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ATV/UTV trails provide opportunity to experience Lincoln County's scenic Harrison Hills

By Jalen Maki



Those looking for a Northwoods getaway have the opportunity to experience a scenic Lincoln County area up close and personal. On land owned and managed by Lincoln County, roughly 50 miles of ATV/UTV trails wind through the Harrison Hills. The

Harrison Hills Trail is a two-way trail system primarily utilizing existing logging roads, traversing glacial moraines and upland hardwoods. Riders will see cedar swamps, small creeks and lakes throughout the hilly terrain.



Pictured is the Harrison Hills ATV/UTV trailhead, located three-quarters of a mile north of County Hwy. J on Turtle Lake Rd. in Lincoln County.

Photo by Jalen Maki



The trailhead is one of several access points for the Harrison Hills Trail System.

Photo by Jalen Maki

The Lincoln County Forestry Department cautions that due to the area's hilly topography, there are many sharp curves and steep segments. "These terrain features not only make the Harrison Hills Trail scenic, but result in a trail that may be challenging for some riders and certainly not a high speed trail," the Forestry Department says.

Depending on trail conditions, the summer ATV trail system opens on May 1, and the majority of the trail system closes on Dec. 1 each year. The Forestry Department says most of the trail system is also open to road-licensed vehicles, mountain bikers, hikers and other recreationists. "The summer ATV trail segments north of County Hwy. D intersecting with Theis Rd. and Bowman Rd. are gated and not open to highway-licensed vehicles," the Forestry Department states. "Immediately north of County Hwy. D, the ATV trail crosses private property for approximately one-half mile. Near the community of Harrison, there are two trail segments that also cross private land. These trail segments crossing private land are only open to ATV/UTV use and are closed to ATVs earlier than Dec. 1."

There are several parking areas that provide direct access to the trail system: three-quarters of a mile north of County Hwy. J on Turtle Lake Rd.; one and one-quarter miles northwest of State Hwy. 17 on County Hwy. B; and one and one-half miles south of Harrison on County Hwy. B.

The Harrison Hills trail system is also connected to trail systems in Langlade and Oneida counties.

The Forestry Department notes that all machines utilizing the Harrison Hills trail system must be registered and have a functioning muffler and spark arrestor.

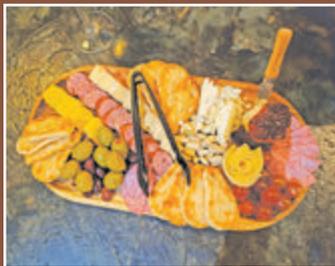
"ATV safety education is a positive move towards a safe and enjoyable ATVing future," the Forestry Department says, adding that all operators, including nonresidents who are at least 12 years old and who are born on or after Jan. 1, 1988, must obtain a DNR safety certificate.

To learn more about the Harrison Hills trail system, visit www.tinyurl.com/bdf8nap4.

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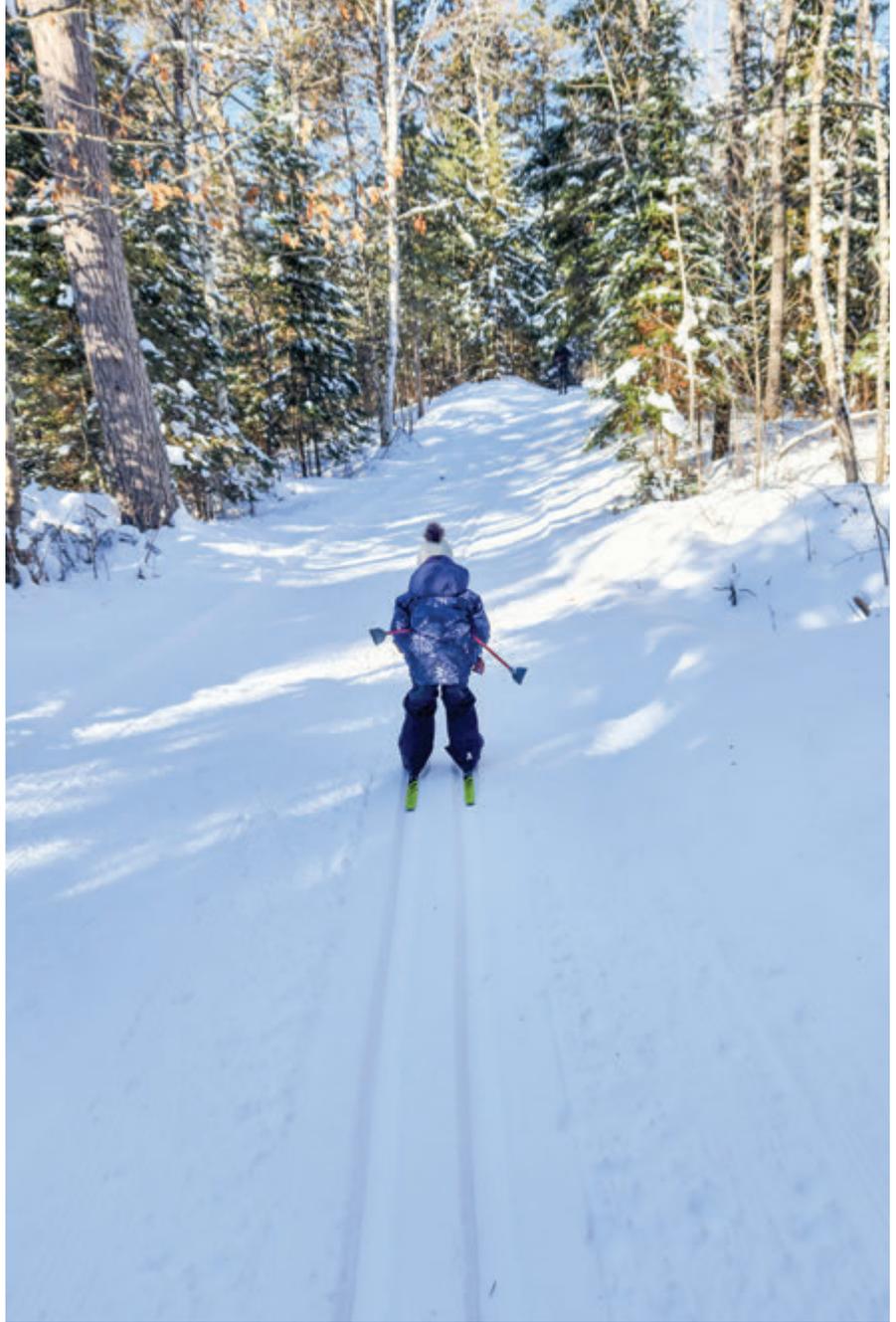


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Build it, groom it and they will come

*Rhineland organization
strives to make silent trails
for everyone*

By Eileen Persike



A young girl skis at one of the RASTA trails. The organization is seeing increased trail use by young people.

Silent sports have been popular in the Northwoods for decades. Well before the pandemic sent Americans outdoors in search of fresh air, a group of Rhineland area silent sports enthusiasts banded together to support and encourage non-motorized use of public lands.

The nonprofit Rhineland Area Silent Trails Association has worked to promote, sustain and improve local hiking, biking, snowshoe and ski trails for more than 20 years. With five trail systems in the Rhineland area, silent sports can be enjoyed nearly year round.



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A fat biker at the Enterprise Trail at dawn. This winter-only trail allows access to beautiful Northwoods scenery. **Submitted photos**

“All of these sports are growing in popularity in recent years,” said Laura McFarland, RASTA board president. “Mountain biking in particular has really taken off. RASTA has been adding trails throughout the years, and in addition to adding mountain bike trails, they’ve been grooming more and more for fat biking in the winter — which in and of itself is growing exponentially in popularity.”

McFarland began informally working with RASTA 14 years ago when she and her husband relocated to the area, picking up sticks on the trails and other volunteer work. About 18 months ago McFarland joined the board as president.

“I’m a huge mountain biker as well as a recreational cross country skier; enjoy snowshoeing, hiking, all of the above,” McFarland said. “I really gravitate toward the trails; they provide an opportunity to enjoy the Northwoods in all its glory and commune with nature.”

The group’s list of accomplishments is staggering. They include:

- 37 miles of single track bike trails
- 30 miles of groomed ski trails
- 17 miles of groomed fat tire trails
- 8 miles of designated snowshoe trails over four trail systems

For two decades, RASTA’s blood, sweat and tears have been shed to ensure silent sports can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.

“Groups like RASTA have invested quite a bit in the infrastructure and have really focused on increasing accessibility to folks of all abilities,” McFarland noted. “Historically, mountain biking was been pretty hard core. Basically, people on early mountain bikes were riding what were hiking trails, so they were really grinding over rocks and roots and navigating these turns that weren’t designed to be ridden. Now days, RASTA and other organizations like us are spending up to \$30,000 a mile to create these machine built ribbons of dirt in the forest that are more accessible to beginner riders. I think that’s really helped, and you’re seeing it in the next generation of mountain bikers.”

Looking for a winter treat? McFarland recommends hopping on a fat bike and hit the Enterprise or Mud Lake trails.

“It’s such a unique way to see the landscape in the winter,” McFarland said. “Our Enterprise Trail System as well as our Mud Lake Trail System go through some pretty amazing ecotypes — through bogs that you can’t access in the summertime without being up to your knees in sphagnum and mud, but in the winter time you can float through those effortlessly though those tamarack swamps. And it’s really breathtaking and a beautiful and a quiet way to enjoy the landscape.”

For detailed trail information, visit RASTATrails.org.

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



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Fat bikers are ready to roll at a RASTA event at Washburn Trails. Fat tire bikes are gaining in popularity because they make riding in the winter possible.

Submitted photo

» SILENT SPORTS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Washburn Area Silent Trails

Trail fees: Oneida County Trail Pass required \$5 per day / \$30 annual
7650 County Park Rd, Rhinelander
Located on Oneida County forest lands west of Rhinelander. Perch Lake County Park hosts the main trailhead. **Trailhead features a picnic area on the shores of a spring fed lake, a warming shelter with covered outdoor patio and fireplace, and restrooms.**

WINTER

- 13.4 miles skate and tracked classic skiing
- 13 miles of ungroomed and marked snowshoe trails with multiple routes; also used for fat bikes
- 3 miles of groomed fat tire bike trails

SUMMER

- 13 miles pro designed and built single track mountain bike trails and a pump track
- Accommodates hiking, running

Nose Lake Trails

2586 Hancock Oneida Lake Rd, Harshaw
Located west of Rhinelander on gentle topography in remote county forest land. **There is also a portable restroom in the parking area. Dogs are permitted on the entire system.**

WINTER

- 7.8 miles of trail groomed for traditional tracked skiing
- 2.3 miles of snowshoe routes through balsam forests, oak and maple ridges, aspen and pine

SUMMER

- 3-mile west loop hiking and biking trail on gentle topography
- 5-mile east loop is also hiked
- Both loops mowed periodically

Cassian Two-Way Cross Country Ski Trail

South Trailhead: 7578 County Highway K, Rhinelander

Middle trail access: 7642 Timber Lake Rd. Crossing (limited Parking)

North Trailhead: 5332 Beaver Lake Rd, Rhinelander

Located west of Rhinelander, with multiple trailheads. Also accessible from the Washburn Silent Sports Area. **The trail provides side-by-side skiing. Dogs are only allowed on the winter ski trail north of Sheep Ranch Road. There are no restroom facilities.**

WINTER

- 9 miles groomed for traditional tracked classic skiing; 29 kilometers roundtrip through remote county forests.

SUMMER

- 9 miles/18 miles roundtrip for hiking and biking
- Dogs permitted in the summer

Enterprise Trails

Zimmer Rd, Rhinelander
 Located 8 miles south of Rhinelander on Hwy G, with the trailhead at the parking lot at the Zimmer Road entrance.

A WINTER TRAIL ONLY, this trail is unique as it traverses through peat bogs, black spruce swamps, navigates glacial eskers, and crosses the Enterprise Hemlocks State Natural Area with stands of mature mesic forest heavily dominated by Hemlock, many over 200 years old with some dating back to 1720 A.D, as such, much of this area is only accessible in winter. **Dogs are permitted; no foot traffic without wearing snowshoes.**

- 8 mile loop with shorter cut-off (4 miles), groomed for fat-tire biking, snowshoeing, and back-country skiing.

NO SUMMER ACCESS

Mud Lake Trails

Trail fees: RASTA Donation tube at trailhead kiosk
 4963 Crystal Lake Rd, Rhinelander
 Located three miles north of Rhinelander, on gently rolling topography includes hardwoods, aspen, pine, and the oh-so-popular cedar swamp. Several private landowners allow access to their property to make this trail system available. **There are no restroom facilities. Dogs are permitted. No foot traffic without wearing snowshoes.**

WINTER

- Over 8 miles of mostly hand-built technical single track for mountain biking in the summer and fat biking and snowshoeing in the winter.

SUMMER

- 8 miles mostly hand-built technical singletrack mountain bike trail
- Hiking, running
- Dogs permitted in summer 🇺🇸

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‘Berry’ grateful for cranberries: Celebrations of cranberries set at Vilas County Cranberry Fest

By Josephine Hinderman



Eagle River Chamber of Commerce photos

October in the Wisconsin Northwoods is a time to celebrate cranberries.

Cranberries are more than just a simple berry that can be baked into sweets or squeezed into juices; they can also be used in unique cooking recipes, and motifs influencing arts, crafts and even clothing. Cranberry Fest in Eagle River is a way to celebrate the tasty, colorful and thirst-quenching uses of the little red berry.

Celebrations will include an arts and crafts fair, farmers market, bog tours, wine and beer tasting and an array of family entertainment.

The event draws nearly 40,000 people a year to Vilas County, according to the Eagle River Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Kim Emerson, and she says that the 2024 festival can anticipate a whopping 45,000 attendees.

“This is an annual pilgrimage for many — an event they would not miss,” she said. “One new thing we tried last year and will do again this year is that we will be offering wine flights in our wine/beer garden. Festival goers really enjoyed trying the many different kinds of cranberry wines by enjoying a flight of four different wines”

While there are festivities held at the Vilas

County Fairgrounds, the excitement of Cranberry Fest cannot contain itself to just the fairgrounds and extends to local businesses, berry bogs and alcohol vendors that want to take part in the celebrations.

250 craft vendors are expected to be at the fairgrounds for the weekend and 30 - 40 farmers market/antique and vintage market vendors downtown on Saturday, Oct. 5.

Marsh Tours will begin on Thursday, Oct. 3, and run through Sunday, Oct. 6. Participants will be taken to Lake Nokomis to tour the cranberry





marshes on the property where cranberries are gathered. Participants who are 21 years or older can take part in sampling cranberry wine. Shuttles will be leaving from the Eagle River Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Center at 21 North Railroad Street in Eagle River.

Reservations are not required but are strongly encouraged so that you can ensure your spot on the tour. Reservations can be made by calling 800-359-6315.

The cost of the tour is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 6-12 and children 5 and under are free.

Saturday, Oct. 5 will also be filled to the brim with other activities for those who may not find touring cranberry marshes to be their thing.

The Cranberry Fest Pancake Breakfast will be kicking off the day from 7 a.m. til 10 a.m., then starting at 9 a.m. will be the arts and crafts fair, which will run until 4 p.m.

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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Toasting, what else? Cranberries!

Amy Jakubowski photo.

» CRANBERRY FEST CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Other activities at the fairgrounds will include a cranberry bake sale, chances to purchase cranberry food products and souvenirs, a cranberry beer and wine garden, family entertainment and a variety of foods both with and without cranberries. Approximately 8,000 pints of cranberries are predicted to be sold during the festival, and a lot of those berries will be going into producing unique cranberry-themed foods for the festivities.

Cranberry soup, cranberry brats and cranberry baked goods will be served alongside char-broiled chicken sandwiches and other treats.

Meanwhile, in downtown Eagle River, people can attend the open-air antique/vintage and farmers market from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., where there will also be sales for fresh cranberries and craisins.

Festivities continue into Sunday, Oct. 6 with another arts and crafts fair going from 9 to 3 p.m.

The Cranberry Fest Crafter Items Auctions will be starting at 11:30 a.m.

Also continuing into this day will be another bake sale, souvenirs, entertainment and food with or without cranberries.

Cranberry marsh tours will start at 10 a.m. and will be running until 2 p.m. with a shuttle bus leaving every hour.

There will be a Cranberry Wine and Beer Garden for visitors 21 years and older.

No pets are allowed at the Vilas County Fairgrounds.

For more information about the Cranberry Festival, including maps and lists of vendors, visit eagleriver.org/events/cranberry-fest/ or call 800-359-6315. 🇺🇸



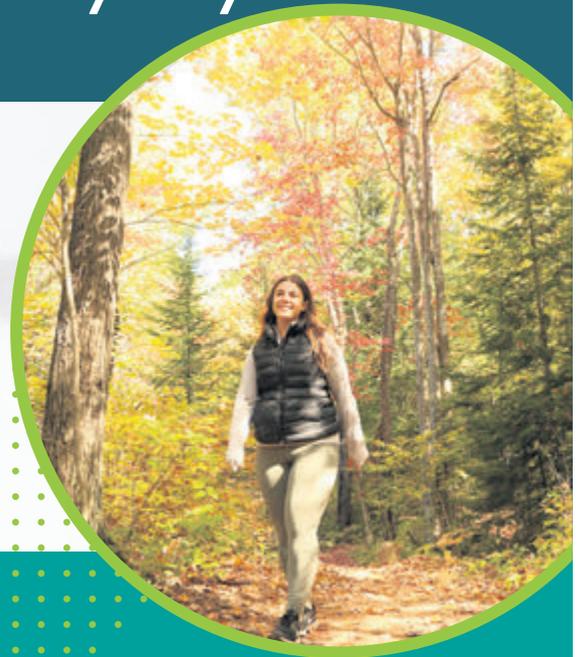


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Wheel Hike Together in fall colors

By Kaity Coisman

Wisconsin in fall yields some beautiful displays of color in nature. Marinette County has an inclusive way of making sure all residents and traveling participants can enjoy nature. Wheel Hike Together is an adaptive hiking experience for people with limited mobility set to take place during the week of September 24-29. Registration is open starting Aug. 1 at exploremarinettecounty.com.



Wheel Hike Together allows individuals with limited mobility to use all-terrain track wheelchairs to explore Thunder Mountain Overlook. Pictured are a couple enjoying the fall colors with the all-terrain track wheelchair.



The three mile hike to the Thunder Mountain Overlook includes a range of terrains including a trek through long prairie grasses with a view of the fall colors in the distance.

Submitted photos



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The event allows individuals with limited mobility to use all-terrain track wheelchairs to explore three miles of trails and scenic overlooks at Thunder Mountain Overlook. Individuals who cannot hike due to temporary or permanent physical limitations, including shortness of breath, may reserve chairs in one-hour increments and explore the park's autumn scenery with friends and family. There is no cost to reserve a chair; however, reservations must be made in advance. The only cost of the event is the \$5 Marinette County Park entrance fee.



Economic Development and Tourism Director Jennifer Short explained that the chairs used during the event are donated by agencies in the area. Short said she also hopes to have another adaptive hiking technology, one that resembles a dune buggy, for participants to reserve before the event.

Participants begin in the parking lot and travel through multiple different terrains, including long prairie grasses, up a steep incline to view an overlook with a view of the Peshtigo River and continue through a hilly landscape with large trees. "We live in the north woods, so a lot of the time hiking is what people grew up doing and continue to do in their adult life... to provide the means for them to do something they have spent their whole life loving is so incredible," Short said.

Past participants have expressed through a questionnaire that the chairs allowed them to go greater distances, enjoy hiking with their family again and have peace of mind that they will return to the parking lot.

"We have so many people repeating it that look forward to it each year, so don't let nervousness or fear of it stop you. It is the friendliest and most welcoming greeting committee that wants to make the event successful for everyone," Short said.

The planning committee for the event consists of Marinette County Park, Marinette County Tourism, Marinette County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and Marinette Elderly Services.

"Those of us that organize the event almost feel a little selfish because all day long we hear how amazing the event is and it fills our cup," Short added.

Event organizers hope to procure enough chairs to keep the event growing every year to give more participants the gift of an outdoor adventure. 🌿



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Helene's Hilltop Orchard offers generations fun, photos and delicious treats

By Tina L. Scott

Helene's Hilltop Orchard is a destination by design — the design of the late Helene Pagoria and now her daughter, Olivia Telschow, who is putting her own spin on things.

Olivia is the fifth generation owner of the property, which was once the dairy farm of her great grandparents. “It was my great-great-grandparents’ farmstead, and my great-grandparents started it as a dairy farm,” Olivia said.

Olivia's parents, Helene and Dave Pagoria, purchased the property in 1980 and set about planting and developing an apple orchard and building a business and a life and bringing Helene's dream to life. “They were a couple of city kids who knew absolutely nothing about farming, but they had this romantic idea,” Olivia said. “They wanted an apple orchard. So they struggled through it, got some trees planted, and in 1993, they finally had enough apples to open up to the public.”

“At that time, we said a successful day was if we had six mini vans parked in our front yard,” Olivia said. “I grew up around it, grew up doing farmer's markets.”

Soon her parents built the bakery and Olivia went off to college, and Helene's Hilltop Orchard became a popular local and regional destination. Helene's dream had become a reality.

Today, Olivia is following in Helene's footsteps in many ways, but she's putting her own spin on things and working to attract an entirely new demographic to the farm, focusing on expansion, providing a multi-generational experience, and rebranding to showcase all the property now has to offer.

Olivia purchased the property in 2017, and while her parents primarily targeted local and central Wisconsin residents and young families who came to the orchard to pick apples and pumpkins and spend an afternoon outdoors with the kids, Olivia wanted to create something that would delight adults just as much as the kids.



It all started when Olivia's parents, Helene and Dave Pagoria, planted some apple trees.



Olivia's vision for Helene's Hilltop Orchard is becoming a reality.

Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photos

“Twenty years ago, the story would’ve been all about the things we have to do for kids,” Olivia said. Today, her vision is guiding the design of Helene’s Hilltop Orchard as a multi-generational venue that provides a variety of experiences and options year-round.

Helene’s Hilltop Orchard expands Olivia began in 2019 by offering farm-to-table dinners, now called Sunset Dinners, in the renovated lower portion of the barn, the Barn Cellar, highlighting meat and produce from local farms.

Those meals have since evolved into six- or seven-course plated dinners that now begin out on the patio area for the first course and then move into the Barn Cellar for subsequent courses.

“We partnered with Chef Travis Tuska, who is a chef in the Wausau area and a culinary instructor at Northcentral Technical College,” she said.

You can’t get this kind of meal anywhere else in northcentral Wisconsin, Olivia said.

Chef Tuska talks guests through the courses he serves, guests enjoy the outdoors and typically a live musician and everyone really enjoys the atmosphere, she said.



The beautiful red barn, long ago a dairy barn, now houses the Barn Cellar in the lower level and the gift shop in the loft.

The dinners have developed a loyal following, and even at \$150 per plate, with a limit of 70 people for each of the exclusive events, Olivia said the dinners always sell out. Held once each month in June, July and August, tickets for the dinners are available on their website.

Occasionally, Chef Travis hosts additional events such as a cigar and bourbon night or a charcuterie night. **>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 18**



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When not in use for planned events, the facility is available as a venue for private family and corporate dinners and events. With complete food and beverage service, decorating, and all of the amenities included, Olivia's team does it all, making it easy for her guests. "Events are all inclusive. ... It's all done for you," Olivia said. The venue can accommodate groups of 60-70 people, but she said they've also created events for small groups of 10.

However, Olivia doesn't envision weddings on the property, as she does not aspire to turn the farm into a wedding venue. That's not her vision, she said.

Expanding on the property, expanding their brand and product lines

Most recently, Olivia has expanded what she calls the Barnyard Play Yard with a wide range of activities for adults and kids, including pedal carts, a jumping pad shed, the giant chair, a hog panel maze that they can change up frequently so it's always a new adventure, and many other interactive play areas, some traditional and some new. Olivia said this isn't one of those places where you sit at a picnic table and watch your kids play. "You interact with them, you play with them, you make those memories, and you enjoy the day together," she said. The Barnyard Play Yard is a popular place during the orchard's peak season, when they are open daily from Labor Day weekend until Oct. 31.

But in addition to grassy play areas, the space now includes an outdoor patio with seating, a bar area, and a small stage for live music – and that's all new for this year.

Helene's serves beer from The Sawmill Brewery in Merrill, hard cider made in Green Bay, and their own line of wines, as well.

"We partnered with Sunset Point Winery. They use our honey crisp apple cider to make a honey crisp wine for us," Olivia said. "We're serving our wine out here, wine slushies, sometimes we have Sawmill beer out here, as well, but this is just kind of a place to enjoy," she said.

She said they usually have a live musician and fires going so people can relax and enjoy the space.

Another new addition to the property is what Olivia calls the Boho Tent. Staged with new and vintage furnishings, rugs, soft textiles, and amenities, it's a picturesque feature that is a favorite with the ladies. Used as "a private rental space" for adult birthdays, small showers, or just a place for the ladies to get together, Olivia set the scene: "You sit there with 12 of your girlfriends, have a box of charcuterie, and a couple glasses of wine, and you just enjoy the evening."

Olivia has also added self-guided school tours such as the pollination trail tour which goes through the apple orchard. Educational signage enables groups to take the tour, pick some apples, and learn about honey bees, pollination, and more as they go. "We feel strongly that pollination is something that needs to be taught to everybody," Olivia said.

They still have the traditional cow train that runs during peak season.

"We now call it the Wisconsin Dairy Trail," Olivia said. "And that too has educational science about the dairy industry and what it means to Wisconsin — just some cool facts for the kids."

A new pond is being added to the property, along with small vignettes set up at various places on the property for photo opportunities. Snapping photos and making memories is what Helene's has been about since the orchard was created, and that's something Olivia continues to embrace and encourage, and she said really loves seeing those photos appear on social media.

Sunflower fields, the apple orchard and the pumpkin fields are all



Interior view of the Barn Cellar, where Sunset Dinners are held and available for private parties.



The patio area is a brand new addition to the property, with an area for live music. The Boho Tent, available for private rental, is in the background.

perfect locations for pictures, too.

Wagon rides are still available, but last year Olivia expanded them to be more inclusive and multi-generational. Long-time visitors to Helene's will remember wagon rides sitting on hay bales, but that wasn't "user friendly" for people with asthma and it wasn't accessible to all. In 2023, Olivia purchased a 40-foot accessible wagon for their

wagon rides. "We can accommodate nine wheelchairs at one time," she said. The lift is battery operated, so now even someone with bad knees can get up on the wagon, she said. Assisted living facilities and nursing homes and people with disabilities have really enjoyed the new addition and the opportunity to be able to come and enjoy the property.

In 2021, Olivia's husband Mark renovated the upper area of the barn and transformed it into a gift shop. Olivia filled it with farmhouse decor and home lines, some seasonal decor items, and a large selection of Christmas decor. "Christmas is what people really want," Olivia said. The sign on The Loft says: "Simply a collection of Olivia's favorite



Sunset Dinners are held once a month in June, July, and August each year.

things,” and it really is a collection of items Olivia loves and thinks others will also want to purchase for gifts or their own homes.

The bakery area was also expanded, creating five kitchen work stations so five different chefs or bakers can be working at the same time.

Olivia hired Alyse Neuman, who worked there as an intern while studying at the culinary institute, after her graduation.

“Now she is our culinary services manager,” Olivia said. “So she’s responsible for our dinners, special events, bakery, concession stand, and food service, which has been a huge blessing and it’s allowed us to expand our menu offerings.”

“We’ve been able to add things like chocolate-filled croissants and sourdough bread ... just tons of different things,” Olivia said.

Locally well known for their apple pies, apple, dumplings and turn-overs and other delicious apple treats made with apples from Helene’s, Olivia continues that tradition. But now Alyse works full-time, year round processing produce, canning, baking and creating and testing out new offerings.

“We’re able to go into the season fully stocked with pies, not waiting for apples to ripen or employees to learn how to actually make them,” Olivia said. “[And] we’ve added things like chicken pot pies, soups, shepherd’s pies, and quiche.”

Helene’s Hilltop Orchard now also works in partnership with other farmers and businesses. They process and produce a line of pickled products including pickles and pickled carrots and other canned goods. They also produce and can apple salsa, apple pie filling, applesauce, and apple butter from everything in their orchard. “That is what we do during the winter,” Olivia said. “We don’t want any waste.”

The bakery also offers new favorites like apple cider donuts that are

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



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» HELENE'S HILLTOP ORCHARD CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

in high demand and a wide variety of cookies, including macarons and Christmas cookies seasonally, as well as other baked goods. And they aren't for sale just during peak apple orchard and pumpkin picking time as was traditionally the case under her parents' ownership.

Traditionally, they offered pies for the holidays. Now, in addition to pies, customers can purchase side dishes for Thanksgiving and Christmas — stuffing and a lot more — to help prepare their holiday meals with ease.

And for Christmas, “We do a ton of Christmas cookies. This past year we did 7,500 dozen cookies. And we do it the cookie walk style. So you walk along, there's 30 plus different varieties, and you're telling us which ones you want in your box. This will be year four for that,” Olivia said.

“During the winter months, January through April, we do what's called a drive through,” she said. “So you place an order online, on our online store. And then once a month, we have a drive thru pick up date, and you come and you literally drive through. We give you your stuff and you drive out. People don't even have to get out of their car.”

There are now about 80 different items on the menu, Olivia said. But that menu/online store is only live on their website during those winter months when the service is available.

From May through the end of August, “We're also at the farmer's market in Wausau every Saturday,” Olivia said. “So we have items we bake specifically for that.”

Olivia and her husband Mark and their daughter Malena work at the farmer's market together and Olivia said that's really expanded their exposure and increased their customer base. And, they've found a lot of their seasonal employees from going to the farmer's market, as well.

From peak season to Christmas

Peak season at Helene's runs from Labor Day weekend through Oct. 31, when Helene's is open daily and draws large crowds to the farm.

Seasonal admission is \$7.50 per person, plus tax, (children and adults) for admission into the play yard and includes wagon rides, cow train rides, the jumping pad, and other venues. Concession stands, apple and pumpkin picking, purchase of pre-picked apples and pumpkins, or items in the bakery and gift shop are also available. There is no admission charge to go to the orchard, bakery or gift shop.

“The week after Halloween, everything is closed, to give her and the staff an opportunity to regroup,” Olivia said. “Then during November and December, the bakery and gift shop are open Fridays and Saturdays.”

And in December for Christmas, “Upstairs in the loft, that's open, and we do cookies and cocoa with Santa. It's fun,” Olivia said.

Changing and growing

“In 2015, it was all about the kids,” Olivia said. Since she purchased the property, she's focused on rebranding to better facilitate her vision for the property. “We dug deep into what we wanted to accomplish,” she said. Some new signage and logo usage showcases the changes.

The new sign welcoming guests to the property is one example. “It



The Loft ... a gift shop featuring a collection of Olivia's favorite things.



Delicious pastries are a traditional staple of Helene's and that tradition continues.

says: Wholesome. Authentic. Unique. And that's what we're trying to keep everything,” Olivia said.

On the farm, Olivia is the farmer. Olivia is the one out there planting the apples, spraying the apples, driving the tractor, and handling all the agricultural aspects of running the farm. That involves a large portion of her time. “Then I'm physically out there watering the plants and decorating.”

She also handles all of the marketing and social media aspects of the business.

Olivia's husband Mark was the orchard's first full-time employee, quitting his job in 2018 to become the maintenance person and builder.

“From a business standpoint, I'm the dreamer ... I dream it, and the managers are the ones that are actively implementing it,” Olivia said.

In addition to Mark and Alyse, Olivia said the company employees a full-time office manager, event coordinator, agronomy manager, and a retail sales manager. And they employ up to 75 seasonal employees during the peak season.

“There's something here for everyone to be able to do,” Olivia said. “And it all centers around Wisconsin agriculture and the great food that we can make with it.”

That's Olivia's vision in a nutshell.

“We have found that the millennial generation – although they love living in the Midwest and they hold their traditions strongly – they like having other experiences. And this is an experience that you see on social media or you see on TV,” Olivia said.

Olivia said many of their event clientele are local foodies, but they also draw couples from Green Bay, Kansas City, Chicago and other areas. Guests may be staying at short-term rentals or a bed and breakfast in the area.

“People are traveling. They hear about it and they want to be part of it. So they do travel in for it,” Olivia said.

During peak season, “We have a lot of people during the fall that are from Chicago. You know, it's only a four hour drive now,” she said. “It's so quick. And they're on their way up north or they're coming home from up north. Well, Grandma and Grandpa are up there, too. So the whole entire family comes, which is wonderful. And then, our local clientele — the school kids, the assisted livings, the nursing homes, and then also, our baby boomer population.”

“You know, it's beautiful to see our baby boomer population sitting out



Helene's expanded product line includes pickled canned goods they process and can during the winter months.

here in chairs, just enjoying the afternoon, watching the kids, having a bite to eat," Olivia said. "And then also, too, after work, people come and they just want to sit underneath the umbrellas and have a drink, have a piece of pie, and just enjoy the evening."

It's been a lot of hard work, Olivia said — envisioning the future for Helene's Hilltop Orchard, planting the seeds, growing the vision — but added it is all coming to fruition. And she's happy to share the farm where she grew up and her love of Wisconsin agriculture with anyone, of any age, who wants to experience it at Helene's.

Helene's Hilltop Orchard is located just southwest of Merrill at N1189 Quarter Road. For more information, visit heleneshilltoporchard.com.



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Four strategies to keep kids occupied on long car trips

Road trips and self-driving vacations tend to produce their own unique moments and memories, but that doesn't mean they don't share certain characteristics. Lately, those characteristics might be high gas prices and more traffic as many vacationers drive in an effort to circumvent the escalating cost of air travel. For parents, one component of road trips to count on like clockwork is the moment when kids ask, "Are we there yet?"

A frustration moms and dads from all walks of life and across all generations can share; bored children calling out from the backseat can try any parent's patience. Thankfully, parents can utilize these four strategies to keep kids occupied on long car trips.

1. Take out the tablet. Unlike their own parents, modern moms and dads have a reliable ally in the fight against backseat boredom. Tablets can be loaded with all sorts of entertainment, from e-books to movies to interactive activities to school lessons. Rules governing device usage may be a part of life at home, but parents can relax those rules on the road to ensure kids stay occupied until the family arrives at its destination.

2. Encourage kids to scrapbook the trip. If a road trip involves visiting multiple destinations, parents can encourage kids to spend some time

scrapbooking their experiences in the backseat. Kids can write about the previous day's activities and paste ticket stubs and other mementos from the trip into their book.

3. Transform the backseat into a play area. Parents may prefer their vehicles remain toy-free most of the time, but transforming the backseat into a play area can ensure kids have plenty of things to do and less time to dwell on how long it's taking to get from point A to point B. Avoid packing anything that can be turned into a projectile, especially for children who aren't yet school-aged. But be sure to include some books, puzzles, dolls/action figures, and handheld games.

4. Time the trip well. Of course, kids don't necessarily need to be actively engaged in an activity in order to be occupied during a road trip. If possible, depart in the wee small hours of the morning, which can pay a host of dividends. Leaving before sunrise reduces the chances of being stuck in traffic, thus cutting back on the amount of time the family spends in the car. Leaving early also increases the chances that kids will spend a good portion of the trip sleeping in the backseat.

Road trips with young kids in tow can try any parent's patience. But some useful strategies to keep kids occupied on long car trips can make such excursions much more enjoyable for everyone. 🇺🇸

How to plan a football road trip



The popularity of football is undeniable. Football fans anxiously await the return of the sport each fall. The season's opening kickoff stokes the passion of fans of scholastic, college and professional football, prompting a months-long focus on the sport.

Many fans take their love of football on the road each season. In fact, travel has become such a big component of football fandom that the National Football League has made an event of its annual schedule release each spring. Once schedules are released, it's not uncommon for fans to begin making plans to travel so they can support their team on the road. Whether fans intend to drive, fly or take another route to the game, they can consider these tips to make the most of their football road trip this season.

- **Plan early.** The earlier fans begin planning, the more likely they are to get great tickets, budget-friendly travel deals and comfortable lodging. Schedules are typically released many months before the season begins, and fans are urged to begin planning their trips once they can confirm the date of the game they would like to attend.

- **Consider sponsored travel packages.** Individual teams, leagues or private fan clubs may organize travel packages to particular games for interested fans. Such packages can save fans the legwork of planning their own football travel weekend, as they typically include tickets to a game and lodging. Some packages even include bus or airfare and pregame meet-ups with fellow fans at an establishment close to the stadium.

- **Confirm you can get tickets.** Apps and websites like SeatGeek, Stubhub and Ticketmaster ensure it's possible to get tickets to any game on the schedule in a given season. However, fans should do a little research into ticket prices prior to booking any other components of the trip. Much has been made of consumer demand for live event experiences after restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic were lifted. For example, the entertainment company Live Nation reported a 32 percent

increase in revenue during the third quarter of 2023. That heightened demand has driven up the cost to attend live events in many cities. Fans who want to take their fandom on the road this football season should visit team websites and secondary market sellers to confirm if ticket prices are within their budgets. If so, purchase tickets and then begin planning the rest of the trip.

- **Don't forget to consider weather.** Though football fans tend to be a hardy breed, weather still merits consideration when planning a football travel weekend. The tail end of a football season can be cold, particularly when traveling to parts of North America where winter typically begins early. If cold weather figures to dampen your travel experience, look for indoor stadiums or follow your favorite team to regions like the southeastern or southwestern United States, where temperatures tend to remain welcoming even as the football season reaches its latter stages.

Traveling on the road with your favorite team is a great way to take your football fandom to the next level. That's particularly true when fans give ample thought to certain variables prior to booking a trip. 🇺🇸

 An advertisement for Northwoods Community Realty.com. It features a portrait of Deonn Graeber, a Sales Agent, in a blue shirt. The background shows a sunset over a lake with trees. The company logo and contact information are displayed.

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How to stay alert behind the wheel

Impaired driving and distracted driving get their share of attention, as both contribute to fatal yet often preventable accidents. However, another danger lurks when people get behind the wheel – particularly when they engage in drowsy driving.

The National Safety Council says drowsy driving accounts for roughly 100,000 crashes, 71,000 injuries and 1,550 fatalities in the United States each year. The Council equates the effects of driving while tired to driving with a blood-alcohol content of 0.08 percent. The majority of drowsy driving incidents happen between midnight and 6 a.m. or in the late-afternoon hours, indicates the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one in 25 drivers has admitted to falling asleep behind the wheel.

Remaining awake and alert behind the wheel may seem easy. But droopy eyelids and incessant yawns can catch any driver off guard. The following tips can help drivers remain more alert.

- Alcohol and certain medications can exacerbate feelings of drowsiness, so neither should be ingested prior to driving. It is important to determine if fatigue arises after taking new medicines before getting behind the wheel.
- Try not to make long distance trips alone. A companion on the drive can share driving duty and provide conversation that helps drivers stay alert.

- Get adequate sleep at night. It is more likely that you may fall asleep behind the wheel if you are sleep deprived.
- Recognize gas station snacks will not be the fix. According to Nancy Foldvary-Shaefer, DO, MS, a sleep medicine specialist, once the body metabolizes these snacks, which tend to be carbohydrate-heavy, drowsiness can increase as the sugar spike in the bloodstream wears off.
- Sip coffee or a caffeinated (unsweetened) beverage. The caffeine is a central nervous stimulant.
- Pull over and take a rest or a brief, 20-minute nap, advises the Cleveland Clinic.
- Exercise increases blood flow to the brain and reduces stress hormones. Doing a small workout before getting on the road, or during pit-stops, can help drivers stay alert.
- Don't begin a trip during a time when you would normally be sleeping. Stop and start while you are alert. Build rest into your budget and stop at a roadside motel.
- Blasting music may not be a fix, and actually could be an extra distraction, causing you to miss the sounds of horns or sirens.

Staying alert in the car involves some strategies that any driver can employ. 🇺🇸




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Sept-Oct	Grampa's Farm
Sept-Oct	Grace & Sophie's Pumpkin Patch
September 2	Labor Day Parade
September 2	Merrill Lion's Club Labor Day Car Show
September 7	Community Wide Rummage Sales
September 12-15	Northwoods Fall Ride
September 13-14	NCWGCA Fall Gun Show
September 21	Gleason Lions Truck & Tractor Pull
September 21	Colorama Bike Tour
September 28	Merrill Enrichment Center's Fall Craft & Market
October	Haunted Sawmill
November 9	Craft & Vendor Fairs
November 30	Shop Small, Shop Local
December 7	Christmas Parade
December 7	Park Manor Luminaria
December 7-8	O'Tannenbaum Tour
December 11	City of Merrill "Tour of Lights"



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Northwoods Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

5-Ongoing

Lake Nokomis Cranberry Marsh Tours. Eagle River. eagleriver.org

7 **Duck Dash.** Downtown Rhinelander. rhinelanderchamber.com

9-14 **Upper Mississippi Steamboat Meet.** Eagle River Chain of Lakes. eagleriver.org

12-15 **Tomahawk Main Street Fall Ride.** Tomahawk. tomahawkmainstreet.org

14 **SepTimber Ride.** Eagle River. Choose from three routes. eagleriver.org

14 **Scarecrow Fest.** Downtown Phelps. vilaswi.com

20-22 **Colorama Weekend in Downtown Sayner.** vilaswi.com

21 **32nd Colorama Arts & Crafts Fair.** Boulder Junction. boulderjct.org

21 **St. Germain Colorama.** Birthplace of "Colorama". vilaswi.com

21 **Oktoberfest.** Three Lakes. threelakes.com

21 **Paul's Pro Am Musky Tournament.** Eagle River Chain of Lakes. vilaswi.com

21 **Art in the Square.** Crandon. visitforestcounty.com

28 **Beef-A-Rama.** Downtown Minocqua. minocqua.org

OCTOBER

3-6 **Cranberry Fest Marsh Tours.** Eagle River. eagleriver.org

4-6 **Midwest Musky Classic Tournament.** Phelps. vilaswi.com

5-6 **Boulder Junction Lions Club Walleye Classic.** Boulder Junction area lakes. boulderjct.org

10 **22nd Annual Pumpkin Run Rally.** Mercer. mercerc.com

11-13 **Northwoods Fall Art Tour.** Multiple locations. eagleriver.org

12 **Oktoberfest.** Tomahawk. tomahawkmainstreet.org

12 **Three Lakes Pumpkin Fest.** Three Lakes. threelakes.com

26 **Hallowfest.** Eagle River. eagleriver.org

NOVEMBER

9 **Old Fashioneds Up North.** Eagle Waters Resort. eagleriver.org

22-24 **Christmas in Downtown Sayner.** vilaswi.com

22 **Festival of Lights.** Three Lakes. threelakes.com

23 **Wi-Does Wine Walk.** Downtown Eagle River. eagleriver.org

29 **Winter Wonderland Arts & Crafts Show.** Boulder Junction. boulderjct.org

29 **36th Christmas Walk.** Boulder Junction. boulderjct.org

30 **Holiday Marketplace, Jingle Bell Fun Run and "Lighting Up St. Germain".** St. Germain. vilaswi.com

DECEMBER

6 **Living Nativity.** Shows 6-8 p.m. Eagle River. eagleriver.org

7 **Christmas Kickoff.** Riverview Park Eagle River. eagleriver.org

31 **New Year's Eve Fireworks.** Woodruff Town Hall. vilaswi.com

JANUARY

9-12 **Vintage Snowmobile Races.** Eagle River. derbycomplex.com

16-19 **62nd World Championship Snowmobile Derby.** Eagle River. derbycomplex.com

FARMERS MARKETS

Antigo: Saturday 8 a.m.-noon. Peaceful Valley Park

Crandon: Tuesday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 200 S. Lake Ave

Eagle River: Wednesday, 8:30 am-1 pm. Sunday 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Opens May 8. May-October. Hwy 45 north of the bridge

Hurley: Wednesday 3 p.m.-6 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m. June-October. 13420 N 10th Ave.

Merrill: Wednesday & Saturday 7:30 a.m.-noon. June-October. 600 Block of North Center Ave.

Minocqua: Friday 8 a.m.-1 p.m. May-October. 408 E. Chicago St.

Rhinelander: Hodag Farmers Market. Saturday 8 a.m.-1 p.m. End of May-mid October. Pioneer Park

Tomahawk Main Street Farmer's Market: Tuesday 11 a.m.-3 p.m. June-October. Third Street off West Wisconsin Avenue

Tomahawk Farm & Flea Market: Saturday. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. May 4-October. 79 Hometown Drive



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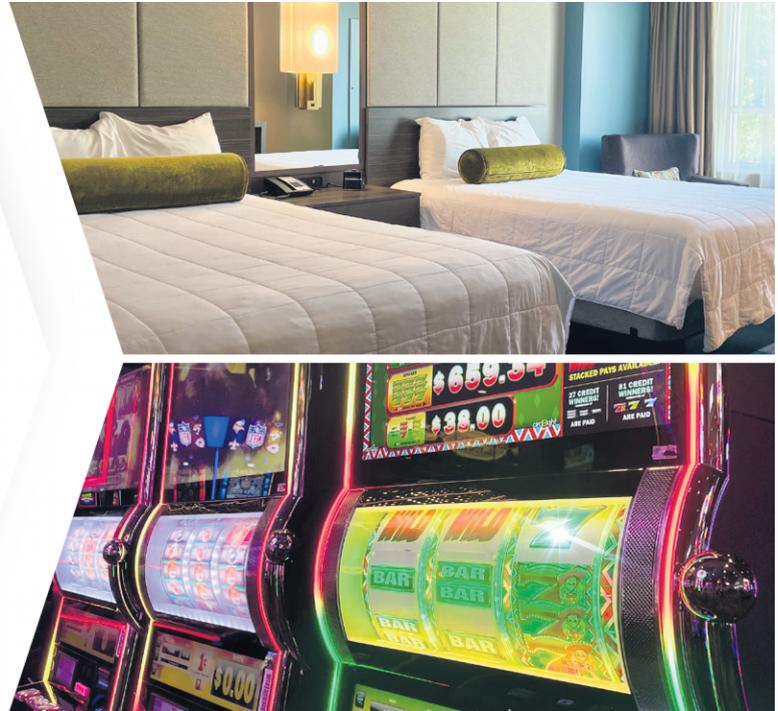
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Heather and Luke Mullins have opened a distillery where they use milk sugar to craft their spirits. **Jena Carlin photo**

Distillery rooted in agriculture

By Mike Warren

Here in Wisconsin, we like to celebrate all things dairy – like milk, cheese, ice cream, cows and vodka. Yes, you read that correctly.

Recently-opened Knowlton House Distillery – 16 miles north of Stevens Point and 19 miles south of Wausau – uses pure milk sugar (whey), a byproduct of making cheese, as the base ingredient for their award-winning TenHead line of spirits. The whey comes from the Mullins Cheese plant near Lake DuBay in Knowlton and the Mullins Cheese & Whey facility eight miles north of Marshfield, on Highway C.

“All of the whey from the Marshfield facility, as well as from the Knowlton facility, comes back to Knowlton, and then they pull off the cream and they pull off the protein and dry that and purify that for whey protein powder and then what’s left is the whey that they send down the street to me to turn into spirits,” said Heather Mullins, during a June 5 conversation.

Located just south of Mosinee, Knowlton House was founded by Luke and Heather Mullins. The distillery is a marriage of their respective

professions and passions. As a fourth-generation cheesemaker with Mullins Cheese, Mosinee-born Luke comes from a long line of Wisconsin dairy farmers and cheesemakers. Heather, a Stevens Point native educated in distilling with a masters degree in brewing science, had worked as a product development scientist aiding other distilleries and breweries before starting their distillery.

“Guests are often surprised that we distill vodka from milk sugar because it’s uncommon,” says Heather Mullins. “We didn’t invent it. There are maybe a dozen worldwide that are doing it. But, certainly milk is near and dear to us and to our state.”

Mullins attended grad school for brewing science in the UK, where she tried her first sugar-based spirit.

“And it was a similar story,” she said. “It was a family cheese factory, and one of the brothers was using the whey from the milk to turn it into spirits, and those spirits are really lovely. They kind of retain this

underlining silky texture. It's really about the nuance and the mouth feel where that raw material really shines and comes through, and so we wanted to retain that. It's not just because we can make it from milk, but also because it really turns into an excellent spirit at the end of the day."

But don't take Heather's or Luke's word for it. At the San Francisco World Spirits Competition – the largest spirits tasting competition in the world – both their TenHead Vodka and Woodland Dry Gin were awarded gold from their panel of expert judges. At the SIP Awards – the only internationally-recognized consumer tasting competition – Knowlton House vodka won platinum and their gin double gold.

"We entered the competitions to get opinions from their expert judges," said Heather. "As a new distillery, that feedback is very valuable. While of course we hoped to get a medal, we never expected this. We felt we were crafting something special, but to receive accolades at this level of competition is humbling. It's exciting that we can bring attention to another delicious use of dairy."

While distilled from pure milk sugar, TenHead spirits are lactose-free.

"During fermentation, we use a special strain of yeast that breaks down the milk sugars and converts them into alcohol," Heather adds. "The distillation process essentially boils off the alcohol to purify and concentrate it, leaving behind any residual sugars. We're left with an exceptionally-smooth spirit that is both lactose and gluten-free."

Knowlton House Distillery began distribution of TenHead spirits in spring 2024.

Even the name of their product line – TenHead – is derived from the Mullins family's farming history.

"In 1849, Patrick Mullins sold his ten head of cattle, the census records show, in Ireland to move to Wisconsin during the potato famine and start a new life," Heather explained. "So, that ten head of cattle kind of helped finance the family dream, and ever since then, the Mullins have only been in dairy for the last seven generations, first as dairy farmers and then for the last few generations as cheesemakers. So, we're just continuing to evolve. We're committed to dairy and want to see what amazing things we can do with it."

Mullins added the distillery and its products have been very well received, since opening Labor Day 2023.

"Honestly, I'm kind of humbled that it's gone this smoothly," Heather told us. "I am not the risk taker in the family. My husband is definitely the entrepreneurial spirit. We have been overwhelmed with the success of how many community members are coming out. And a lot of it's coming from Marshfield, Rapids, Wausau and Stevens Point. I think it was a dream that if you had asked me fifteen years ago I didn't know it was a dream I had," Heather added. "But I certainly would say that it's been a dream-come-true thanks to a lot of support and help from, not just our immediate family, but families and friends in the area."

Mullins added the family has enjoyed seeing some of their farm friends visit to see how their milk can become other products.

TenHead spirits are produced 100 percent onsite in Knowlton using the milk sugars from the family's cheese-making operation just down the road. One pound of whey produces nine pounds of cheese.

"We make about a two thousand-gallon batch of whey that then turns out to be just over a thousand bottles of vodka," said Heather.

Consumers can now find TenHead spirits in liquor stores and bars throughout the Dairy State.

Knowlton House also offers several tour-and-tasting packages, as well as private space for small parties and corporate events. For more information, visit knowltonhouse.com.

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Weekend of music at Chain Blues Fest

By Robert Cloud

While the Chain O' Lakes in Waupaca is a popular summer tourist destination, it is also a hot place for weekend tourists to visit this fall.

The Indian Crossing Casino, located at the channel between Columbia and Limekiln Lakes, will host the 13th annual Chain Blues Fest Friday and Saturday, Oct. 4-5.

Built in 1925, this historic dance hall has showcased such legends as Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Jimmy Dorsey, Les Brown, Beach Boys, Everly Brothers, Woody Herman, Neil Young, Bobby Vinton, Herman's Hermits and Ricky Nelson.

The Chain Blues Fest continues the nearly 100-year tradition of great bands performing at the ICC restaurant and bar.

This year's event features the Jay Edward Band at 7 p.m. and Ivy Ford at 9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4.

At 3 p.m. the following Saturday, Ian and the Night Thieves opens the second day of the Chain Blues Fest, followed by Midtwon Mannish Boys at 5 p.m., Jay Stulo and the Mighty Aces at 7 p.m., and closing out the night with Toronzo Cannon at 9 p.m.

Tickets

Tickets for Friday night are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door. Tickets for Saturday are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door. A Weekend Pass is \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door.

Advance tickets are available online until noon Friday, Oct. 4. Tickets purchased online will be held at "Will Call." Pick up at the ICC beginning at 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4 or beginning at 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 5.

Advance tickets can be purchased online at www.ChainOLakesBlues-Festival.com or by calling 715-258-7343. Advance tickets are also available for purchase at the Indian Crossing Casino, at E1171 County Trunk Q in Waupaca.

Individuals under 21 years of age will not be admitted to the Festival. Chairs are provided at the event.

The Indian Crossing Casino is a restaurant and bar, so food service and refreshments will be available during the festival.

The event will include complimentary shuttle service from Waupaca area lodging facilities to and from the Blues Festival!

For more information, including lodging, dining, shopping, events and things, visit www.VisitWaupacaChainOLakes.com.



Jay Stulo is scheduled to perform at the Chain Blues Festival on Saturday, Oct. 5.

Photos courtesy of Waupaca Area Chamber of Commerce



Madtown Mannish Boys will play Saturday, Oct. 5, at the Indian Crossing Casino during the Chain Blues Festival.

Bands

Jay Edwards Band: Jay started playing in local bands in Oshkosh, when he was 15 years old. At 20, he moved to Southern California to pursue his music career further. He is known for his soulful harmonica playing.

He returned to Wisconsin in 2016 and continued performing with The Jay Edward Band. In 2018, the band was nominated for its first Wisconsin Area Music Industry Award (WAMI) and in 2019, the band won the WAMI for "Best Blues Artist." They also released their only album, "Chest Pain," featuring guitar great Jay Stulo.

Other members of the band include bass guitar player Tony Menzer, drummer Tony Wagner, guitarist Jim Prideaux and organist Dennis Wage.

Ivy Ford: One of the up and coming stars in the blues world, Ford and her band were finalists at the 2019 International Blues Challenge, based in Memphis, Tennessee. They have self-released two albums and played at music festivals across the U.S. and Canada.

A singer and multi-instrumentalist, Ivy is known as "The Chicago Blues Kitten." She currently lives in Kenosha. Her music blends a rockabilly vibe with Delta blues and soulful vocals.



Jay Edward will be performing on the harmonica at the Chain Blues Festival in Waupaca on Friday, Oct. 4.



Toronze Cannon will be among the performers at the Chain Blues Festival at Indian Crossing Casino.



Ivy Ford will perform at the Chain Blues Festival at the Indian Crossing Casino on Friday, Oct. 4.



Ian Seaholm and the Night Thieves will perform Saturday, Oct. 5, at the Chain O' Lakes Blues Festival in Waupaca Saturday, Oct. 5.

In a review of her album, *Club 27*, in “Deep Roots” magazine, critic David McGee noted, “It would not be inaccurate to say that from first note to last, Ivy Ford delivers a bravura performance that elevates her into the forefront of young blues artists in America. From concept to execution – in writing the songs, playing all the instruments, taking all the lead and backup vocals – she doesn’t slip up for a second. It’s all believable, honest and rather breathtaking in her assured grasp of idiomatic variations.

Ian Seaholm and the Night Thieves has been delivering powerhouse blues, rock and soul music since the band’s first show in Chicago in 2021. Ian Seaholm has opened for Buddy Guy and received the Louis Armstrong Jazz Award and Outstanding Soloist at the 2003 UWGB Jazz Fest, and the Joe Bonamassas Keeping the Blues Alive Foundation music grant.

His four-piece band, the Night Thieves, plays a range of Chicago and Austin based blues, ranging from Muddy Waters and the three Kings, to The Vaughan brothers, Clapton and other blues legends.

The Madtown Mannish Boys are a Madison-based blues band influenced by artists such as Muddy Waters, Junior Wells, Otis Spann, Paul Butterfield and Little Walter. Some of their tunes are harmonica-driven, played with gritty fervor and intense energy. Others are soulful ballads.

Paul Schwoerer plays harmonica. Jesse Steinberg plays guitar, Tim Payne on bass, John Sickerdick is the drummer and Todd Phipps is the keyboard player.

Jay Stulo began his career in music playing for a bar band at age 17. He later performed with blues legend Luther Allison, then with James Solberg. He co-founded The Mighty Aces in 1996 and then led Jay Stulo Band for a decade.

Noted for his high-energy, fast-paced guitar and wrenching vocals, Stulo will be joined by guitarist Doug Kroening.

According to a review at MNBlues.com. “Jay Stulo plays the heck out of a guitar, everything from wicked, howling, fast-picking slide to slow, subtle, soulful playing.”

Toronzo Cannon grew up on Chicago’s South Side, listening to the blues with his grandfather and to soul, R&B and contemporary rock on the radio.

“I want my songs to be heard and experienced, not just listened to,”

Cannon said, regarding the stories his lyrics and music tell in his original songs.

According to Blues Music Magazine, “His guitar playing has all the fire and spontaneity of the Chicago legends he carries; his songwriting is a timely and original look at the world he sees by day on a bus and in blues clubs by night, and his assertive voice is the perfect vehicle to deliver the message.” 🍷

Wausau moonstone hunt

*Check out Wisconsin's
first pick-your-own
Moonstone field*

By B.C. Kowalski



ABOVE: Pick-your-own Wisconsin moonstones in Marathon County. **B.C. Kowalski photos**
BELOW: Emi Oshima said she fell in love with Wisconsin Moonstone and spread her fascination to Japan, where it has become a popular gem.

Driving west on Highway U, my eyes keep searching for a sign I'd seen via email - one that signaled something rather unusual for the area - a place where one can pick their own Wisconsin Moonstone, run by a woman originally from Tokyo, Japan.

I found the white sign that led off of Highway U onto a grassy parking lot and a big open field. A little, colorful shed adorns the outer edges of the field, and a picnic table full of gems, paper and other necessities.

Emi Oshima greets me warmly with a smile and a big sun hat. As we sit down, I mention that I heard Wisconsin Moonstone is big in Japan. She smiled "I did that. That was me," she explained with a smile. Oshima fell in love with Wisconsin Moonstone and quickly spread it to Japan, turning it into a popular gem in the country, she said.

She's had a wholesale service selling Wisconsin Moonstone for some time, and it's become a passion of hers. But she and her partners — Trent and Shana Rebeck, and Austin and Jennifer Gausmann — started talking about how they could share the joys of Wisconsin Moonstone more with the public, and one day they decided to start a pick-your-own field. Thus began the first pick-your-own Wisconsin Moonstone site in the whole state. "This is a unique experience," Oshima, known colloquially as Moonstone Emi, said at the site.

How does it work? Basically, customers pay \$35, get a bucket, rent some tools, and then are sent into the field to look for moonstone.

It's not hard to find on the site — the moonstone is everywhere. Customers are able to harvest up to 20 pounds of moonstone, which fills a pretty sizable bucket. The site officially opened May 15, and Oshima says they get 60-70 people per day picking moonstone.



Oshima carries a spray bottle with her, and demonstrates how raw moonstone really comes to life when you spray it with water - the colors and vibrancy really shine under the gleam of the water.

The luminance of Wisconsin Moonstone even comes out in its raw form to a degree, but it really shines a brilliant blue when polished, and that's made it a favorite for jewelry or just for having around on a shelf.

The site is unique, Oshima says, because the field is filled with moonstone. "They're so surprised," Oshima says of first-time customers. "It's everywhere."

The site is open Wednesdays and Sundays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with Saturdays by special appointment. There are special discounts for seniors and youth, and those who pick more than 20 pounds pay \$2 per pound extra.

To learn more or buy tickets, visit wisconsinmoonstonellc.com. The field can be found at 143344 Highway U in Wausau. 🍷



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Central Wisconsin Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 6-8 Pacelli Panacea.** Stevens Point. pacellicatholicschools.com
- 7 Harvest Fair.** Historic Point Basse, Nekoosa. historicpointbasse.com
- 7 Celebrate Amherst.** Downtown Amherst. stevenspointarea.com
- 14 Beer and Bacon Fest.** Fern Island, Wausau. wausauevents.org
- 14-15 32nd Annual Maple Fall Fest.** Wildwood Park & Zoo, Marshfield. visitmarshfield.com
- 21 Art in the Park.** Piffner Park. artintheparkstevenspoint.org
- 26-28 Central Wisconsin Book Festival.** Portage County Library. stevenspointarea.com
- 27-28 51st Annual Warrens Cranberry Festival.** Warrens. cranfest.com

FARMERS MARKETS

- Abbotsford:** Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m., May-October. 1011 E Spruce St, Abbotsford
- Marshfield:** Every other Tuesday 8 a.m.-1 p.m., June-October. Pick 'n Save Parking Lot, Marshfield
- Mosinee:** Mondays 11 a.m.-4 p.m. June-October. River Park, Mosinee
- Neillsville:** Saturdays, 8 a.m.-noon. May-October. Sniteman's Town Square, Neillsville
- Owen:** Saturdays 9 a.m.-noon. June-September. County Rd. X
- Stevens Point:** Daily (Saturdays most popular), 6:30 a.m.-5 p.m. May-October. Mathias Mitchell Public Square
- Stratford:** Wednesdays 4 p.m.-7 p.m. June-September. 402 S Weber Ave
- Wausau:** Wednesdays & Saturdays. 7 a.m. until items sold out. May-October. 200 River Drive
- Wausau:** Thursdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m. June-September. 2727 Plaza Drive
- Wisconsin Rapids:** Thursdays & Saturdays 8 a.m.-2 p.m. June-October. Downtown Wisconsin Rapids

- 28 Ironbull Ultra Marathon.** Wausau. ironbull.org
- 28 Oktoberfest 5k Run/Walk.** Mosinee. mosineechamber.org

OCTOBER

- 1-4 The Highground Education Days.** Neillsville. thehighground.us
- 4-5 Chain O Lakes Blues Festival.** Indian Crossing Casino. visitwauapacachainolakes.com
- 4-6 Hidden Studios Art Tour.** Along the Ice Age Trail near Amherst. hiddenstudiosarttour.com
- 5 Taste of Norway and Lost Arts.** lola. ischamber.com
- 5-6 Nekoosa Giant Pumpkin Fest.** Riverside Park. nekoosagiantpumpkinfest.com

- 10-13 The Basin Short Film Festival.** Stevens Point. filmfreeway.com
- 12 23rd Wisconsin Country Dance Workshop.** Marshfield. visitmarshfield.com
- 12 Ironbull Red Granite Grinder.** Wausau. ironbull.org

NOVEMBER

- 27 Rekindle The Spirit.** Wisconsin Rapids. visitwisrapids.com

DECEMBER

- 7 Nekoosa Area Hometown Christmas.** Nekoosa. visitwisrapids.com
- 7 Christmas in Rome.** visitwisrapids.com

MARCH

- 1 Point Bock Run.** Stevens Point. pointbockrun.com



HEAVENLY FOOD Served by “Angels”

In 1950 the Sky Club became the home of the FIRST ever salad bar...

Three generations of fine dining



In 1935, a new business ventured its way in to the small town of Plover, WI. Boasting its lunch specials consisting of homemade sandwiches and oven - baked chicken, it attracted many hungry tourists who also had the opportunity to spend the evening at the business camping facilities offered at no expense. A gas and oil service station were included for those who may have been on their way to a more distant location. Marion Nall started this unique combination of services set among stately oaks offering a quiet country setting. The original building not only housed a bar and a restaurant, but also served as a home to the operators. It didn't take long for this wayside to become an identifiable spot for travelers heading through Plover and Stevens Point. Near the end of the war, the tourist season seemed to grow along with the restaurant, whose service was becoming more extensive, hence the term "supper club".



Post war booming the 40's and 50's came rather quickly. It was in those years changes were made to the wayside restaurant which helped identify the present Sky Club. In 1950 an innovative self-service, all - you - can - eat salad bar, believed to be the first ever was introduced. It became an identifying benchmark of the Sky Club. Around this time, the slogan, "Heavenly Food Served by Angels" was introduced, and is said to have been started by Tom Leach, a part - time owner/customer in the early 1940's. The restaurant's history of owners, in order is: George Armstrong '35 Marion Nall '40 Louie Jacobs, John Rocco, Louie and Evelyn Schnittger '50 and finally, in 1961, John Freund. Freund, from Neenah purchased the restaurant and operated it until 1965, but died suddenly. It was then his sons, Doug and Terrol who purchased the restaurant and took over where their father left off. In May of 1966, another son Dennis, fresh out of the Air Force,

joined his brothers in the business. Age was their only asset, but in no time, the business was on its way to success. In 1969, Doug decided to pursue other interests, and left the Sky Club. In late November, the restaurant dealt with a severe setback from a fire forcing the business to close until June, 1970. Dennis and Terry responded to the challenge and rebuilt the restaurant again. With the help of loyal customers, dedicated employees, and a few years' time, an additional dining room was added in 1979. In order to do this, the owner's home located next to the business was moved. Additions were added in 1981 and in 1994. With tremendous pride, the Freund's are able to look back at the history of their business. Dennis Freund retired in the summer of 1999 and Terry Freund retired to his other restaurant "Headwaters" in Boulder Junction Wisconsin in the summer of 2007, passing the tradition down to his two son's Patrick and Eric. The Freund's continue the tradition of the Sky Club and want to thank our past and present patrons and employees, for helping us make the first years successful...

And we've only just begun.... Once again

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306854

Fall fun awaits at Flyte's Fieldstones

By Hayley Sroka



A wedding party takes a ride aboard a tractor-powered trailer at Flyte's Fieldstones.

Submitted photos

Everything is in the air, so grab your flannels and plan a trip that offers something fun for the whole family. Whether you want to look for the perfect pumpkin or challenge the family to a 10-acre corn maze, Flyte's Fieldstones in Richmond has what you are looking for.

Flyte Family Farm is kept busy in the summer months during their growing period of fresh market produce such as strawberries, blueberries and vegetables. Flyte's Fieldstones fall fun season nicely complements the growing period.

After purchasing a beautiful farm, the family decided to expand their commercial crop acreage but was left with the question of what to do with the historic buildings and property. They decided it would be best to share the grounds with the entire community, and it has since become a tradition for many families. Before, during, and after the fall season, Fieldstones is a venue for weddings, quinceañeras, bridal showers, baby showers, reunions, farm-to-table dinners, banquets, and your upcoming event.

Flyte's Fieldstones is most known for its 10-acre corn maze that features a new design each year. This year, you will navigate through a special design celebrating the family farm's 50th anniversary. Beyond the maze, you will find plenty of other activities such as a pumpkin patch, hay maze, corn pit, tractor rides, petting zoo, jumping pad, walking trail, a giant slide, pumpkin launcher (a fan-favorite!), barnyard games, apple orchard, gift store, ice cream truck, concessions and a candy shop.

The beauty of the property will make your visit special. Each year Flyte's Fieldstones continues to grow, with new attractions constantly being added! This year they are excited to showcase their giant mega slide, pig racers, apple orchard, renovated event barns, full service bar and concessions stand.

Flyte's Fieldstones hosts a variety of special events throughout the year. Save the date for "Beer and Bourbon in the Maze" on Saturday, Sept. 14, beginning at 5 p.m. Enjoy alcoholic beverage tastings and farm-to-table style food that is assembled at various places in the corn maze and Fieldstones with live music in the Barn (21+).

Each year the Farm to Table Breakfast is held at the farm, featuring old fashioned cake donuts, quiche, biscuits and gravy, maple ham, pancakes, hash browns, coffee, milk and apple cider. This year's Farm to Table Breakfast is set for Sunday, Oct. 6 from 8 a.m. to noon. Stay and play after breakfast for a reduced price!

Plans are also in motion for Booze in the Barn, the Farm to Table Dinner, and a Fall Harvest. Check out Flyte's Fieldstones Facebook page for more details coming soon.

Fieldstones offers a fantastic food selection that will add to the comfort of fall. Fried delights, including donuts, funnel cakes, fries, kettle corn, and more, are all available.

Flyte's Family Farms foundation is agriculture, which sets them apart from other fall attractions around the state. Bring home a delicious pie with blueberries from the farm. You can also find a unique selection of produce, jams, jellies, salsas, and wine among other goods in our store all inspired by the family farm.

You won't want to miss out on all of the fall fun. Their 2024 season starts Sept. 6 and will operate until Oct. 31. Hours are primarily Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. In October, special hours are offered on Saturdays, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Flyte's also offers special hours for school field trips and other groups during the week by request. 🍁



The farm is best known for its 10-acre corn maze which features a new design every year.



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Northeast Wisconsin Hidden Gems: Wequiock Falls

By Kris Leonhardt

Brown County's Wequiock Falls is one of the county's smaller parks.

The park includes a large ravine that offers a close-up look at one of the Niagara Escarpment rock formations.

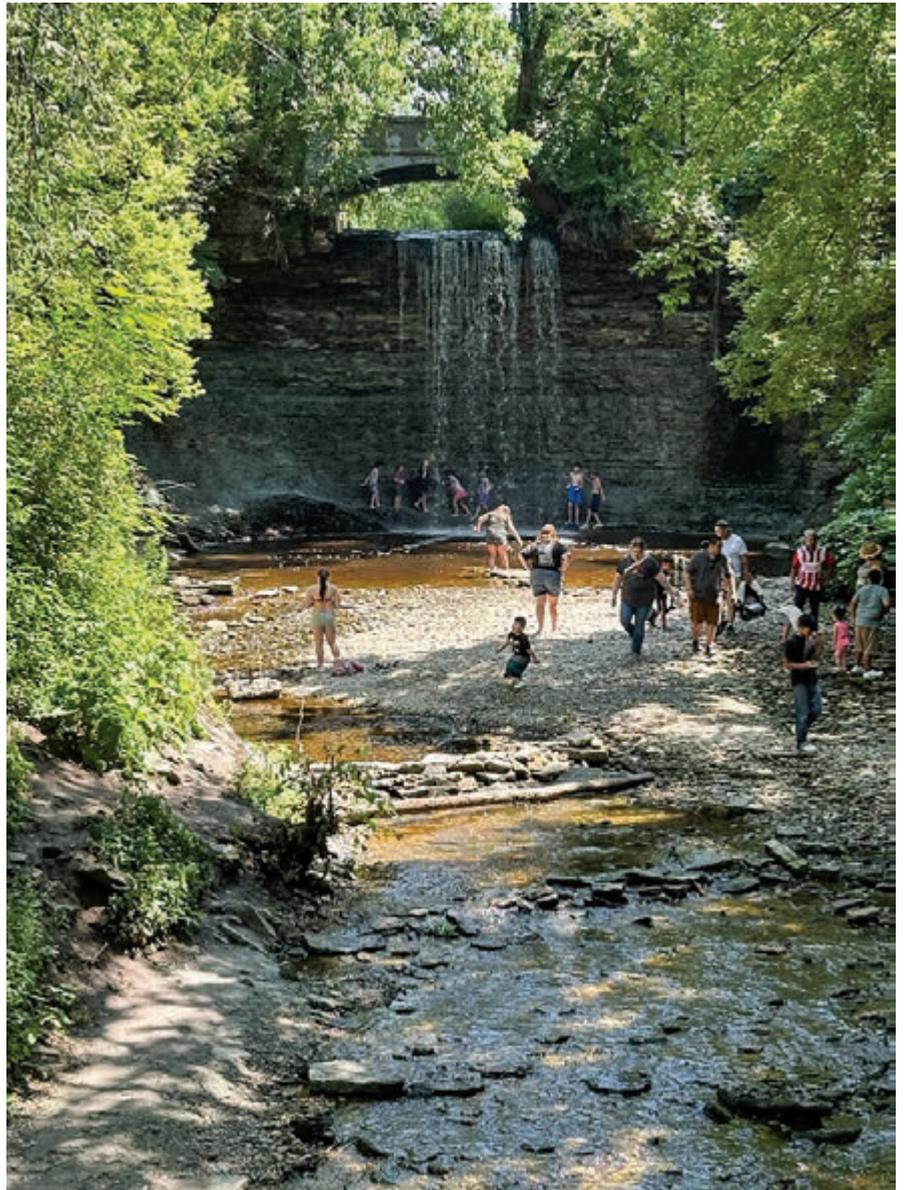
During the spring and summer, the Wequiock Creek forms an inviting waterfall and the small roadside park offers a small picnic area with restrooms just off of Highway 57.

An old bridge above the falls and a set of stone stairs leading down to the ravine only add to the ambiance of the park.

The park is located off of Highway 57; turn off on Van Laanen Road and the entrance to the park is immediately on the right.

The ideal time to visit the waterfall is in the spring during the thaw and after a good rain, but the falls offer a picturesque view and fun all summer long.

Wequiock Falls is located at 3426 Bay Settlement Road, Green Bay.





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EVENTS CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

19TH ANNUAL KITES OVER LAKE MICHIGAN

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Saturday, August 31, all day
Sunday, September 1, all day

PADDLE PALOOZA

Twin Rivers- Vet's Park
Saturday, September 14
8:45am to 7:30pm

ETHNIC FEST

Downtown Two Rivers
Saturday, September 21
9:30am to 5pm

OKTOBERFEST

Cool City Brewing
Saturday, September 21
11am to 11pm

OCTOBER

40TH ANNUAL APPLEFEST
Two Rivers Central Park
Saturday, October 12
9am to 3pm

DECEMBER

2ND ANNUAL COOL CITY CHRISTMAS
Two Rivers Central Park
Saturday, December 14
9am to 3pm

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exploretworivers.com

It's the climb

Odyssey brings indoor climbing opportunities to Green Bay, Appleton

By Janelle Fisher

In 2023, co-owners Ben Ganther and Sam Howard opened Odyssey, Green Bay's first indoor climbing gym and home of the tallest indoor climbing wall in the state.

The 47-foot-tall climbing wall has routes set up for auto-belaying, top rope climbing and lead climbing which will be changed up on a regular basis so there's always something new to climb.

In addition to the traditional climbing wall, Odyssey also has a bouldering wall, traditional fitness equipment and space to hold programs, classes and other events.

Ganther said even for people who have never climbed before, Odyssey will have something for everyone.

"A really important part of what we stand for is this idea of humility, or meeting people where they're at," he said. "That starts with our staff and making sure we meet them where they're at and then train them to be able to be professionals within the climbing gym industry. But we meet our members and our guests where they're at, too. Climbing is an inherently dangerous sport and it can be intimidating. If somebody's a first-time climber we can give them the same fun, engaging experience as someone who has been climbing for 20 years. The way that we've designed our space and the way that we plan to have our routes set with difficulty ratings will be really approachable for everybody and that's something we believe pretty strongly in."

For Howard, the love of rock climbing started young – and he passed that passion onto Ganther as they became friends.

"I grew up climbing with my dad," he said. "He has taught me ever since I can really remember. Trips to Devil's Lake to go rock climbing for a week were a key part of our summers. I met my wife in college – she's actually Ben's sister, so that's how Ben and I are connected. Ben and I started climbing in



Photos courtesy of Odyssey





Milwaukee and it just became an integral piece of our social fabric. It was like every Tuesday we were climbing and then we were grabbing tacos. It became a really important piece of our social circle.”

Howard said that when he and Ganther came to Green Bay, they realized that integral part of their social lives just didn’t exist here.

“When we came up here to visit Ben’s family, we just didn’t find it,” he said. “We’d bring all our climbing gear and try to find something, but it didn’t exist. So that kind of got the gears turning. We thought, ‘hey, there’s something really special in these gyms that help people connect and we can bring that to the community in a really cool way.’ So that got the gears turning almost four years ago now.”

Bringing climbing to the community is a big part of what Ganther and Howard want to accomplish with Odyssey, but Ganther said it’s not the only goal they have.

“A big part of what we want to do is obviously expose people, and especially kids in the area to climbing,” he said. “To expose them to, ‘hey, this is something you can do in your state,’ but then also expose them to all the other great outdoor activities that we have not just in Wisconsin, but specifically in the Green Bay area. And kind of use our programming arm of Odyssey to really get people aware of the really fun outdoor activities that are in the area.”

Beyond the sports aspect of it, Howard said he and Ganther hope Odyssey will bring the social element of climbing to the area like they experienced in Milwaukee.

“Climbing in general, when you look at other fitness centers or activities, is a very social sport,” Howard said. “There’s a really huge social aspect to it. You’re constantly interacting with other people – top roping involves multiple people and you’re taking classes. So it kind of breaks down a lot of the barriers that exist in traditional fitness centers. We’ll be a social touch point for the community and a place where people can come in and feel comfortable to grow beyond what they thought they might be doing, especially when we’re talking about climbing to a new height, taking classes or meeting new people. It’s going to be a fitness center and a climbing gym, yes, but it’s also going to be a social touch point for the community as well.”

Being a space where people can grow and learn, Ganther said, is what inspired the name of the gym.

“We had scribbled out a whole bunch of different ideas,” he said. “And it turns out a lot of the good climbing names have been taken already. So we were kind of hitting a dead end and we talked a lot about this idea of community and being a place for people to start their journey,

whether it’s climbing or just expanding their comfort zone and pushing their boundaries. So the idea of Odyssey is that it’s the journey – it’s the process and where people are going. So simultaneously, the logo became this circle with abstract mountains and kind of like the portal to that next step for people whether they want to grow within climbing or just want to be a little bit more adventurous or just grow as a person. Odyssey can be that first step and the place where they do that.”

But Odyssey’s Green Bay location won’t be the only climbing gym in the area for long, as a second location is coming soon to Appleton.

Learn more about Odyssey Climbing and Fitness and get updates on the Appleton location at odysseyclimbing.com. 🇺🇸

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\$3.00 - Burgers
\$2.50 - Cans of Beer

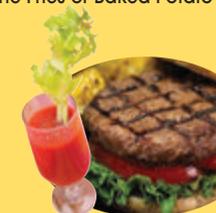
Thursday
\$3.00 - Coronas
\$3.00 - Margaritas
\$13.00 - Domestic Beer Buckets
\$10.00 - Chicken Dinners

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\$2.50 - Captain & Soda

Sunday
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East Central Wisconsin Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 14 **Festival Hispano.** Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 21 **Bonduel Founders Day.** Bonduel. shawanocountry.com
- 21 **Clintonville Fall Frenzy.** clintonvillewichamber.com

OCTOBER

- 3-6 **36th Annual Caroline Lions Colorama.** Caroline. shawanocountry.com
- 5 **De Pere Soup Walk.** Downtown De Pere. definitelydepere.org
- 6 **Fall Harvest Festival.** Shawano. shawanocountry.com
- 11 **Witches' Night Out.** Shawano. shawanocountry.com
- 12-19 **Great Pumpkin Train.** National Railroad Museum, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 26 **Thrills and Chills.** Downtown Sturgeon Bay. sturgeonbay.net

NOVEMBER

- 21-30 **Festival of Trees.** National Railroad Museum, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 29-1 **WPS Garden of Lights.** Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 30 **Holiday Stroll & Tree Lighting.** Shawano. shawanocountry.com

FARMERS MARKETS

Shawano: Saturday, 8 a.m.-noon.
Franklin Park from June-October.

Clintonville: Thursdays, 3 pm-6:30 p.m. Community Center parking lot from June-October.

Waupaca: Saturday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 102 E. Fulton St. Mid-May to end of October.

DECEMBER

- 1-31 **Festival of Trees.** National Railroad Museum, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 5-8 **WPS Garden of Lights.** Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 6 **Santa Parade.** Downtown Shawano. shawanocountry.com
- 6 **Winter Wonderland on the Wolf.** New London. newlondonchamber.com
- 7 **Holly Day.** Downtown De Pere. definitelydepere.org
- 10-12 **Holiday on the Rails.** National Railroad Museum, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 12-15 **WPS Garden of Lights.** Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 14 **Christmas in Clintonville.** clintonvillewichamber.com
- 19-23 **WPS Garden of Lights.** Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay. greenbay.com
- 26-30 **WPS Garden of Lights.** Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay. greenbay.com

JANUARY

- 1-5 **Festival of Trees.** National Railroad Museum, Green Bay. greenbay.com



Visitor Information

Abbotsford

(715) 223-8509
abbycolbychamber.com

Antigo

(715) 623-4134
antigochamber.com

Beaver Dam

(920) 887-8879
beaverdamchamber.com

Belguim Area

(262) 483-1200
belguimareachamber.org

Boulder Junction

(715) 385-2400
boulderjct.org

Campbellsport Area

Campbellsportchamber.org

Clintonville

(715) 823-4606
clintonvillewichamber.com

Colby

(715) 223-8509
abbycolbychamber.com

De Pere

(920) 334-6500
deperechamber.org
definitelydepere.org

Eagle River Area

(715) 479-3450
eagleriver.org

Fond du Lac

(920) 921-9500
envisiongreaterfld.com fdl.com

Forest County

(715) 478-3450
visitforestcounty.com

Green Bay Area

(920) 593-3400
greenbay.com greatergbc.org

Horicon

(920) 485-3200
horiconchamber.com

Hurley

(715) 561-4334
hurleywi.com

Iola/Scandinavia

(715) 445-4722
ischamber.com

Kewaskum

(262) 626-3336
kewaskum.org

Kewaunee

(920) 388-4822
kewaunee.org

Land O'Lakes

(715) 547-3432
golandolakeswi.com

Lomira

lomirachamberofcommerce.com

Loyal

loyalwi.com

Manawa

(920) 596-2495
manawachamber.org

Manitowish Waters

(715) 543-8488
manitowishwaters.org

Marshfield

(715) 384-3554
marshfieldchamber.com
visitmarshfield.com
mainstreetmarshfield.com

Mayville

(920) 387-5776
mayvillechamber.com

Medford Area

(715) 748-4729
medford-chamber.org

Mercer

(715) 476-2389
mercerc.com

Merrill

(715) 536-9474
merrillchamber.org

Minocqua

(715) 356-5266
minocqua.org

Mosinee

(715) 693-4330
mosineechamber.org

Neillsville

(715) 743-6444
neillsville.org

New London

(920) 982-5822
newlondonchamber.com

Oneida County Tourism

(800) 236-3006
oneidacountywi.com

Pelican Lake Area

(715) 487-5222
pelicanlakewi.org

Phelps

(715) 545-3800
phelpswi.org

Plymouth

(920) 893-0079
plymouthwisconsin.com

Presque Isle

(715) 686-2910
presqueisle.com

Rhineland Area

(715) 365-7464
rhinelandchamber.com

St. Germain Chamber

(715) 477-2205
st-germain.com

Sayner-Star Lake

(715) 542-3789
sayner-starlake.org

Seymour

Seymour Business League
sblwi.com

Shawano

(715) 524-2139
shawanocountry.com

Stevens Point

(715) 344-2556
stevenspointarea.com

Sturgeon Bay

(920) 743-6246
sturgeonbay.net

Theresa

(920) 488-5421
chamber of commerce

Three Lakes

(715) 546-3346
threelakes.com

Tomahawk

(800) 569-2160
gototomahawk.com
tomahawkmainstreet.org

Vilas County

(715) 479-3649
vilaswi.com

Wabeno

(715) 473-4333
townofwabeno.org

Waupaca

(715) 258-7343
waupacamemories.com

Wausau Area

(715) 845-6231
visitwausau.com

Wausara County

(920) 787-3488
wausarachamber.com

Wisconsin Rapids

(715) 423-1830
wisconsinrapidschamber.com
visitwisrapids.com

Wittenberg

(715) 881-2111
wittenbergchamber.com



Old Glenbeulah School

Photo courtesy of Haunted Wisconsin

Ghostly adventures await in Sheboygan County

By Clarice Case

If you are looking for a real fright this Halloween season, Sheboygan County is the place to go.

Fox Valley Ghost Hunters is back again for another year leading tours through the old Sheboygan County Comprehensive Health Care Center in Sheboygan Falls.

The building is commonly referred to as the “Sheboygan Asylum,” however the true asylum, the Sheboygan County Hospital for the Insane, located in Sheboygan, was torn down in 1960.

The Care Center was built in 1940 and provided care to elderly, mentally ill and developmentally disabled patients.

From 1944-1945, the hospital served as housing for Italian and German World War II prisoners, who worked in the fields, after the building was requisitioned by the U.S. Military. The building was temporarily renamed to Camp Sheboygan.

In 1969, the hospital became an acute care facility for the mentally ill. Drug and alcohol rehabilitation was also provided. In 1978, the hospital expanded to provide care to those with chronic illnesses and developmental disabilities.

The hospital stayed open until 2002, despite similar facilities beginning to close in 1988.

Former staff are said to have experienced paranormal activity years before the closure. Visitors have reported experiencing physical sensations and hearing various noises.

In a 2020 episode of “Destination Fear,” the building, tunnels, surgical center and morgue included, were explored and a shadowy figure appeared to be captured in a photograph.

Tickets for the tours sold out last year. This October, tours run from 11 p.m. – 2 a.m. every Friday and Saturday, with additional tours

Sunday, Oct. 27 and Thursday, Oct. 31. More dates are available beyond October.

Tickets are \$59, not including a service fee, and there are no refunds. Fox Valley Ghost Hunters also does not promise that you will see or experience any paranormal activity.

For more information on the tours, tickets, rules, and contact information, please visit www.ticketleap.events/tickets/foxvalleyghosthunters/sheboygan-insane-asylum-ghost-tours-2024.

Not far from Sheboygan Falls is Glenbeulah where Haunted Midwest Ghost Tours is leading guests through a three-story school built in 1916 and vacated in 1995.

The owners, Craig Nehring and Melissa Clevenger, have a combined 12 years of experience in paranormal exploration.



Melissa Clevenger and
Craig Nehring

Like the asylum, there is a history of spooky occurrences.

Haunted Midwest Ghost Tours says, "Past occurrences included footsteps running up the stairs, which we have heard since we bought it. There are reports of pictures falling off walls even after they were hung securely multiple times. Shadows have been seen; Lights turn on after we have turned them off. Things in our store have been moved around and are in a different place the next day. Disembodied voices and children's laughter is heard."

Three-hour tours will be given the same dates in October as the asylum. There are two tours a night with the early one running 7-10 p.m. and the later one from 10:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Tickets are \$48, not including a service fee.

For more information on the tours, tickets, rules, and contact information, please visit <https://haunted-midwest-ghost-tours-llc.ticketleap.com/ghost-tours-haunted-glenbeulah-school/details>.

In addition to their regular tours, Haunted Midwest Ghost Tours is hosting the Great Lakes Paranormal Conference, Friday, Sept. 13-15, 2024, within the Old Glenbeulah School.

For information on tickets, speakers, vendors, and more, please visit www.greatlakesparanormalconference.com. 🍷



ABOVE: Sheboygan Asylum

Photo courtesy of Fox Valley Ghost Hunters



Kewaskum/Southern Wisconsin Events Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 7 **Fondue Fest.** Fond du Lac. travelwisconsin.com
- 13-15 **Audubon Days.** Mayville. travelwisconsin.com
- 21-22 **Cedarburg Wine and Harvest Festival.** visitmilwaukee.org
- 15 **Fondy Food Truck Festival & Art Fair.** Fond du Lac. lakesidepark.org

OCTOBER

- 18-20 **Magical Christmas in the Barn.** West Bend. See Facebook Events.
- 19 **Field and Forest Dual Sport Motorcycle Ride.** Kewaskum. kmsr.clubexpress.com

FARMERS MARKETS

- Beaver Dam:** Saturday 8 a.m.-noon & Tuesday 4 p.m.-6:30 p.m. May-October. Corner of Spring Street and Henry Street.
- Campbellsport:** Sunday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. June-October. Dundee Farmers & Crafters Market, N3019 Hwy 67.
- Horicon:** Wednesdays, 4-8 p.m. June-September. Kiwanis Park.
- Kewaskum:** Thursdays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. May-September. American Legion, Kewaskum.

NOVEMBER

- 7 **Downtown Tree Lighting.** West Bend. visitwestbend.com
- 23 **Turkey Trot 5k.** Kewaskum. raceentry.com
- 24 **Craft & Fair Expo.** Kewaskum. kewaskum.org

DECEMBER

- 1 **Kewaskum Christmas Parade.** Downtown Kewaskum. kewaskum.org



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