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women

AREA F... NG MAGAZINE

Games Women Play

Lisa Mathson
Swims with
the Kids

She's Got (Big) Game

4 Playful Spring Fashions

Taking the Lead:
Women Who Coach

Food Fun with
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Pictured on the cover and above:

Lisa Mathson, Activities Director, La Crosse YWCA

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One of my favorite memories from childhood is playing with my cousins, outside in the twilight, on summer evenings when we were celebrating someone's birthday or just getting together so the adults could shoot the breeze. There were eight of us, and we were all within about four years of each other in age. Totally unsupervised, we ran around the house in the near-darkness, playing "The Ghost Is Out Tonight," a game that involved sneaking around the house without getting caught by the "ghost," whose job it was to scare the bejesus out of everyone and hopefully tag someone to be the next ghost. I remember most the cool dew on my bare feet, the faraway buzz of a Brewers' game on a radio and the thrill of running through the darkness, tripping on kids and dogs, with the safety of a lighted house and the promise of birthday cake near at hand.

My own kids aren't quite old enough for these sorts of games, so my firsthand experience of the state of game-playing today is a little limited. From what I read, though, it's clear some things have changed from my "Ghost" days. Across the nation, recess in some schools is being reduced or eliminated altogether, and structured activities aimed at ever-younger ages—from lessons to sports—are replacing the childhood games and freewheeling, imaginative play that most of us remember from our own stints as kids.

The anecdote is to reclaim play—not only for our kids, but also for us adults. It may mean recalling those childhood games and teaching them to a new generation. It may mean shutting down the computer and chasing each other in the backyard. And—good news for any woman who feels she needs a break—it also means demonstrating that games don't end when you grow up.

In this issue, we feature women who, though grown up, are still enjoying games—for their own health and balance as well as for the greater good. You'll meet Lisa Mathson, who helps kids of all abilities enjoy swimming and other adaptive sports. Kerry Gloede of the Special Olympics gives people with developmental disabilities the chance to become champions, and recreational therapists at Bethany Riverside prove that no one is too old to enjoy games.

You'll meet women who bond over games, coach games and even hunt big game. You'll meet others who "play house" by taking on impressive DIY projects, and still others whose job it is to "play" with food. By and large, I think you'll see that games, though important for children, are imperative for us all. Let's learn from the women in this issue who joyfully demonstrate play for us, and get in on the game.

Betty

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PUBLISHER

Diane Raam

EDITOR

Betty Christiansen

DESIGNER

Renee Chrz, Innovative Graphics, LLC

MARKETING ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVES

Carol Schank, Director

Sandra Clark

Claire Ristow-Seib

WEB MASTER

Mader Web Design LLC

PROOFREADING

Jessica LaCanne

PHOTOGRAPHY

Janet Mootz

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Coulee Region Women Editor,

816 2nd Ave. S., Suite 600, Onalaska, WI 54650.

E-mail: editor@crwmagazine.com

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Family & Children's Center

HELP PREVENT CHILD ABUSE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The Family & Children's Center's annual events, the Springtime of Hope Gala and the Guardian Party, have combined this year to form a new event called the Guardian Gala of Hope. This event strives to recognize individuals, organizations and companies that put forth outstanding effort toward helping families and children in the community by increasing awareness of child protection issues. All funds raised from the event will go to support the Family & Children's Center's Healthy Families program and the Stepping Stones Child Advocacy Center. The event takes place on Tuesday, May 10, in the Cargill Room at the Waterfront Restaurant in La Crosse. Social hour begins at 5:30 p.m., with an elegant dinner, entertainment and a wingspan raffle. Reservations are requested and tickets are \$60 per person. This event is sponsored by the Waterfront Restaurant & Tavern. For more information, visit www.fcconline.org or contact Jamie Schloegel at 608-785-0001, ext. 235.



ONE STEP CLOSER TO A CURE

Help the fight against cancer and create a world with more birthdays with the American Cancer Society 5K Run/Walk presented by United Healthcare. The family run/walk has many participation options, including a chip-timed race for competitive runners and a leisurely family stroll through Onalaska for others. Funds raised by the run/walk will help support the mission of the American Cancer Society to save lives by helping people get well, stay well, find cures and fight back. The run/walk takes place on Sunday, April 10, from noon to 2 p.m. Registration begins at 9 a.m. in the United Healthcare parking lot. For more information and to register, visit <http://community.acevents.org/UHCrunwalk> or call the American Cancer Society office at 608-783-5001, ext. 102.

FISHY FUN TO BENEFIT KIDS

The Chileda Women's Board will be celebrating their 25th anniversary in conjunction with the 2011 Fish Boil, held on Thursday, May 19, at Forest Hills Golf Course. From 4:30 to 9 p.m., enjoy a "Door County" style Fish Boil meal along with entertainment and games (drive-up available). This year, there will be special recognition for the individuals who have made up the Chileda Women's Board, a volunteer group whose mission is to raise funds for children with autism and other cognitive disabilities that Chileda serves. Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$18 at the door. Call 608-782-6480 or visit www.chileda.org for tickets.



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This event benefits the Women's Fund of Greater La Crosse which exists to enrich the lives of women and girls so they can do the same for others.

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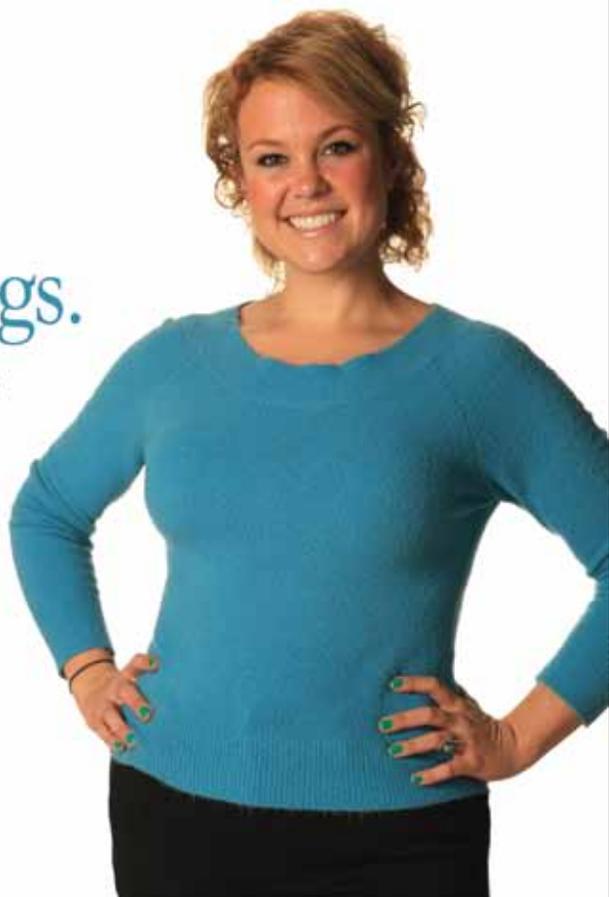
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GETTING KIDS IN *Motion*

Lisa Mathson helps children of all abilities enjoy physical activity.

BY LEAH CALL
Contributed photos

Lisa Mathson's eyes brighten when she talks about her work at the La Crosse YWCA. As the organization's Activities Director, this energetic young Coulee Region woman motivates and inspires area women and youth to improve their well-being through fitness.

"I think getting involved in fitness helps you grow both physically and emotionally," says Mathson. "By getting and staying fit, you are able to participate in more activities, and it does wonders with self-esteem."

The La Crosse YWCA has long been a part of Mathson's life. Influenced by her mother, Mathson began swimming at age 7. By age 13, she was swimming competitively on the YWCA swim team. Later, as a student at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Mathson worked part-time with the YWCA swim team and volunteered for other programs and special events. Today, she applies her degree in

therapeutic recreation to her position as YWCA Activities Director. One of her primary duties: to coach the very swim team she participated on as a young person. She also leads the YWCA's Adaptive Physical Recreational Opportunities (A-PRO) program, which is designed to introduce youth with disabilities to recreational opportunities.

Fun, fellowship and fitness

The fruits of Mathson's labor come through the milestones reached by her young charges on the swim team and other YWCA programs. Forty boys and girls, ages 5 to 18, make up the YWCA swim team, which focuses on fun, fellowship and fitness. Competition and winning are secondary goals.

"Swimming is a cool activity. You can compete in individual events

or as a team. I've observed kids with lower self-esteem who joined the swim team, and their self-esteem really rose after a couple of months," says Mathson, who accompanies the team to swim meets throughout the Midwest.

Especially rewarding to Mathson are the smiles and the sense of accomplishment experienced by the children involved in the A-PRO program. Through this program, approximately 20 boys and girls ages 5 to 18, who are afflicted with cerebral palsy, spina bifida and other disabilities, participate in recreational activities that may otherwise be unavailable to them. The program offers specialized instruction and utilizes adaptive equipment in the areas of adaptive swimming, gardening, bicycling and skiing.

The freedom to move

It's no surprise that the adaptive swimming element of the program is closest to Mathson's heart. "The children are paired one-on-one with a volunteer in the pool," explains Mathson. "They get a feeling of independence in the water, because a lot of these children can't walk or move the way that they can in the water."

Mathson smiles as she recalls a child kicking her too-often-immobile legs in the water for the first time or a student overcoming his fear of the water and ultimately dunking his head under. The YWCA rents the pool at Logan High School for swim team practice and for the A-PRO program, which meets once a week year-round.

Mathson says the children she works with are motivated by participating with other children with disabilities. "It can be

intimidating for an individual to be in a sport or activity with others who don't share that same disability."

Marlis O'Brien, parent of A-PRO participant Erik O'Brien, agrees. "Because there are others with disabilities there, they are all on the same playing field. They are not always the last one to finish."

In spring through fall, adaptive gardening takes place at YWCA-owned land between Onalaska and Holmen. Here, specially designed raised garden beds, made possible by a Pepsi grant, allow individuals in wheelchairs to plant seeds, tend flowers and harvest produce.

The adaptive bicycling program started in 2003 utilizes specially built recumbent bicycles and hand cycles that can be operated by most physically challenged youth and adults. "Every child should be able to ride a bike," Mathson says. "Hand cycles give them an opportunity to participate in an activity they can do with their family or individually."

The hand cycles and other bicycles, as well as specialized ski equipment used in the adaptive ski program, are made available through a partnership with the North American Squirrel Association (NASA), which was formed to give physically challenged elderly and youth the ability to enjoy outdoor recreation. Equipment can be checked out free of charge by participating families.

YWCA, NASA and Mt. La Crosse join forces to offer the adaptive ski program throughout the winter months. "With the adaptive skiing, we get to ski next to Erik, so we can ski as a family," says O'Brien. "We ride up the lift together and come down together. That is something we couldn't do without the program."



Renaya Horvath experiences the outdoors through A-PRO's adaptive gardening program.

Setting an example

It's easy to see how children are inspired to excel under Mathson's upbeat, vibrant personality. Raised in Blair, Wis., Mathson today lives in La Crosse and sets an example for the young people she works with by maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle that includes running, swimming, skiing and walking her dog, Lucky.

Families of those participating in YWCA programs appreciate the dedication and compassion they see in Mathson. "Lisa has worked to provide an inclusive community for everyone that lives in the area," says O'Brien. "She puts a lot of blood, sweat and tears into it, and her personal time, trying to make it convenient for everyone."

According to O'Brien, if you tell Lisa, "That will never work," she'll reply, "We'll make it work." O'Brien adds, "If she believes it's the right thing to do, she will find a way to do it."

The YWCA has provided programs and services to women, youth and families in the Coulee Region since 1906. Mathson sincerely supports the organization's mission: to empower women, eliminate racism and promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

For more information on YWCA programming or to become an A-PRO volunteer, contact Mathson at 608-781-2783, ext. 266, or e-mail lmathson@ywcalax.org. 

Freelance writer Leah Call stays active with her family in Westby. She is thankful for people like Lisa Mathson, who make the world a better place.



Under Mathson's guidance, A-PRO participant Erik O'Brien experiences the freedom of movement swimming allows.

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SHE'S GOT GAME

Hunting and fishing enthusiasts are not always who you might think.

BY JULIE NELSON
Photos by Janet Mootz Photography



Sarah Bauer comes from a long line of fisherwomen: She learned to fish from her mother, who learned to fish from her mother. For Bauer—like many women in the Coulee Region who enjoy the outdoor sports of hunting and fishing—her pastime has become central to her life. Not only has her passion found its way into her career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but it has also played a prominent role in her romantic life: It was over an Asian carp, specifically, that she met her fiance, Eric Leis.

As part of her job, Bauer had volunteered for a project in Peru, Ill., that studied the movement of Asian carp—those ugly critters that jump out of the water and into boats, posing a danger to anyone on the water. She was assigned to a boat with another single volunteer—Leis—and the two of them hit it off. When Bauer moved to La Crosse,

Fish are central to Sarah Bauer's life—they play a big role in her leisure time, her work and even her love life.



Pheasant hunter Tracey Armstrong is in her sport for the camaraderie and tasty dinners.

he followed. They love to share the story of their first encounter. “I always tell people we met in Peru,” quips Bauer.

Bauer and Leis both love to fish and are out on the water (or ice) all year round. “We fish for bass in the summer, walleye and sauger in the spring and fall, northern pike in the winter and bluegill almost all year long,” Bauer says. They mostly catch and release, but they eat a lot of bluegill.

Bauer says fishing is a sport anyone who enjoys being on or near the water can pick up, though it involves a fair amount of patience. “Fishing is a lot of luck and a lot of practice,” she says. “If you’re just starting out, you’ll

likely have more fun if you go with someone who knows what they’re doing.” From there, Bauer advises not to take anything too seriously. “If your lure isn’t working for you one day, just switch to a different one.”

Bauer says her biggest catches include a 45-pound flathead catfish and a lake sturgeon estimated to weigh 100 pounds. “But my greatest catch ever was Eric,” she says. “He proposed while we were fishing on a cranberry bog near Tomah. He put the ring in the fish’s mouth and then told me to take a look at it because it looked different. Then he got down on his knee and proposed.”

Who knew fishing could be so romantic?

Hunting serves up family fun

A parent and child march through a remote field in Iowa, their grips tight on 12-gauge shotguns. At their feet, an alert dog awaits a command. Are the pair out for a little father-and-son bonding over a hunting ritual? Not exactly. These two are Tracey Armstrong of La Crescent, Minn., and her 15-year-old daughter, Morgan, avid pheasant hunters stalking their prey on 1,000 acres of family land in what has become a yearly tradition.

Interestingly, it was Armstrong herself—not her husband—who first picked up a shotgun. “My sister-in-law talked me into going deer hunting about 11 years ago,” says the 41-year-old. Armstrong enjoyed some aspects of deer hunting, but found others too sedentary. So, instead of sitting for hours in a deer stand and then waiting for the right moment to shoot at a large target, she decided to try a sport that requires more continual walking and quick reflexes. From the first time a bird flushed out of hiding and the adrenaline started pumping, Armstrong was hooked on pheasant hunting.

“I love the excitement of it,” she says. “I love walking along and then, all of a sudden, you have to react. I’m actually better at this than I am at deer hunting, even though pheasants are obviously a smaller target.”

While the moment of shooting the gun is what the sport is all about, Armstrong says the lure for her goes well beyond that. For starters, there’s the opportunity to be outside during a time of year when most people are hunkering down for the winter. From mid-October to early January, Armstrong is bundling up and enjoying fresh air and exercise on the land her in-laws own in Iowa.

Also, Armstrong loves watching their golden retriever, Zoey, in action. Whenever Zoey sniffs a pheasant in the grass, she puts her nose to the ground, holds her tail straight and points to the bird until Armstrong has the chance to peer at the bird and make the call. On the word *hen*, Zoey goes on about her business, but when the call is *rooster*, Zoey flushes the bird so that it takes off in flight. Armstrong aims carefully, pulls the trigger and watches the bird fall. Zoey watches the bird fall, too, and hustles to retrieve it, carrying the prize gently in her teeth to Armstrong.

Of course, the other aspect of pheasant

hunting that lures this marketing manager from Logistics Health, Inc., to make the 90-minute trip to Cresco on weekends is the camaraderie. Her husband, her daughter, her sister-in-law and her brother-in-law are all regulars on these expeditions. The pheasants they shoot become part of the family Christmas dinner (last year 40 pheasants weren't enough to feed their crew), and the chance to spend time together without other distractions is invaluable.

Though hunting is a sport traditionally dominated by men, Armstrong says she doesn't feel out of place in the gun-wielding crowd at all. "Actually, in my circle of friends, most of us hunt deer, turkey or pheasants," she says.

Deer, Dear

Romance and family are also the fuel behind 37-year-old Amy Breidenbach's desire for deer hunting. She took up the sport about seven years ago as an activity she and her husband, Ben, could do together. "I went duck hunting and trapping with my dad when I was a kid," Breidenbach explains. "Ben loves to deer hunt, so after we got married, I decided to join him. I enjoy being outside in the tree stand; it can be very pretty when there is snow on the branches, and it's peaceful."

The season opener (they do both bow and gun) has become a ritual in the Breidenbach household. Amy, Ben, Ben's father and any other friends or family members who are joining them stay up "late" (10:00 p.m.) picking their tree stands, discussing their strategies and reviewing pictures taken in the woods in the previous week.

When morning comes, Breidenbach is up at 4:30 and, with a Crock-Pot of chili in hand, is soon ready to head to some land they have just north of the La Crosse area. Before the sun comes up, Breidenbach is in her tree stand, enjoying the peace of the forest while waiting for deer to wander by. "It's very tranquil ... until the guns start to go off," she says with a laugh.

The sport is also challenging, especially during bow season, when Breidenbach says she has to wait for her prey to be within 40 feet in order for her to get a good shot. And Breidenbach is not too squeamish to take on any aspect of deer hunting. She guts the



Deer hunter Amy Breidenbach has been hunting and trapping since she was a child. Now, she and her husband bond over the sport and enjoy the organic meat it yields.

deer, helps to hang them, skins them and even processes the meat. "The only thing I can't do myself is hot sticks," she says. The Breidenbachs have the spicy jerky made at Holmen Meat Locker.

The end result of the hunt—quality meat—is the other aspect that lures Breidenbach into the woods. "We grow apples and soybeans, so we know what the deer have been eating. It's organic and it's good for you, with none of the additives you might find in commercial meat. Breidenbach also does a lot of canning in the fall, so taking the extra step to have meat all year round is just part of the busy routine for this chiropractor and mom of three.

While Breidenbach is more than willing to field-dress a deer she just shot, she does have her limits when it comes to hunting. "I always get the tree stand closest to the shack so I can easily go to the bathroom, come in for lunch and take a little nap before going out again in the afternoon," she says. "And if it's really cold or raining, I'll just quit for the day and go in." She's got game—and common sense, too. **(crw)**

Julie Nelson is not much of a hunter, but as the Development Director of the Salvation Army, she encourages anyone who shoots more than they can eat to donate the extra to the Salvation Army's meal program.

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WINNING, INSIDE & OUT

Area coaches inspire women to reach their potential in athletics and life.

BY MARY MALAHY
Contributed photos

Last year, two women's athletics coaches were recognized for their contributions to the women of the Coulee Region.

Barb Gibson, head coach of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse women's gymnastics team, was honored with a \$25,000 endowment fund in her name, and Bobbi Vandenberg, head coach of the Viterbo University's women's basketball team (pictured above), was recently honored by the YWCA at their annual Tribute to Outstanding Women event. Both coaches say they were honored, surprised and humbled by the recognition. But considering the impact these coaches have made on the hundreds of young women who have participated on their teams, the honors were well deserved.

On the beam

Gibson's long history with UW-La Crosse began during her days as a student. She earned degrees in exercise, sports science

and health education with a coaching concentration in 1978 while competing on the women's gymnastics team. More than three decades later, she is in her 26th season as the head coach of the UW-La Crosse women's gymnastics team, which has won 14 National Collegiate Gymnastics Association Championships.

Despite the team's sustained success, Gibson says championships aren't a given—they are the result of hard work. "Each year is a new year," Gibson says, "and it doesn't matter what you did last year. We just keep striving and trying to be the best we can be."

Reaching full potential requires long hours. According to Gibson, her team spends about 20 hours a week in the gym. Besides coaching, Gibson teaches two classes at UW-La Crosse and oversees all lab sections of HPR 105, a mass lecture all UW-La Crosse students are required to take.

But Gibson says the hours are worth it when she sees the impact

she has on her students. When asked if she remembers every gymnast she has coached, Gibson immediately responds, "Absolutely." Because she spends three hours a day with her students and shares a common passion for gymnastics, she has the opportunity to know them as an athlete, student and person, she explains.

"I try to recognize more than just the gymnast. I am assisting them not just in gymnastics, but also personally and academically. I try to be a good role model, and they know I will be an advocate for them," Gibson says.

Gibson's pride and respect for her athletes is evident as she talks about their dedication.

"I am proud of the athletes for being so committed to their sport and loyal to the things that I expect in a program," Gibson says. "It's fun and enjoyable to work with a motivated group of athletes who are committed, talented, bright, high-achieving, goal-oriented women."

On the court

Vandenberg also recognizes the dedication her players invest in their sport. "I don't think people realize how much effort these girls put in and how committed they are," Vandenberg says of her basketball team.

Vandenberg played basketball for the University of Colorado as she earned degrees in biology and biochemistry as well as a teaching certificate. She began her career as a teacher and coach at Boulder High School in Colorado before relocating to La Crosse with her husband.

When Vandenberg began coaching Viterbo women's basketball, she said she would give it five years. Now 18 years later, she still enjoys helping the V-Hawk women reach their full potential. Watching the way her players mature between their freshman and senior years is very fulfilling, she says.

"I see a tremendous amount of growth in these young ladies," Vandenberg says. "It's so rewarding when they succeed."

Vandenberg has seen her players succeed in two trips to nationals and two conference championships. She says she believes it is her responsibility to make sure her players

achieve that success and growth.

"If an athlete leaves as a senior the same player she was when she came in as a freshman, then I haven't done my job," Vandenberg says. "Many of my players have a lot of raw talent, and my job is to develop that talent so they reach their potential."

Coaching beyond sports

Despite their passion for their sports, Vandenberg and Gibson each stopped participating in their sports around the age of 35, and both say they miss competing.

"I had back surgery when I was 35, and that was the end of handstands," Gibson says. "There are still times when I would love to go do a round-off back handspring, though."

Even though they are no longer developing their own athletic talents, they say they are excited by the progress women have made in sports.

"Women's sports are much more competitive," Vandenberg says. "There is no comparison between now and 30 years ago. The skill level is so much higher."

Both coaches believe this is partially because women have the chance to practice year-round. In the past, girls didn't have the opportunity to train and attend camps during the off-season, Vandenberg explains. But now, Gibson says, women are geared toward year-round training

and strength development. Both coaches are thankful for this development because they believe participating in sports benefits their athletes beyond their athletic career.

"It builds a work ethic and teaches the athletes to recognize differences and work through problems," Gibson says. "There are so many life lessons that you can take away from a sport experience that I think the workplace really values."

When not in the gym, both coaches enjoy golfing and spending time with their families. Gibson and Vandenberg feel that La Crosse is a great place to raise children.

Vandenberg spends a lot of time watching her 16-year-old son, Patrick, play goalie for Aquinas and watching her 14-year-old daughter, Mollie, play softball.

Gibson's children, Kelli, Katherine and Kyle, are grown, so when she is unable to spend time with them, she enjoys gardening, walking and reading.

Both coaches are grateful for jobs that allow them to inspire and motivate the young women of the Coulee Region. 

Mary Malahy is a journalist who recently graduated from UW-La Crosse. Writing this article reminded her of her days on the ice as a hockey player and the coaches who inspired her.



Barbara Gibson, gymnastics coach at UW-La Crosse, shapes women's lives on the mat, in academics and in life beyond athletics.



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In the early years of marriage, women are the relationship caretakers. They carefully monitor their relationships to make sure there is enough closeness and connection. If not, women will do what they can to try to fix things. If their husbands aren't responsive, women become extremely unhappy and start complaining about everything under the sun... things that need to get done around the house, responsibilities pertaining to the children, how free time is spent, and so on. Unfortunately, when women complain, men generally retreat and the marriage deteriorates even more.

After years of trying to successfully improve things, a woman eventually surrenders and convinces herself that change isn't possible. She ends up believing there's absolutely nothing she can do because everything she's tried has not worked. That's when she begins to carefully map out the logistics of what she considers to be the inevitable - getting a divorce.

While she is planning her escape, she no longer tries to improve her relationship or modify her partner's behavior in any way. She resigns herself to living in silent desperation until "D Day."

Unfortunately, her husband views his wife's silence as an indication that "everything is fine." After all, the "nagging" has ceased. That's why, when she finally breaks the news of the impending divorce, her shell-shocked partner replies, "I had no idea you were unhappy."

Then, even when her husband undergoes real and lasting changes, it's often too late. The same impenetrable wall that for years shielded her from pain now prevents her from truly recognizing his genuine willingness to change. The relationship is now in the danger zone.

If you are a woman who fits this description, please don't give up. I have seen so many men make amazing changes once they truly understand how unhappy their wives have been. Sometimes men are slow to catch on, but when they do, their determination to turn things around can be astounding. I have seen many couples strengthen their marriage successfully even though it seemed an impossible feat. Give your husband another chance. Let him prove to you that things can be different. Keep your family together. Divorce is not a simple answer. It causes unimaginable pain and suffering. It takes an enormous amount of energy to face each day. Why not take this energy and learn some new skills and make your marriage what you've wanted it to be for so long?

If you're a man reading this and your wife has been complaining or nagging, thank her. It means she still cares about you and your marriage. She's working hard to make your love stronger. Spend time with her. Talk to her. Compliment her. Pay attention. Take her seriously. Show her that she is the most important thing in the world to you.

Perhaps your wife is no longer open to your advances because she's a soon to be walk-away wife. If so, don't crowd her. Don't push. Be patient. If you demonstrate you can change and she still has eyes...and a heart, you might just convince her to give your marriage another try.

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COACHING YOUR FAMILY TEAM

Modeling good sportsmanship builds kids' character on the field and off.

BY KIM BRASEL
Contributed photos

Kids of all ages have the opportunity to practice sportsmanship through area sports programs. Here, girls shake hands after a La Crosse Parks & Recreation softball game.

It can be hard to teach kids the value of good sportsmanship when they see the endless parade of bravado displayed by professional athletes and perhaps even their peers. Pile on the pervasive “winning is everything” attitude, and parents can be left asking how they can counteract these negative messages.

The answer? Set the example. From the time they start playing sports, teach your kids that good sportsmanship is about having respect for teammates, coaches, the opposing team and the referees, in addition to maintaining a healthy perspective on winning and losing. Reinforce this by finding sports programs with a similar philosophy and coaches that support it.

Set the example

Jane Schwartzhoff, a mother from La Crescent, agrees that kids learn from the adults they have the most contact with—their parents and coaches.

“As parents, when we are sitting in the stands, we need to be cheering for the kids, and not bad-mouthing the referee or yelling at the coach,” she says. “When kids see adults exhibiting good sportsmanship, they are more likely to understand that winning isn’t the only thing.”

But don’t just be a spectator; Ben Porath of Holmen encourages parents to volunteer with their child’s team. He started coaching girls basketball at the YMCA when his oldest daughter began playing four years ago.

“Just because you don’t know the sport doesn’t mean you can’t volunteer and learn it with your kids,” he says. Porath started out as an assistant and now is a head coach. “I like having parents help at practice and at games, and it’s good for kids to see their parents take an interest in what they are learning.”

He adds that when parents disagree with a coach during a game, often it’s because they don’t know what the coach has

been working on with the team. Taking part in practice drills helps parents better understand what a coach is teaching the players, which can alleviate potential conflicts between coaches and parents during a game.

Respect for all

Porath reminds his players to always show respect for coaches, other players and the referees, both during and after a game, win or lose. “Of course you want them to win and be competitive, but they need to know that life goes on.”

When coaches focus on being in first place and have a win-at-all-costs mentality, kids pick up the message that being ruthless on the field is acceptable. When parents pressure their kids to play better or criticize their every move, kids get the message that they’re only as good as their last good play.

Good examples of sportsmanship become more important as kids get older and into more competitive leagues where the focus is on winning. Without constant reminders, they can forget how to behave appropriately before, during and after a game.

Parents need to be supportive regardless of a game’s outcome, and if you only seem to be happy when your kids win, it’s time to look at your own motivations for having them involved in sports.

Your children are watching

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse professor Richard L. Pein says that children’s attitudes are usually a reflection of what they see at home, and that oftentimes, winning is more about the parents’ expectations for their kids.

“Research tells us winning and competing are mid-level reasons why kids participate when they are young,” Pein says. “First is learning new skills, second is fun. In a good youth program, that is the focus.”

Pein, who specializes in applied sports psychology, says competitiveness and good sportsmanship can coexist as long as everyone involved is able to keep a healthy perspective when it comes to winning and losing.

Brandon Corcoran, La Crosse YMCA Youth and Family Director, and Jen



Sportsmanship and friendship prevail at a La Crosse Parks & Recreation track meet held at Logan High School.

Barber, North YMCA Youth and Family Director, say they hold parent meetings where the expectations for parents and kids are outlined. “We want people to realize that you can have both; you can be competitive and still have a positive, fun experience,” Corcoran says.

From sports to everyday life

YMCA programs around the country teach the four core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, ideals that are at the heart of all their programs and which coaches reiterate at every practice. The goal is to help kids understand the importance of applying these lessons to sports and everyday life.

Displaying good sportsmanship isn’t always easy, especially after losing a close or important game. But the kids who learn how to do it will benefit in many ways. Kids who are bullies during a game usually behave the same way in school and in social situations. In the same way, a child who practices good sportsmanship is more apt to behave that way off the field.

Schwartzhoff wants to ensure her boys know that being a team’s most valuable player or scoring the winning shot isn’t as important to her as raising two caring, respectful, responsible people.

“Character means so much more to me than accomplishments. I try to drive that message home all the time,” she says. “I want my boys to understand that perseverance and behaving with dignity, win or lose, is what matters.”

It’s important to remember it is just a game. Losing one game or every game during the course of a season does not crush your child’s chances of being successful in life. The best thing to do is encourage kids to play fair, have fun, maintain a healthy perspective and focus on helping the team while improving their skills. 

Freelance writer Kim Brasel would also include treating siblings respectfully and not using each other’s head for target practice in the definition of good sportsmanship. She is eternally grateful to Reynolds Guyer, inventor of the Nerf ball.

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Far left: Kerry Gloede (center) thrives on the rewards of working with Special Olympics athletes.

Left: The athletes, like tennis champ Sarah Vogelsberg, embody the love of sports.

MAKE TIME FOR *Play*

The Special Olympics thrives under Kerry Gloede's direction.

BY HEIDI OVERSON
Contributed photos

Kerry Gloede's days revolve around games. As the Recreation Supervisor for the City of La Crosse and the head of the area's Special Olympics program, Gloede helps more than 300 athletes ages 8 years and older with cognitive or intellectual disabilities participate in games and activities that not only are a lot of fun for the athletes, but also enrich their quality of life.

Gloede, who has held her full-time position for three years, lists all of the games in order of their seasons. April falls in the "indoor sports" season, and her athletes are busy with basketball and gymnastics. The seasons that follow feature swimming, track, soccer, power lifting, golf, softball, bocce, cycling, skiing, snowboarding and—most popular of all—bowling.

It's how you play the game

One would think Gloede would be exhausted by all of the activities, but she thrives on the innumerable rewards of her job. "Games are all about having fun, and my athletes display that attitude all the time," she says. "They know that as long as they're doing their best, that's all they can do." Gloede laughs about something that happens at every competition her athletes attend. "During the ribbon award ceremony, if someone's receiving a blue ribbon and they already have one, they'll ask for a different colored ribbon to help complete their ribbon rainbow set. They don't care how they place—they just want to have fun."

Everyone wins

Gloede loves the success that the Special Olympics program in this area boasts. "There are 180 Special Olympics programs in the state

of Wisconsin," says Gloede. "Our program is the second largest in Wisconsin. Our community's support is wonderful.

"All of our games and activities build self-confidence in our participants and provide opportunities for socialization," she continues. "And there are a lot of love and friendship bonds being established." For the volunteers and coaches who work with the athletes, the rewards are just as big. "I always say that once you start working with the athletes, you are hooked for life," Gloede says. "The athletes run up to you when they see you; you make their day."

The Special Olympics athletes have opportunities to participate in state, national and world competitions every year. Gloede has traveled with them to places such as North Carolina, Connecticut, Alaska and Ireland. These trips are supported through fund-raising events: the Polar Plunge, the Law Enforcement Torch Run and the DuRunRun. "These events are not only fun for all involved, they help create awareness for our mission and the people we serve," says Gloede.

Gloede's office was recently relocated to the Black River Neighborhood Center on the north side of La Crosse, where Gloede and her staff are enjoying their extra space. And every day, they can look out their window at a memorial rock garden that honors athletes who once enjoyed the games. Gloede knows that while these people participated in the program, their lives were enriched. It confirms her conviction: Life is too short; make time for play.

To volunteer for Special Olympics, contact Kerry Gloede at 608-789-7596. 

Heidi Overson writes from her country home in Coon Valley, Wis.

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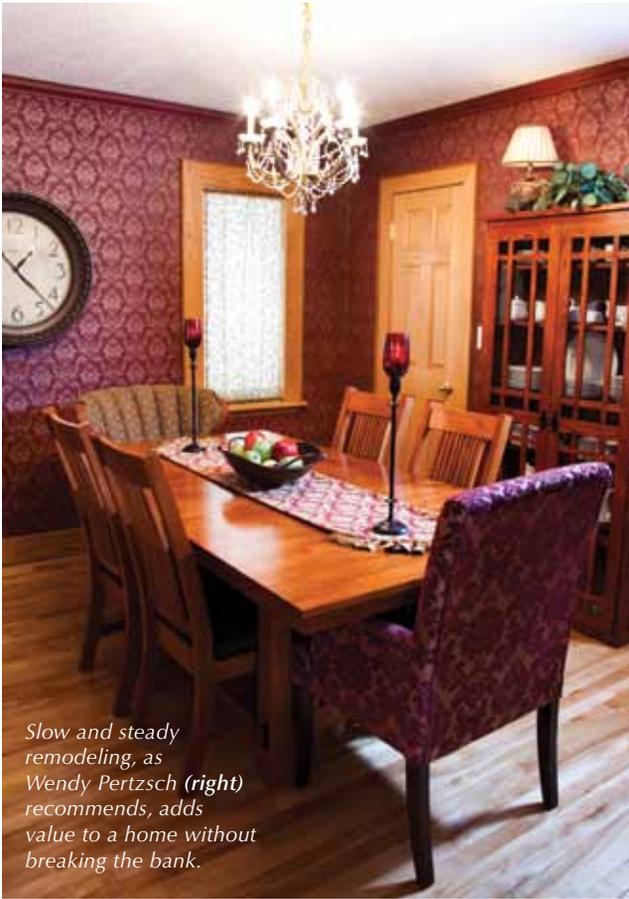
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Slow and steady remodeling, as Wendy Pertzsch (right) recommends, adds value to a home without breaking the bank.



THE JOY OF REMODELING

A La Crosse couple brings new life to their home—again and again.

BY MAURA HENN
Photos by Janet Mootz Photography

Wendy and Larry Pertzsch moved into their Cape Cod-inspired home in La Crosse in 1992. With considerable amounts of renovation and remodeling, the house has made quite a metamorphosis since then, but continues to offer inspiration for new projects. Nearly all improvements have been completed by the couple, with minimal help from contractors. Nearly 20 years after moving in, the Pertzsches are still making updates.

Slow and steady is key to DIY

The Pertzsches have never been the sort to take on every project at the same time, due to practicality, but also cost. Wendy Pertzsch's career as a real estate agent for RE/MAX has taught her much about

how to make updates to their home. "I would never suggest someone take out loans to remodel their home," she says; rather, she suggests saving for the updates. The slow approach has provided the opportunity for them to do most of the work themselves, but it's also allowed them the time to save up the money required to make improvements.

From replacing siding to opening up walls for entryways, most projects in the house have been done by Larry and Wendy. Many Cape Cod-influenced homes have a first-floor bedroom that shares a wall with the main living room. Not needing a bedroom on the first floor, the Pertzsches decided to create an entryway in the wall so the living room opens up into what has now become a den, perfect for reading



A glimpse into the past (above) shows how the Pertzches have transformed their kitchen and dining room (left). Note Larry's custom oak cabinetry work in the updated kitchen.

quality of their home. Although the work done at this 23rd Street home has been significant, working over a length of time has helped increase the value of the home considerably. In terms of equity, the Pertzches have more than doubled the value of their home. It has been a true labor of love, with many projects Wendy warmly refers to as “bonding projects,” but well worth the effort when they decide to sell.

An eye for improvement

The kitchen, dining room and living room take up most of the space on the first floor. Much of the main floor has the original golden birch wood, with a few spots updated with wood that, luckily, matched the original. Patterned wallpaper, a refurbished chandelier hanging over a large table and a china cabinet have transformed what was a second main-floor bedroom into a grand dining room.

The kitchen encompasses most of the major remodeling with a recent addition built onto it. Larry is responsible for the excellent oak cabinetry adorning the walls as well as a floating eating bar. In the center of the kitchen ceiling is one of Wendy's more interesting and affordable projects, a mock-tin ceiling with three hanging lamps. Trying to stay in the vein of the “old home” feel, Wendy used silver spray paint on a textured wallpaper, adhered it to the ceiling and framed it with stained wood trim. With the exclusion of the lighting fixtures, the project cost \$20 to \$25, but the effect is worth

so much more. Not only does the ceiling adornment add interest and depth to the kitchen, it cleverly draws the eye away from the seam between the original footprint of the house and the addition to the kitchen.

Even adding just a little paint, wallpaper and wood trim can make bare walls more interesting. Wendy also suggests keeping your eye out for sales on things like lighting fixtures to add panache to any home. Many of Wendy's ideas are relatively simple and come from seeing the interiors of the many homes she shows through her real-estate job.

A labor of love

The second floor houses the master bedroom, full bathroom and guest room. During one of the renovations, two small walls were removed to expose smaller second-story windows, allowing more light into the second story. Most of the entryways use updated pocket doors to allow for ease of movement and to keep the feeling of the house open.

The lower level is a home office area with a half bath. Walking through a side door reveals where much of the renovations take place: Larry's workshop. His current project is cutting the trim to finish the bookcase in the den. Larry is responsible for all the woodwork in the house, as well as design and tile work that accompanies the pellet and wood stoves. “Do it right the first time” is Larry's mantra when giving advice to those interested in home improvement. Do your homework and save up for the material so it is completed correctly.

All of the remodeling has aided the Pertzches in sharing their home with friends, and one of their first projects was having their wedding in their home. The home has become more than just a place where the Pertzches keep their things; it has become part of their history. Every piece of stained wood, every doorknob and every painted wall reminds them not only of their accomplishments, but of the time they spent doing it together. With a little creativity and willingness, the Pertzches show remodeling can be fun and affordable, but also a true reflection of what your home means to you. (crw)

Maura Henn is the Cameron Park Farmers Market Manager. She is eagerly awaiting for the 2011 season, which starts in May.

and enjoying a wood-burning fireplace. Their love for books has led them to their current remodel, a built-in floor-to-ceiling bookcase, in the den.

Work with what you have

One of the most important concepts Wendy shares for successful home renovation is to work with what your home can offer you. For the Pertzches, learning to live with what is achievable—rather than what is “perfect”—has allowed them to make renovations while still enjoying their home. To save on costs, they often bought fixtures with small imperfections, such as a sink with a small nick in the basin. They were able to save money by being flexible and realistic about what their budget could get them.

For many first-time home buyers, a fixer-upper best fits in their price range. With adequate planning, equipment and time, even novices can do things to improve the

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BOOT CAMP, CIVILIAN STYLE

Combat training exercise challenges fitness fanatics.

BY MARTHA KEEFFE

Contributed photo



Participants in Core Exercise Training classes are put through military-like paces, from push-ups to squats to wind sprints, all in the name of core strengthening and cardiovascular health.

Begin in a standing position. Drop to a squat. With your hands on the ground, extend your legs back into a push-up position. Jump your feet apart into a V. Bring them back together. Throw in a push-up, hop to a squat, then stand. Congratulations, you have just completed one “body builder.” Now repeat 15 times—or 20, if you are looking for a challenge.

And when you’re done, take a quick breath and wipe off the sweat. Then lie on the ground, with knees in the air and crank out 40 abdominal crunches.

Welcome to boot camp, civilian style.

So I don’t have to enlist?

Also known as endurance or combat training, these calisthenics-inspired exercise programs do not require you to be in peak physical condition, use weaponry or wear camouflage. Instead, these classes, offered at the YMCA North in Onalaska, the La Crosse Area Family YMCA and through Core Exercise Training classes led by martial arts instructor Fred Nicklaus, are designed to help adult men and women increase their overall fitness levels. Borrowed from actual military training programs, these sessions have the benefits of boot-camp-style

conditioning without the drill sergeant.

“Don’t let the name (of the class) scare you,” says Catherine Tryon, who joined Nicklaus’s classes, then known as Combat Endurance Training, in October 2009. “There isn’t any pressure to be hard core. Anybody can do this class at her own pace.”

“These classes are designed to be fun,” says Sheena Cook, Health and Wellness Director at the La Crosse Area Family YMCA. Though the YMCA boot camp class is listed as intermediate to advanced with vigorous to high-impact exercise, the instructors will accommodate less-experienced participants and those with special concerns like knee or back problems, she explains.

Hup, two, three, four ...

During a one-hour session, participants go through a series of activities that focus on total-body and cardiovascular conditioning, body awareness and flexibility, with special attention to strengthening the body’s core (abdominal and back muscles). “Body weight training, in which use your own body weight to do push-ups, sit-ups and squats, is used extensively through the workout,” says Cook. In addition, jumping jacks, wind sprints and knee lifts add variety, strengthen the heart and increase overall endurance.

“I beat the pants off my seventh graders during our last field trip,” says Mary Tierney, an Aquinas Middle School teacher, when asked about health benefits she’s received from taking the Core Exercise Training course. “They were huffing and puffing, and I had no trouble outpacing them.”

That’s why we do it

“I was sick of feeling old, out of shape and weak,” says Tryon when explaining why she began the program. “I’ve seen significant changes in the distribution of my body weight, and I have a lot more energy.”

Nicklaus designed his program because, as he says, people want to feel good about themselves, their fitness level and their life in general. They want that energy that comes with moving, being healthy, fit and strong.

“And once you start,” says Tierney, “you just can’t quit.” **CFW**

Martha Keefe lives, writes and recreates in La Crosse. She can attest that combat training will make you feel the burn!

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YMCA boot camp | www.laxymca.org

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Nursing home recreational
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BY FRAN RYBARIK
Contributed photo



If someone asked you to name a game that would be played in a long-term care setting, would you answer “Bingo”? A recent visit to Bethany Riverside on La Crosse’s south side showed a bigger picture of games people play in nursing homes—and you can thank recreation therapists for that.

As the Director of Recreation Therapy at the facility, Kris Fry, along with her staff of recreation therapists, keeps the residents there occupied in activities that not only pass

Ruth Hole (left) and Certified Recreation Therapy Specialist Danielle Olson enjoy a session of pet therapy at Bethany Riverside.

the time, but help them socialize with others and keep their skills sharp.

Just as the national population curve has changed with baby boomers reaching retirement age, so have nursing homes. Last year, the average daily census at Bethany Riverside was 116 residents. More than 100 people call it their permanent home, about one-third of them in units designed for those with dementia. Additionally, about 12 more short-term residents utilize rehabilitation services each month, says Fry.

Beyond bingo

And yes, they play bingo twice a week. "People make fun of bingo, but it's a good example of what goes on during a game that can be beneficial for our residents," says Fry. "First of all, there is social interaction. Participants use cognitive skills to hear and find the numbers that are called; they use fine motor skills to move the chip, keeping fingers limber; and yelling, 'Bingo!' shows their accomplishment. The activity masks the physical, social and mental benefits that

happen during a game."

Jigsaw puzzles and board games occupy shelves in one of the community rooms at the home. Games like Shake Loose a Memory help participants reminisce or recall memorable events. Large-print or bigger game pieces aid those with visual impairments or stiff fingers. Bethany Riverside also maintains a library of large-print and audio books.

Nearby, a computer and a big-screen TV for movie watching or playing Wii—the latest fad at adult residential settings—await the next user. Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune are popular on the Wii, along with music games and bowling.

"More and more of our residents are computer-savvy," Fry said. "Some have young children visitors who prefer playing games to just sitting around. One woman needed computer access so she could pay all her bills."

A new phase of life

Fry describes nursing home life as a new phase in a person's life journey. "Our job

is to help them continue to find purpose and meaning in this new setting. Residents have so much to share, but they seldom get asked anymore. Our recreation therapy staff members are great advocates," she continues. "They find out those little things about the person—what makes her who she is—and share that with other staff members caring for her."

Residents receive a weekly schedule of recreational opportunities, from games and music to outings and religious or educational programs. If a new resident identified past interests, like playing an instrument and owning a dog, the recreation staff helps them sign up for musical programs and visits from pet therapy dogs. Each activity comes with specific therapeutic benefits to body, mind or spirit. Even bingo. **(crw)**

Fran Rybarik loves kayaking and hiking and other activities that mask the hidden benefits of exercise. She is still working on mastering the Wii.

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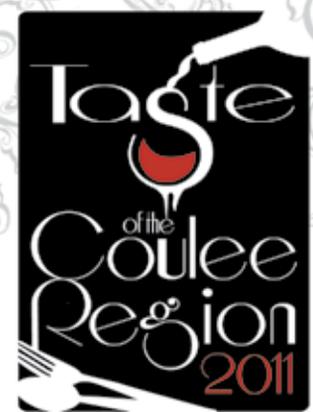
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Play WITH YOUR FOOD

Artful presentation allows guests to eat first with their eyes.

BY CHARISH BADZINSKI
Photos by Charish Badzinski

In a bustling mid-morning kitchen, Alex Brevik forms a soft bed of scallion and truffle risotto with the back of a spoon on an elegant white plate, then gently places a prepared halibut filet on top. While beautiful as is, these steps form only the foundation of the entrée he is preparing. Brevik, the executive chef for the Waterfront Restaurant and Tavern, knows that some simple finishing touches will give the food the “wow” factor for which the Waterfront is widely known.

The painstaking care with which he heightens the plate’s appearance goes far beyond what most home cooks might do when serving the family dinner. Yet, Brevik explains, garnishing food doesn’t have to be time consuming or complicated. “There are infinite possibilities when you create food. By its very nature, food is an art form, and your goal is to please all of the five senses of the people you are serving.” To engage those senses, Brevik tops the halibut with sweet pea greens, sprinkles the plate with house-made gingerroot vinaigrette and scatters cashews around the edges. The result is a plate that comes alive with color, texture and flavor.

Appearance and flavor

For the novice cook, garnishes can seem intimidating, so they’re often forgotten entirely. Yet the concept is simple and fun: Play with your food. Add color and crunch. Incorporate ingredients that not only boost the appearance of the dish, but add flavor. Don’t overthink it, and don’t overdo it. “The way I look at it,” explains Brevik, “never add a garnish unless it adds a flavor profile or texture that adds to the dish.”

The Waterfront pastry chef, Jen Haas, agrees. “Sometimes people add color that doesn’t necessarily improve the dish, and that doesn’t make sense.” Haas demonstrates correct garnishing with her presentation of *pots de crème*, whimsically served in mason jars and topped with caramel sauce, whipped cream and—perhaps unexpectedly—sea salt, which marries the flavors perfectly.

“Go outside your comfort zone,” Haas says. “Every time I go to the store, I try one thing I’ve never tried before.” **crw**



Bedazzling a plain pots de crème couldn’t be simpler: (1) add a layer of caramel sauce, (2) a swirl of whipped cream, (3) a sprinkle of sea salt and a mint sprig.



Simple finishing touches will give your food a “wow” factor. Here, tortilla chips add flavor, crunch and garnish to the Waterfront’s ceviche.



Sauces add flavor and visual appeal to a well-composed entrée. Keep empty squeeze bottles handy for the perfect drizzle.

WATERFRONT CEVICHE

Serves 8.

- 1 cup diced raw Ahi tuna (sushi grade)
- 1 cup diced raw sea scallops
- 1 cup diced raw shrimp
- 1 cup diced raw snapper
- ¼ cup minced mango
- ¼ cup minced red pepper
- ¼ cup minced jalapeno
- 2 T minced cilantro
- Zest from 1 orange, lemon and lime
- 1 cup orange juice
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup lime juice
- 3 T honey
- 1 tsp. citric acid

Mix all wet ingredients together with the zest and citric acid. Add all seafood, mango, red pepper, jalapeno and cilantro. Refrigerate for a minimum of 12 hours.

As pictured, dish is garnished with house-made sriracha vinaigrette, sesame seeds, thyme oil and homemade tortilla chips, and is served alongside a seaweed salad.

220 calories, 1.5g fat, 23g protein, 29g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 250mg sodium (without garnishes).

Simple tips from Waterfront chefs

- Food presentation starts with the platter, plate or bowl. White dishes will showcase your efforts most dramatically.
- Use fresh herbs as garnish to add flavor and color. These may be herbs featured in the dish.
- Squeeze bottles are key for sauces. Have several on hand.
- Instead of serving your starch and protein side by side, stack them to create height.
- Layer garnishes for drama. Build upon the flavors and textures of the dish itself.
- Sauces don’t have to be complicated. Create homemade flavored olive oil (heat oil with the herbs, then bottle

SEARED HALIBUT OVER SCALLION AND TRUFFLE RISOTTO

Serves 1—multiply as needed.

For risotto:

- ¾ cup unseasoned risotto, prepared
- 2 oz. chicken stock
- 2 oz. Parmesan cheese
- 3 T diced scallions
- 1 T black truffle butter
- 1 T olive oil
- Salt to taste

In medium saucepan over medium heat, sweat the scallions briefly with the olive oil. Add the risotto to heat. Add chicken stock and allow it to incorporate into the risotto. Once absorbed, add the truffle butter, Parmesan cheese and salt to taste. Keep warm until halibut is finished.

For halibut:

- 1 fresh halibut filet, approx. 8 ounces
- 2 T olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

and use as needed), a homemade aioli (blended egg yolks, paprika and capers) or fruit coulis (pureed fresh fruit, strained).

- For desserts, incorporate fresh fruit and dust the finished dish lightly with cocoa or cinnamon.
- Try the wide variety of sea salts available. They can add color, flavor and texture.
- Gather ideas from cookbooks and food magazines.
- Use tried-and-true dishes for dinner parties, but experiment on your own to discover new tricks.

If inspiration eludes you, why not do some research? Go out to eat where you can enjoy dishes as presented by the experts, and pocket some ideas to use in your own kitchen.

Preheat oven to 450°F. Bring oven-safe pan to high heat and add olive oil. Allow the oil to reach its smoke point. In the meantime, season the halibut with salt and pepper. Sear the halibut until golden brown on one side. Flip to other side and place in oven until it reaches an internal temperature of 135°F, approximately 8-10 minutes. Serve over the Scallion and Truffle Risotto.

As pictured, dish is garnished with sweet pea greens, house-made gingerroot vinaigrette and lightly salted cashews.

1,080 calories, 72g fat, 73g protein, 27g carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 1,460mg sodium (without garnishes).

POTS DE CRÈME

Serves 6.

- 2½ cups heavy cream
- ½ cup plus 3 T milk
- 5 T sugar
- 1 vanilla bean or 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 cinnamon sticks or 1 extra tsp. ground cinnamon
- 6 eggs

Garnishes:

- Prepared whipped cream
- Caramel sauce
- Medium coarse sea salt
- Fresh mint

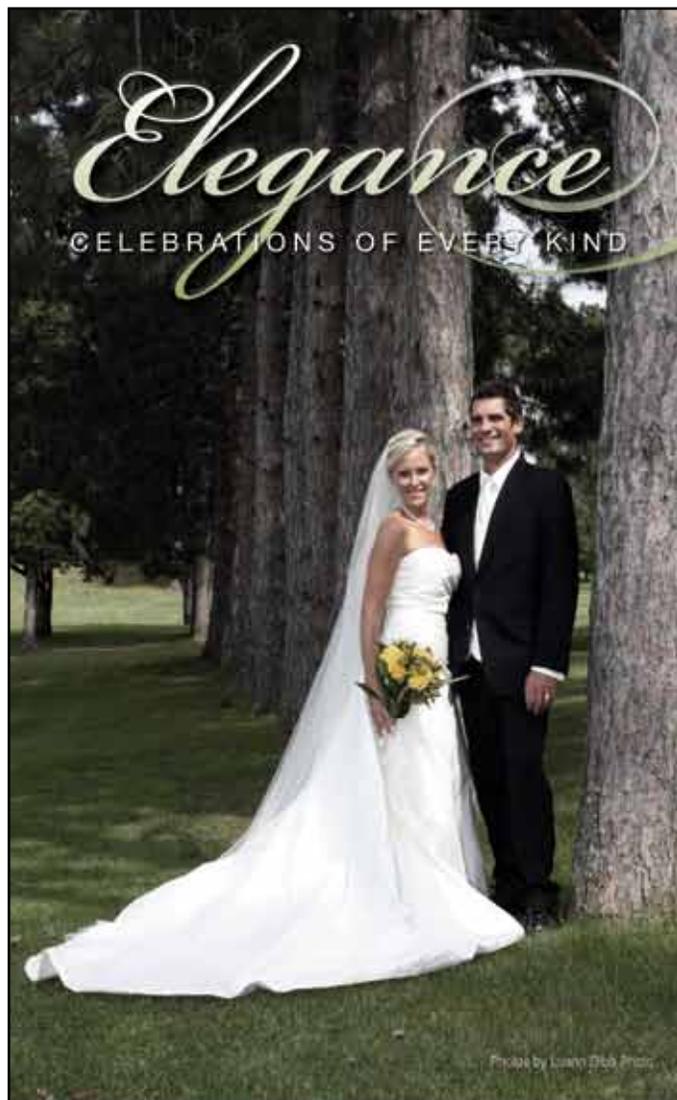
In a large bowl, whisk eggs and set aside. Combine all other ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Very slowly pour the hot mixture into the eggs, whisking the entire time. Reduce the temperature of your pots de crème quickly by placing it over an ice bath. Allow mixture to cool for at least one hour. For deeper flavor, refrigerate overnight.

Strain mixture. Heat oven to 300°F. Place 8 oz. Mason jars or soufflé cups in a 9x13-inch pan. Slowly pour the cream base into each cup. Place in the oven and pour water into the pan until it is about 1½ inches deep, forming a water bath. For extra protection against overbaking, place a cookie sheet directly on top to create a lid. Bake 45-55 minutes, or until the custard has set. The custard has set when you tip it and it holds its shape, but still has a little jiggle to it.

Remove from heat and refrigerate until cold. To serve, top with caramel sauce, whipped cream and a light sprinkle of sea salt. Garnish with fresh mint.

630 calories, 43g fat, 9g protein, 51g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 120mg sodium (without garnishes).

Charish Badzinski enjoys the visual appeal of food that's beautifully presented almost as much as she enjoys dismantling it. She can often be seen taking photos of the food she orders, a hobby that allows her to enjoy meals time and time again.



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DESIGNING WOMEN



This original Elise Johnson design is modeled by Jenna Vande Zande. It was transformed from the far left dress (below).



Here's a challenge: Take that old prom gown in your closet (you know the one) and transform it into something a 17-year-old fashionista would proudly wear.

Daring designers in the La Crescent High School community took up this very challenge in an Ugly Dress Turnaround contest, culminating in a fashion show on Feb. 5 as part of Prom Dress Palooza, a prom dress consignment sale. Both the sale and the contest aimed to help high school girls enjoy prom without spending hundreds of dollars on a dress, says coordinator Annie Jackson, a junior at La Crescent.

Seven contestants selected "ugly dresses" from cast-offs donated by the Wedding Tree in La Crosse. Of the designers—including high school students and adults—the winner was Elise Johnson, a first-year English

teacher at La Crescent who has been sewing since childhood.

Johnson selected an "ugly dress" with fabric that would dye well, then dyed it from light blue to a rich purple—her favorite color. She then completely re sewed a fresh design from the dress, a process which required about 40 hours, \$5 worth of trim and the emotional support of her also-crafty mother. The result is a gorgeous dress tailored to fit model Jenna Vande Zande (one of Johnson's AP English students), featuring ruching at the bust, brocade trim and a plunging backline.

"I love watching shows like *Project Runway* and *Say Yes to the Dress*, so when this opportunity came up, I knew I wanted to try it," Johnson says. "I saw this as a chance to connect my interest in design with my dedication to my students." **crw**



GIRLS' NIGHT GAMES

From Bunco to bridge, game groups are about the friendships formed.

BY SHARI HEGLAND
Contributed photo

It may be called Bunco night—and they do play the simple dice game—but what it really boils down to is a guaranteed night once a month together with friends.

All around the Coulee Region, women gather on a regular basis to play Bunco, bridge, mah jongg, dominoes or any number of card games. At the same time, they are forging new friendships, reinforcing old ones and creating a network of support.

“Everybody has young kids. We talk about kids, we talk about schools,” says Jenny Eickhoff of Holmen, part of a regular group of 12 ladies from the Remington Hills subdivision who formed a monthly Bunco league. The group, which has been gathering for about three years, recruited players from the neighborhood to ensure that even during bad weather, they could still get to each other’s homes.

Among the dice, snacks and drinks, they share details of their

lives and enjoy a relaxed evening. Most in the group are stay-at-home moms with young children.

“It guarantees once a month you are out of the house,” says group member Katie Lawton.

While the atmosphere is generally laid back, and Bunco is a game that doesn’t require concentration or strategy, there are times it does bring out the competitive side in players. Especially, notes member Angie Gault, when someone is coming close to winning one of the pots funded by their \$4 per night buy-in.

Although the group doesn’t have actual officers or a formal structure, Gault maintains a roster of the regular players plus substitutes, and they rotate hosting on a monthly basis.

Similar groups can be found gathering in homes throughout the Coulee Region most any night. You could start one of your own: Just

invite a few friends, tell them to invite a few friends and have fun.

A wonderful support group

For a large and growing group of mostly retired women in the Coulee Region—and a handful of men—the La Crosse Family YMCA-North in Onalaska is a center for social interaction over tables of card games several days a week.

Nancy Beguin of Onalaska said the group evolved shortly after the YMCA opened in 2006, with women who took water aerobics classes together in the mornings. Now, on any given Monday, Wednesday or Friday morning, you can find up to five tables of card players sharing jokes and stories as they deal out hands of Triple Play Hand and Foot from stacks of eight combined decks of cards.

“We started out playing 500, and then went to a game called Golf,” Beguin says, before transitioning to the current game, which can accommodate three to six players at each table, providing flexibility for the fluid group of card players. An informal roster now numbers more than 50, and the

interaction among the women extends far beyond simply playing cards together.

“It’s a wonderful support group,” says Joyce Kammel, who felt as though she was “wrapped in love” when she lost her husband. “When I came back after Joe’s death, I didn’t feel so alone.”

Audrey Stendall started playing cards with the group after her husband’s death and says that the reward of getting together with friends after her workout is part of what gets her moving in the mornings.

While some of the ladies have been playing cards for years, Beguin says others never had played before they joined the group, which now also celebrates birthdays and goes out for lunch on a regular basis after playing cards for a couple of hours.

“It’s good for our memory and good for our thoughts,” she says, noting that many of them did not know each other before meeting at the YMCA.

The friendships that have formed are so strong that Beguin even traveled to Europe last year with several women she met through the card games.

Fun that’s not hard to find

While most of those who gather at the YMCA live in Onalaska, others come from La Crosse, La Crescent, Holmen and West Salem to play a few hands after their morning workouts.

For many, the fun doesn’t stop when they leave the YMCA—they continue on to play in one of the Onalaska Parks & Recreation Department’s game leagues at the Onalaska Community Center. There are days for dominoes, bridge, Bunco and mah jongg.

La Crosse also has two organized bridge leagues, one that meets Tuesday nights at the South Side Senior Center and another that plays Thursday afternoons at the Moose Club.

In many cases, while the pretext for gathering is to play a game, the true attraction is not the cards, the dice or the tiles. The true attraction is the people. 

Shari Hegland is a freelance writer in Holmen who thinks it might be time to dig out the cribbage board or Uno cards for a family game night.



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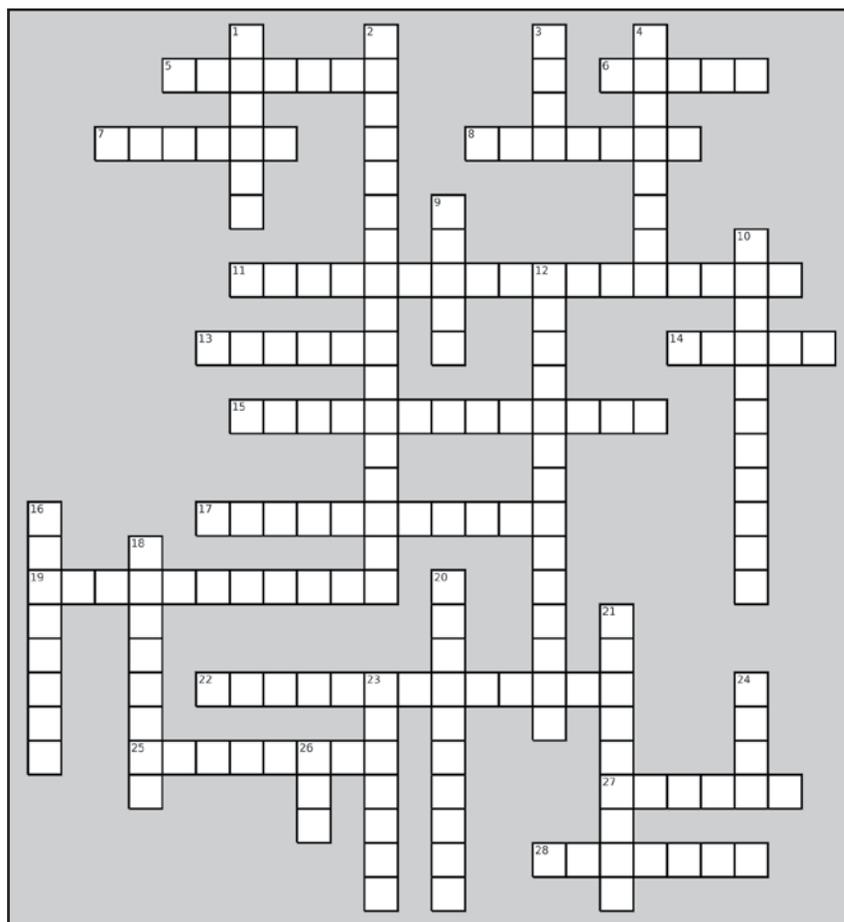
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7. Section of CRW magazine that features moms, dads, children and pets
8. Title of CRW magazine's sister bridal publication "The _____ Magazine"
11. CRW magazine website
13. The In the Know section announces upcoming _____
14. Target market of CRW magazine
15. Section of CRW magazine that features fashions or products (2 words)
17. Items that are worn for a fashionable effect frequently featured in our Retail Therapy section
19. Name of woman on this cover of CRW magazine (2 words)
22. Betty Christiansen writes this at the beginning of each issue (3 words)
25. City where CRW magazine office is located
27. To go from place to place or to visit various locations
28. Jobs or occupations/also a section in CRW magazine

Down

1. "_____ Region Women" magazine
2. The current CRW magazine editor (2 words)
3. An article "Play with Your Food" is in which section of this issue
4. A city's center featuring businesses and retail shops
9. Section of CRW magazine that makes you laugh (turn to page 52 of this issue for some fun)
10. To convey a feeling or thought by speech, writing or gesture
12. Businesses use these to promote their products or services
16. In the back of each issue of CRW magazine we feature a community _____
18. Popular social media site (become a fan of ours)
20. Photographer who took this issue's cover photo (2 words)
21. Title of CRW magazine's specialty publication "Coulee Region Women Business & Resource _____"
23. CRW magazine promotes this type of living
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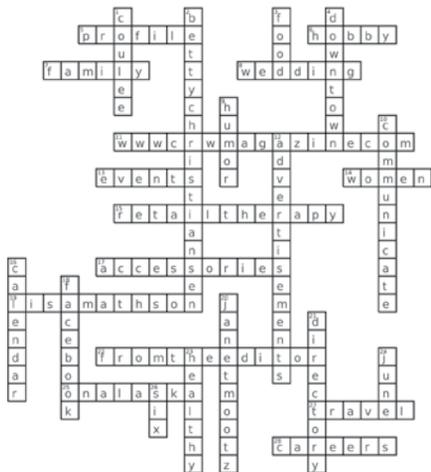
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BY AMY BATTERAM
Photos by Janet Mootz Photography

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coral spring trench and skinny jean
Chan Luu pearl drop earrings and
stone chain wrap bracelet
Brighton Zoe bronze zip messenger bag

2 Crème Caramel

From **Gap**, Valley View Mall:
Gap white perfect khaki pant, brown and white
sleeveless tie print top and white jersey cami

From **Herbergers**, Valley View Mall:
Erica Lyons blush necklace set
Fossil sunglasses
GAL brown leather handbag
MaddenGirl "Kickoff" neutral multicolor pump

3 Bluesy Blues

From **Gap**, Valley View Mall:
Gap blue strapless plaid dress and
cropped denim jacket

From **Herbergers**, Valley View Mall:
Erica Lyons beaded necklace,
bracelet with flower
Ruff Hewn "Howie" black pump

4 Fleur Couture

From **LARK**, downtown La Crosse:
Andrea Fisher floral bias-cut dress
Pachi coiled copper earrings

From **Herbergers**, Valley View Mall:
Fashion Focus belt



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A LEAGUE OF HER OWN

Find the summer sport of your choice anywhere in the Coulee Region.

BY MARTHA KEEFFE

Do you throw like a girl? How about run, bike or relax like a girl? If so, you are exactly the kind of woman many Coulee Region groups are looking for. Use the following list of female-friendly organizations as an opportunity to kick-start your interests, hone athletic skills or take on a new challenge—get out and find that league of your own. 

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Black River Beach
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Holmen

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Halfway Creek Park
Holmen Park and Recreation 608-526-2152
www.holmenwi.com

BIKING

Smith's Biking and Fitness

Ladies' Monday Night Ride
5:30–7:30 p.m.
Wednesday Night Ride—co-rec
5:30 p.m.
608-784-1175
www.smithsbikes.com

River Trail Cycles

Wednesday beginner group 6 p.m.
Tuesdays 6 p.m.
Sundays 4:30 p.m.
608-526-4678
www.rivertrailcycles.com

HIKING

Three Rivers Outdoors

Mondays and Tuesdays
June through September
6–8 p.m.
Call 608-793-1470 to register.
www.threeriversoutdoors.com

KAYAKING AND CANOEING

Coulee Canoe and Kayak Club

Group Paddle
Wednesdays 5:30 p.m.
Saturdays 10 a.m. April through October
www.ccakc.org

Three Rivers Outdoors

River Divas—Women only
Mondays June through September
6–8 p.m.
Paddle Time—co-rec
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\$10.00: kayaks, paddles, PFDs
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Call 608-793-1470 to register.
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MOUNTAIN BIKING

Human Powered Trails

County FA, La Crosse
Visit www.humanpoweredtrails.com
for maps, contact info and event info.
Ladies Group Mountain Bike Ride
Thursdays 6 p.m., All abilities.
Runners and hikers also welcome!
Contact Emily at 608-526-4678.

WOMEN'S FLAT TRACK ROLLER DERBY

Mississippi Valley Mayhem

recruiting@mississippivalleymayhem.com
Visit www.mississippivalleymayhem.com
for practice times and events.

La Crosse Skating Sirens

Practice held Mondays and Wednesdays.
8–10 p.m.
skatingsirens@yahoo.com
www.skatingsirens.com

RUNNING CLUBS

River City Running Club—co-rec

Saturdays 7 a.m., La Crosse YMCA
Sundays 7:30 a.m., UW-La Crosse
Tuesdays 5 p.m. (varies)
Contact Joe Fass at 608-783-6267.
Wednesdays 5:30 p.m.
Summer trail runs, Myrick Park.
Contact Jim Stenulson at
608-783-0789 or 608-797-8361
or Jeff Woody at 608-779-5808.
www.rivercityrunningclub.com
\$20.00 annually

SOFTBALL

La Crosse Park and Recreation

Women 18+
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6–10 p.m.
May 3 and 4 to August 2 and 3
608-789-7533
www.cityoflacrosse.org

TRIATHLON CLUBS

Bluff Busters Tri Team

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Visit www.bluffbusterstriteam.net
for events, contact info and more.

SET FREE 2 ENJOY

Connect with women of all ages and abilities for year-round outdoor group activities from kayaking to snowshoeing, or meet for an afternoon of hiking, an evening at the movies or for friendly conversation over a cup of coffee. www.setfree2enjoy.com

Martha Keffe not only writes about sports and social activities, but enjoys getting together with a friend and enjoying them herself.

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“TEE” IS FOR TRAVEL

Excellent courses plus regional attractions equal great getaways for women golfers.

BY JESSIE FOSS
Contributed photos



As the sun gets stronger, the thermometer begins to rise, birds return to the area and people's minds turn to the outdoors. Thoughts of long walks, gardening, sprucing up the yard and, for many women, golfing, begin to fill our heads.

While most Coulee Region women golfers wait for area greens to turn green and snow and water to leave the fairways, some women have been getting their swings in all winter long.

Vacations that focus on golfing while combining other attractions and luxuries are becoming alluring trip options for women as golfing among women increases. The number of women golfers is growing faster than male golfers, and women now make up more than 25 percent of all U.S. golfers, according to recent National Golf Foundation numbers.

Samantha Zielke, Tracey Hummel and Sandy Wendling, booking

agents at Travel Leaders in La Crosse, have several ideas when it comes to booking that perfect golf vacation.

Where to go?

There are several great golf areas in the United States, the booking agents say. A concentration of courses and an infrastructure make for a complete vacation. Some of these areas include Orlando, Fla., Arizona's Phoenix and Scottsdale areas, Myrtle Beach, S.C., Hilton Head, S.C., and Las Vegas.

Many of the prime golf areas are located in the southern part of the United States because they offer those who live in colder climates a place to escape to when the cold and cabin fever set in. However, Zielke, Hummel and Wendling point out that many of the top 100 individual golf courses are located in the northern half of the country.

The United States isn't the only place to head for golf vacations. The Caribbean and Mayan Riviera also offer wonderful golf courses and all-inclusive properties.

Local golfer Doris Killian doesn't find much of a need to go away to golf because she enjoys local courses—and others throughout Wisconsin—that offer her all the challenges she needs.

However, she does spend March golfing in Arizona. Deciding where to go was an easy decision, and she loves her golfing choices in the Green Valley, Ariz., area.

"We happen to go there because someone mentioned it to us," she says. "We thoroughly enjoy it. [Some of the courses] remind you of being back in Wisconsin."

A package deal

Depending on individual needs and wants, Zielke, Hummel and Wendling say a variety of golf and vacation packages can be put together. Packages can be created that contain just the "bare bones" or include every detail down to meals and drinks. They point to the Caribbean and Mayan Riviera as being a great option for all-inclusive trips. The agents note that even packages that include golf do not always include a mandatory cart rental, so that could be an extra expense.

The opportunities and varieties of

inclusions are limitless, they say, and really depend on individual wants.

Upscale can be key

An upscale hotel, spa, great shopping and a variety of dining choices are important to a lot of women, the representatives at Travel Leaders say. Not only should those options be nice, but they also need to be convenient and feel and be safe.

The agents offer these examples:

- A trip to the Las Vegas area can combine some very nice golf courses with Las Vegas nightlife, Las Vegas shopping and a wide variety of hotel themes, plus great spas.

- In the Orlando area, Disney has some "magical" golf courses, plus myriad hotels, excellent shopping and even the option of combining the golf trip with a cruise, either before or after.

Killian's choice of where to golf is based on the price and quality of golfing, she says.

"The rest of it—we're able to find what we need," she says. "We're pretty one-dimensional. We get up, we have our bowl of oatmeal and we go to the golf course." 

Jessie Foss is looking forward to her first spring in Onalaska so she can get outside, find some new activities and wear off some of her dog's energy.



The number of women golfers in the United States is rapidly growing, making golf travel packages—in sunny locations with a variety of attractions—a hot commodity.

Top courses for women

Golf Digest compiled America's Top 50 Courses for Women by taking into consideration woman-friendly criteria established by its editors. The criteria included at least one tee less than 5,300 yards, at least two sets of tees with USGA Slope and Course Ratings for women, minimal forced carries from the forward tees and run-up areas to most or all greens. Female-friendly design, amenities, courteous staff, programs and an atmosphere that appeals to women were also considered.

These courses make up the Top 10:

- Pine Needles Lodge and Golf Club in Southern Pines, N.C.
- The Boulders Resort and Spa (South) in Carefree, Ariz.
- Amelia Island Plantation (Ocean Links) in Amelia Island, Fla.
- Running Y Ranch in Klamath Falls, Ore.
- Sea Island Resorts (Seaside) in St. Simons Island, Ga.
- LPGA International (Champions) in Daytona Beach, Fla.
- The Golf Club At Newcastle (China Creek) in Newcastle, Wash.
- Celebration Golf Club in Celebration, Fla.
- Kingsmill Resort and Spa (Plantation) in Williamsburg, Va.
- Grand Cypress Golf Club (East/North) in Orlando, Fla.

Tips for golf vacations

Blair Howard, a golf travel writer for About.com, has several suggestions when it comes to golf vacations.

Pick the right destination: Make sure it fits your needs. Check the resort ahead of time to make sure it meets expectations.

Pack smart and travel smart: Don't pack more than you need. Plan what you will wear each day and each evening. Keep a list of items packed in case luggage is lost and you have to make a claim.

Use a checklist to make sure you don't forget anything.

Take care when traveling with golf clubs. Caring for clubs is essential, and one should invest in a good-quality padded travel covers for clubs.

Deal with jet lag, which could mean staying in your own local time zone as much as possible.



THE GAMES WE PLAY

When it comes to competition, women run the table.

BY HEIDI GRIMINGER BLANKE

Some say men are more competitive than women, but don't believe it for a second. I'm here to tell you women compete on a whole different level. Unlike Monopoly, you don't need all the money to win; unlike rummy, you don't need the most points to win; and unlike Mario Brothers, you don't need the fastest fingers to win. You do need a confident swagger, a well-developed sense of gloating and the ability to trumpet your winnings more loudly than anyone else in the room.

I first started playing women's games when my children were quite young. While the kids tottered around eating dirt and chasing the cat, the moms embarked on the my-kid-is-smarter-faster-cuter-and-a-lot-more-talented-than-your-kid game. It went like this:

"Alice is potty-trained a whole year ahead of schedule."

"Well, Daniel's not potty-trained—he's a boy and they potty-train late—but he knows how to use the phone to call me in an emergency."

Just as I was ready to ante up and join in the conversation, my son took lipstick from my purse and drew on the wall, distracting everyone and making himself the center of attention. Now that's what I call clever.

Upping the ante

As the children aged, the stakes got higher. I worked hard at maintaining a good poker face, just in case I wanted to place a bet.

"I'm so exhausted. I just got back from Tracy's voice lesson in Minneapolis, and yesterday I went to Madison to watch Martin in the state tennis finals. Carla is on prom court, so we need to go dress shopping."

"I know what you mean. I'll be in Rochester tomorrow with Rachel and Girls of Tomorrow; she got the highest score the judges have ever given."

Thank goodness my kids weren't that talented. Think of all the money I saved on gas.

However, even without children, women battle for the number one spot. The I'm-on-a-diet game requires strategy and a plateful of determination. The participants are easy to spot. They don't eat dessert on Bunco nights, order poached eggs and dry toast when out for breakfast and claim their favorite food is celery. If nothing else, they win by guilt default.

I think I'm better suited to role-playing games: cinnamon rolls, jelly rolls, nut rolls and egg rolls.

A game to end all games

These days, I'm yearning to compete in the ultimate of womanhood games, though I've barely begun any kind of preparation. My friends are opening their wallets and iPhones to pull up photos of their grandchildren.

"Isn't she adorable? That's number five for me."

The contest is strictly a numbers game; the woman with the most grandchildren wins. I'm waiting for my seat at the table so I can be dealt in on the next round. Granddogs and grandcats are not allowed on the game board and may even cause you to lose a turn.

Women everywhere, beware. I'm in serious training for the next round of whatever game comes my way. I've got new running shoes, a fresh deck of cards and long-life batteries for any electronic activity. Just don't check my purse for the loaded dice. **(CRW)**

Heidi Griminger Blanke, Ph.D., is the executive director at WAFER Food Pantry, but prefers solitaire to competitive games.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

ONGOING EVENTS

American Association of University Women (AAUW)
2nd Sat. of each month (Sept.-May), 9:30 a.m.,
608-788-7439, www.aauw-wi.org.

Business Over Breakfast La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce, 4th Wed. every month, 7:30-8:45 a.m.
Preregister 608-784-4807, www.lacrossechamber.com.

Children's Museum of La Crosse weekly programming: Save-On-Sundays \$1.00 off admission every Sun., noon to 5 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CALENDAR EVENTS

April 6-10, *Splendor in the Grass*, 7:30 p.m. April 6-9, 2 p.m. April 10, Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

April 7-10, *The Last Five Years*, 7:30 p.m. April 7-9, 2 p.m. April 10, Pump House, La Crosse.

April 8, Touching Moments Animal Assisted Activities benefit art show, 5-8 p.m., Gallery La Crosse, 320 Main St., La Crosse. 608-782-4278.

April 8, *Stuart Little*, 10 a.m. and 12:45 p.m., Heider Center, West Salem. www.heidercenter.org.

April 8, *Night (Out) at the Museum*, 5:30-8:00 p.m., Children's Museum of La Crosse. \$10/member, \$15/nonmember, preregistration and prepayment required. 608-784-2652.

April 8-9, *The Hostage*, 7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center LaCroix Black Box Theatre, Viterbo University.

April 9, Easter Eggstravaganza, 11 a.m.-noon, Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

April 10, 13, Pet Photos with the Easter Bunny, 3-6 p.m. April 10, 5-8 p.m. April 13, Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

April 14-17, *The Hostage*, 7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center LaCroix Black Box Theatre, Viterbo University.

April 15, Bottom Line Duo, 7:30 p.m., Heider Center, West Salem, \$15 adults, \$13 students and senior citizens. www.heidercenter.org.

April 15, Jazz Ensemble, 7:30 p.m., Page Theatre, Saint Mary's University, Winona.

April 15-16, La Crosse Symphony Orchestra, 7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Main Theatre.

April 15-17, River Trail Cycles Spring Sale, Holmen, www.rivertrailcycles.com.

April 16, Thank You for Being a Friend, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Drugan's Castle Mound, Holmen.

April 16, *American Musicale*, Figiulo Recital Hall, Saint Mary's University, Winona.

April 16, Earth Fair, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Myrick Hixon EcoPark/Myrick Park. www.greenlacrosse.com.

April 16, Lou and Peter Berryman, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

April 16, Fresh Face for Spring, Bobbi Brown Master Class with makeup artist Jenn Utley, 1-3 p.m., La Crosse. Contact Sarah Utley-Wells at 608-333-5642.

April 17, Women's Voices Recital, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., Figiulo Recital Hall, Saint Mary's University, Winona.

April 21, Stobb, Krump, & Sexton, Reading Series, 7 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

April 23, Between the Bluffs Beer, Wine, & Cheese Festival, 2-6 p.m., South Side Oktoberfest grounds, La Crosse and 2nd Streets. www.betweenthebluffsbeerfest.com.

April 25-May 8, *Dracula*, 7:30 p.m. April 29-30 and May 5-7, 2 p.m. May 1 and 8, Toland Theatre, Center for the Arts, UW-La Crosse.

April 27-May 8, Free Mother's Day gift with purchase, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

April 29, Wellness Expo, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Onalaska OmniCenter. www.rsvplax.org.

April 29-30, Dance Repertory Company, 7:30 p.m. April 29, 3 p.m. April 30, Page Theatre, Winona.

April 30, UW-L SOTA Project Funway Fashion Show, 1 p.m., Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

April 30, Celebration 2011 Performance Platinum Edition, 7:30 p.m., Fine Arts Center Main Theatre, Viterbo University.

May 1, Chamber Ensembles, 3 p.m., Figiulo Recital Hall, Saint Mary's University, Winona.

May 6-8, 100-Mile Garage Sale, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., from Alma to Bay City, Wis., and Red Wing to Winona, Minn. www.mississippi-river.org/calendar/garagesale.

May 6-22, *Chicago*, 7:30 p.m. Thurs-Sat, 2 p.m. Sun, La Crosse Community Theatre. www.lacrossecommunitytheatre.org.

May 13, Chris Smither, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

May 14, Safe Families 5K Walk/10K Run, Bluff Country Family Resources, registration 8:30 a.m., Houston County Nature Trail, Houston, Minn. www.bluffcountry.org.

May 14, Pet Expo, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

May 20, YWCA Taste of the Coulee Region, 4:30-8:30 p.m., City Brewery Hospitality Center, 1111 S. 3rd St., La Crosse. \$25 in advance, \$30 at door. 608-781-2783.

May 20-21, 27-28, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, 7:30 p.m., Pump House, La Crosse.

May 21, Reggae Fest, 2-11 p.m., Trempealeau Hotel. www.trempealeauhotel.com.

May 26, CRPW Cruising for Scholarships, 5-9 p.m. City Brewery Hospitality Center, 1111 S. 3rd St., La Crosse, \$20, www.facebook.com/crpwomen.

May 28, RSVP presents: Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?, 10 a.m.-noon, Center Court, Valley View Mall. www.myvalleyview.com.

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

Are headaches ruining your **LIFE?**



Dear Waterloo Heights Dental Center,

I am writing today to express my extreme gratitude to Dr. Ladesic and his assistant Tracey. I have suffered with chronic headaches since I was a child. They got worse as I got older and the last few years had been almost unbearable. I work in healthcare and like most healthcare people I thought of headaches as a "medical" problem, not a "dental" problem. It didn't help that my neurologist thought dental treatment for headaches was absurd. A year and a half ago I was at my breaking point and decided to see what neuromuscular dentistry had to offer. I had tried everything else. At my first consultation with Dr. Ladesic I was embarrassed by all the "yes" answers I had to his questions. Do you have plugged ears? Do you wake with headaches? Do you have sleep apnea? Do you sit with your head forward? I now have an appliance that helps open my jaw. I have been stable now for at least six months. I can't explain the difference this has made in my life. I feel like a new person, literally. I would urge anyone contemplating treatment by a neuromuscular dentist to stop waiting and make the appointment today.

It has saved my life.

Roxanne

Headaches may be helped by neuromuscular dental evaluation and treatment. Let us help treat your headache.

We want to save your life.

Call us today to learn more!

• Family Dentistry • Cosmetic and Neuromuscular Dentistry which includes treatment of TMJ, Headache, Migraines and Jaw/Neck Pain • Snoring and Sleep Apnea Treatment



Dr. Kevin T. Ladesic



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