¼ cup red wine  
¼ teaspoon oregano  
Salt and pepper to taste

## For the creamy polenta:

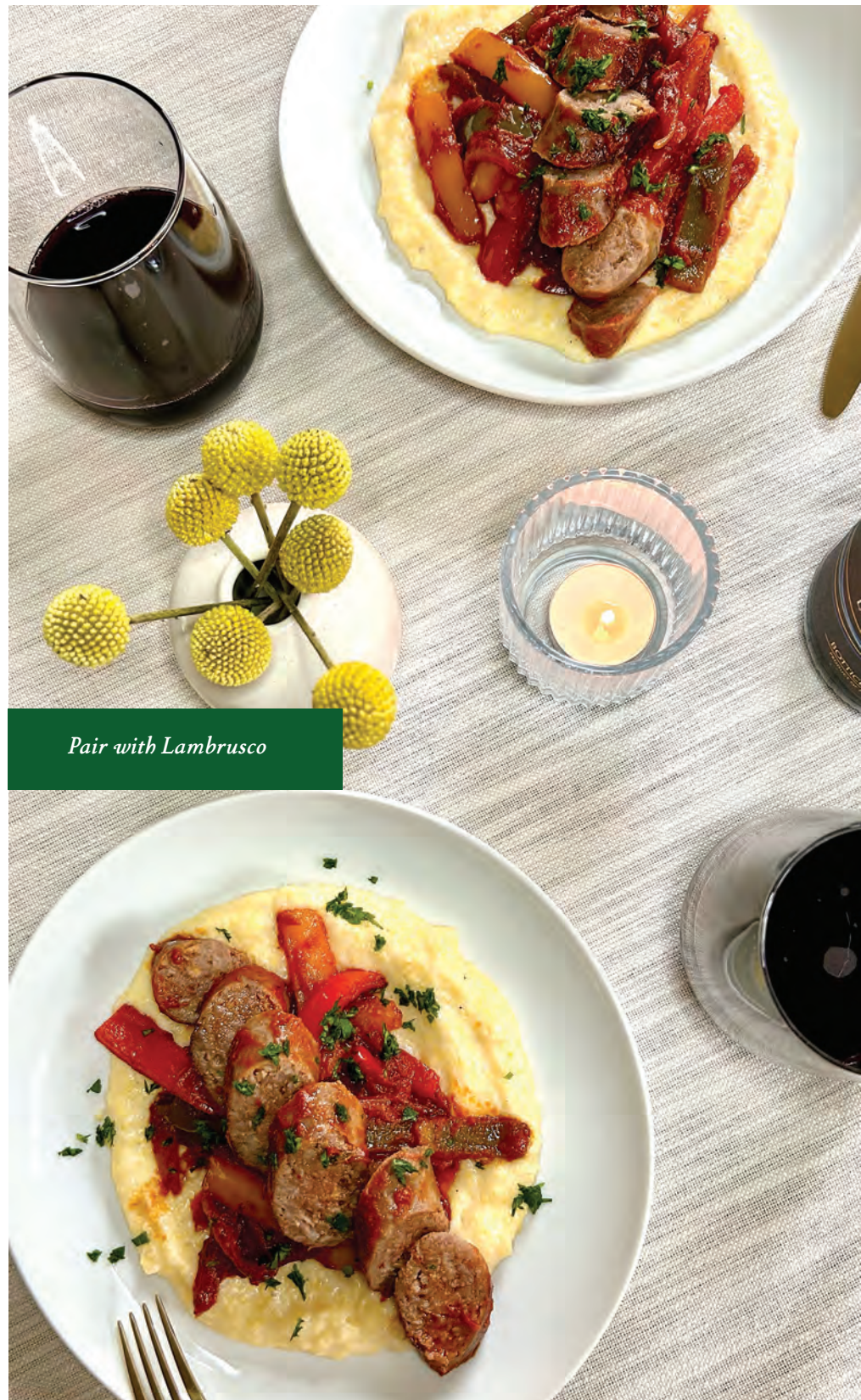
One 18-ounce tube pre-cooked polenta  
1 ½ cup milk  
2 tablespoons butter  
1 cup freshly shredded parmesan cheese  
¼ teaspoon garlic powder  
⅛ teaspoon black pepper  
Salt to taste

## Directions:

Heat a frying pan over medium heat and add butter. Once melted, fry Italian sausages until dark on both sides. Remove from the pan and add onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions start to caramelize and then add peppers. Continue cooking and stirring until the peppers are about halfway cooked. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add tomato sauce, red wine, oregano, and the seared sausages and let simmer until the sausages are done (155 degrees F), about 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, make the polenta. In a medium saucepan, break up the polenta with a wooden spoon and add milk. Heat gently and continue breaking up polenta until it is hot. Once hot, use a whisk to stir in the parmesan cheese, butter, and seasonings. Whisk until fully incorporated and smooth. Keep warm.

To serve, spoon a pile of polenta onto the plate. Top with the tomato pepper sauce mixture and sliced Italian sausages. Serve hot with a glass of chilled Lambrusco and enjoy!





This decadently creamy white chocolate crème brûlée is one of the easiest and most impressive desserts you can make! With just five ingredients, you can have a show-stopping treat that goes wonderfully with a glass of pinot noir thanks to its light body and flavor notes of dark, juicy red fruits.

*Serves five*

#### **Ingredients:**

Five egg yolks  
¼ cup sugar  
2 cups of heavy cream  
¼ cup white chocolate chips  
½ teaspoon vanilla  
5 tablespoons sugar

#### **Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F. Take out a 9-by-13-inch pan and set aside.

In a small saucepan, gently heat heavy cream and white chocolate chips until just starting to steam. Stir occasionally to help melt the chocolate. You want it hot enough to dip your pinky in for a few seconds, but not any hotter. No bubbles!

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk egg yolks and sugar together. Once the heavy cream mixture comes to temp and the chocolate is melted, carefully temper the cream mixture into the egg mixture. (This means slowly adding the hot cream while whisking the egg mixture). Stir in the vanilla paste and set five ramekins in the 9-by-13-inch baking dish.

*Put a kettle on to boil some water.*

Strain the crème brûlée mixture using a fine mesh sieve and divide evenly between the five ramekins. Place the baking dish on the middle rack of your oven, and pour the hot water into the baking pan, avoiding the ramekins, until the water reaches three quarters of the height of the ramekins. Bake for 25-30 minutes. The center of your crème brûlée should jiggle about the size of a quarter. Remove from the oven and let cool until you can handle them, then remove from the water bath. Let cool to room temperature, then wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

To serve, sprinkle 1 tablespoon of sugar evenly over the top of the crème brûlée. Broil on high for 3-5 minutes WATCHING CLOSELY until sugar caramelizes but does not burn. Remove carefully from the oven and serve with a glass of pinot noir. Enjoy!

# *White Chocolate Crème Brûlée*



*Pair with pinot noir*



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# Sundae Funday

## Scoops, Swirls & Sweet Surprises

by JENNI EICKELBERG

**T**here's something undeniably joyful about an ice cream sundae. Whether it's the swirl of whipped cream, the drizzle of hot fudge, or the cherry perched on top, sundaes are a dessert that invites indulgence, creativity, and nostalgia. While the exact origin of the sundae has been debated, one small town in Wisconsin proudly claims the title: Two Rivers.

According to local lore, the first sundae was served in Two Rivers in 1881 when a customer at Ed Berners' soda fountain requested chocolate syrup over a scoop of ice cream—an unusual request at the time. The treat became so popular it was soon offered every Sunday, eventually earning the name “sundae.” Today, Two Rivers celebrates this sweet legacy with pride, and visitors can even see a replica of the original soda fountain at the Washington House Museum.

But the sundae has come a long way since its humble beginning. At its core, a sundae is a simple concept: ice cream topped with syrup. Yet the possibilities are endless. Classic versions feature vanilla ice cream with hot fudge, caramel, or strawberry sauce, often topped with whipped cream, chopped nuts, and a maraschino cherry. But modern sundaes have evolved into elaborate creations that reflect regional tastes, seasonal ingredients, and culinary imagination.

Toppings now range from crushed cookies and brownie bites to fresh fruit, cereal, candy, and even savory elements like pretzels or bacon. Some sundaes are built in layers, parfait-style, while others are served in edible waffle bowls or Mason jars. The base itself has also diversified—many

shops now offer frozen yogurt, dairy-free alternatives, or even frozen custard.

Custard, in particular, has become a favorite in the Midwest. Made with egg yolks in addition to cream and sugar, frozen custard is denser and creamier than traditional ice cream. Its rich texture makes it an ideal foundation for sundaes, holding up well under warm toppings and mix-ins. The smooth consistency also allows flavors to shine.

One of the most exciting trends in sundae culture is the fusion of global flavors. From churro sundaes with cinnamon-dusted pastries to tropical versions with mango, coconut, and chili-lime seasoning, today's sundaes are as diverse as the people who enjoy them. Some shops even offer build-your-own sundae bars, where customers can mix and match ingredients to create their perfect dessert.

Whether you're a purist who sticks to hot fudge and vanilla or an adventurer piling on mochi, matcha, and marshmallows, the ice cream sundae remains a dessert that's endlessly customizable and universally loved. It's a dish that sparks nostalgia and brings people together—one scoop at a time. Whether enjoyed in a glass dish at a retro diner, scooped into a waffle bowl at a local fair, or served with a twist of cultural flair, the sundae is a symbol of indulgence and joy. And thanks to a little town in Wisconsin, where it all began, every bite carries a scoop of history. So, the next time you dig into a sundae, remember: you're not just enjoying dessert—you're tasting a piece of tradition.



# Charlie's Drive-In

Charlie's Drive-In  
806 W. Main St., Hortonville

**Tucked away in Hortonville, Charlie's Drive-In is a nostalgic gem that's been serving up smiles since 1965.** Owned and operated by the Mann family for more than five decades, this classic roadside spot is more than just a place to grab a bite—it's a celebration of Americana, community, and good old-fashioned fun.

Charlie's is beloved for its retro car hop service, frosty mugs of root beer, and a menu packed with comfort food favorites. But it's their ice cream sundaes that truly steal the show. Whether you're craving hot fudge, caramel, or strawberry, each sundae is piled high with creamy soft serve, rich toppings and whipped cream. It's the perfect treat to enjoy from the comfort of your car or at one of their outdoor picnic tables.

Adding to the charm are Charlie's themed events, like Classic Car Night every Tuesday, where vintage vehicles line the lot and guests with collector plates get a free root beer with a sandwich purchase. And don't miss Elvis Days, a rockin' tribute to the King himself—complete with music, costumes, and plenty of ice cream. This summer, Elvis Days will be held on August 12 and 13.

Charlie's isn't just a place to grab a sundae—it's a place where time slows down and traditions live on. Whether it's your first visit or your 50th, the charm, flavor, and fun keep you coming back for more.



Culver's  
Darboy, Appleton, Little Chute, Neenah,  
Grand Chute, and opening this summer  
in Combined Locks

## Culver's

**Culver's may be famous for its ButterBurgers and cheese curds, but no visit is complete without a taste of their rich, velvety frozen custard.** Made fresh in small batches throughout the day, custard from Culver's is smoother and creamier than traditional ice cream, making it the perfect base for their indulgent sundaes.

Culver's sundae menu offers something for every sweet tooth. The beloved Turtle Sundae is a fan favorite, combining roasted Southern pecans, hot fudge, and savory caramel over a generous scoop of vanilla custard, all topped with a maraschino cherry. It's a perfect balance of salty, sweet, and creamy in every bite.

Other sundae options include the Caramel Cashew Sundae, Strawberry Sundae, and the option to create your own with a variety of toppings like brownie pieces, candy, fruit, and sauces. Whether you're craving something fruity, nutty, or chocolatey, there's a sundae to match your mood.

Their sundaes aren't just an afterthought—they're a signature part of the Culver's experience, served with a smile and a cherry on top.



# Dick's Drive-In

Dick's Drive-In  
1718 Crooks Ave., Kaukauna

**Located in Kaukauna, Dick's Drive-In is a beloved local landmark that's been serving up smiles and sweet treats for decades.** With its retro charm and friendly service, it's the kind of place where summer memories are made—especially over a perfectly crafted ice cream sundae.

Dick's is known for its old-school drive-in experience, where customers can enjoy their food and frozen favorites from the comfort of their cars or at shaded picnic tables. But it's the ice cream sundaes that truly steal the show. Whether you're craving a classic hot fudge sundae or something more adventurous, Dick's delivers with generous portions, rich toppings, and creamy soft serve that hits the spot every time.

For those looking to elevate their dessert game, Dick's offers a lineup of indulgent Sundae Supremes. These deluxe sundaes include nutty favorites like Turtle, Almond Fudge, and Pecan Fudge, as well as creative combos like Blueberry Cream, Hawaiian Delight, and Cherry Fudge Nut. Each one is topped with peanuts, almonds, or pecans for the perfect crunch.

With its nostalgic vibe and commitment to quality, Dick's Drive-In continues to be a go-to destination for families, date nights, and anyone in search of a sweet escape.



# Frio Mexican Treats



**Frio Mexican Treats is a vibrant dessert shop in Appleton that celebrates Mexican heritage, family, and flavor.** Founded by a couple from Chihuahua, Mexico, Frio was created to share authentic Mexican treats and build a welcoming space for the community.

Their churro ice cream sundae is a standout—featuring a scoop of house-made ice cream inspired by Italian gelato and American classics, topped with a warm, cinnamon-sugar churro. The mix of hot and cold, crunchy and creamy, makes it a truly memorable treat.

What sets these sundaes apart is the variety of creative flavors. Guests can stick with classics like vanilla or chocolate, or explore bold options like mango chamoy, horchata, or strawberry cheesecake. Each sundae is fully customizable, offering a unique experience every time.

Frio is more than a place for dessert—it's a place to connect, celebrate, and enjoy tradition with a modern twist.

Frio Mexican Treats  
131 W. Wisconsin Ave.,  
Appleton



# Dairy Queen

Dairy Queen  
1813 N. Richmond St. and  
2000 S. Oneida St. in Appleton

Dairy Queen has long been a favorite stop for frozen treats, and in Appleton, the Oneida Street location holds a special place in history—it was the very first Dairy Queen in the state. Since opening its doors, it has become a beloved destination for families, friends, and ice cream lovers of all ages.

Among its most iconic offerings are Dairy Queen's signature sundaes, which combine creamy soft serve with rich, flavorful toppings. The legendary Peanut Buster Parfait is a standout, layering velvety vanilla soft serve with hot fudge and roasted peanuts for a salty-sweet experience that's been delighting fans since 1971. It's a perfect blend of textures and flavors in every spoonful.

Another classic is the Banana Split – a colorful and nostalgic treat featuring three scoops of soft serve nestled between a split banana, topped with chocolate, strawberry, and pineapple sauces, and whipped cream. It's a dessert that's as fun to eat as it is to look at.

Whether you're visiting for a quick treat or a trip down memory lane, Dairy Queen's sundaes offer timeless comfort and flavor where every bite comes with a scoop of local pride.



# Parker John's



Parker John's  
124 Main St., Menasha and  
2331 E. Evergreen Drive, Appleton

**Parker John's BBQ & Pizza is best known for its smoky, slow-cooked meats and hearty comfort food—but if you stop there, you're missing out on one of the menu's sweetest surprises.** While the barbecue is the main event, the desserts are a showstopper in their own right—especially the indulgent Iron Skillet Sundaes.

These sundaes are served warm and gooey in a cast-iron skillet, combining the rustic charm of comfort food with the decadence of a gourmet dessert. Each one starts with a fresh-baked cookie or brownie base, topped with a generous scoop of creamy vanilla ice cream, then drizzled with rich chocolate or caramel sauce. The warm-and-cold contrast, paired with the skillet's crispy edges and soft center, makes every bite unforgettable.

Whether you've just polished off a plate of ribs or shared a pizza with friends, Parker John's Iron Skillet Sundaes are the perfect way to end your meal. They're big enough to share—but you might not want to.

So next time you visit Parker John's, come hungry for the barbecue, but be sure to save room for dessert. Because at this Wisconsin favorite, the final course might just be the best part.



# HERBED TOMATO SALAD

By CARLY CERNIGLIA

*Bright and juicy tomatoes are the star of this delicious salad.* Bursting with flavor and fresh herbs, this marinated tomato salad is a wonderful addition to grilled meats or sandwiches! Creamy mozzarella and smooth avocado help boost this salad to the next level. And the pop of red onion ties the whole thing together. This is an easy addition to any meal, or add your favorite meat for a light meal!

## INGREDIENTS

Three large heirloom tomatoes, chunked  
½ medium red onion, sliced thin  
2 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped  
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped  
2 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped  
2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped  
Mozzarella, torn  
¼ cup olive oil  
¼ cup red wine vinegar  
Two garlic cloves, minced  
1 tablespoon honey  
2 pinches sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon pepper



## DIRECTIONS

Mix herbs, olive oil, red wine vinegar, garlic, honey, sugar, salt, and pepper. Add in sliced red onion. Stir to combine.

Arrange tomatoes on a serving dish with a lip. Sprinkle torn mozzarella over tomatoes. Pour onion mixture over the salad and toss to coat. Enjoy immediately or let rest for 20 minutes to marinate. Chill leftovers.



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# BEER AND FOOD PAIRINGS

By STEVE LONSWAY

When it comes to food and drink pairings, wines have seemed to dominate the conversation. But as craft beers become more available and more accepted, we sense a shift. Beer flavors are very diverse and offer a fun opportunity to find what your palette truly enjoys as it can be vastly different for every individual.

Beers, like wines, come in an array of flavors from light and refreshing to bold with full flavors. The most important thing to consider when pairing beers with food is deciding if you want the flavors to contrast each other, or complement. For instance, pairing a chocolate stout with chocolate cheesecake can work well if you're looking for the flavors to continue. Personally, I would

want it to contrast in this scenario. I would tend to lean towards a lighter lager or ale so that the beer can rinse my palette of the heavy flavors from the chocolate cheesecake. Conversely, pair a lighter dish like a summer salad of mixed greens, goat cheese and fruit with a heavy beer, and the heavy beer will just overwhelm the flavors. In this instance, I would recommend a sasion, farmhouse ale, or pilsner so that the flavors of the salad continue.

You also need to consider the complexity of the dish. If there are a lot of components in the making of the dish, sometimes the beer chosen can pair with some of the components and not all. This gives you a great opportunity to try a couple of different beers to really pinpoint what you enjoy most. I find that darker beers do not go well with fish. The acidity from the fish tends to really play with the flavors of these beers. I have learned to always use lighter to amber styles that do not have a lot of hop bitterness when pairing with fish.

Carbonation also comes into play in pairings. This is the true advantage that beers have over wines in pairing events. The carbonation, or fizziness in beers, really helps to cleanse your palate, allowing for a "refresh" to occur. This is the result I get when I follow up that bite of seafood with a light lager.

My go-to pairing is a nice spicy dish (think chicken tikka masala) with a highly hopped pale ale. The bitterness from the hops really enhances the spiciness of the dish, which makes you crave it more and more. Another guilty favorite of mine is a nice medium-rare grilled steak paired with an aggressive porter or oatmeal stout or even better, a smoked beer. Stone Arch's Scottish Ale is a really good food pairing beer. Because there are low hops, and thus low bitterness, it really complements a lot of dishes. It also has a slight malt sweetness and a faint smokiness in the finish which really allows it to pair well with a lot of different flavor profiles.

Have fun in your adventures of pairings. The results are fascinating!



*Steve Lonsway is the brewmaster and owner of Stone Arch Brewpub in Appleton. His passion shows in the beers he creates and in the national recognition he receives for them.*





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# Triple Berry Sparklers



When you need something that will keep the whole family—from the kids to the grandparents—hydrated, reach for this super-light, patriotic refresher. You can always swap out the non-alcoholic seltzers for anything found in your liquor store. The fresh and patriotic fruit colors add so much to this mocktail and it is perfect for a Fourth of July get together. Sip in the backyard, on a boat, or at the park watching fireworks!

## INGREDIENTS

*For the berry ice cubes:*

- 1 1/4 cups coconut water
- 1/3 cup blueberries
- 1/3 cup raspberries
- 1/3 cup chopped strawberries

*For the drink:*

- 2 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice

2 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

Three (12-ounce) cans seltzer

## DIRECTIONS

*Make berry ice cubes:* Place blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries in an ice cube tray, then fill with coconut water. Freeze until solid, about 4 hours.

*Make drink:* In a pitcher or large

measuring cup, combine honey with lime and lemon juices. Stir until honey is completely dissolved. Add seltzer and stir gently to combine.

Fill serving glasses with ice, then fill with the lemon lime mixture.

DRINK

# GRAPEVINE



SIP

## BLUET SPARKLING WINE

Canned wine is a convenient alternative in the summer when you're on the go. Toss a few in a cooler for a day at the beach or in a backpack for a hike. Each can contains more than a pint of Maine wild blueberries. The wine is crisp and low in alcohol, contains no carbs or sugar, and is packed with antioxidants.

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If the homemade salsa doesn't make you fall in love, the tangy vinaigrette and balsamic drizzle will. Top it off with your choice of grilled chicken or salmon for a protein-packed lunch or light dinner.

Best of all, take your summer dining experience outdoors and enjoy this salad on our brand-new patio.

This summer seasonal salad won't last forever! Stop by and savor the taste of sunshine before it's gone.

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## Summertime PICNICS



By JAMIE SHERIDAN



# PICNIC-PERFECT PARKS

by JAMIE SHERIDAN



## Picnic Essentials

**Water bottle** – remember, it can be refilled

**Backpack or handbag** – easy to pack, to carry in and to carry out (including wrappers)

**Sunscreen** – super important, even in the shade

**Blanket, beach towel, portable hammock** – Roll it up and pack it.

**Hand sanitizer** – for peace of mind before snacking

**Easy, Earth-friendly snacks** – granola bars, protein balls, veggie sticks, apples, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to inspire some childhood nostalgia, or take-out from a favorite restaurant

**Book, journal, sketchpad** – jot down and record sights, sounds and inspiration

**Camera** – capture a favorite scene to print and frame as a reminder of each picnic adventure

**W**isconsin captures the best of summer with its rolling hill topography, roaming freshwater rivers, numerous lakes, charmingly landscaped neighborhoods, and details only found in classic paintings or described in Jane Austen novels. Our cities and villages, each surrounded by pristine countrysides, are connected through thoughtfully planted parks and tree canopied rail-to-trail systems. The best way to experience these stunning views in our vast backyard can be captured with a picnic!

A perfect prescription for a designated pause, picnics aren't reserved for hopeless romantics. They're for anyone longing to step away in search of respite, inspiration, exploration, and best of all, connection with each other and with nature. The greater Appleton region is saturated with the most delicious picnic-perfect parks just waiting for the next big discovery.

You don't have to be an avid outdoorsperson to plan a picnic. Pretend to be a minimalist. Refrain from overthinking it and avoid setting a time limit. Whether it's that maple-shaded nook you notice during the morning commute or that dreamy swinging park bench you've been saving for another someday, gather some picnic basics (including this guide), or pick up your favorite take-out along the way. When you get to your picnic destination, find a spot, set your phone aside and commit to it five minutes at a time, focusing on the views and sounds. Release the worries of the day and embrace the moment. Expect the unexpected.



*"There's something for everyone in our city parks—whether it's a quiet walk beneath the trees, a game with friends, or a family picnic. Step outside and discover the beauty and energy waiting in every corner of our green spaces."*

DEAN GAZZA, CITY OF APPLETON DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION

# PICNIC-PERFECT PARKS OF APPLETON

## PEABODY PARK, APPLETON

Located along North Green Bay Road in the registered neighborhood of Peabody Park, this gem of an urban getaway is situated on a tree-lined ravine featuring a playground and picnic shelter. The park crosses the road where it runs along the northern edge of the Fox River with breathtaking views! A favorite spot for group photos at sunset, Peabody Park also attracts kayakers and fishing enthusiasts with plenty of space for a quiet picnic far from distractions.

## ERB PARK, APPLETON

One of the most sought-after neighborhoods for home-buyers surrounds this beautiful urban park! Home to the recently renovated Erb Pool, which offers summer swim lessons and the annual Bird Bath Invitational swim meet (July 13), this park has plenty of attractions for everyone including tennis and basketball courts and a soft-surface playground. Towering oak and hickory trees are what picnic lovers pine for all year, providing plenty of shade throughout this charming getaway.

## LUTZ PARK, APPLETON

Whether you walk from the beautiful Pierce Park or start from the bluff views at Alicia Park, the route via Mason Street on South Lutz Drive to Lutz Park is a must-see experience! Situated near the Appleton Yacht Club, the entire property is a picnic-lovers paradise with views in every direction. Lutz Park has a playground, a gazebo and a boat launch. Enjoy a picnic spot under a tree or on a swinging bench next to the Fox River. Then walk the fishing pier for views of river waterfowl against the backdrop of the Memorial Drive Bridge.

## MEMORIAL PARK, APPLETON

Home to an expanse of carefully planned community spaces and the City of Appleton Parks and Recreation Office, Memorial Park is a perfect landing spot for picnic enthusiasts. With plenty of parking lots and paved trails, this park has a fishing pond, the Scheig Garden Center, ballparks, three playgrounds and its landmark sledding hill. Picnic tables and benches are plentiful as well as shaded grass areas from tree-lined forests and just-right trees for hammocks and inspiration.



Peabody Park



Erb Park



Lutz Park



# PICNIC-PERFECT PARKS OF THE GREATER APPLETON REGION



Black Otter Park

## BLACK OTTER PARK AND ALONZO PARK, VILLAGE OF HORTONVILLE

The picnic gazebo and kayak launch area at Black Otter Park serves as a recreational and nature access point with a surprising view of the ever-serene Black Otter Lake. Connected by a charming walking bridge, Alonzo Park has a fabulous new play area for younger park enthusiasts with its own picnic options for young families.



Alonzo Park

## RIVERSIDE PARK, KAUKAUNA

Some parks are worthy of a picnic any time of year! Riverside Park, located at Wisconsin Avenue and Riverside Drive in Kaukauna, belongs in a 1950s film or a Norman Rockwell painting. In the summer, catch a local softball game from a picnic spot on the hill above the diamond in the bowl. Walk beneath enormous maple and oak trees creating a most magnificent ceiling of summer and fall foliage. The River Street entrance offers a quiet riverside picnic experience with a boat launch and fishing piers.

## DOYLE PARK, LITTLE CHUTE

While this seemingly hidden-gem park is known for hosting the massive, annual Great Wisconsin Cheese Festival each June, the beauty of this space is all about location! The pool, courts and stage area make it an all-inclusive day trip for regulars but also features quiet spaces for those looking for pause. Doyle Park connects to nearby Heesakker Park via the Island Park trail system, for an entire picnic excursion.



Riverside Park

*"We recognized the need to update Alonzo Park by adding modern amenities that will benefit Hortonville families for generations. The addition of the splash pad and large playground provides activities for children of all ages and abilities to enjoy during their visits."*

NATHAN TREADWELL, VILLAGE OF HORTONVILLE  
ADMINISTRATOR



## JEFFERSON PARK, MENASHA

The updated Jefferson Park is a jaw-dropping feast for the eyes! With a brand-new playground, ballfield, renovated pavilion, and a social space with a stage, firepits and bocce ball courts, this park has become a vibrant community destination. A new pavilion will also open after the annual, Neenah-Menasha CommunityFest Fourth of July celebrations (go to: [nmcommunityfest.org](http://nmcommunityfest.org) for more details). Jefferson Park is well maintained with mature trees and ample space for solace seekers to enjoy a quiet break along the walking trail tour on the northern shore of Lake Winnebago. With its iconic swimming pool and plenty to explore at any age, this park is an all-day summertime go-to. Be sure to pack enough sunscreen to stay a while!



Jefferson Park

*"Designed for comfort and connection, Jefferson Park is the perfect place to picnic with the blend of natural beauty and upgraded amenities. With a revitalized boat launch arriving in late 2025 and a brand-new pool on the horizon, there's even more to look forward to."*

MEGAN SACKETT, CITY OF MENASHA DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND FORESTRY



Kimberly Point Park

## KIMBERLY POINT PARK, NEENAH

The Kimberly Point Park Lighthouse beckons visitors to witness the sunrise from across the lake above High Cliff State Park. The lakeside parking is ideal for a car picnic lunch break or, park the car and take a picnic bag for a stroll through the beautiful Riverside Park with its sunset views of downtown Neenah. The awe-inspiring picnic options are endless!

## MEMORIAL PARK, NEENAH

Accessible from two locations, the south section of the Neenah Memorial Park and its landmark hill, features open spaces and play equipment. The north section, nestled along a wooded area with a connecting trail system, features soccer and baseball fields and play equipment. A quiet sunset picnic on the hill or along the tree lined trail offers a truly unforgettable summertime experience!

## RIVERSIDE PARK, OSHKOSH

The beautiful Riverside Park at 101 Ceape Ave. in Oshkosh feels worlds away yet close enough to find parking and an easy stroll to a restaurant for a take-out picnic. Along the Riverwalk Trail find a spot where the Fox River meets Lake Winnebago on a quiet afternoon or moor along the docks during one of the summer concerts at the nearby Leach Amphitheater.

*"Grab your picnic basket, soak in the scenic waterfronts, and make the most of Neenah's stunning parks!"*

MICHAEL KADING, CITY OF NEENAH  
DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION



## BUTTERMILK CREEK PARK, FOND DU LAC

Once home to a manmade island, this popular park, at 700 S. Park Ave. in Fond du Lac, was renovated to retain its landmark hill with views of Pier Elementary School and quiet surrounding neighborhoods. A picnic shelter, a playground and tennis or pickleball courts, make this a great picnic spot for quiet reflection or family gatherings. Buttermilk Park is conveniently located less than a mile from Gilles Frozen Custard drive-in—a picnic-perfect treat!

## CALUMET COUNTY PARK HARBOR, HILBERT

The Calumet County Park Harbor, located at N6150 County Road EE in Hilbert, has the most incredible sunset views along the eastern edge of Lake Winnebago! The chapel area, located above the harbor, is available to rent for wedding services or gatherings, but when not in use, it's open to the public. The chapel area bluff view offers an unforgettable picnic experience! Or, enjoy a picnic along the lakefront where swings, playgrounds, and park benches trace the shoreline. The county park includes 82 campsites and only charges fees for camping and boating. Visitors can enjoy a series of mountain biking and hiking trails looping through the Niagara Escarpment as well as a boat launch with kayak rentals. Parking is free!

## HIGH CLIFF STATE PARK - UPPER PARK DAY USE AREA, SHERWOOD

High Cliff State Park is for nature lovers who enjoy endless picnic options. Managed by rangers and park staff as well as the Friends of High Cliff, this state park features 120 campsites and three picnic shelters (lower, pine and upper pavilion) available for reservation. Visitors can explore its five trail systems, playgrounds and beach access at the northeast curve of Lake Winnebago. To picnic along the breathtaking bluff of the Upper Park Day Use Area, take the roadway up to the Tower Parking Lot or hike the Redbird Trail. Day parking passes or 12-month passes are available to purchase at the entrance.

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*"Picnic opportunities are plentiful throughout the park and vary by whatever scenic sight you want to enjoy. Using contributing funds to match the Wisconsin DNR Knowles Nelson Stewardship grants, the Friends of High Cliff State Park have purchased many new ADA compliant picnic tables which are available at the shelters and strategically placed all over the park for great views."*

FOHC BOARD MEMBER

---



Buttermilk Creek Park



Calumet County Park Harbor



Newton Blackmour State  
Trail and Duck Creek Trail

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**BUBOLZ NATURE PRESERVE**, at 4815 Lynndale Drive, offers year-round access to maintained trails and picnic spaces throughout this sprawling property.

**NEWTON BLACKMOUR STATE TRAIL AND DUCK CREEK TRAIL**, east from the Seymour trailhead, toward Green Bay is a peaceful stretch for walking or biking, with beautiful picnic and photo opportunities along the way!

**PITTSFIELD TOWN HALL PARK ON THE MOUNTAIN-BAY STATE TRAIL**, at 4862 Kunesh Road has a humble picnic spot under a grove of trees with views of the Wisconsin countryside.



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# VOIGHT MAY BE SAYING FAREWELL TO NATURE CENTER

By TIM FROBERG

Jack Voight can tell you more than just the ABCs of butterflies.

He can explain the XYZs of these beautiful, winged wonders.

Voight and his wife, Marty, are the founders and owners of Friends of Butterflies Inc.; a serene seven-acre nature preserve and nonprofit organization in Appleton created to inform and educate the public about butterflies, bees, hummingbirds, insects, and even reptiles like snakes and turtles.

The Voights opened the nature center for its 13th season in early June. It is open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. through Aug. 30. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

The nature center is one of the largest of its kind in the Midwest and usually draws between 5,000 to 7,000 visitors annually. It is home to hundreds of butterflies and up to 15 different species, including the star attraction, the monarch.

The large hoop house – which allows guests to interact with butterflies and snap photos – is a popular place to visit along with a honey bee observation hive, a two-mile butterfly-shaped maze, and a half-mile walking trail highlighted by a pond with a waterfall where guests can feed koi fish.

The nature center is available to school and nature groups and for corporate events, weddings, birthday parties, and other social activities.

"We've had visitors from so many different places over the years, including many people from different countries," Voight said.

Voight grew up in Shiocton and has been fascinated with butterflies and nature in general since his childhood.

"I still have my original butterfly collection from 1959," said Voight.

"It's a hobby that I've turned into something for the community to enjoy."

This may be the final season for the Voights at Friends of Butterflies Inc. Voight is seeking a buyer for the nature center so that he and Marty can enjoy their retirement years. A long-time businessman and former politician who once served as Wisconsin's state treasurer, Voight also oversees Vets and Friends Coffee House in Appleton.

"I'm going to turn 80 soon and my enthusiasm is high, but my energy is low," Voight said with a chuckle. "My wife feels the same way. We need to retire. We are seeking a new owner and operator."

The Voights have poured their heart and soul into the center and are hopeful their successor will be dedicated to sharing the wonders of nature with the public.

"We hope the new person or organization will continue this community asset enjoyed by thousands of people," Voight said. "We hope the future will be in the best interests of the public as well as for monarch butterflies."

"This is a community center, and we hope to find a buyer who is committed to run the type of program we've had at the gardens. We want people to continue enjoying the various things nature can offer and have the chance to interact with butterflies, insects, plants and animals."

Voight added that he would be more than willing to remain active with the gardens and assist a buyer initially as an on-site consultant.

"I have certainly enjoyed the opportunity to have a butterfly nature center for the community," Voight said. "I thank everyone who has been involved in our gardens the past 13 years – everyone



who has been a volunteer and everyone who has visited us. My wife and I will continue raising monarchs, but not at the level of what is needed to run a good nature center."

Until a buyer is found, it will be business as usual at the center. A new beekeeper, Larry Cain, will work with the honeybee hive. Cain has been a beekeeper for years and was a former president of the Fox Valley Beekeepers Association. Through Cain's work, the public will get the opportunity to view honey bees making honey in their enclosed observation hive.

Voight added that all volunteer workers will be welcomed. To inquire about volunteering, contact Voight at 920-733-2929 or email him at [friendsofbutterflygardens@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofbutterflygardens@gmail.com).





PHOTO BY JOHN VAN DEN BRANDT  
WILD WIND IMAGES

## *The Spirit of* **FC**

By JOHN VAN DEN BRANDT

Rising with the sun is an essential part of a wildlife photographer's job, surprisingly more of a perk than a downside. Summer sunrise in the field is a breathtaking experience. Bird calls fill the air like the acoustic chaos of an orchestra tuning up. The first shafts of golden light spill over the horizon, transforming the rising mist into wispy curtains of light. Birds take flight, perfecting the scene's beauty with their presence. Yet, few people are willing to sacrifice a few hours of sleep for the privilege of witnessing the magic of daybreak. This summer, choose a day, set your alarm, and don't look back. When it sounds off in the morning, forget the snooze button and get those feet on the floor. Congratulations; the hardest part is over. Now, get out and create a summer memory as you experience a glorious sunrise from an overlook, wetland, hiking trail, or even from the seat of a canoe. Summer has never looked so beautiful.



# Understanding Spaying and Neutering

By DR. JIM ZIEGLER

In the world of animal rescue, spaying and neutering pets is essential. Ideally, this should be done prior to the pet being adopted, or under a contractual agreement that is monitored and enforced by the adopting agency. The reason for this is to ensure that unwanted litters of kittens or puppies do not result from adopting out intact animals.

To accomplish this, shelters and rescue groups perform what is called early age or pediatric surgery. Puppies and kittens can be spayed and neutered as young as 8 to 10 weeks of age. This type of policy has greatly reduced the number of pets entering shelters over recent years, which in turn has greatly lowered the number of animals being euthanized.

This does not mean that there is no longer a problem. It has simply reduced the magnitude of the problem somewhat.

Spaying and neutering in private veterinary practices is rarely done in pets this young. The best age to spay and neuter a pet has been a controversial topic. For large breed dogs, current



recommendations are to wait until 1 to 2 years of age. This is for health reasons such as orthopedic health and a slight reduction in certain types of cancers. There may be other benefits to delaying a procedure if another surgical procedure may be performed at the same time, such as doing a stomach tuck in large to giant breed dogs to prevent bloat. Even in smaller breed dogs, waiting ensures that they lose all their baby

teeth (retained baby teeth in certain breeds is common) thus avoiding the need for a separate anesthetic event to remove the teeth.

Given all the various factors, owners need to follow the advice and guidance of their veterinarian when making this decision after getting a new puppy or kitten. In the rescue world, the best course of action is to perform early age spay and neuter surgeries. The question then comes up if this is in any way detrimental to the pet. In my opinion, it is not. Thousands of early age spay and neuter surgeries are performed daily across the country.

The incidence of problems associated with this are minimal, and the benefit of reducing shelter intake and reducing euthanasia is so very important. In several ways, spaying and neutering can be considered a lifesaving event.

*Jim Ziegler DVM joined the Fox Valley Humane Association in 2021 as the Medical Director following a 34-year career in private veterinary practice.*

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**Buckethead**

Buckethead is a 2-year-old neutered male Labrador Retriever mix. He is intelligent, eager to please, and he may do well with a dog friend and proper introductions.



**Taz**

Taz is a 1.5-year-old neutered male German Shepherd mix. He is the life of the party and enjoys long games of fetch and training. He would thrive in an active home! He has previously done well living with children of all ages.



**Oboron**

Oboron is a 4-year-old neutered male. He is a playful cat who does not pass up a chance to cuddle. Oboron is FIV positive. Cats that are FIV positive still often go on to live long healthy lives, and Oboron doesn't let it slow him down!



**Noweena**

Noweena is a 15-year-old cat looking for a comfortable home to live out her golden years. She is a sweet older lady with a gentle temperament. She will need to be kept on a kidney diet lifelong.



# Growing Roses in Midwest Gardens

By HOLLY BOETTCHER



For years I was reluctant to attempt roses. My perception was they were too much work and extremely finicky to coax into bloom. About 13 years ago, the attraction of having them in my gardens overtook my hesitation.

Roses are symbols of love and thought to be cultivated in China over 5,000 years ago. They are part of a huge botanical family with over 3,000 species known as Rosaceae (pronounced "rose-ay-see-eye") which include species known as food and ornamental crops.

There are enough classes of roses to fill many pages. When I decided to grow roses, the first thing I did was choose which type I was interested in, such as potted roses or bare root roses. Of course, I tried some of both.

## Bare Root Roses

The biggest advantage of purchasing bare root roses is the wide selection of varieties. They also can be ordered online, and at a huge cost savings compared to buying potted roses. Bare root roses are packaged while they are dormant, so they need to have their roots soaked before planting to wake them up.

## Roses in Containers

Container-grown roses are abundant in garden centers in the spring. They are "leafed out" and usually have plenty of blooms calling out our names. They can be planted both in the ground or transplanted into a larger pot. Choosing the right type of rose is important in making this decision.

## Planting in Containers

Roses such as floribundas, and miniature roses work great to plant in a pretty container to place on your patio or porch. Make sure the container has plenty of drainage. Since miniature roses have smaller root systems, they make a great addition to your outdoor space. But keep in mind they will not survive if left out in our extreme Wisconsin winter. After a few mild frosts in the fall and once they have

dropped their leaves, bring them inside and keep them in an unheated area such as a corner of your basement or garage.

## Planting in the Ground

Planting the bare root rose or container rose in the ground requires some careful planning. Read labels and make sure you choose an area that gives them plenty of room to spread out. Most rose varieties require at least six hours of full sun each day. Well-drained soil that is plentiful in organic matter is essential to the success of growing roses. Make sure when digging the hole, you make the space large enough to accommodate the root system. Mix compost, peat moss, or some well-rotted manure in with the soil you removed from the hole. In our climate you should cover your rose with soil making sure the crown is between two and three inches below ground level.

## Fertilizer, Insects, Disease

To keep your roses blooming, they need a monthly application of fertilizer. Yes, organic is always better. To control insects, I prefer Neem or insecticidal soap. However, with the infestations of Japanese beetles over the past few years,

I had to switch to an all-in-one fertilizer that also treats for insects and diseases such as powdery mildew or black spot. I begin this monthly treatment in April and discontinue applications in August to allow my rose bushes to slow down and reach dormancy over the winter.

## Water

Roses need about an inch of water per week, so if rain doesn't take care of that, water deeply every week during hot weather.

## Pruning and Deadheading

Pruning should be done in early spring. And to keep them blooming, take the time to properly deadhead on a regular basis. You will notice there are leaf sets of three and leaf sets of five on each stem. When you deadhead, cut above the five leaf sets and you will be amazed at the difference this makes to keep your roses looking pretty and blooming profusely.

Growing roses seemed like a big step when I first planted them, but now that I have experienced their gorgeous blooms, the feeling of pride has dispelled all reluctance. Is this the year you are going to give them a try?



# AT THE END OF THE DAY(CARE)

On an August morning almost six years ago, my wife and I found ourselves giving each other the sort of ineffective kitchen pep-talk we'd someday ineffectively give our sons. "I think I'll keep it together," I lied. "I think he'll do really well there," my wife told herself (and me, to a lesser extent). And then we loaded 9-month-old Ellis into the car and drove in total silence to his first morning of daycare.

Two weeks from this writing, our younger son, Theo, will wrap up his own tenure in daycare. In so doing, my wife and I will put a bow on the tender period when our boys went from diapers to pull-ups to regular old skivvies. We no longer have kids in daycare. We made it. And as this chapter comes to a close, I find myself digging through a mixed bag of emotions.

On one hand, I won't miss the sheer cost, which crept well over \$2,000 per month when both boys were enrolled. On the other, we sure got a great return on that investment.

For new parents sending a kid to daycare, you tend to grow on a parallel track to the child you're dropping off. We all go into the experience pretty green, and core skills are being developed by all parties involved. Our lads went from functional helplessness to being responsible young citizens of the planet; after these six years, I must say that I can relate.

This came to mind as I watched my older son's 5k graduation a few days ago. Many online commenters will tell you that ceremonies such as these are pointless and unnecessary, and I can certainly understand why someone might feel that way. I disagree, but I understand.

But mileposts such as these – an end of daycare enrollment here, a 5k ceremony there – don't just signal an era's end for the kids in question, not by a long shot. Watching our son beaming and searching for our faces among the multitude, it felt for a minute like my wife and I were graduating as well.

We were graduating from a time when

That's the dance I've been doing as I've prepared myself for what comes next. I love that our kids are dressing themselves and cleaning their messes with some frequency. Truly, I do. But I also know this means I'm going to be needed less, and I can't say I've hated being needed. And while I love seeing my guys become independent in ways big and small, I can't say I love what it ultimately means.

"I can't wait until our kids are out of daycare," I used to say. I suppose I probably meant it. But that doesn't mean we aren't grateful for the experience and grateful to the teachers who did such a fantastic job of getting us all here. It doesn't mean we won't miss it.

The world turns, and dominos continue to drop. That's the way of it. And next fall, I'll be dropping off both boys at a real school, with backpacks and recess, and a whole new list of mileposts to clear.

I think I'll keep it together. I think they'll do really well there.



## ONE MORE THING

By TYLER SJOSTROM

going out to dinner usually meant chasing our kids around a restaurant for an hour before bringing our food home in a box. From a time when their world wasn't nearly as big as it's about to become. From a time when the questions they ask don't sometimes come with hard answers. It's a bittersweet graduation, is what I'm saying.



*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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