

Autumn Bridal
Section INSIDE



THE SPIRIT *of Geneva Lakes*



Vol. 27 No. 10

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OCTOBER 2015



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\$188,900 Connie Poggensee 262-215-7644

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BRUCE HEARD *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

Autumn epitomized

It's October and nothing captures the simple beauty of the season like bright orange pumpkins, hay bales, corn stalks and cute kids chomping on colorful, crisp apples. This seasonal display – and the kids to go with it – are supplied by Pearce family of Williams Bay. The Pearce children (from left) are: JR holding Freedom, Brayden and Jake. See page 7 for more on Pearce's Farm Stand and Estate of Terror.



IT'S COMIN' UP

OCTOBER EVENTS

2 River's Edge Art Walk – Absolutely Waterford's fourth annual art walk where artists display and sell their works in downtown Waterford's businesses from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. (262) 534-9000, www.absolutelywaterford.org

2-3 Army Lake Camp's Corn Maze and Haunted Hay Ride, 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Fridays and 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Saturdays. Also on Oct. 9-10, 16-17, 23-24, 30-31. Attendees are also invited to explore the courtyard, which includes concessions, bounce house, wagon rides, pumpkin patch, climbing wall, corn cannon, pedal cars and games. The cost is \$8 for adults, \$5 for children 5-12 and free for children younger than 4. In addition this year will be the Haunted Hayride both Friday and Saturday nights from 8:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., \$8 for adults, \$5 for children 5-12. The camp is at N8797 Army Lake Road, East Troy. (262) 642-6400, www.armylakecamp.org

3, 10, 17, 24 East Troy Electric Railroad Dinner Train, 5 p.m. Two-hour excursion offers a gourmet four-course meal and a full cash bar overlooking Phantom Lake. Boarding is at the East Troy Depot at 2002 Church Street. The train takes a leisurely trip to Phantom Lake, pauses on the shoreline, and then returns to East Troy. Regular dinner trains make no station stops or stopovers. Tickets are \$68.25 per person (plus tax). (262) 642-3263 or visit www.easttroyrr.org

3-4 East Troy Electric Railroad Fall Foliage Trolley Ride. Trains depart eastbound from the East Troy Depot at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1, 2 and 3 p.m. and westbound from The Elegant Farmer at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1, 2 and 3 p.m. (not round trip). Fares are \$12.50 for adults, \$10.50 for seniors and \$8 for youth 3-11. Children younger than 3 ride for free. (262) 642-3263. Also offered on Oct. 10-11, 17-18, 24-25, 31-Nov. 1.

9 Harvest Fest, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Kishwauketoe Nature Conservancy, 251 Elkhorn Road, Williams Bay. Cookout, DJ and bonfire. Bring chairs. www.kishwauketoe.org

10-11 Lake Geneva Oktoberfest Celebration – Pumpkin giveaway, food,

pony rides, bouncy houses, magicians and face painting. 262-729-9872, www.lakegenevawi.com

10 Dinner on the Farm, 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Yuppie Hill Poultry, W1384 Potter Road, Burlington. Call Lynn at (262) 210-0264 to make reservations. www.yuppiehillpoultry.com

11 Harvest Bounty Buffet, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Old World Wisconsin, W372 S9727 Highway 67, Eagle. Adults \$45; Children (12 and under) \$25. Reservations are required by calling (262) 594-6301. www.oldworldwisconsin.org

17 GALA Charity Auction at Rumpoles, Twin Lakes. Open bar from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. with appetizers. Buffet dinner catered by Twin Lakes Country Club at 7 p.m. www.twinlakeschamber.com

17 10th annual Elkhorn Oktoberfest – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in downtown Elkhorn. Walk around to see the numerous vendors, participate in activities for kids and adults, live entertainment, 5K run/walk and more.

24 Delavan Oktoberfest at Community Park, 1220 South Shore Drive. The event will feature a variety of German foods, beers, wines, pastries, desserts, live music and gifts available for purchase. No admission charge. (262) 740-2335, www.townofdelavan.com

24 Scare on the Square – hosted by the Elkhorn Parks and Recreation Department and Elkhorn Area Chamber of Commerce in downtown Elkhorn. Parks and Rec, (262) 741-5114 or Chamber, (262) 723-5788

31 Skeleton Scurry, 9 a.m. to noon at Lake Lawn Resort, 2400 E. Geneva St., Delavan. (262) 728-5585, delavanparkrec.com

Although we make every attempt to provide accurate information regarding area events, dates and times may change or events may be cancelled. We suggest you confirm events before you finalize your travel plans.

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THE
SPIRIT

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F.R.E.S.H



Pearces
celebrate two
milestones of
family & farming



from the Farm

Mary Ann and Robert Pearce are celebrating 60 years of marriage this year while the farm stand they operate is approaching 50 years in business.

What started decades ago as a family farm with a humble roadside produce stand has evolved into a thriving business and destination spot for those seeking locally grown produce and autumn fun.

by **Janet Deaver-Pack**
CORRESPONDENT

Today the Pearce Farms of rural Walworth stand as a testimonial to hard work and community support as owners Robert and Mary Ann Pearce celebrate 60 years of marriage and their now-not-so-little farm stand marks nearly 50 years of existence.

The farm stand had its genesis in an innocent idea

SUBMITTED PHOTO
Spirit of Geneva Lakes

suggested as a way for Bob and Mary Ann to deal with the excess sweet corn and peas the family grew.

With their parents' guidance, the Pearce's children set up a picnic table at the corner of their yard and sold the extra vegetables. Buyers loved the freshness of the produce – and the cute kids selling it – and began stopping regularly at the picnic table to buy.

Today, a third generation of Pearce offspring is involved in the family farming dynasty – and growing extraordinary produce for the vegetable stand.

A 'growing' business

The original picnic table used by Bob and Mary Ann's children to sell vegetables quickly became too small to serve their growing produce business. Bob built a small open stand with a canopy that had sides he could put up to protect the interior when the stand was closed. This structure and the gravel parking lot served the family well for many years.

It also became a social gathering place for buyers, who recognized friends there, and made new ones over cucumbers, tomatoes, sweet corn and zucchini.

Meanwhile, Bob Pearce continued expanding the acreage he planted, eventually adding soybeans and wheat as cash crops to the original sweet corn, field corn, and peas.



BRUCE HEARD Spirit of Geneva Lakes

Pearce's Farm Stand is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. from mid July through October. Most of the produce sold is grown on the Pearce Farms.

The farm stand also grew. The Pearces decided to expand sales to include locally produced jams, jellies, honey, cheese curds, and a few other carefully researched products. They also decided to add Michigan fruits to the list of locally grown produce.

A Pearce family member used to drive to Michigan once a week and bring back a

truckload of peaches and other fruits. The Pearces now share the trip on an alternating basis with a farm market in Illinois.

The cash crops have been successful, too, particularly the pumpkins the family now grows. They are sold locally and throughout Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota, and trucked as far away as New York and Florida.

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JR Pearce, son of Bobby and Michelle Pearce, enjoys a perch atop the many pumpkins available at Pearce's Farm Stand.

The Pearces are one of the largest pumpkin producers in the upper Midwest. They have a semi truck with a bright orange cab that bears the slogan “Got pumpkins?”

The family grows several varieties of pumpkins, including “porcelain pumpkins,” which are a pale pink with a shiny surface that almost looks like delicately rose-tinted porcelain.

The porcelain pumpkins are sold alongside many others in a myriad of styles and sizes. The farm stand features many other staples of autumn décor, including gourds, Indian corn, squash and corn stalks.

Autumn entertainment

The modest farm stand has been expanded to cover a large portion of its original corner home. The small wooden building is now overshadowed by a much larger permanent metal structure with doors that open wide to let the country-fresh air in.

As Bob and Mary Ann welcomed the help of their children and grandchildren, they also welcomed ideas for entertainment possibilities that would create more interest around the farm stand.

One of those ideas was adding “jumping bales” area, which features a multi-level maze for children made of baled straw complete with a secret fort.

Bobby Pearce, grandson and namesake of Bob Pearce, built a “human hamster” wheel two years ago that’s fun for children and adults alike to walk on. There is also a “tube roller” area that features sections of culvert tubing aligned on a track that allows people to roll back and forth.

There is also now a picnic pavilion with an entertainment stage, which the Pearces rent for private parties. It is also available to patrons who want to rest their feet, listen to music or watch the children playing after perusing the wide selection of produce and other items for sale.

A dozen fire pits nearby entice people to gather around their warmth and, perhaps, roast marshmallows as dusk comes to the farm.

Mmm, doughnuts

Freshly made food items are now an important part of the current ambiance. Three years ago Bobby Pearce’s wife, Michelle, began making fresh donuts. Sugar and cinnamon-sugar varieties are always available on weekends. The pumpkin and fresh apple cider donuts are autumn flavors that have proven popular with customers.

The smell permeates the farm stand as these delectable delights come out of the fryer. Customers often have to stand in line to get warm donuts. Members of the family



BRUCE HEARD Spirit of Geneva Lakes

Bobby Pearce with one of the business' trucks. Pearce Farms is one of the largest pumpkin growers in the upper Midwest.

also make kettle corn continuously on weekends. The farm stand sells hot apple cider, pumpkin cappuccino and other hot drinks to complement the snacks.

Weekends are special at Pearce's farm stand. Part of the picnic area has a stage where local musical talent is showcased on designated dates. For the truly adventuresome, helicopter rides are available from MidWest Helicopter of Kenosha. And, weather permitting, tethered hot air balloon rides are provided by Lake Geneva Balloon Company. The changing hues of the trees are wonderful seen from above.

During October, the Pearces offer the Estate of Terror – a haunted mansion and a haunted hayride for those who like a little adrenaline in their systems.

 **Local goodness**

While many people request the farm stand open earlier in the summer, the Pearces don't rush the local growing season.

"We don't open until we have our own corn," Bobby Pearce said.

That's usually sometime in July. This timing allows the family to make certain that the produce they sell comes from their own fields. The fruit and the specialty items like cheese curds, jams, and jellies come from local supplies. This is another reason why their customers return again and again for some of the best local produce available.

What do the Pearces plan for the future? Bobby is contemplating putting in a small corn maze and a pick-your-own apple orchard.

The Haunted Mansion may expand as its reputation grows. Who knows what other wonderful things the family will come up with in the future, especially since the younger generation is quickly maturing enough to contribute their ideas.

Sixty years is a remarkable personal anniversary for Bob and



Submitted photo Spirit of Geneva Lakes
The "Jumping Bales" area of Pearce's Farm Stand features a maze of straw bales for climbing, jumping and otherwise enjoying the fresh fall air.

Mary Ann. Fifty years running the farm stand that started out on a picnic table makes their saga truly unique. And celebrating autumn at the farm stand with all these amenities makes the season thoroughly memorable.

Pearce's Farm Stand is at the intersections of highways 67 and F at W5740 N. Walworth Rd., Walworth. The farm stand is open from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily. The telephone number is (262) 275-3783 and the website is www.pearcefarms.com. You'll also find them on Facebook.

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ESTATE OF TERROR

Pearce's haunted mansion and hayride offers spine-tingling thrills!

by Janet Deaver-Pack
CORRESPONDENT

A dark-colored study has an odd green chair sitting in it. The kitchen is set with a stove, a table with candlesticks...and a skeletal guest. The funeral room shows deep, bloody Victorian-red coloration, featuring gathers of flowers and a casket. And the surgery room is positively grisly. Just beyond, the hay-filled wagon pulled by



BRUCE HEARD Spirit of Geneva Lakes

A somewhat emaciated dinner guest greets visitors to the kitchen of the haunted mansion at the Pearce farm in Walworth.

a tractor takes visitors into the dark fields and woods where haunts, sepulchral scenes, and horrifying venues abound.

Screams tear through the dark.

These are just a few of the visions waiting to curdle one's blood at The Estate of Terror" which is open at Pearce's Farm until Halloween. The features – a haunted mansion and a spine-tingling hayride – are two frightening shows rather than a lone attraction.

The spooky events are held at the site of the Pearce Farm Stand at the corner of highways 67 and F, immediately west of Williams Bay and north of Fontana. The Haunted Mansion is situated behind the farm stand. The haunted hayride takes place in the nearby woods – known to locals as Witchwood Forest – bordered by fields that are home to corn, wheat, and other crops.

It's a perfect way for a farm to host a celebration during the season of ghosts, spirits, and frightening escapades.

"The Estate of Terror" is the invention of two grandsons of Bob and Mary Ann Pearce, the owners of the farm and the locally renowned produce stand. Grandson Bobby Pearce discussed the idea for some time before opening the initial haunted mansion and hayride in October three years ago. This year they have changed the name to the more evocative "Estate of Terror," and escalated the fright levels.

When asked why he wanted to build such attractions, Bobby Pearce considered his answer for a moment.

"We thought it would bring more attention to the farm for one thing," he said. "Then, there isn't another haunted house within a half hour's drive of here."

Finally, he stated the real reason for getting involved with horror venues: "And I like scaring people."

The Pearces have bought the components from three other haunted houses that went out of business to furnish theirs. Bobby Pearce's wife, Michelle, creates the detailed scenes within the

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The story of what's haunting the forest has something to do with a tragic circus train crash on the outskirts of the property.”



haunted mansion.

“It's 95 percent renovated from the haunted mansion of the first two years,” Bobby Pearce said.

That means nearly everything inside is different, and much scarier. The Pearces are building a new Victorian-style two story façade on its front. According to the description on the website, “There's only one way in, and one way out.”

The wagons for the haunted hayride hold a total of 40 people and the trip through Witchwood Forest takes 20-25 minutes. The story of what's haunting the forest has something to do with a tragic circus train crash on the outskirts of the property.

The haunted mansion has a more complicated storyline, which

can be found in detail on the website. The theme is “Dead and Breakfast.”

The “Estate of Terror” will be open Fridays and Saturdays 7 to 10:30 p.m. through Halloween, Oct. 31.

The Pearce Family Farm is at W5740 N. Walworth Road, Walworth. Cozy fire pits and concessions will be available for guests. Call (262) 949-4992 with questions or to request reservations. The walk through the mansion and the hayride are both recommended for people older than 10.

Visit estateofterror.com or check out the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/estateofterror.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS Spirit of Geneva Lakes

The Estate of Terror at the Pearce farm in Walworth features a haunted mansion as well as a haunted hayride that takes visitors through an adjacent woods.

The Pearce's haunted mansion features a funeral room complete with casket, flowers and photos of the dearly departed.



BRUCE HEARD Spirit of Geneva Lakes



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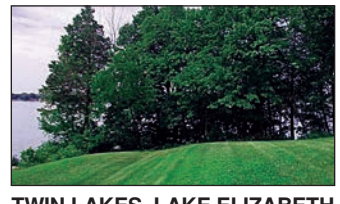


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pickin'g

This is a crate of one of the many varieties of red apples available at Brightonwoods Orchard, Burlington.



grinnin'g

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ
Spirit of Geneva Lakes

Apples make
for a day of
delicious fun

In autumn, nature treats us to an explosion of color as tree leaves change from the bright greens of summer into a rainbow of reds, orange, and yellows. Along with the leaves changing color the pomaceous fruit of the apple tree, ripens and is ready for us to enjoy.

When we imagine an apple we generally picture a large bright red globe, but that is only one type of apple available to us. Apples range from bright

red to the dark red of Red Delicious apples, to green, yellow, and even a pink-orange hue. Apples grow in every state although not every variety grows in each state.

Of the 2,500 varieties grown in the United States only about 100 varieties are grown commercially. With different colors, textures and flavors there is an apple to please everyone.

Apples have always been the fruit



SANDRA LANDEN-MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

You know it is fall when ripe red apples can be seen on the trees. Here in Hafs Road Orchard these apples are ready for picking and, more importantly, for eating.

indicative of health. “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” has been heard by everyone and, true to that axiom, apples are a very healthy fruit. They are easy to carry for a quick snack on the go. They are free of fat, sodium, and cholesterol. They are relatively low in calories – from 50 to 100 calories depending on size. They are tasty and can be found in very sweet varieties to drier, crispier and even tart apples.

Who doesn't enjoy apples as part of our desserts? While desserts are not low calorie they are a special treat during apple season. What is your favorite? Is it the caramel apple, apple pie, apple crisp, apple muffins, apple breads or some other way of adding apples to your dessert? Maybe you just like sliced apples in your salad or over ice cream. Apples are a most diverse food.

Ripe for picking

Area apple orchards offer the opportunity to pick apples right off the tree.

Many orchards that have open picking seasons plant dwarf apple trees to make the picking process easier, particularly for young children, so there's no need to bring along a ladder. You should still be able to find plenty of apples close to the ground.

A good farmer will know when certain varieties of apples are ripe, and he or she will likely cordon off trees that are not ready for picking. Ripe apples will be crisp and firm. Keep in mind that apples ripen from the outside of the tree inward. Those are the ones usually picked first, anyway.

Try to get to an orchard earlier in the season. If you wait too long, the trees may be picked of most of the best fruit. Depending on where you live, apple-picking season may begin in mid-September and continue into mid-October.

Apples can bruise, so don't toss them into baskets when picking. Also, wait to wash apples until right before eating to prevent moisture-related spoilage. Apples keep best in a cool

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location.

Here's a look at a few of the area's apple orchards:

Apple Barn Orchard, Elkhorn

The Apple Barn is a vibrant apple orchard owned by Steve and Judy Jacobson on land the family has owned since 1848. You will always find some members of the family present, whether Steve or Judy or one of their daughters and sometimes all of them. The Apple Barn is the home of all things apple.

Visitors will start by checking out all the available apples ready for purchase. But most will be sidetracked by the many apple-baking products for pies, cobblers and muffins.

Decorative apple accessories are found throughout the store. If you are looking for a special pie plate, an apple cookbook, or towels decorated with apples, then this is the spot to begin. Last year the Jacobsons added a tasting room that is used to sample their homemade fruit wines and ciders.

A stop at the pastry counter is a must. Apple flavored muffins and other sweets all with great apple flavor. The words "I'll take three of the muffins and how about a pie" pop out before you realize it. Pick out your favorite pie – apple of course.

Outside enjoy the ambience of the comfortable lawn chairs and picnic tables

and breathe in the fresh country air. Families sit and enjoy their food purchases before beginning their journey home.

The orchard is easily found when the large apple logo towering above the orchards can be seen from the distance. Self picking is allowed on weekends in October.

The Apple Barn is at W6384 Sugar Creek, Elkhorn. For more information, visit the website www.theapplebarnorchardandwinery.com or call (262) 728-3266.

Brightonwoods Orchard, Burlington

Brightonwoods Orchard is owned by Judith and Bill Stone and Judith's sister Paula Duntenney and has evolved from a three-acre orchard purchased by Judith and Paula's parents as a weekend retreat in the 1950s. It has become an 18-acre orchard that produces 200 varieties of apples and 12 varieties of pears.

The orchard focuses on preserving heirloom varieties and testing new experimental varieties along with growing standard commercial varieties.

Brightonwoods does not allow people to pick their own apples due to the large trees, but does allow visitors to walk through the orchard to view the various types of trees. Walking through the orchards is a peaceful experience and interesting to see the different ways the trees are planted.



SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

Bright-green shiny apples are ready to be purchased at the Elegant Farmer. Green apples tend to have a tart flavor and are great for baking.

Bill Stone, a retired physician, explained that they use four different methods of planting trees for maximum yield. The high-density method allows the planting of 600-700 trees per acre rather than the more traditional 100 trees. This method of planting allows higher yield and higher quality fruit.

Brightonwoods is also well known for its cider made on site using their apples. A free sample is offered to all visitors. It is cold, sweet and goes down easily. Children

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and adults can be found savoring its goodness and most families leave with a jug of cider in tow.

Brightonwoods Orchard is at 1072 288th Ave., Burlington. The telephone number is (262) 878-3000. Check the website www.brightonwoodsorchard.com.

 **Hafs Road Orchard, Genoa City**

Hafs Road Orchard began as a family orchard for the Hafs family in the 1930s. They continued to cultivate the various apple trees until 1982 when the orchard was sold to Richard and Debbie Polansky who continue to raise prize-winning apples. On my visit there Debbie was pleased to point out the blue ribbon from the Walworth County Fair that was received for their Ginger Gold apples.

Ginger Gold is a unique apple. It is not sweet and not tart. It is a fresh and crisp-eating apple. It is also good mixed in a pie with a more flavorful apple such as a Zestar, which, incidentally, makes a very good applesauce.

While many of the newer varieties of apples are developed by plant breeders, the Ginger Gold has a very different beginning. It was found as a chance seedling in a Golden Delicious

orchard in West Virginia. So its complete parentage is unknown. Just the Golden Delicious half is known but the Ginger Gold apple has become an eating favorite.

While the orchard produces 50 varieties of apples, Hafs Road is well known for its large supply of Honey Crisp apples. Richard and Debbie planted 60 Honey Crisp trees more than 20 years ago, long before the Honey Crisp became so popular. Their mature trees now produce excellent Honey Crisps.

Hafs Road Orchard is at W632 Hafs Road, Genoa City. Hours are 9-6 Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Check the website for current available varieties, www.hafsroadorchard.com or call (262) 279-3738.

 **Pearce's Farm Stand, Williams Bay**

At the corner of highways 67 and F between Williams Bay and Fontana, Pearce's Farm offers a large choice of local apples along with other seasonal fruits and vegetables.

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This young lady enjoys a muffin while sitting in the pleasant grove at The Apple Barn, Elkhorn. It's the perfect place for families to enjoy their apple treats.



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A BAR THAT FITS LIKE A...

The Zenda Tap has been a fixture at 560 Zenda Road since 1917. While it has undergone changes in ownership and décor it still attracts local residents and motorcyclists from throughout the area.



Comfortable pair of Jeans

Zenda Tap offers friendly faces in cozy confines

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Zenda Tap is a small bar with a long history.

For those who are fans of the television show “Diners, Drive-ins and Dives,” this is just the type of place that you would expect to see on the show. Small, friendly and filled with a combination of locals enjoying the bar atmosphere intermixed with visitors who stopped while passing through.

There are also those who began as strangers passing through only return on a regular basis – especially for the burgers.

Located at 560 Zenda Road in the Town of Zenda, Zenda Tap is easily missed when driving past due to the large Buddy Melges boat storage building next door.

The Melges building dwarfs the Zenda Tap, but customers still manage to find it. Even the

sign elevated on the roof is barely seen when approaching from the north. The sign is simple – with the Zenda Tap name, a picture of a hamburger and a mug of beer.

The small, cement block building appears to be about 100 years old and the lettering on the awning seems to confirm that as it says it was founded in 1917. The front of the building goes up in a stair design to the peak of the roof with two large gargoyles perched – one on each corner – of the roof. Chairs and pots of blooming flowers grace the front.

There are always several motorcycles parked in the front, as this is a favorite spot for bikers to stop on their way to Lake Geneva or farther north.

While the building has been around since 1917

and has gone through a multitude of owners, Jose Hernandez purchased the bar about four years ago. Together he and his wife, Lenore, have remodeled much of the bar, adding a unique, long granite bar top and comfortable cushioned bar stools with backs. The light gray granite placed atop a metallic base reflects the light and makes the front of the bar a welcoming spot.

The bar itself is often filled with a variety of customers. Locals, bikers and other tourists can be found either in the bar or out in the beer garden. The beers on tap are the tried and true – MGD, Miller Lite, Bud Light, Budweiser, and the more upscale New Glarus Spotted Cow and Coors Light.

According to Lenore Hernandez, Coors Light is the most requested beer. Happy hour occurs daily from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. when draft beers can be purchased for \$1.50 and well drinks for \$2.50.

Jose describes the bar as a music bar. Each Friday night from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. there is an open jam session and all are welcome to listen or participate. According to Jose, “The place really rocks during the jam sessions.”

On Sundays karaoke can be heard resonating throughout. Laura Stone conducts the open microphone sessions. Visitors are invited to stop in and add their voice to the karaoke event or to just enjoy

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Guitars line the wall of the music corner. Music is the name of the game here as open-jam sessions and karaoke nights are regular features.



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Lenore Hernandez handles the bartending duties during a recent visit to Zenda Tap. The bar, which was recently updated, features a granite top.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

the sounds of others.

The billiard table located in the back of the bar is another popular spot where pool players get together to test their skills against one another. According to the Hernandez family, the pool table is usually being used with others waiting to take their turn. Foosball is another game found here in the bar.

Summertime is a favorite time at Zenda Pub as visitors gather outside in the beer garden to enjoy the pleasant weather while they socialize with friends, follow sports on the outdoor television and, of course, drink beer. The garden has been expanded and now

contains a large open green space.

Since the inside of the bar itself is small, the overflow has plenty of space out in the beer garden.

The cornfield next to the beer garden reminds people that they are in the country – and ambiance that can be enjoyed along with beer and food on the picnic tables in the open grassy areas.

Zenda Tap is known for its great choices in bar foods. The list of appetizers includes deep fried offerings, such as onion rings, mac and cheese bites, mozzarella sticks, French fries, pizza puffs, mini tacos, and chicken tenders.



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“The best choice is the appetizer basket,” Lenore Hernandez said.

Diners have a choice of any four appetizers served in a basket for \$7.50. It is a great choice to nibble on while enjoying a drink or to share with a friend. Most customers choose the basket, as it is a better value than just ordering individual appetizers.

“We serve the best hamburgers in

Zenda,” Jose Hernandez said with a laugh. “Of course, we are the only place in Zenda that serves hamburgers.”

The hamburgers and cheeseburgers are popular with customers and the small grill behind the bar seems to be busy cooking them most of the time.

Hot dogs are also available. And, being a Wisconsin bar, bratwurst is a must. Potato chips top off the meal. Non-alcoholic



SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

Jose and Lenore Hernandez have been the owners of Zenda Tap for approximately four years. The two have made several changes to the place in the past two years.

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beverages are also available.

For pizza lovers, the Zenda Tap prepares a variety of frozen pizzas for customers to enjoy.

In wintertime, many of the motorcycles parked in front of the bar are replaced with snowmobiles.

“Being right on the snowmobile trail, we get a lot of snowmobilers stopping in,” Jose Hernandez said. “We love to cook for them as they are always hungry after being out in the cold air and they are looking for a spot to warm up.”

The bar is listed as opening at 11 a.m. but that can vary depending on the day. During a recent visit several groups arrived before noon – some by motorcycle and others by car and truck – with many sticking around until the bar opened.

Zenda Tap offers the comfort of a well-worn pair of jeans and a country retreat removed from the bustle of downtown Lake Geneva.

“We are a happy, friendly bar,” Jose Hernandez said. “Come join us.”

Zenda Tap is at 560 Zenda Rd., Zenda. It can be reached by telephone at (262) 275-5228. Or check them out on Facebook. The bar is open 7 days a week and offers live music Friday and Saturday.



On pleasant days the best place to enjoy a beer or cocktail is out in the beer garden.

The beer garden opens to a green space with flowerbeds and corn stalks around its perimeter.

Photos by SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ Spirit of Geneva Lakes

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by Janet Deaver-Pack
CORRESPONDENT

Currently owned by husband and wife event planners Kevin and Stacy Hermann, The Treasure Hut features the kind of expertise and customer service only a second-generation business can offer. Weddings are just the apex of the special celebrations at which this couple and their staff excel.

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what a normal florist shop would (offer).”

“Simple or complex, we have everything needed for the wedding ceremony, and then for the reception,” Stacy added.

The Hermanns maintain a seasonally stocked greenhouse and a large storage building for everything associated with their business. Typically, Stacy takes care of the weddings, and Kevin decorates everything from parties to corporate gatherings, to lavish Christmas displays at resorts such as Lake Lawn Lodge.

The Hermanns also have a small shop specializing in giftware that serves as Stacy’s special meeting and planning area for brides on Broad Street in Lake Geneva. It is at the same site where the sister store of the original Treasure Hut served customers for many years. The Lake Geneva shop shares space with another business called Good Vibes.

A family business

Kevin Hermann’s father, Richard, and his wife, Jean, started the Delavan floral business in 1969.

“He had worked for several shops in Milwaukee during high school,” Stacy said. “It got into his blood.”

When the time came to put down their own business roots, Richard and Jean decided not to open a florist shop in Milwaukee. That market was already too crowded for their tastes. They began looking for a potential property that would allow for both expansion and storage, while giving them the creative elbowroom they craved.

While investigating Delavan, the couple discovered the Nieman Greenhouse near the corner of Highway 11 and Mound Road for sale. They bought it. “There was room for both of them to create here,” Stacy explained.

The location is close enough to Milwaukee and Chicago to attract big corporate clients, at the same time showing individuals the couples’ unusual depth of decorating expertise.

It was perfect: the original shop, greenhouse, and storage areas are still viable parts of The Treasure Hut. Richard and Jean became well known as florists, hired by resorts such as The Abbey for holiday decor, and as event decorators for parties, weddings, funerals, birthdays, and other memorable occasions.

Richard and Jean brought their son Kevin up in the business.

“I started working here when I was old enough to sweep up, water the plants, and make little things,” Kevin explained. “When I started driving, I delivered flowers.”

He counts 1994 as the year he started



SUBMITTED PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lake

The Treasure Hut created the flowers for this couple using natural woody materials in the bride’s bouquet and the groom’s boutonniere.

formally working with The Treasure Hut. The fun really started for Kevin when he became skilled enough to help his father with Richard’s creative seasonal animated displays that were always in demand.

“We’ve done huge moving snowmen and nutcrackers,” Kevin said. “Really huge – the snowman’s hat and head were over six feet tall. We’ve done enormous Christmas trees, flying witches for Halloween – you name it, we’ve probably done it.”

Focus on weddings

Treasure Hut’s reputation extends north past Milwaukee and south into Chicago for

such displays. Kevin and his team are kept very busy, especially during holidays.

Stacy also began working for the business during 1994. When Richard and Jean decided to retire in 2004, Kevin and Stacy bought the business and continued it with the same quality and dedication to customer service as Kevin’s father and mother. And their reputation since has increased because of their attention to detail and their creativity.

The Treasure Hut specializes in weddings. “Most of my brides come from Illinois, particularly the Chicago area,” Stacy said. “Many of their families or their friends

“

No project is too big or too little. We do it all. You’ve got to have so many choices to please everyone – not every place can offer that...”

have second homes or cabins in this area. They know about our great prices and good service.”

Putting together textures and colors into harmonious blends and listening to what brides want are two of Stacy’s strong points.

“Sometimes they bring in big binders full of ideas they want for their wedding,” she said.

Stacy knows how to narrow down the “I wants” to fit the budget, and still provide plenty of special bang for the available bucks.

“Receptions have gotten more complex because people spend more time there than at the wedding itself,” Stacy said. “During some ceremonies, the wedding party and their guests spend about 45 minutes in the sanctuary. Then they spend hours at the reception.”

Decorating for those receptions has become equally as important as decorating the area where the wedding takes place. It’s no wonder brides and grooms are ordering more flowers and decorative items for post-wedding festivities.

Creative with colors

When asked what’s new in nuptial details, Stacy considered before replying, “Color themes. Color is primary now. Often there are three or four colors that come together. And there’s lots more thought put into weddings. We can incorporate the brides’ and/or groom’s favorite things, such as golf tees – one of our brides was a golf pro, and the tees were important to her.

“We’ve made table arrangements with lemons, with fruit such as apples, with peacock feathers and, for a 1920s theme, ostrich feathers,” Stacy smiled, remembering. “We even had one bride who was allergic to flowers. We used candlelight, branches, and lots of non-floral items. We’ve also done a Wisconsin nature wedding.” (An excellent picture of their rustic decorating theme for this nuptial is on The Treasure Hut’s website.)

“The most dangerous thing we’ve ever hung as decoration for a wedding is a big chandelier with lights and flowers, including strands of orchids hanging from it,” Kevin said. “That’s also the most unusual thing we’ve designed so far. It was used in a reception held in the Pavilion tent at The Abbey.”

For another wedding, Stacy and Kevin came up with more unique decorations, including boxes full of greenery hung from the ceiling. Anything a bride or groom can imagine at their wedding or reception can be designed by the talented team from The Treasure Hut.

Currently, the most popular flowers for weddings are hydrangeas. “They’ve got big, beautiful blooms,” Stacy said. “Roses are still a favored choice, especially the English Garden or cabbage rose.”

Those are rounded blooms with so many



An ordinary tent is transformed into an elegant reception hall with draped fabrics, chandeliers and lanterns that appear to float above the dance floor and dining area.



This elegant table bouquet features popular English Garden and regular roses, along with greenery and wheat.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS
Spirit of Geneva Lake

petals the flower appears almost like a fat cabbage, hence the odd nickname. “And they smell good, too,” Kevin added. “Not like those roses that look pretty, but have had the scent bred out of them.”

Stacy gets requests to use special fabrics

on a regular basis. “Yards of tulle or chiffon draped from pillars, arches, gazebos, and ceilings is very popular right now.” The fabric softens the surrounding light, and makes everything appear richer and more magical. Special lighting is also popular as

an accent on tables, up walls, and across ceilings.

“We can put color-themed floral sprays on wedding cakes, too,” Stacy said. “They’re really beautiful.” These can be added to a plain confection, or used in association with frosting decorations. The result is spectacular. The live blooms bring an additional dimension to a typical brides’ or groom’s cake.

Stacy has some sound advice for prospective brides. “Plan your wedding, but don’t overthink it. You need to have fun, too.”

Kevin added, “And don’t think there has to be a perfect match for a certain color, such as the mother of the bride’s dress. Sometimes a color that blends is better.”

Handling the hassle

The serene atmosphere of The Treasure Hut changes into one of controlled tension during preparation for a wedding or decorating assignments.

“Our jobs make us work nights, weekends, and holidays,” Kevin said. “Many of our biggest projects come at times when other people are on vacation. It’s part of the business.”

The Treasure Hut also offers rentals. “We have linens and table settings,” Stacy said, “and arches, and canopies, and other items. That’s why we need such a large storage area.”

She can also take care of printing

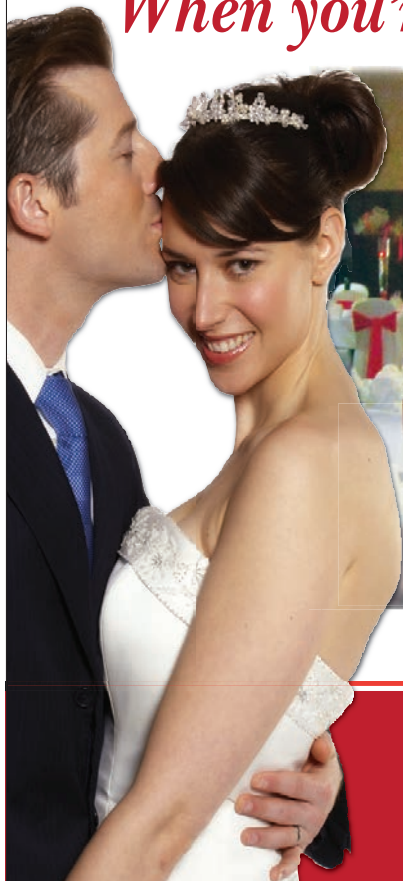


ABOVE: This is the unassuming sign at The Treasure Hut on the corner of Highway 11 and Mound Rd., Delavan.

LEFT: The Treasure Hut is operated by second-generation owners Stacy and Kevin Hermann. Kevin’s father and mother started the business in 1969 after moving to Delavan from Milwaukee.

*Photos by BRUCE HEARD
Spirit of Geneva Lake*

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This spectacular arch of fresh flowers created by The Treasure Hut makes a festive frame in which this couple exchanges vows.

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Spirit of Geneva Lake*

wedding invitations, coordinated reply cards and thank-you notes. When these two say they can accomplish nearly everything associated with a wedding but the special clothing, the catering, and getting everyone to the ceremony on time, they mean it. Using Stacy's and Kevin's expertise can take a lot of the pressure off a soon-to-be-wedded couple.

Nowhere in the shop is it obvious that The Treasure Hut has won several awards. If hung on the walls, they'd probably be nearly obscured by greenery and gift items. Being given the Bride's Choice Award, and the Couples Choice Award from the Weddingwire network isn't very important to Kevin and Stacy. They also have received national

recognition for excellence in party planning and event decoration.

What is important to this couple is their relationship with their customers, demonstrated by their exemplary customer service, and the creativity that highlights everything they do. They're also one of the few local shops listed as a representative for both Teleflora and FTD.

"We're starting our son in the business," Kevin said.

Logan is 11. He takes care of some sweeping and watering plants in the greenhouse. "Who knows," Stacy said, "perhaps some day we'll have a third generation at The Treasure Hut."

This business may look small, and it's in what may seem to some an out-of-the-way location. But the owners' hearts and talents are as huge as the animated decorations they devise.

"We're always ready for new and fun challenges," Kevin stated.

"We're always searching the market for new 'wow' items to use at weddings and parties," Stacy added. "Just call us with questions."

The Treasure Hut maintains a website at www.treasurehut.com, and is also on Facebook, Weddingwire, and other social media. The local phone number is (262) 728-2020, or toll-free (800) 762-2032.



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Simple solutions to save on your wedding



FILE PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lakes

The cost of a wedding is considerable, but couples can cut those costs in several ways if they're willing to be flexible and negotiate with vendors.

Couples in the midst of planning a wedding often find themselves overwhelmed by the cost of such a meaningful yet expensive undertaking. The average wedding is as expensive as a new car or a down payment on a new house, so it's no surprise many couples experience sticker shock when they first begin to negotiate with vendors. But as shocking as the cost of saying "I do" in front of family and friends can be, there are some tried-and-true ways to drastically reduce that cost without making the big day any less special.

GUESTS Many couples save the most money by reducing the number of people they invite to their wedding. Couples who come from large families may not be able to cut family members from their guest lists without causing a significant stir, so such men and women can look for other areas to trim.

Professional colleagues and old acquaintances who you no longer keep in touch with are unlikely to be offended if they don't make the cut, and removing them from the guest list can save couples substantial amounts of money.

VENUE Perhaps no element of wedding planning is more open to negotiation than the venue where the reception will take place. Many couples now choose venues that can host both the wedding and the reception, and that can save couples the cost of booking two separate locations and transporting out-of-town guests from one location to another. Venues are typically open to negotiation with regard to the price per person for the reception, and few will not have some wiggle room built into their initial quote. If young children and teenagers will be attending the wedding, negotiate lower rates for their meals, as they won't be drinking alcohol and therefore won't cost the venue as much as adult guests.

LOCATION Where a couple decides to tie the knot will have a

Hidden expenses that can sink your budget

In the days of yore, the responsibility of paying for a wedding fell to the bride's parents. But that tradition has largely fallen by the wayside in recent years, when more and more couples have used their own savings to finance their weddings.

Few couples enter the process of planning their weddings unaware of just how expensive weddings can get, but costs can easily begin to escalate if couples are not careful.

Couples know that certain wedding expenses, such as the cost of booking a reception hall, will eat up a large portion of their budgets. But there are some hidden expenses that couples must build into their budgets to avoid finding themselves in debt as they walk down the aisle as husband and wife.

TAXES Sales tax might not seem so significant when you're buying everyday items, but the taxes add up quickly when paying for a wedding. Depending on where you live, state and local sales tax can exceed nine percent in the U.S., and some Canadians pay as much as 15 percent in combined sales taxes depending on where they live.

Before signing contracts with any

vendors, couples should get the price including sales tax written into their contracts, as failing to do so may result in a several thousand dollar surprise when the time to pay up arrives.

GRATUITIES Gratuities are another potentially hefty expense that often takes engaged couples by surprise as they start to plan their weddings. Some reception halls build gratuities for staff into their estimates, and these tips for the staff can be as high as 25 percent at some venues. But even if gratuities for reception hall staff are already accounted for, don't forget to include tips for additional vendors the day of the wedding.

Couples may be expected to tip the florist, photographer, band or DJ and even the reception hall maître d' if his or her gratuity is not included in the aforementioned staff tip. Brides-to-be typically tip their hairstylist and makeup artist on the day of the wedding as well.

POSTAGE Couples who plan to invite guests via email or online invitations can skirt the cost of postage. But many couples still prefer traditional paper invitations, which include return envelopes that tradition suggests, should also be stamped. Save-the-

date cards have grown in popularity as well, and these cards must also be stamped and mailed.

Depending on the size of your guest list, postage can cost several hundred dollars before you mail your last invitation. And don't forget to save some money for postage to mail thank-you cards once the big day has come and gone.

OVERTIME Overtime fees for reception hall staff and additional outside vendors are typically written into contracts, but few couples imagine needing more than the predetermined allotment of time noted in their contracts.

But it's better to be safe than sorry, as unanticipated events such as a misplaced wedding license or heavy traffic on the way to the venue can force the party to start late and thus extend past its deadline.

Set aside some money for overtime so you don't find yourselves scrounging for dollars or charging the extra few hundred dollars on your credit cards.

Weddings are expensive, and even more so when hidden fees start to make their presence felt. Couples who build such fees into their budgets will find it easier to avoid breaking the bank than those who don't.

(METRO CREATIVE)

significant impact on their bottom line. Certain locales, such as large cities, are more expensive than others. Couples who come from small towns may benefit from tying the knot close to home, as vendors tend to charge less the further they are from large metropolises.

Waterfront venues, regardless of which city they happen to be in, also tend to be more expensive than venues with less impressive surroundings. Couples willing to sacrifice city lights and breathtaking views of the water are likely to find more affordable venues for ceremonies and receptions.

TIMING

The timing of a wedding also affects a couple's bottom line. Couples hoping to get married when wedding season hits its peaks, which is generally considered the months of May and June and then also late-September into October, can expect to pay substantially more than couples willing to get married at other times of the year.

Couples also can save money by choosing to get married on Friday or Sunday nights or Saturday afternoon, when many venues charge considerably less per person than they do on Saturday night, which remains the most popular night of the week to get married.

The cost of a wedding is considerable, but couples can cut those costs in several ways if they're willing to be flexible and negotiate with vendors.

(METRO CREATIVE)



In between the guest list, the flowers and the perfect three-tier cake, it can be hard to find time to shop for your wedding rings. However, it is important to remember that most of the wedding details are fleeting and gone after a few hours of enjoyment, while your rings are enjoyed forever.

So, whether you are having a smaller gathering or a more traditional affair, this important to-do on your event checklist should not be overlooked, especially since your rings mark your commitment to one another and will last a lifetime.

Jewelry and style expert Michael O'Connor has a few tips that are sure to help you find matrimonial bliss when it comes to ring selection:

CREATE A BUDGET

There are many details to consider when planning a wedding that can quickly drain your budget. It is important to set aside money for a lifelong symbol like your wedding bands.

Not sure how much to budget? Consider that in 2006, couples spent an average of \$2,079 on wedding bands, according to the CN American Wedding Study. And since the age-old rule for purchasing an engagement ring is to spend two months salary, plan to spend one month's salary for the two wedding bands. Check out the "Budget Calculator" at www.TheKnot.com.

SHOP TOGETHER

It is a good idea to shop for rings together. In fact, 80 percent of couples do, which isn't a surprise since your rings, which don't have to match, should reflect your personal styles and tastes.

PLAN AHEAD

Don't wait until the last minute to go shopping for your wedding bands, they're simply too important. Plan to start shopping for your rings six months prior to your "I do's." Not only do you need time to research and shop, but you also need to allot time for custom orders, sizing and engraving.

INVEST IN QUALITY

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SWISS MAID BAKERIES CREATE EDIBLE WORKS OF ART

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Cake has been known to be a part of wedding celebrations from as far back as the Roman Empire and possibly even earlier. These early versions of the wedding cake were not the beautifully crafted cakes that we find today but more basic bread cakes that were broken over the bride's head to ensure a happy marriage and fertility.

In 17th century England, the wedding cake became a sweet pie, such as quince, where the bride would hide a glass ring. The bridesmaids would each have a piece of the pie and whoever found the ring was said to be the next to marry – much as today's custom of catching the bouquet.

In the 19th century, Queen Victoria was reported to have a cake exquisitely decorated more in the style of cakes we see today. Hers however, was said to weigh 300 pounds.

Today wedding cakes are a work of art individually crafted and designed to enhance the style of the wedding or the interests of the couple being married.

A recent afternoon visit with Laura Stricker of Swiss Maid Bakeries provided quite an education in modern cake making. Swiss Maid has two locations: 104 E. Brainard St., Harvard, Ill.; and 122 N. Benton St., (on the square) in Woodstock, Ill..

The Swiss Maid Bakeries have a long tradition of authentic European style pastries, breads, desserts and unique and elegant



SUBMITTED PHOTO *Spirit of Geneva Lake*

This traditionally elegant cake with the antique swirling is decorated with roses and would be at home at any wedding.

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M A T T R E S S

wedding cakes. Their history in the baking business in the United States, goes back to the 1920s when two families from Switzerland opened bakeries near North Avenue in Chicago.

The two families, the Planzers and the Strickers, would become more intertwined in the following years.

In 1943, the Stricker family moved to Harvard and purchased a bakery from R.J. Keeley. Six years later the Planzers purchased the bakery from the Strickers. One year later the families were united when their children, Shirley and Tony, married.

It was Tony and Shirley Stricker who took over the bakery from the Planzers and named it Swiss Maid Bakery. They worked at the bakery for 20 years encouraging its growth.

Their sons Kurt, Paul, and Eric became the owners of the bakery in 1987 but their partnership was short lived. Kurt left the business to pursue another career in 1999 and Eric passed away unexpectedly in 2005, leaving Paul to carry on. He was not to be alone for long as his son Jeremy attended Scottsdale Culinary Institute and returned to join the family business, making five generations of Stricker bakers.

Paul's other children have also worked at the bakery in various jobs.

WEDDING CAKE 101

Back in the mid 1900s, wedding cakes were pretty standard. Two, three, or four round tiers, depending on the size of the wedding with colored flowers made of icing to match the bridal party's color scheme. A bride and groom – usually of plastic in those early days – adorned the top of the cake.

"Today's wedding cakes are unique and original. Anything goes," said Laura Stricker. Laura is Paul's wife and has been an active partner in running the Woodstock retail store and serving as wedding cake consultant for more than nine years.

Laura went on to explain that wedding cakes are as unique as the couple marrying.

"We have designed cakes that express interests of the couple, such as a Harley Davidson motif, a sand castle, and even a dragon," Laura said. "If you have a photo of what you would like, bring it in and we can make it."

Wedding cakes can be round or square or a combination of round and square layers to give the cake its own unique look.

Swiss Maid Bakery uses only quality ingredients for baking and decorating. Each cake is decorated with butter cream



SUBMITTED PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lake

This cake is custom colored to match the hues of the wedding party with the addition of flowers in the color of choice.



Today's weddings often include a sweets table with a cupcake tower such as this one.

SUBMITTED PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lake

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frosting, which not only looks good but also tastes good. Some bakers use fondant because it holds up well for late pictures but it just isn't tasty.

The cake itself can be any flavor and the fillings come in many different flavors.

"Today one of the most popular looks is shabby chic and vintage," Laura said. "The vintage-looking scrolls on the cake paired with an unusual decorative accent like burlap. Others prefer the opposite look, a cake with lots of bling."

Whatever the desire style, Swiss Maid can create the cake of your dreams.



This square layer cake is decorated with chocolate drizzling down the sides and embellished with fresh flowers in fall colors.

SUBMITTED PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lake

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CHOICES GALORE

There are many choices today for topping the cake. Fresh flowers can decorate the entire cake. They may be cascading down a single side or placed intermittently around the cake. Some prefer flowers on the top of the cake and some prefer a traditional cake topper of the bride and groom. If the choice is the latter, there are many different styles of the bride and groom cake toppers to fit different styles. Elegant or whimsical there is one that will please you.

Groom's cakes were popular in the mid 1900s and have again returned. Many people likely recall weddings in the 80s where the groom's cake was always chocolate while the wedding cake was white. Today either cake can be any flavor. Groom's cakes are again popular and can be made in a whimsical manner perhaps with the logo of his favorite sports team or automobile.

Swiss Maid offers quality chocolate butter cream, plain butter cream, butter cream flavored with one of their 14 different flavors or ganache. The cakes will be accented with butter cream flowers, sugar flowers, or fresh flowers.

All of the baking is handled at the Harvard facility where the ovens are working 24 hours a day. The decorating is the work of two long-time employees, Terri and Sharon, who have over 25 years experience in the field. Their creativity and fine attention to detail can be seen in the finished products.

Today's wedding cake is not the only eye catching sweet at many of today's weddings. Cupcake towers, filled with fancy cupcakes, displayed on a tiered pedestal are making an appearance at many weddings.

The towers are often the highlight of the sweets table with other items displayed around its base. The elegant sweets table filled with decorated cookies, cake pops, mini desserts, pretzel rods and mini turtle candies all made in house are beautifully displayed and quickly eaten.

Cookies come in many shapes but the favorite wedding cookies are the ones in the shapes of a bridal dress and the tuxedo-decorated cookie. Heather at the Harvard facility has been decorating cookies and all the special candies for the last 10 years. She is constantly coming up with new ideas for special cookies and candies.

FREE TASTING, CONSULT

Couples planning a wedding may call Swiss Maid Bakery and schedule an appointment for a free consultation and cake tasting. Ashley or Laura meet with couples and share the many flavors available for cakes and other sweets.

Swiss Maid also frequently participates in local bridal shows, offering prospective



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Bride and groom cookies in the shape of the bridal dress and tuxedo are a special addition to the sweets table at many weddings.

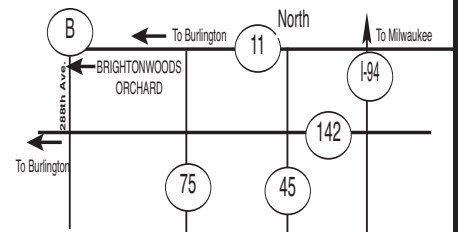
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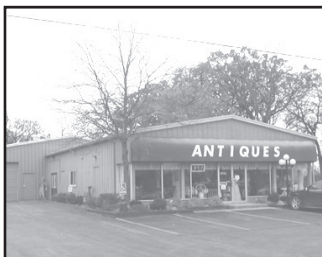
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brides a chance to learn more about its services.

Swiss Maid regularly works with Geneva National, Lake Lawn Resort, and the Riviera ballroom in the Lake Geneva area.

Swiss Maid Bakeries have been won many honors over the years. This year they have been recognized as the Best of the Fox among bakeries for their wedding cakes, and pastries. In 2005 Eric and Paul Stricker were awarded best business by the Chamber of Commerce

Paul has been a member of the Chamber of Commerce Board and is an active member of a group known as the Baker's Dirty Dozen. It is a group of 15 top-level bakers from Chicago to Indiana who meet on a regular basis to share ideas for improving fine baked goods.

Swiss Maid is also active in the community. Each day as the bakery closes, they donate all of that day's baked goods that have not sold, to various charitable groups in the area. These include the Woodstock Bible Church, community outreach programs, military groups, food pantries, and other groups in need.

For those who are not in the market for a wedding cake, there is still reason to visit Swiss Maid Bakeries. The business carries a full line of European pastries, cakes, Danish tortes, pies, and cookies.

And don't forget the breads – six-grain, rye, white and a variety of others make even choosing a loaf of bread difficult. Swiss Maid is well known for its apple strudel. It is served in some local restaurants.

Those who visit Swiss Maid often find it difficult to leave with just one item. It may take a while to choose from the great variety of freshly baked items.

Swiss Maid Bakery is at 104 E. Brainard St., Harvard, Ill., (815) 943-7282 or at 122 N. Benton St. (on the square), Woodstock, Ill., (815) 338-0414. They can be found on the web at www.swissmaidbakery.com. The Harvard store is open Tuesday through Friday from 4 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays from 4 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Woodstock Bakery is open Tuesday through Friday from 4:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 4:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Wedding photographers play a big role on a couple's big day, and it's important that men and women about to tie the knot consider a host of factors before choosing the men or women they will ultimately task with visually documenting their wedding days.

Engagement photos

Couples who want to do an engagement photo shoot may want to negotiate such a shoot into their photography package. Some agencies include engagement shoots in their packages while others do not.

If the engagement photo shoot is on your list of needs, then look for an agency that provides such services as part of its packages or agencies willing to include the engagement photo shoot for free or for an added fee.

Party size

The number of people on the guest list should factor into your choice of wedding photographer. If your guest list is especially large, then you might want to consider hiring two or more photographers to document the day. Many agencies offer separate packages for couples who want one photographer and couples who prefer two or more photographers, so it pays to examine the price differences between such packages to see if more than one photographer can fit into your budget. Couples with relatively small guests lists can typically get by with just a single photographer to document their ceremonies and receptions.

Travel

When discussing a wedding photography package, ask how much travel is included

in the package. This is important for couples whose ceremonies are in a separate location from their receptions. If the distance between the ceremony site and the reception venue is considerable, you may have to pay extra for the photographer to travel between both sites. While a reasonable amount of travel is typically included in a photography package, it's best that you confirm this prior to signing an agreement.

Videography

Many photography agencies also offer videography services in some of their wedding packages. Videography can be a great way for couples to document their wedding days, and it can be fun for couples to watch their wedding videos with their families down the road.

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Murder and mourning at Black Point

Historic site, cruise line team up for October programs

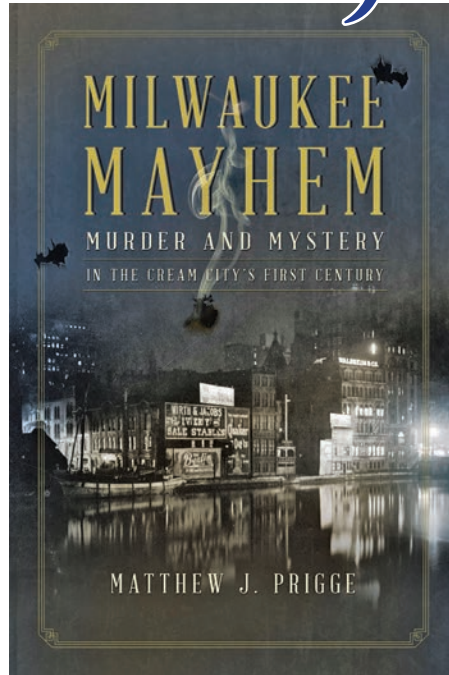
Black Point Estate will host several programs in October that are designed to appeal to those seeking grisly and macabre tales from the Victorian era.

On Oct. 3, 10 and 17, the estate will revive its popular “When Angels Carried Them Away: Death and Mourning in the Victorian Era” program.

Victorians embraced death as a cause for elaborate ritual. During this era (1876-1915) the ritual of death became increasingly sophisticated and public; parlor funerals, post-mortem death photographs, Victorian hair wreaths, public mourning and séances’ all became accepted practices.

In addition, the period saw the development of the modern cemetery, mortician and public funeral complete with floral arrangements and hearse transportation for the deceased.

This program will feature a presentation



SUBMITTED PHOTO *Spirit of Geneva Lake*

Matthew Prigge, author of “Milwaukee Mayhem: Murder and Mystery in the Cream City’s First Century,” will present a program at Black Point Estate in October.

on Victorian funeral and mourning customs, a first-floor house tour, and narrated lake boat tour of maritime mishaps on the Geneva Lake Cruise Line.

The presentation will be delivered by Black Point docent Steven Person, who is a recently retired funeral director from Walworth Township.

New to the ghastly October line-up is “Milwaukee Mayhem: Murder and Mystery in the Cream City’s First Century” by Matthew Prigge.

Prigge will share stories of murder and matchstick men to all-consuming fires, painted women, and Great Lakes disasters – and the wide-eyed public who could not help but gawk at it all.

The author uncovers the little-remembered and rarely told history of the underbelly of a Midwestern metropolis and presents these stories as they were recounted to the public in the newspapers of the era, using the vivid and often grim language of the times to create an engaging and occasionally chilling narrative of a forgotten Milwaukee.

“Milwaukee Mayhem” is being offered on Oct. 8 and 9 as part of a much larger regional book launch by Prigge. The author is a Milwaukee historian and often

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leads sightseeing historical tours of the Cream City.

“Both Person and Prigge are excellent storytellers so we are very pleased to offer these programs to the public at Black Point Estate,” said site director, Dave Desimone. “We strive for unique and authentic programming that is complimentary to the estate and feel both of these programs provide an entertaining and informative way to spend a fall evening in Lake Geneva.”

Tickets for each program (including narrated boat tour) are \$40 and can be purchased through the Lake Geneva Cruise Line by calling (262) 248-6206.

The cruise departs from the Riviera boat dock at 812 Wrigley Drive in downtown Lake Geneva each day at 4 p.m. and returns at approximately 7:30 p.m. Tickets are limited to 36 people per date.

Regular tours of Black Point Estate will continue through Oct. 31 daily at 10:30 a.m. A second tour is available at 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.



VICKY WEDIG *Spirit of Geneva Lake*
Presenter Steve Person shows a wreath made from locks of hair cut from deceased female members of a family during a 2014 program on death and mourning in the Victorian Era at Black Point Estate on Lake Geneva.



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Munich-style



by **Kellen Olshefski**

STAFF WRITER

With Oktoberfest traditionally being a German celebration of the tapping of Marzen-style beers – typically brewed in March and ready for consumption in late September – several local communities are gearing up for their own versions of the autumn celebration.

Lake Geneva and Elkhorn host Oktoberfest events on successive weekends this month.

First up is the Lake Geneva event on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 10 and 11. The celebration runs from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days.

Activities are centered in downtown Lake Geneva and include

music, magic, food, a craft booth, wagon hayrides, pony rides, a bouncy castle, caramel apples and more.

The Great Pumpkin Giveaway is set for 1 p.m. on Oct. 10. All children 10 and younger receive a free pumpkin while supplies last.

Shuttle buses will run continuously from the Home Depot parking lot on Edwards Boulevard at Highway 50. Riders will be dropped off at US Bank, 303 Center Street, in downtown Lake Geneva. Buses make the trip about every 20 minutes.

Unlike the Munich event where 6.7 million liters of beer are drunk each year, alcohol is not served at the Lake Geneva Oktoberfest.

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Men with heavy beer steins in hand offer a toast during the fifth annual Oktoberfest at Old Settlers Park in Paddock Lake Sept. 12. Lake Geneva and Elkhorn have similar celebrations planned in October.

where the Elkhorn Area Chamber of Commerce is expanding its operations for its 10th year, by offering more beer to its patrons.

The Elkhorn Oktoberfest is scheduled Saturday, Oct. 17 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

While the beer tent has been contained to Elkhorn's Pocket Park in the past, it has been moved to a larger area on North Wisconsin Street for 2015. The ceremonial tapping of the keg is scheduled for 11 a.m.

MORE BEER CHOICES

Chris Clapper, executive director of the Elkhorn Chamber of Commerce, said the beer tent is expanding its beer and wine tasting based on comments from attendees, who have wanted more variety in beer.

"So, this year we concentrated more on beer," she said.

Clapper said organizers have created a selection of various types of different beers from various Wisconsin breweries she visited in working towards a broad selection.

"We've really added a lot of craft and IPA, but still kept with that Oktoberfest theme," she said. "It's not going to be your Coors Light, Miller Lite type of event. There's going to

be some specialty."

Beer selection this year will include:

- Lakefront Brewery's Pumpking Lager, IPA, and Oktoberfest;
- Milwaukee Brewing Company's Louie's Demise and Hopster;
- Capital Brewery's Oktoberfest, Wisconsin Amber and Mutiny IPA;
- Samuel Adams' Angry Orchard, Sinful Seasonal and Crisp Apple;
- Spaten's Oktoberfest; and
- New Glarus's Spotted Cow, Staghorn Oktoberfest and Pumpkin Pie Lust.

Clapper said for 2016 they aim to redefine some of their wines, pushing to add some higher-end wine selections. This year's wines were announced in the first week of October.

"We're doing small things to improve based on what people have asked for," she said.

With younger crowds being fans of craft and IPA beers, Clapper said they're hoping to draw from those crowds as well as the crowds of past years.



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FILE PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lakes

Dancers in traditional costume move through a Bavarian love dance during the 2014 Oktoberfest celebration in Paddock Lake.



Those who attend Oktoberfest will receive a commemorative mug, differing from last year's, as well as tickets that allow patrons to sample the beers available.

While in the past attendees have only been able to purchase samples, this year, Clapper said, they'll allow people to purchase full-size beers.

A CHILI COOK-OFF

As in past years Oktoberfest will include a chili cook-off, live music, entertainment from community groups, various vendors and a classic car show.

North Wisconsin Street will be closed off from Moy's to Friends on the Square to provide space for live music and additional vendors in the downtown area.

The annual chili cook-off will again be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., with first-, second- and third-place prizes being awarded in the People's Choice Contest. Prizes range from \$50 to \$200 for the three winners.

The Chamber requires entry forms be completed



CONTINUED ON PAGE **52**



VICKY WEDIG Spirit of Geneva Lakes

Free pumpkins are part of the festivities at the Lake Geneva Oktoberfest celebration set for Oct. 10 and 11.

Ready, aim, fire!



Union Grove's Pumpkin Chuckin' Festival offers kids a chance to use trebuchets, catapults and slingshots to launch pumpkins as far as they can in competition.

Union Grove's Pumpkin Chuckin' Fest is Oct. 24-25

The Union Grove Great Pumpkin Chuckin' Fest featuring Best of the Midwest BBQ Cook-Off is set for Oct. 24 and 25.

Visitors are encouraged to dress in Halloween costumes for the Union Grove Area Chamber of Commerce's annual event on the Racine County Fairgrounds, 19805 Durand Ave., Union Grove.

Attendees will have a chance to see how catapults, trebuchets and slingshots hurl pumpkins into the air and taste some of the best barbecue of the Midwest as teams compete against each other in The Best of the Midwest BBQ Cook-Off.

"Whether it's your first time to attend a Pumpkin Chuckin' event or you've been to a festival such as this numerous times before, this year's event is even more special and you should not miss it," Union Grove Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jennifer Ditscheit said.

Join in the fun

Set up for the Pumpkin Chuckin' contest begins at 11 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 23. Trebuchets, catapults and slingshots may be used to launch pumpkins to the air. Participants should bring their own pumpkins.

Face painting is just one of the activities kids can participate in at the Pumpkin Chuckin Festival in Union Grove. The year's fall festival will be Oct. 24-25.



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Set up for the Pumpkin Chuckin' Contest begins at 11 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 23. Participants bring their own, un-altered pumpkins and use trebuchets, catapults and slingshots to launch them into the air.



JENNIFER DITSCHKEIT *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

No alterations may be made to the pumpkins used in the contest.

The contest happens on Saturday and Sunday and each team will be judged according to the following criteria: machine design, team presentation, distance and accuracy and good sportsmanship.

Each winning team per category – trebuchet, catapult and slingshot – will be awarded prize money, trophies and bragging rights.

BBQ Cook-Off

The Best of the Midwest BBQ Cook-Off pits barbecue teams against one another on Saturday, Oct. 24, for \$5,700 in cash prizes.

There are four categories of competition – chicken, ribs, pork and brisket.

To qualify to become this year's grand

champion, groups must compete in all four categories.

The event is sanctioned by the Kansas City Barbeque Society and conducted by the Racine County Agricultural Society and the Greater Union Grove Area Chamber of Commerce.

In addition, participants of the contest have the option to sell food as well so that attendees of the festival can have a taste of their specialties.

Family events scheduled

The family friendly festival will have a costume contest in the children's activities area. There will also be hayrides, free kids games, rides, vendors, music, food, beer and more.

Attendees can participate in several Wisconsin Cooking Contests, including peoples' choice chili cook-off, pumpkin

baking contests, pie eating contest and a pie auction.

For more information, visit www.pumpkinchuckin.com or find it on Facebook at [ugpumpkinchuckin](https://www.facebook.com/ugpumpkinchuckin).

Volunteers needed

The chamber is looking for volunteers to help out at the festival. There are openings for:

- Main gate volunteers;
- Information booth volunteers;
- Soda and beer tent volunteers – all beer tent volunteers must be 21 years old or older;
- Grounds maintenance;
- Security; and
- Vendor and team support volunteers.

Interested parties can contact Ditscheit at (262) 878-4606.

“

Whether it's your first time to attend a Pumpkin Chuckin' event or you've been to a festival such as this numerous times before, this year's event is even more special and you should not miss it.”

and turned in by Oct. 12 to the Chamber Office. Contestants are asked to bring at least eight quarts of warmed chili (no pasta) in a Nesco or large crock pot and contestants must provide a server. Contestants must stay until contest winners are announced at about 2 p.m.

The Sixth Annual Elkhorn Oktoberfest Classic Car Show will be held in the north parking lot of the Walworth County Government Center, along Court Street from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Five non-perishable food items or a \$5 donation to the Elkhorn Food Pantry are appreciated for entry. Clapper said the first 75 cars will receive dash plaques. Space is limited and there will also be a People's Choice Award for the best classic car.

The City of Elkhorn Parks and Recreation Department will be holding it's Lights and Ladders event from 9 a.m. to noon on South Broad Street, out in front of Elkhorn City Hall and the fire and rescue department.

This event offers families a chance to get up close and personal with some of the city and county's cars, trucks and utility vehicles, ranging from fire trucks and ambulances to electric utility trucks and ATVs.

Clapper said people have told her in past years they love that it is a family friendly event, providing plenty of opportunities for attendees of all ages.

"People feel comfortable that they can purchase a wrist band for their child so they can go play over there and mom and dad can walk around," she said.

"There's something for everyone. The guys who want to can go look at cars, the women can shop and then they can go meet in the beer and wine tent."

Additionally, Clapper said, the Chamber will introduce its new Christmas Card for this year, which marks the organization's 19th commissioned painting. The card will be unveiled at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday and a limited quantity of this year's card will be available for purchase.

"Come and enjoy the downtown community and everything it has to offer," she said.



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WHEN: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 10 and 11
WHAT: Tenth annual Elkhorn Oktoberfest, hosted by the Elkhorn Area Chamber of Commerce
WHERE: Downtown Elkhorn
WHEN: Saturday, Oct. 17 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lakes

Elegant four-course meals served while riding the rails under a canopy of autumn colors is the hallmark of the fall dinner trains offered by the East Troy Electric Railroad.

great pride in delivering an experience that is truly unique, not only to the Midwest, but to the entire country.”

Four dinner train events remain this fall season. Each excursion features a unique menu:

Oct. 3, Oktoberfest – German food and beer, including Wiener schnitzel, bratwurst, cake;

Oct. 10, Fall Harvest – stuffed pork chops, squash, tricolored potatoes, cheesecake;

Oct. 17, Sweetest Day – strip steak, mashed potatoes, vegetables, cream puff swans

Oct. 24, Pumpkin Express – prime rib, glazed carrots and beans, baked potato, apple pie.

Dinner service includes cheese spreads

and olive tapenade with assorted crackers, green salad, special entrée, dessert, and beverage. A cash bar serving cocktails, beer and wine is also available.

The train departs the railroad’s historic East Troy depot at 5:30 p.m. and returns two hours later. The cost is \$68.25 per person (\$50 for Oktoberfest train) and reservations are required.

Visit www.easttroyrr.org and click on the Dinner Train link. Then scroll down to purchase tickets. Tickets may also be purchased by calling (262) 642-3263.

The East Troy Electric Railroad’s dining cars were built in 1927 for the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad. The cars underwent extensive renovations by museum volunteers, resulting in mahogany trimmed, art deco-style interiors

complemented by an exterior color scheme featuring the railroad’s colors of red and silver.

About the railroad

The East Troy Electric Railroad operates 10-mile round trip excursions from its historic East Troy depot and museum to the early 1900s style terminal at the popular Elegant Farmer store and deli in Mukwonago. Celebrating 108 years of riding the rails through Southeast Wisconsin’s Kettle Moraine countryside, this not-for-profit railroad continues to be operated and managed by over 100 volunteers committed to the operation and preservation of historic trolleys and interurban rail cars.

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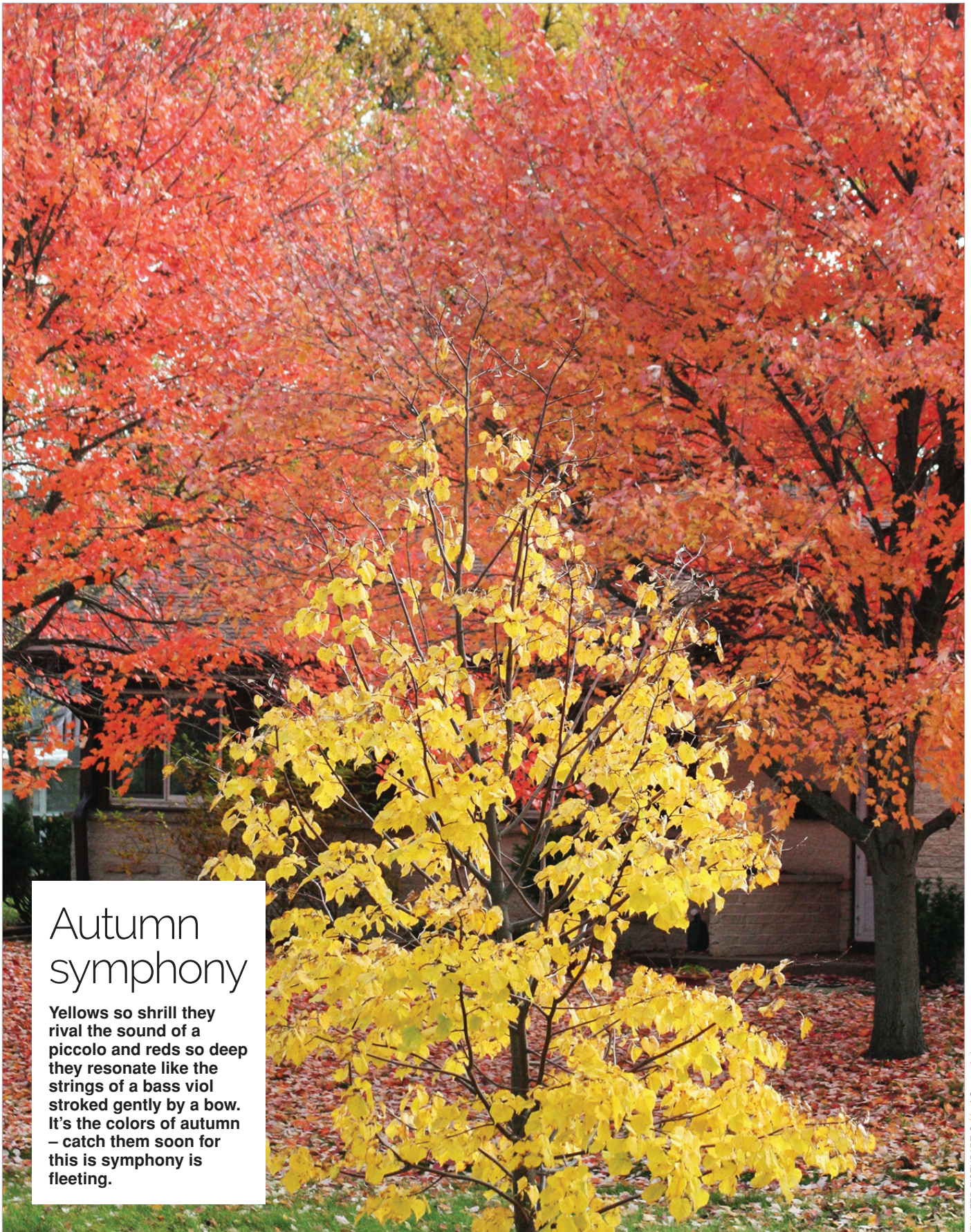
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JENNIFER EISENBART Spirit of Geneva Lakes

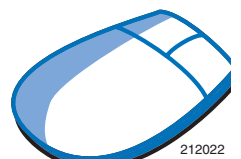


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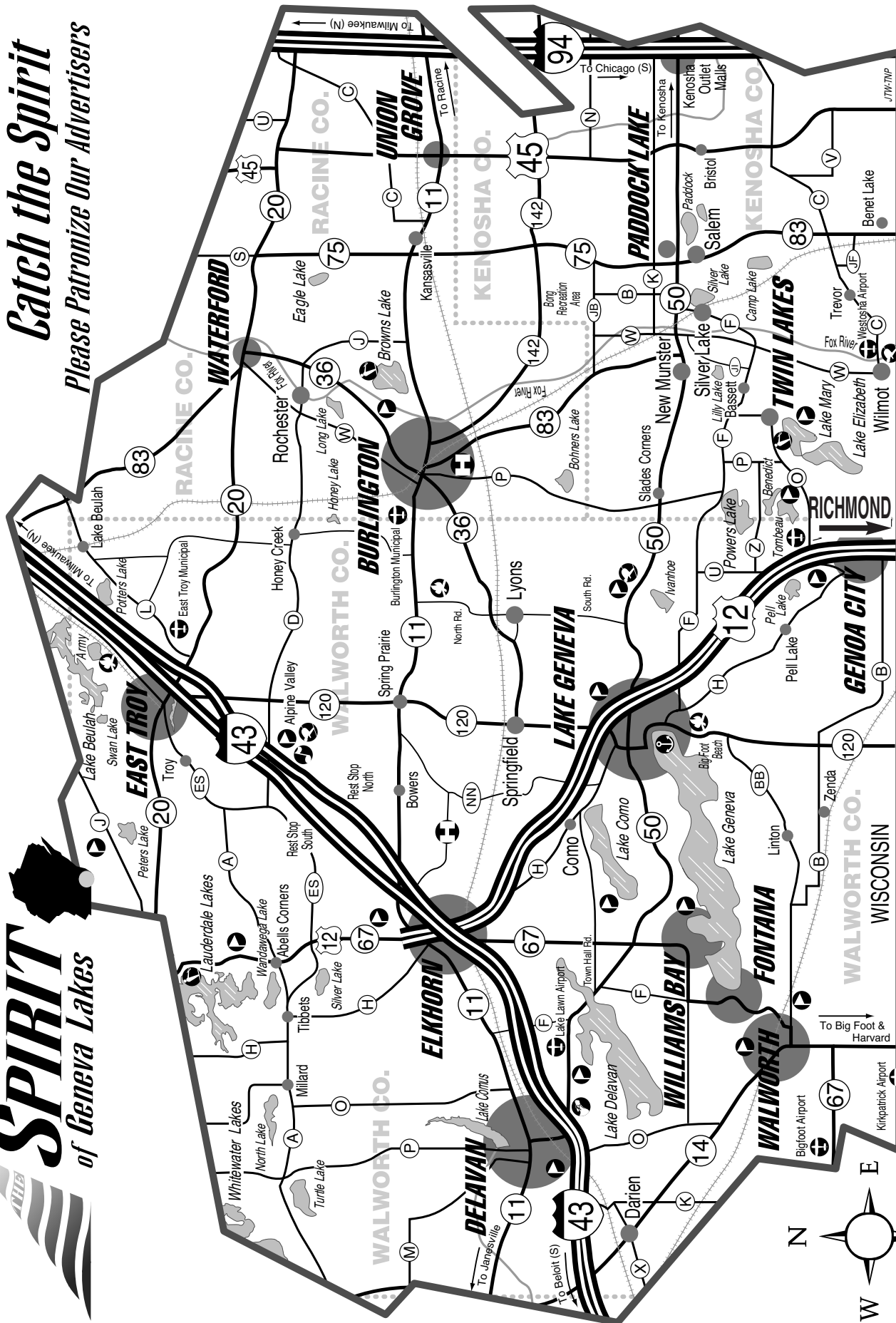
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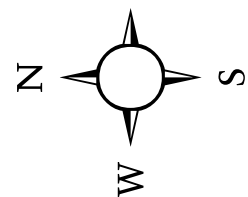
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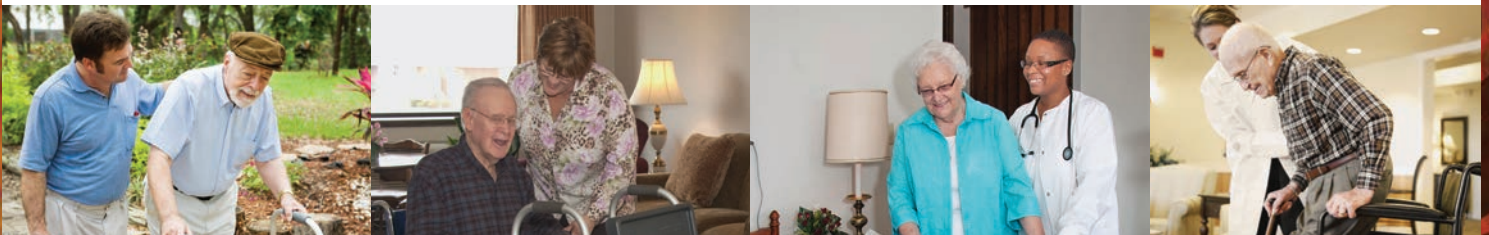


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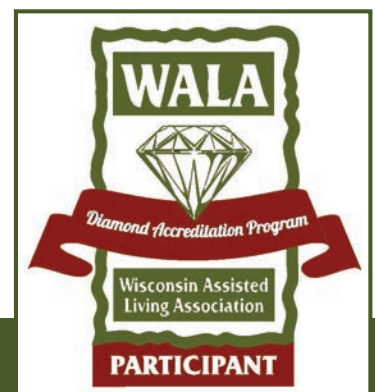
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