

Master Gardener Holly Boettcher

Appleton

April 2026

Monthly

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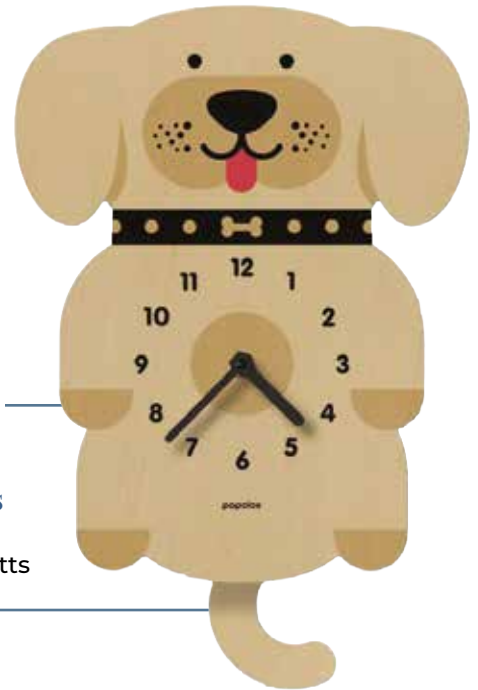
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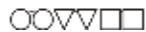


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FROM
THE
EDITOR

Ahhh, SPRING!

IT'S HERE AT LAST (OR SO WE HOPE) — flowers are blooming, songbirds have returned, and sunlight lingers longer than ever. It's time to refresh and get back to the activities that make Wisconsin's warmer weather worth the wait.

In *VOICE*, we uncover fascinating details from Appleton's history as Tim profiles Gwen Sargeant, president of the Appleton Historical Society. Angela shares 10 ways to have fun while staying active, and Josh explains how artificial intelligence can be useful for small businesses.

We're bidding farewell to winter, and Tim helps with 25 can't-miss spring activities in *TODAY*. Jackie focuses on macro floral photographer Dallas Denoo, and we get inspiration for spring fashion, music, books, movies, and local events.

In *TASTE*, Jenni lands at The Nest in Greenville — a new gathering place for coffee and community. Chef Carly has a nutty take on cutout cookies, and Steve highlights how the Wisconsin Brewers Guild champions craft breweries.

It's garden season, and Holly shares expert tips for getting those vegetables started in *MORE*. Plus, we've got rustic-modern design inspiration from Joel, insights into pet behavior from Dr. Ziegler, and a reflection on the changing roles of Tyler's family garage.

Enjoy the season!

Sarah Peterson
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Jackie Sanders

Jackie is the owner of Little Known Art House, an artist, photographer, and educator. She lives in Appleton with her husband, young daughter, and their two cats. She loves walking, finding new coffee shops, exploring, and reading.



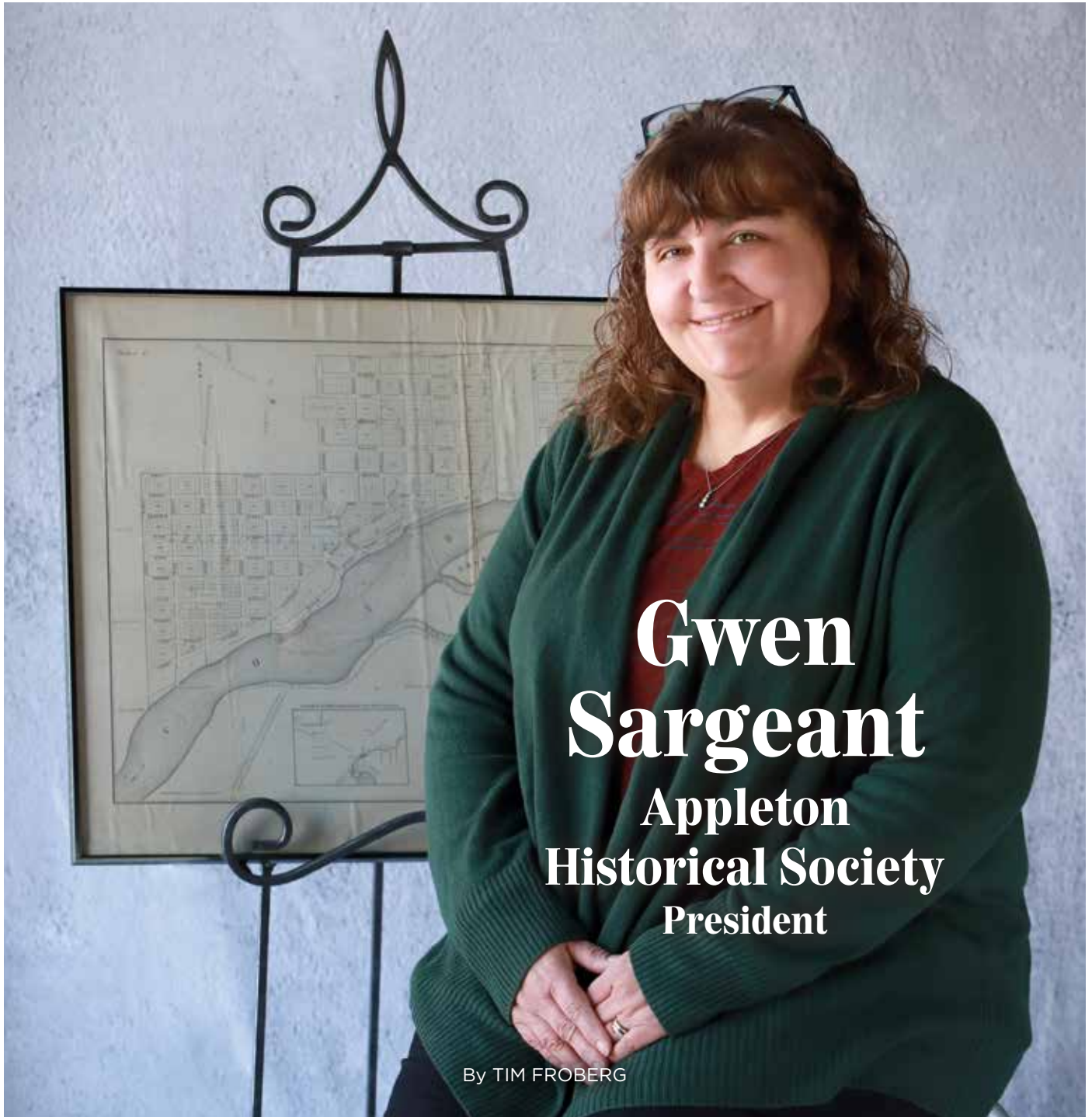
Dr. Jim Ziegler

Dr. Jim Ziegler has been a veterinarian for close to four decades. He loves working with animal shelters and rescue groups. He currently works part-time at the Fox Valley Humane Association and the Humane Society of Waupaca County, along with doing some independent work helping pets and pet owners in need.



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**Gwen
Sargeant**
Appleton
Historical Society
President

By TIM FROBERG

Once Upon a Time

SARGEANT ENJOYS LOOKING BACK AT APPLETON'S HISTORY

By TIM FROBERG



Clocks move forward, chewing up precious time with every passing second.

Historians see time differently. They enjoy pushing the clock back and examining people, events, and developments from earlier eras.

Life in the past lane suits Gwen Sargeant just fine. She is the president of the Appleton Historical Society and has been a board member since it was formed in 2011.

Sargeant works diligently to promote and preserve the city's history. She oversees daily operations, exhibits, artifacts, archives, and presentations of the Appleton History Museum, which is run by the Appleton Historical Society.

Sargeant also manages the historical society's social media account, leads local history tours, and helped put together a 2015 book titled *Images of America: Appleton*. The book contains rare vintage photos along with detailed stories and anecdotes about the history of Appleton.

Sargeant, who co-owns Appleton Bicycle Shop with her husband, Joe, does her historical work for free. The Appleton Historical Society is an all-volunteer organization.

"History is a passion of mine," said Sargeant, an Appleton native. "I enjoy all the different stories people bring to the table. Every time we have an event, someone will walk up with a picture, a story, or an artifact that is incredibly interesting. I always learn something new."

Surprisingly, history wasn't on Sargeant's radar when she attended Lawrence University. She graduated from the school in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in science.

"My degree is actually completely opposite of history," said Sargeant with a laugh. "I was a science kid, taking classes in biology, physics, and organic chemistry."

Still, Sargeant was intrigued by history and developed an interest in genealogy, the study and tracing of family lineages.

"What has always grabbed me about history is the depth of different people, families, and businesses that helped build communities," she said. "There are lots of smaller stories that haven't been told. I love telling those smaller stories about people who had a small but important part in Appleton's history."



Ribbon cutting with Mayor Jake Woodford at the Appleton History Museum.



Amos Lawrence, founder of Lawrence University.



Sarah Elizabeth Appleton Lawrence, wife of Amos Lawrence.

Appleton's Origin

Sargeant finds Appleton's history to be particularly intriguing — especially with its direct connection to Lawrence University. She has done considerable research on topics such as Appleton street names, businesses, and early settlers.

According to Sargeant, Appleton was originally named after Sarah Elizabeth Appleton Lawrence. She was the wife of Amos Lawrence, the Boston merchant and abolitionist who founded Lawrence University (then known as Lawrence Institute) in 1847.

At that time, the local area was made up of three unincorporated villages: Appleton, Lawesburg (where much of Lawrence University is currently located), and Grand Chute (where the courthouse stands). The three merged into a single incorporated village in 1853, and it became a city in 1857.

Although one of the three villages was already known as Appleton, it became the town's official name in hopes of securing a substantial donation from Samuel Appleton, a prominent New England philanthropist and a cousin of Sarah Elizabeth Appleton Lawrence. Samuel Appleton made a \$10,000 donation toward the construction of the Lawrence library, and the town was named in his honor.



Appleton College Avenue and Morrison Street looking east.

"One of my favorite parts of Appleton history is the way that Lawrence University is intertwined with Appleton's history," said Sargeant. "Lawrence was established in 1847, so that was sort of the beginning of the timeline of Appleton."

"The very first spots in the city were College Avenue, along with Durkee, Lawrence, and Morrison streets. They were the original corners. The first Lawrence building was in the middle, where the YMCA is."

Exploring Houdini and Dafoe

Sargeant has studied many of the famous names and celebrities who have lived in Appleton, including legendary magician Harry Houdini and Oscar-winning actor Willem Dafoe.

"What I find really interesting about Houdini is that he felt a connection to Appleton despite only being here a few years," Sargeant said. "I think that's true of a lot of people that come to Appleton."

"I also find it interesting that he did one of his famous tricks off the Lawe Street Bridge after establishing his career and returning to Appleton. There is a little plaque down on the trail right next to the bridge that mentions that."



Legendary magician, Harry Houdini.



Actor Willem Dafoe

Dafoe is an Appleton native who attended Appleton East High School.

"People who knew him called him Billy 'Day-foe,' which is how they pronounced it at the time," Sargeant said. "He was in a lot of school plays and musicals. A lot of times at the museum, we'll get donations of (musical or theatrical) programs from those years, and it's fun paging through them and seeing his name. It will say, Billy Dafoe. He didn't go by Willem at that time."

Kate Blood's Urban Legend

Another famous Appleton name that Sargeant has studied is Kate Blood, who has been a bit of an urban legend for years. Blood was falsely rumored to be a witch and axe murderer in the 1800s who killed her husband and children. Legend has it that blood has been known to ooze from her tombstone at Appleton's Riverside Cemetery, making her grave a popular site for visitors, especially around Halloween.

"Her name gets mentioned in a negative way, but there's no truth to any of that," Sargeant said. "All that talk of her being an axe murderer and everything, it's a myth. A lot of it comes from the fact that her tombstone says Blood on it. Well, that

was her maiden name. The myth that her tombstone bleeds – that could be more related to something like a post on her grave having rust on it.”

Sargeant’s findings run completely opposite to the chilling urban legend stories about Blood. Sargeant says that Kate Blood was the daughter of one of Appleton’s earliest pioneers, Capt. Henry Blood. She lost a child due to illness and died in 1874 of tuberculosis at the young age of 23.

“She was by all accounts, one of the fairest maidens — as they used to say back then — of Appleton,” Sargeant said. “She was a kind, wonderful woman. Her story is tragic, but none of the myths and legends which put her in a negative light are true.

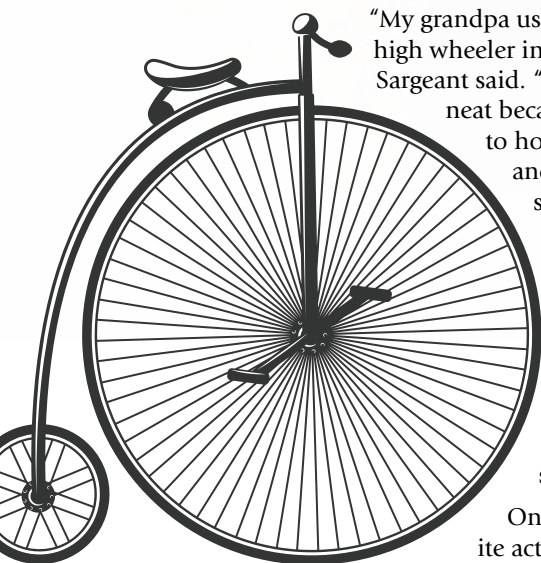
“She had a daughter who went on to write some books that are still used today. So she actually has kind of a neat legacy in her family.”



Riverside Cemetery Walk with Gwen and Joe Sargeant.

Biking Through History

Even as a business owner, Sargeant finds herself dealing with history. She owns the oldest bike shop in the city. Clarence Hinzman, Gwen’s grandfather, opened Appleton Bicycle Shop in 1939, and it has remained in the family for the past 87 years. Her father, Paul, has been an owner.



“My grandpa used to ride this big high wheeler in Appleton parades,” Sargeant said. “I find that pretty neat because it’s not so easy to hop on one of those and ride it. Our bike shop has a history of its own. People come in and tell me stories about the bike they bought here in the 1970s or how they used to work here in the sixties. It’s all so fascinating.”

One of Sargeant’s favorite activities combines her

two passions. She leads a biannual moonlight bicycle history tour for the Appleton Historical Society. It is a free event, and the next one is scheduled for May 14 at 6 p.m., with riders meeting at the Appleton History Museum.

Sargeant and other historical society volunteers are enjoying the museum’s new location, which opened in 2024 and offers almost three times as much space as the former Durkee Street site. Sargeant played a key role in a \$1.5 million capital campaign to purchase and renovate the museum.

The Appleton History Museum features both permanent and rotating exhibits. The permanent exhibits include the Atlas Paper Mill, a former Kimberly-Clark paper production site that ran from 1878-1999; the Courtney Woolen Mill, once a staple for producing wool and polyester batting for quilts and blankets, which closed in 2024 after an amazing 144-year run; the Gloudemans-Gage Lamson Preferred Cable Cash Carrier, an overhead cable-carrier device that once allowed clerks to transport sales slips and money to storage in small metal boxes and was considered cutting-edge retail technology in the 1930s; the David L. and Rita E. Nelson Map Gallery; and the Claudine and Jim Happel Fireside Library.



Courtney Woolen Mill carding machine.

The current rotating exhibits include Made in Appleton, which showcases the city’s industrial and manufacturing heritage; the Mary Beth Nienhaus Sports History Gallery, which is currently focusing on football and examines Appleton gridiron greats such as former NFL star and Super Bowl winner Rocky Bleier; Presto Products; Air Wisconsin; Trolleys; the Dave Kalz photo collections; and Reverence: The History of the Makaroff School of Ballet.

“We have a lot of interesting things to see and do,” said Sargeant. “I love the cable cash carrier and watching it zip across the museum. The map room is really a delight because it allows you to see how the city developed in size over the years.

“My favorite part is the Claudine and Jim Happel Fireside Library. It has so many different resources, directories, history books, and personal stories.”

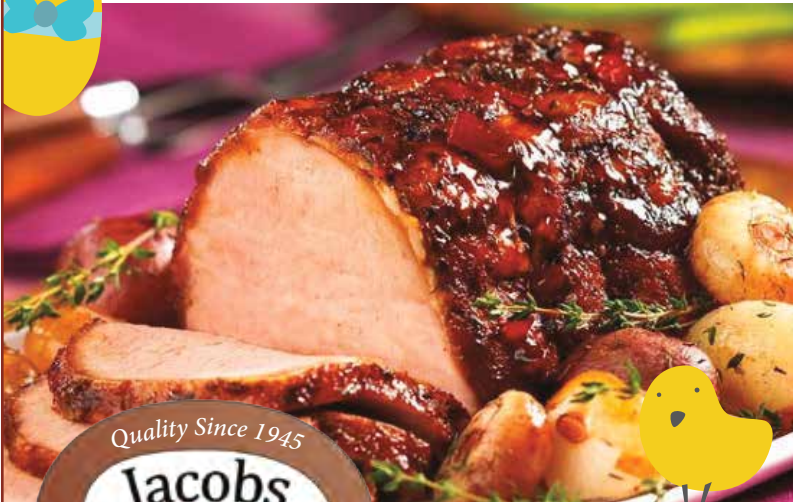
When she’s not dealing with her business or historical matters, Sargeant enjoys family time with Joe and their children: Joey, 22; Helen, 21; and Auggie, 19.



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2007

9,753 children and adults searched for 501,000 eggs on **April 1, 2007**, at the largest Easter egg hunt ever, held at Cypress Gardens Adventure Park in Winter Haven, Fla.



Approximately **16 billion** jelly beans are produced each year in the U.S. around Easter.

After striking an iceberg, the **RMS Titanic sank in the North Atlantic Ocean** during the early hours of April 15, 1912, resulting in the deaths of more than 1,500 people.



April 14 is National Gardening Day, encouraging gardeners of all levels to get outside, begin planting, learn new skills, and enjoy the physical and mental health benefits of gardening. **#NationalGardeningDay**



The world's largest chocolate bunny was created in Brazil in 2017, weighing 9,359.7 pounds and standing nearly 15 feet tall.



The word "April" is believed to originate from the Latin verb "aperire," meaning "to open," which signifies the budding of branches and flowers.



"Spring Fever" isn't just a figure of speech — scientists suggest that increased sunlight boosts serotonin and dopamine, leading to greater energy, creativity, and happiness.

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SCAN ME



AI AND AUTOMATION: PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

By JOSH KRUEGER



Artificial intelligence used to sound like something reserved for big companies with big budgets. Today, it's becoming one of the most practical, affordable ways for local businesses to save time, reduce errors, and serve customers better. Here are tools worth exploring in 2026, no massive tech department required.

Where AI Adds Immediate Value and Where It Doesn't

AI-powered scheduling, bookkeeping, and customer support tools can automate repetitive tasks and free up your team for higher-value work. For example, automated bookkeeping platforms categorize expenses and flag unusual activity, while AI chat tools handle FAQs and route inquiries. However, not every process benefits from automation. Tasks requiring deep expertise, nuanced judgment, or personal relationships may still be best handled by people.

Step-by-Step Adoption Roadmap

Not sure where to start? Try this simple roadmap:

1. Pilot: Choose one process that causes

the biggest bottleneck, whether that's scheduling, inventory, or bookkeeping, and test a trusted tool.

2. Measure: Track results using clear key performance indicators (KPIs) such as hours saved, error rates, customer response times, etc.

3. Scale: Expand automation to other areas once you see positive results.

Data Privacy and Vendor Due Diligence

Before buying any AI solution, ask vendors about their data privacy practices. Key questions include: How is your data stored and protected? Who has access? What happens if you switch providers? Make sure your vendor is transparent and compliant with relevant regulations.

Banking Integrations

Many community banks now offer integrations for cash flow forecasting and fraud monitoring, powered by AI. These tools can help you predict cash gaps, spot suspicious transactions, and keep your finances secure, all within your existing banking relationship.

KPIs to Track

As you adopt automation, monitor KPIs:

- Hours saved
- Error rates
- Customer response times

Small wins matter. When you bring in new technology, pair it with people who know your business well. That's how you get the most value. The real advantage comes when teams under-

stand not only the tools, but also your unique goals and challenges. Encouraging collaboration between technology and your staff makes it easier to spot opportunities, prevent issues before they grow, and keep improvements on track.

Stay proactive. Keep your team in the loop. Review your processes regularly and ask for feedback. That way, your automation will fit your goals and still keep things personal for your customers. Remember, open communication



helps everyone feel invested in the outcome, and adapting your approach along the way ensures your business stays resilient. With the right mix of technology, people, and process, you'll position yourself for lasting success while continuing to deliver a high-touch experience your customers value.

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



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10 WAYS TO *Be Healthy While Having Fun*

By ANGELA HALDERSON

Staying healthy doesn't have to feel like a chore. Whether you're on your own, with friends, or with family, there are plenty of engaging ways to move and play around the Fox Valley. Many people think of exercise as something that requires intense workouts or long hours at the gym, but healthy activity can also come from simple, enjoyable experiences. Exploring nature, trying something new, or spending time with others can all contribute to better physical and mental well-being. Here are 10 ideas to inspire your next healthy adventure.

1

Hiking Local Trails

The Fox Valley offers beautiful trails perfect for hiking at all levels. From the scenic **Fox River Trail** (dnr.wisconsin.gov), to the historic **Fox Trot Trail** (parks.appletonwi.gov), to the wooded paths at **Gordon Bubolz Nature Preserve** (bubolzpreserve.org), hiking provides excellent cardiovascular exercise while letting you soak in nature. Bring a friend or your family for added motivation along the way.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

Spending time outdoors while exercising provides benefits beyond physical fitness. Studies show that outdoor activity can reduce stress, improve mood, increase vitamin D, and help improve focus and mental clarity.

Even a 20–30 minute walk in a park or along a trail can have noticeable effects on energy and well-being.





Kayaking or Paddleboarding

The Fox River and surrounding lakes are ideal for kayaking or paddleboarding. These activities provide a full-body workout, engaging your core, arms, and legs while also offering a calming, meditative experience. Calm waters make it accessible for beginners, and exploring small coves or river bends adds a touch of adventure. Kayak rentals and tours are available at **Fox River Kayaking Company**. (foxriverkayakingcompany.com)



Indoor Rock Climbing

Rainy day? Indoor rock climbing is the perfect solution. Facilities like **Odyssey Climbing + Fitness** offer walls for all skill levels. Climbing strengthens muscles, improves coordination, and offers a great mental challenge, keeping your body and brain engaged at the same time. Visit odysseyclimbing.com to plan your climbing adventure.



Dance Classes

Dancing is a fantastic way to stay active while having fun. **Valley Dance Studio** (valleysocial.com) and the **Crystal Ballroom** (thecrystalwisconsin.com) offer a range of classes, from salsa to ballroom. Dance improves cardiovascular health, balance, and coordination, and it's a wonderful way to socialize and express yourself creatively. Check out their websites for dance class schedules.



Frisbee Golf

Frisbee golf, or disc golf, is a low-impact activity that combines walking with skill-based fun. With courses such as those at **Plamann Park in Appleton**, **O’Hauser Park in Neenah**, and **Grignon Park in Kaukauna**, you can enjoy a few hours outside, walking several miles while aiming for targets — all without feeling like a structured workout.

HOW MUCH EXERCISE DO ADULTS NEED?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **most adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week.** That can include activities such as brisk walking, biking, or dancing. Adding muscle-strengthening activities twice a week — like climbing, yoga, or resistance training — can provide additional health benefits.



Fitness in the Park

Tai chi is a gentle, flowing movement that promotes balance, flexibility, and mindfulness. Many parks in the Appleton area host tai chi, yoga, or mindfulness classes, allowing you to connect with your body and the outdoors. It’s particularly suitable for all ages and fitness levels, and practicing in nature adds extra mental health benefits. Visit parks.appletonwi.gov or ymcafoxcities.org for class information.



Geocaching Walks

Turn a walk into a treasure hunt with geocaching. Use your smartphone to explore parks and neighborhoods while searching for hidden caches. This encourages curiosity and exploration for all ages. Visit [Geocaching.com](https://www.geocaching.com) to learn the basics and download the **Geocaching app** to locate caches hidden around the Fox Valley.



Obstacle Courses

Obstacle courses, whether at local gyms or outdoor events, challenge your strength, agility, and endurance. They're playful, social, and perfect for both solo workouts and group bonding. Local trampoline parks such as **Urban Air** ([urbanair.com](https://www.urbanair.com)) offer indoor obstacles, and **USA Ninja Challenge** ([ninjaappletonwi.com](https://www.ninjaappletonwi.com)) in Appleton offers ninja obstacle classes and camps for kids. Check local listings for obstacle races and events.



MAKE EXERCISE A SOCIAL ACTIVITY

Working out with friends or family can help people stay motivated and consistent. Group activities like hiking, dance classes, or disc golf often feel more enjoyable and less like a chore. Social exercise also adds accountability — when others are expecting you to join them, you're more likely to show up and stay active.

Dog Yoga

For dog owners, doga (dog yoga) combines gentle stretching with time spent with your pet. It's relaxing, fun, and strengthens the bond between you and your furry friend while keeping both of you active. Check local listings for classes or search "dog yoga class" on YouTube for how-to videos.



STAY SAFE WHILE BEING ACTIVE

Before starting any new activity, take a few simple precautions. Wear proper footwear, stay hydrated, and start slowly if you're new to exercise. For outdoor activities, check the weather and use sunscreen when needed. Listening to your body and taking breaks can help prevent injuries and keep activities fun and sustainable.



Cooking a New Recipe Together

Health isn't just physical — it also includes nutrition. Trying a new healthy recipe with family or friends can be a fun, interactive way to improve your diet. Cooking together encourages experimentation with vegetables, lean proteins, and wholesome grains while sharing quality time. Find recipes by looking through cookbooks together or by searching "healthy recipes" online.

By mixing movement, outdoor exploration, creativity, and social interaction, these ten activities help you stay healthy without feeling like exercise is a chore. Whether it's hiking the Fox River Trail, mastering a new dance step, or discovering hidden geocaches, fun and wellness can go hand in hand in Appleton, Kimberly, and the surrounding area.

Angela Halderson is the owner of Strong Meridian, a natural healthcare practice focusing on the root cause of disease. She is a dietitian trained in functional medicine, energy medicine, homeopathy, and herbalism.



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April 1 - 13

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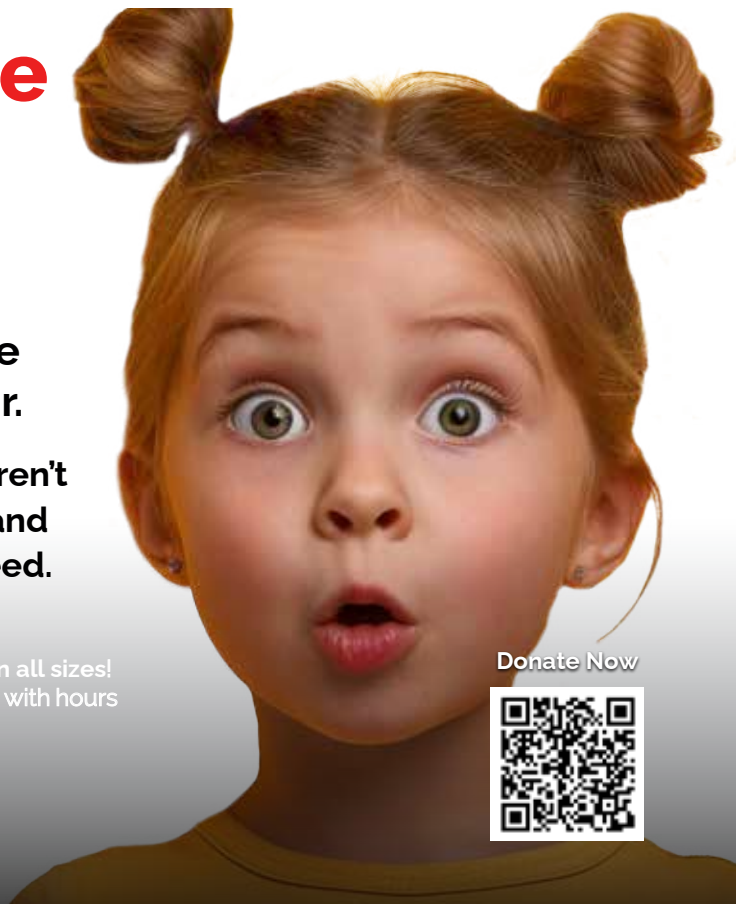


COMMUNITY CLOTHES CLOSET

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THE LIBRARY'S LONG GAME

A New Kind of Noise

By NATASHA WINKLER



WE used to go to the library to be quiet and read in solitude. In 2026, we've realized it's actually the best place in town to be heard.

If you haven't stepped inside the new Appleton Public Library lately, you should. As the April sun hits the glass on Oneida Street, the building doesn't feel like a warehouse for books. The "shushing" culture is gone. There is a low hum coming from the digital creation studios, friendly chatter over games in the designated teen area, and, most importantly, the sound of neighbors collaborating.

When this space reopened last year, it was a \$40 million bet on its ripple effect. The idea was simple: If you give a community a world-class "living room," they'll start doing world-class things. One "Wisconsin Library of the Year" award later, it's clear that the bet is paying off.

THE COMMUNITY WAVE

The library has become a primary hub for community resources, empowering its members with the tools needed to thrive. The 'State of Literacy' report was revealed this March in the library's own meeting rooms, reiterating the strong need for a partnership with Fox Valley Literacy. When a resident attends a literacy class, they aren't just learning nouns and verbs; they are building a community network. That person gains the confidence to apply for a local job, start a business, or simply strike up a conversation with a neighbor. One workshop creates one connection, which ultimately fortifies the entire Fox Valley.

THE ECONOMIC ECHO

By offering high-tech tools like podcast studios and business-building events and programs, the library has effectively lowered the barrier to entry for local entrepreneurs. "Microbusinesses" are sprouting up, fueled by residents who prototype products in the collaboration rooms. Whether it's the 'Upskill-A-Thon' or help with income taxes, the library supercharges the economy by empowering individuals.

As the Fox River finally shakes off the last of its ice, the library represents a different kind of renewal. It's a place where social barriers don't exist. You'll see a CEO in a suit sharing a table with a senior waiting to attend an Advance Care Planning workshop, or a student researching Appleton High School football history next to a family checking out the Outagamie County Nutrition Program.

The library didn't just give us more shelves; it gave us more ways to find each other. In 2026, that is the most powerful ripple of all — a community that supports growth, innovation, and connection.

Ready for
Spring?



Turn those Springtime
smiles into forever
memories.



DD | **DebbieDaanen**
PHOTOGRAPHY

Image Makers: Debbie Daanen & Ashley Schmit

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UP FRONT

KATIE BRUCKS

EQUINE INSTRUCTOR,
WISCONSIN HORSE-
PERSON OF THE YEAR

Katie Brucks wasn't horsing around when she made a bold decision to pursue a career in the equine industry.

Brucks opened Lucky Stables LLC in 2007 and hasn't looked back. Lucky Stables is a private horse riding school where Brucks offers year-round lessons and instruction for people of all ages and skill levels.

Brucks has 17 horses in her stable, located on a 13-acre farm off Woodenshoe Road in the Neenah area. Brucks has been riding horses since the age of 10 and holds a bachelor's degree in equine industries management from the University of Minnesota-Crookston.

She was also a standout rider on the women's equestrian team at UM-Crookston and served as the team's coach in her final year. Brucks is currently the equestrian coach at Ripon College.

Brucks was named the 2026 Wisconsin Horseperson of the Year, an honor presented by the Wisconsin Horse Council in recognition of her contributions to the state's equine community.

When she's not tending to her equine duties, Brucks enjoys spending time with her husband, Luke, and cheering on her sons, Jack and Willy. Jack, 16, is an early Neenah High School graduate and a professional motorcycle rider. Willy is a skilled wrestler and football player at Neenah High School.

By Tim Froberg
Photo by Ashley Schmit
Debbie Daanen Photography

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN HORSES?

"I didn't have pets growing up — not even a dog. But I wanted to take horseback riding lessons. My parents couldn't afford a horse, nor did they believe in just giving me one. So I started taking lessons from Pat Heeg at Prairie View Farm in Greenville. I was that city kid who was in the barn and would ride whenever I could. If there was a horse that needed to be ridden, I'd ride it — even if it was nasty. It taught me grit and how to be a great horseman. It made me earn the privilege of riding these horses."

WHAT'S IT LIKE WORKING WITH HORSES?

"Horses can mirror human emotions. If you walk in nervous or anxious, they're going to be like, 'Hey, what's your problem?' And they're going to be nervous and irritable to the point where they could potentially step on you or kick you. You have to learn to regulate your emotions, your breathing, your heart rate, and check your baggage at the door. If you forget to do that, the horse will remind you to bring it down a notch."

WHAT'S IT LIKE MAKING A LIVING AT SOMETHING YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT?

"There were certainly hard times. My husband and I bought the farm when I was 22, and we had to eat rice and beans in the beginning. We had two babies, and there were months when we couldn't afford to buy diapers. But we rode it out and pushed through. Things have grown, and I'm seeing some of my goals come to fruition. I literally get to live my passion every day. It's beautiful."

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE ALL-TIME HORSE?

"Yes. My favorite horse is Lola. She's still alive today at 22. She was my college graduation gift from my parents (Pete and Cindy Weyenberg). They gave me a gift of \$1,200 and said, 'Go do something for you.' I went out and bought my first horse."



BREAKFAST! LUNCH! DINNER!

Appleton

May 2026 Monthly

Best TAKE OUT!

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Best TAKE OUT!

Appleton Monthly is officially featuring the BEST TAKE OUT in Appleton, the Fox Cities, and surrounding areas in this special May issue. We appreciate the ease, convenience, and service that makes food delivery of our favorite eats possible. Dine in or TAKE OUT is always on the menu. We invite all eateries to deliver your message in this special TAKE OUT issue.

Mother's Day and Cinco de Mayo are also special days for the local business community!

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Plan now to reserve your ad in Appleton Monthly's May Issue by contacting Jon Croce at 920.707.0013 or email jcroce@appletonmonthly.com.

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GOOD STUFF

By SARAH PETERSON

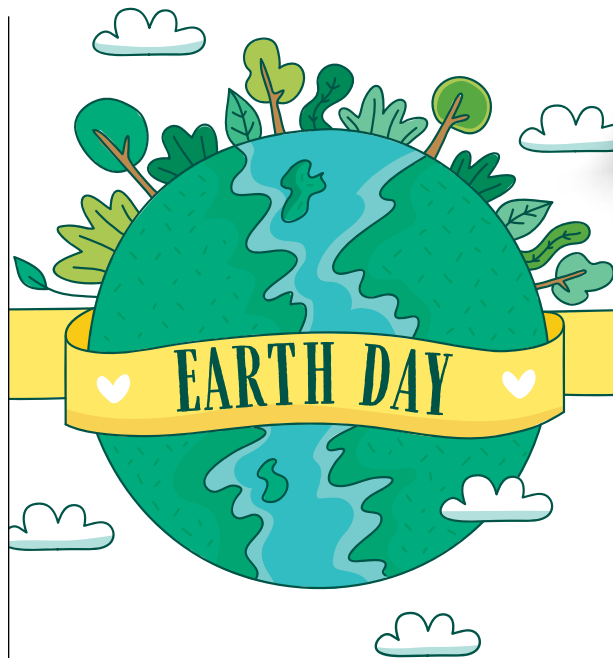


SHOP HEALTHY

FOX VALLEY ARTISAN MARKET

Fox Valley Artisan Market is a new, locally owned marketplace in downtown Appleton, featuring handmade, all-natural, and holistic goods from area artisans and small businesses. Founded by a holistic health practitioner, the market's mission is to nurture wellness and sustainability through toxin-free products, including artisan foods, natural body care, eco-friendly home goods, and unique gifts. Reduce waste at their refill station by bringing your own containers for essentials like soaps and cleaners or enjoy baked goods from local "pop-up bakers." Experience how shopping locally and naturally can be affordable, and foster community.

Find Fox Valley Artisan Market on Facebook.com



HONOR THE PLANET

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION: WELLBEING SATURDAY

People of all ages can celebrate Earth Day 2026 at 1000 Islands Environmental Center. Reconnect with the living world through gentle movement during Grounded and Resilient – Moving Meditation in Nature with Becky McMorow. Take a self-guided hike, then stop in the Nature Center to sign up to win prizes. Track your steps and earn additional entries. Create a recycled Earth Day craft, take your photo in front of the Earth Day backdrop, and enjoy the "fruits" of the earth with a healthy snack. April 18, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

kaukauna.gov/event/earth-day-wellbeing-saturday



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EMERY AND PEARL PROVISIONS

Emery & Pearl Provisions, an urban market and deli in downtown Appleton, offers artisan and local foods, sandwiches, salads, soups, and freshly prepared entrées and sides, making mealtimes easy and enjoyable for gatherings or personal indulgence.

emeryandpearlprovisions.com

SIP & STRENGTHEN

SERENI-TEA

Enjoy a serene hour of yoga-pilates with a warm cup of tea. Help increase flexibility, strength, mobility, and peaceful wellbeing. Bring your own yoga mat. Meets the first and third Thursdays of each month from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at The Kaukauna Public Library.

kaukaunalibrary.org/event



SHOP A MARKET

PRODUCE WITH PURPOSE

Grab a hot coffee or fresh cold-pressed juice while discovering local vendors and seasonal goods in a warm community atmosphere at the Produce with Purpose Pop Up Market. Saturdays through spring from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at Produce with Purpose Farm in Kaukauna.

producewithpurpose.com

TODAY

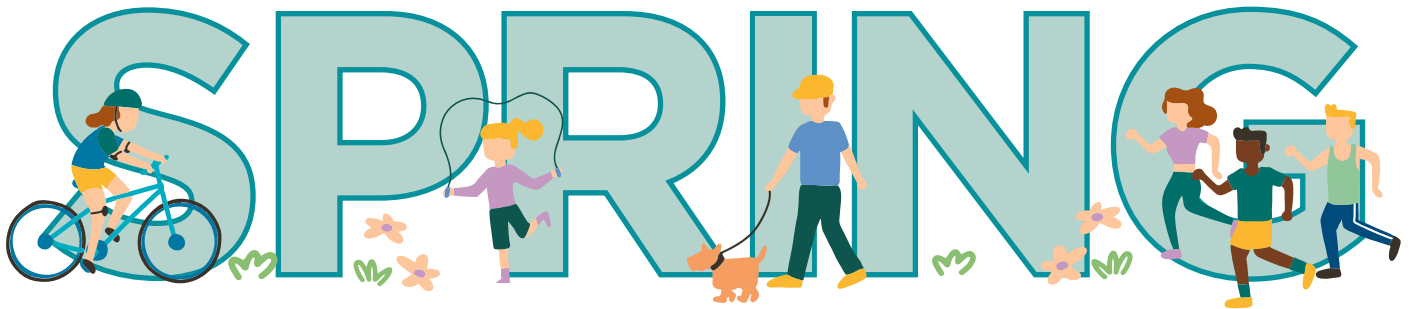
ARTS & CULTURE 34 | STYLE & FASHION 40 | MOVIES 46 | SPORTS PAGE 50



All Things Spring

By TIM FROBERG

25 FUN THINGS TO DO THIS



Spring Brings Relief to Weary Wisconsinites

By TIM FROBERG

The time has come to wave a weary farewell to winter and welcome the long-awaited arrival of spring.

That's easy to do. A Wisconsin winter is endured — not beloved. It's like the Chicago Bears invading Lambeau Field for a four-month stay.

Winter wears us down with constant snow, cold weather, and a lack of sunlight. It is the least popular of Wisconsin's four seasons by a wide margin. Most Cheeseheads celebrate winter's exit as if it were the end of a ban on beer, brats, and cheese.

Spring is a different matter. People yearn for this transformational season, especially on days when their car doesn't start or the plow driver has just dumped a mountain of snow into the driveway.

Spring is a time of rebirth, renewal, and regeneration. Nothing grows during the winter, except snowbanks, but everything good returns in the spring. Buds are back on trees, birds are chirping, grass is growing, and flowers are blossoming. As the great Robin Williams once said: "Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'"

Spring is also a time of optimism, energy, and opportunity. It allows us to reset mentally following a long Wisconsin winter that can be bleak and depressing due to a lack of daylight and limited freedom to pursue normal outdoor activities blocked by the

formidable tag team of Jack Frost and Old Man Winter.

The calendar has slowly flipped from December to April, so it's time to dive into spring. I'll even help. Here's a list of 25 fun things to do during spring. I'm not going to include spring cleaning, lawn mower maintenance, or garage cleaning because they are not fun by any definition.

Happy spring, *Appleton Monthly* readers. You survived another Wisconsin winter, so enjoy the warmer temps and fresh opportunities that spring provides.



DO THE WALK OF LIFE: Snow, ice, and shorter daylight hours put the kibosh on valuable cardio exercise such as walking, hiking, and running. But there is no longer an excuse to blow off that evening stroll during the spring months. The Fox Cities are loaded with scenic walking trails, and you don't need to be an athlete or fitness freak to navigate them. Dig those sneakers out of the closet and put them to work. Never has anything so simple been so beneficial to your heart. Make it a family walk. Kids and dogs absolutely need exercise.



RUN FOR FUN: Treadmills and other indoor exercise equipment are excellent ways to stay in shape. But running outdoors gets you out of the house, connects you to nature, and allows you to get reacquainted with your neighborhood. Stay consistent and set modest goals because running is much harder on the joints than walking.



HOP ON A BIKE: Cycling is an excellent alternative to running. It provides a terrific cardio workout, yet is easier on the body and helps you reach your destination much faster. Get your tires, brakes, and chain checked at a local bike shop such as Appleton Bicycle Shop, Wheel & Sprocket, or

Chain Reaction Cyclery before hitting the trails. And don't even think about riding without wearing a helmet. Electric bikes are very handy and serve many purposes. But remember, they're not helping you get the exercise you might need.



4

TAKE IN A TIMBER RATTLERS GAME: The Rattlers offer professional baseball at a bargain price and work hard to provide an entertaining evening for the entire family. They are the Class High A affiliate of the Milwaukee Brewers — three notches below the majors — and are in the business of developing tomorrow's Brewers stars. There is a long list of MLB players who have spent time in Grand Chute or Appleton, ranging from big names like Alex Rodriguez and David Ortiz to current Brewers Jackson Chourio and Jacob "The Miz" Misiorowski.

The Timber Rattlers' home opener is April 2 against the Beloit Sky Carp. They play a 66-game home schedule filled with bargain and theme nights such as Bang for Your Buck (\$2 hot dogs and discounted drinks on selected Tuesdays), Harry Potter Night (May 30), Star Wars Night (June 13), and Margaritaville Night (July 11).



5

BACK THE BREW CREW: Major League Baseball is just 90 minutes away at American Family Field, and the Milwaukee Brewers have consistently cranked out quality teams in recent years. Sure, tickets, food, and drinks are expensive, but it's an opportunity to see the best baseball players on the planet — cats like Paul Skenes, Aaron Judge, Tarik Skubal, Shohei Ohtani,

Juan Soto, Pete Crow-Armstrong, and Cal Raleigh. Planning for a Brewers game is as easy as it gets, thanks to Milwaukee's retractable roof, which takes rainouts and cold-weather games out of the equation. Get tickets now for the Brewers' May 26-28 home series against the world champion Los Angeles Dodgers.



6

GET A GARDEN GAME PLAN: Gardening can be a relaxing and rewarding hobby, allowing us to nurture and grow plants from seed to harvest. Wisconsin's April weather is wildly unpredictable, with snowstorms still a possibility. But barring major snowfall, it's a good month to start planting cool-season crops like spinach, lettuce, carrots, peas, and radishes. Warm-weather crops such as tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, basil, and squash should be planted after the final frost, typically in mid-May. I'm not a gardening expert, but *Appleton Monthly's* own Holly Boettcher is. Read her spring gardening suggestions on page 59, and her monthly "In the Garden" columns.



7

VISIT A LOCAL FARM: Many public farms like Mulberry Lane in Hilbert reopen to the public in May and are great places to take the entire family for a day's interaction with cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, and donkeys.



8

HIT THE LINKS: The Fox Cities are loaded with quality public golf courses such as Reid, Chaska, Winagamie, and North Shore and most open in mid-April. Golf is a lifetime sport that can be played well into the senior years and offers good, low-impact physical activity. If you're a beginner, take lessons and be patient because this is a tough game to master. Try not to lose your cool on the links like Happy Gilmore.



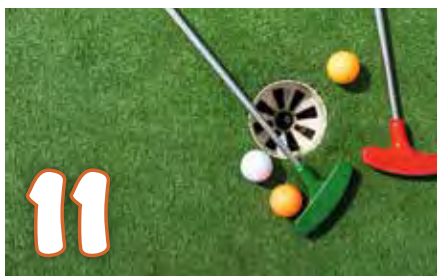
9

DO THE BIRD: One of my favorite parts of a Wisconsin spring is the return of migratory birds. The sight and sounds of these beautiful winged animals are a sure sign that spring has arrived. You don't have to be a full-blown birder to enjoy their vibrant colors and gentle chirping. Put up a bird feeder to help them with their daily meals. Take a ride to southeastern Wisconsin and check out Horicon Marsh, one of the premier birding destinations in the country, with more than 300 species of birds.



10

HIT THE TENNIS OR PICKLEBALL COURT: Tennis is another lifetime sport that provides excellent cardio, and it's incredibly inexpensive once you purchase a racket. Pickleball is one of the world's fastest-growing sports and provides a solid workout that is gentle on the body.



11

PLAY MINI GOLF: This is golf's little brother, and it's far easier and less frustrating to learn than the real game. Hit Badger State Park, Funset Boulevard, On the Fringe, or Tommy's Mini Golf & Arcade for some great family fun.



12

SHOOT SOME HOOPS: If you don't have a basketball hoop in your driveway, visit a sporting goods store and get one. It's great family fun, giving the kids fresh air and exercise. But shooting hoops is for big kids, too. I'm still trying to iron out the kinks in my step-back 3-pointer. Mom and Dad should join the fun and see if they can beat the kiddos in a game of H-O-R-S-E.



13

PLAY CORNHOLE. Some call it bags or beanbag toss, but practically everyone who plays this beverage-friendly, easy-to-learn lawn game calls it fun. Invite friends or neighbors over for a brew and some friendly competition.



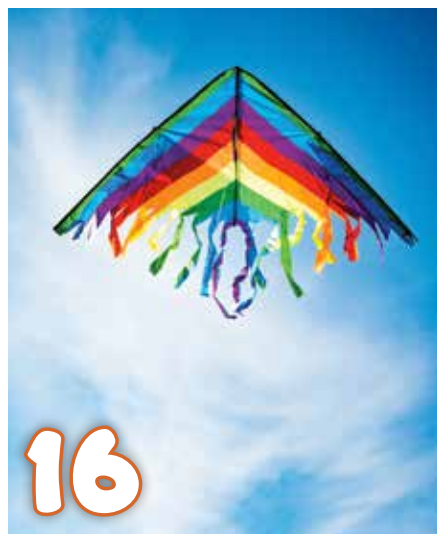
14

TOSS SOME HORSEHOES: This old-school game dates way back to the Revolutionary War. Throwing horse-shoes is fun, relaxing, and you need no athleticism whatsoever to play.



15

TREAT MOM: Don't forget that Mother's Day is May 10. Say thank you to Mom for all her sacrifices by taking her out for brunch, dinner, or a cocktail.



16

FLY A KITE: Wisconsin winds tend to be stronger and more consistent during the spring months, making it a perfect time to launch a kite. This is an enjoyable outdoor activity that pairs you with nature and allows you to experience the thrill of controlling a soaring object.



17

RECONNECT WITH NEIGHBORS: Chances are, you haven't had many conversations with them since October. Spark up your fire pit and invite them over for a beverage.



18

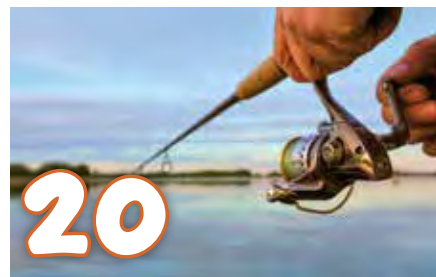
TAKE IN A SHOW AT THE PAC: Yes, it's good to get outside again, but the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center has some terrific shows lined up for the spring months. The Great Gatsby will have an eight-night run from April 14-19. The production is based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1925 novel, which explores the themes of wealth, love, and social class.

Check out SixtiesMania on April 9. It's a musical tribute that performs dead-on renditions of classic rock songs by the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Beach Boys, and others. The World Ballet's top-notch production of Cinderella will have two shows on April 11. Take in The Big Sing on April 25, an uplifting musical production with a patriotic flair and as many as 13 choruses. Amy Grant, the well-known singer-songwriter, performs on May 3.



19

FIRE UP THE GRILL: Some folks barbecue year-round, but most of us turn into grill masters once the snow disappears. Wheeling the grill out of my garage and onto my patio is one of my favorite moments of spring. Celebrate spring's arrival with a grilled ribeye or burger.



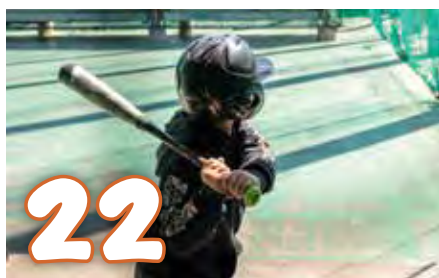
20

GO FISH: Wisconsin is a fishing paradise, loaded with thousands of

lakes and streams. Few things are more relaxing than a day spent with a rod and reel. Whistle the Andy Griffith theme song if you like. The general inland trout season opens April 4 in Wisconsin, while the opener for game fish such as walleye, pike, and bass is May 2.



HAVE A CATCH WITH THE KIDS: Get the mitts out and toss a baseball or softball in your backyard with your son or daughter. It's a terrific parent-child interaction that strengthens bonds and improves hand-eye coordination. If soccer is your game, roll out a ball and kick up a storm.



HIT A BATTING CAGE: Let the kids tune up for Little League season by taking some swings at recreation parks like Badger Sports Park or Play It Again Sports. Feel free to step into the cage and take a few cuts yourself. You may have a little Ohtani in you.



CELEBRATE EARTH DAY: It falls on April 22 and is a global event dedicated to environmental support. Plant a tree or some flowers. Take a walk without your phone or earbuds. Look at the raw beauty of nature and listen to its soothing sounds.



BE A STARGAZER: Spring offers some of the clearest, most unobstructed views of the evening sky, and you don't have to dash inside after two minutes due to cold weather.



SUPPORT HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS: Go to a tennis or golf meet, soccer match, baseball or softball game, or a track meet. Young athletes need your support, especially on lap seven of the 3,200-meter run.

SPRING is a time of rebirth, renewal, and regeneration. Nothing grows during the winter, except snowbanks, but everything good returns in the spring. Buds are back on trees, birds are chirping, grass is growing, and flowers are blossoming. As the great Robin Williams once said: "Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'"

PLAN YOUR SPRING 2026



BUCKET LIST:

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DALLAS DENO

PHOTOGRAPHER

By JACKIE SANDERS



I remember one of the first photographs I saw by Dallas Denoo of a deep green leaf with tiny droplets of water floating on it. The way she creatively uses depth of field in her work draws you into the minute details of leaves and flowers, making you feel that you are in another world entirely.

Dallas is a self-taught photographer originally from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, but moved to Apple-

ton in 1994. She first became interested in photography when she received a camera at the age of 10, and a fondness for looking at the work of photographers and creating her own images grew from there. She was determined to learn all she could about photography. When she moved to Colorado for two years in the late 2000s, she was inspired by the gorgeous vistas and developed a love for landscape photography. She found that slowing down and not hurrying to create a photograph is a skill that has stuck with her. Dallas says, "I never rush into a photo. I look at things at all angles, photograph from all angles, and create with intention."

Learning and then breaking the rules of photography also led her down more creative avenues. She began using Lensbaby lenses, tilt-shift lenses that allow the photographer precise control over the depth of field and focal point of an image.

Her expert use of these lenses is what gives Dallas' macro floral photography such a unique, ethereal quality. She says, "Not everything needs to be in perfect focus because life isn't." The words she uses to describe her work are: details, experimental, and light.

She has lived in Appleton since moving back from Colorado in 2011, focusing on senior and macro floral photography. Dallas has also used the skills she worked hard to learn to teach others through an online webinar for Lensbaby, focusing on creativity and mentoring other photographers.



When I asked Dallas what she wished others understood better about being an artist, she said, "It's not always simple. We love what we do, but it is not just creating. We go through ruts and occasional imposter syndrome. I also wish people understood the value of what we create. The time put into it. The heart we put into it. It is our passion."

A dream project for Dallas would be to photograph strangers on the street with their dogs. She says, "I just love the dog-human connection. It would be such a different project than anything I have done."

Outside of photography, Dallas and her husband are avid game players with over 500 games in their collection.

**Connect with Dallas on Instagram
@dallasreenephotography and at
dallasreenephotography.com.**



Stories That Connect Us:

The 2026-27 Season at your Fox Cities Performing Arts Center



PHOTO: Shane Van Boxtel, Image Studios LLC

Once you've taken your seats at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, there is a special sort of magic that happens. The house lights dim and all goes quiet; a room full of strangers, all held in rapt anticipation of the first note from the stage. In that moment, we aren't just an audience; we are a community, gathered to witness the sights, sounds, and stories that bind us together. This season at the Fox Cities P.A.C. explores the relationships we all share, and this spirit of interconnectedness is at the heart of the *Boldt Arts Alive!* and the *Spotlight Series*—two distinct series, each bringing our world and our stories into vivid focus.

The Boldt Arts Alive! Series

This season, the Boldt Arts Alive! Series invites us to color outside the lines. From legendary jazz legacies to innovative modern puppetry, from vibrant, globe-spanning dance to a high-octane urban circus, and from reimagined classics to thoughtful examinations of memory—this series is your ticket to a broader understanding of the world we all share.

Menasha Corporation Spotlight Series

In the intimate setting of the Kimberly-Clark Theater, the Menasha Corporation Spotlight Series invites you to lean in a little closer. From the rediscovered heroism of a Wisconsin family's World War II legacy to the swinging, hometown rhythms of elite jazz; from the behind-the-scenes secrets of a world-class chef to the magical wonder tales of Native America—this series offers a front-row seat to the personal stories and vivid creativity that bring our community to life.

As the curtain rises on a new season, we invite you to experience these moments with those closest to you. This is an invitation to see the world through a different lens and embrace the unique bond that happens when we find ourselves reflected in the journeys of others. From reinvented masterpieces to bold new voices, the 2026-27 season is a celebration of the stories we tell, the relationships we cherish, and the legacies we leave behind.

The stage is set, and the 2026-27 season is yours to experience together. We hope you'll join us *at the Center of it all.*

BOLDT Arts Alive!

Series

See the full series lineup at foxcitiespac.com/artsalive



Ballet Hispánico's CARMEN.maquia
Wed. Oct. 7, 2026
7:30 p.m.



360 ALLSTARS Urban Circus
Sun. Nov. 15, 2026
4:00 p.m.



Dolly Parton's Smoky Mountain Christmas Carol
Sun. Nov. 22, 2026
6:30 p.m.



Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia's Ocean Blue
Thu. Feb. 18, 2027
6:30 p.m.



3 OR MORE FLEX PASS



SPOTLIGHT SERIES

See the full series lineup at foxcitiespac.com/spotlight



Chef Dan Jacobs
Tue., March 9, 2027



Style Thief Fashion Show
Thu., May 6, 2027

SAVE UP TO 20%



Select 3 or more shows from either series, choose your seats and how to pay, and **save on select titles all season long!**

foxcitiespac.com/flexpass

APPLETON'S MACDOWELL CHORUS TO HOST THE MULTISTATE 'BIG SING' EVENT

By JIM COLLAR

One of the longest-performing male choruses in the United States is based right here in Appleton, and at the end of April, they'll stage a concert like none other in their long, rich history.

The MacDowell Male Chorus will host the American Male Chorus Association's regional Big Sing event from April 24–26. Themed to the nation's 250th anniversary, it will be the first official Big Sing staged in Appleton. Festivities include a 7 p.m. public concert on April 25 at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center.

Steve March-Tormé will host the all-American show, which will feature choruses from North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

"It's going to be a wall of sound," said Al Schmidt, director of the Big Sing and a longtime MacDowell member.

The event will include up to 13 choruses that will perform individually and as part of a massive combined ensemble. While not all selections will be patriotic, the show will highlight American composers and close with a powerful finale.

Between 225 and 275 AMCA singers are expected. Schmidt expects the combined chorus to grow even larger as they've welcomed men from throughout the Fox Cities to join in.

They're hoping to draw a strong contingent of veterans, who will be honored during the concert through a presentation of military branch flags. They've done similar presentations at performances through the years.

"It never gets old," Schmidt said. "And it can't possibly get old for the people who served."

Founded in 1934 by a group of local businessmen, the MacDowell chorus emerged at a time when there were few performing arts options in Appleton. Today, there are plenty of outlets for both audiences and performers, yet the MacDowell Male Chorus continues to endure.

"Music is a common language that crosses generations and backgrounds," Schmidt said. "But beyond the music, it's an excuse to get together as friends. It's a brotherhood."

That brotherhood spans ages, professions, and decades of membership. Some men have sung with MacDowell for 40 or even 70 years, and many who've moved on still return for events. They're always looking to welcome new members.

"We're normal guys," Schmidt said. "We're not professional musicians. If you like to sing, you can be a member of MacDowell. It's always been a 'from-the-heart' kind of group."

Hosting the Big Sing in Appleton is a long-awaited milestone. The event travels annually, and the closest it's come was a reduced version held at Appleton East High School in 1968.

Schmidt believes Appleton is uniquely suited for the experience. With the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center and the Hilton Paper Valley Hotel across the street from each other, visiting choruses can stay

together and walk to rehearsals and events — an advantage few cities can offer. For performers, the weekend will include a Friday recital as well as Saturday morning workshops.

Schmidt is certain that Appleton will make a great impression on visiting singers, and he's hopeful it will encourage more local men with a love of singing to join the fun.

"Everything is falling into place," he said. "This is our chance to show what MacDowell and Appleton can do."



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Andy Weir
Project Hail Mary

With the recent release of Ryan Gosling's *Project Hail Mary*, it seemed fitting to revisit the book that started it all. This captivating science fiction novel follows Ryland Grace, a man who wakes up in a spaceship, light-years away from the nearest living person. His crewmates are gone, and his memory is nonexistent. Yet he is the sole person capable of completing a long-shot mission that could save Earth from destruction. As his time runs out, Ryland learns that he may not be completely alone in space. Fans of *Pierce Brown* and *Matt Dinniman* will fall in love with Andy Weir's cinema-bound *Project Hail Mary*.

Elena Armas
The Spanish Love Deception

When Catalina's imaginary American boyfriend receives an invitation to her sister's wedding, she must quickly find someone to play the part. Aaron Blackford, her infuriating and arrogant coworker, unexpectedly volunteers, forcing Catalina to reconsider every-thing she knows about him.

Ashley Poston
The Seven Year Slip

Book publisher Clementine has her life planned out down to a tee. But all her hard work abruptly goes out the window when a handsome stranger shows up in her late aunt's apartment. The catch? He lives seven years in the past.

Jason Rekulak
The Last One at the Wedding

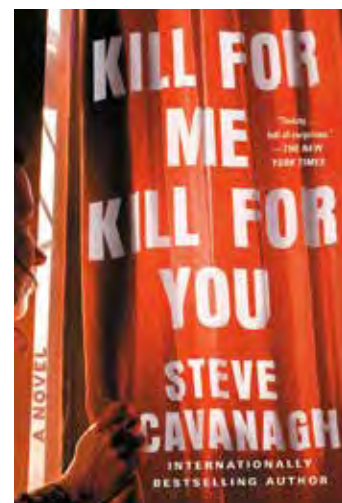
When UPS driver Frank Sztatkowski receives a wedding invitation from his estranged daughter, he's ecstatic. But as he gets to know his wealthy future in-laws, strange things begin to happen, and Frank soon realizes that his daughter may be in over her head.



David Grann
The Wager

From the author of *Killers of the Flower Moon* comes *The Wager*, a nonfiction account of the British vessel of the same name, which wrecked in the 1740s. David Grann recounts the strategy, struggle, and survival of the few sailors who endured the wreck and spent more than 100 days at sea on a makeshift craft to reach civilization. Along the way, Grann reveals betrayal and treachery while exploring the depths of human behavior in this gripping, awe-inspiring historical tale.

Casey Marion is an aspiring author and struggling college student. She works at the Kaukauna Public Library and can always be found with a book in hand.



Steve Cavanaugh
Kill for Me, Kill for You

Amanda White, a recent widow and grieving mother, believes she has reached her lowest point after attempting to assassinate the man responsible for destroying her family. On the recommendation of her parole officer, she reluctantly joins a local support group, hoping to regain some sense of stability. There, she meets Wendy, a woman burdened by a past strikingly similar to her own and whose emotional scars run just as deep. Bonding over their shared anger toward the men who shattered their lives, Wendy proposes a chilling solution: they should exchange murders. Though hesitant, Amanda ultimately agrees. But when the plan spirals out of control, she discovers that trust can be dangerous and survival depends solely on herself.



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A GUIDE TO CLOTHING, ACCESSORIES, HAIR, AND BEAUTY FOR THE SEASON

By PHYLLIS COLLAR

CLOTHING

Spring 2026 clothing trends focus on romantic silhouettes, bold colors, and creative layering. Designers are combining classic spring staples with modern tailoring and dramatic, sometimes three-dimensional textures, creating garments that feel both visually striking and innovative.

One of the most prominent trends is the continued popularity of floral dresses. Floral patterns remain a defining element this spring, appearing in both delicate pastel prints and bold, oversized blooms. Dresses range from airy midi styles to fitted mini silhouettes, making them versatile enough for casual or formal wear.

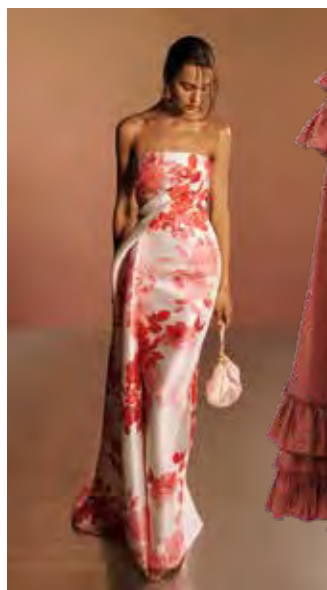
Another trend is the layering of lightweight fabrics. Designers are pairing sheer dresses with tunics, trousers, or slipped layers underneath to create interesting dimension and movement on the runway.

Bright statement colors also appear across all collections. Vibrant shades such as hot pink, lime green, and rich crimson energize the spring looks. Paired with neutral tones like off-white or camel, these bold colors create a balanced yet modern look.

The result is a wardrobe that feels playful yet wearable, mixing feminine elements with more structured silhouettes.



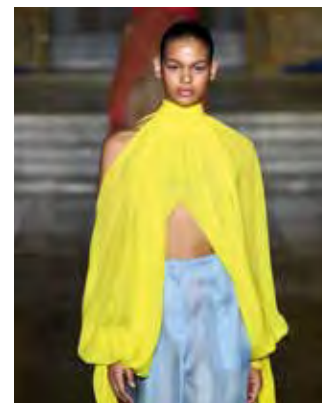
chloe.com



moniquelhuillier.com



chloe.com



fashionunited.com
Prabal Gurung Spring/Summer 2026

Spring 2026 FASHION TRENDS

ACCESSORIES & SHOES

Spring 2026 accessories emphasize boldness and versatility.

Scarves have become one of the most flexible accessories of this season. A silk scarf can be worn around the neck, tied around a handbag, or styled as a headband. This trend highlights the idea of transforming one item into multiple looks.

Jewelry has become increasingly expressive and rather large. Chunky necklaces, layered chains, and colorful beaded bracelets added texture and personality to the simplest outfits.

Footwear trends balance trendiness with comfort, making them ideal for everyday wear. Popular options included clogs and platform sandals, flip flops, Mary-Janes, square-toe flats, and lightweight espadrilles.

Handbags trend larger this spring as well. Oversized totes provide practicality as well as visual impact, while smaller, structured purses offer a more polished look for the evening.



stories.com

Handbags trend larger this spring as well. Oversized totes provide practicality as well as visual impact, while smaller, structured purses offer a more polished look for the evening.



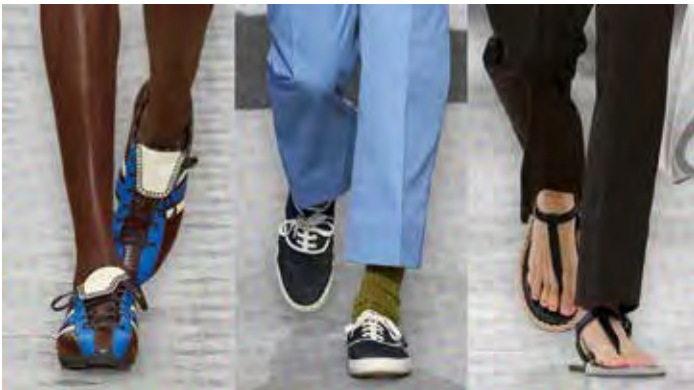
purseblog.com
Ulla Johnson Spring 2026



harpersbazaar.com
Paris Fashion Week Spring/Summer 2026



loewe.com



gq.com - Photo: Vogue Runway; Design: Emily Hanhan



harpersbazaar.com
Carven Spring/Summer 2026

SPRING 2026

HAIRCUTS & HAIR COLOR



@ameliashaehair

A particularly popular shade this season is “cherry cola.” This color blends deep red and brown tones for a vibrant yet natural look.



whowhatwear.com
Michael Kors Spring/Summer 2026

Spring 2026 hair trends emphasize natural texture. At the same time, the runways also embrace sleek, polished styling.

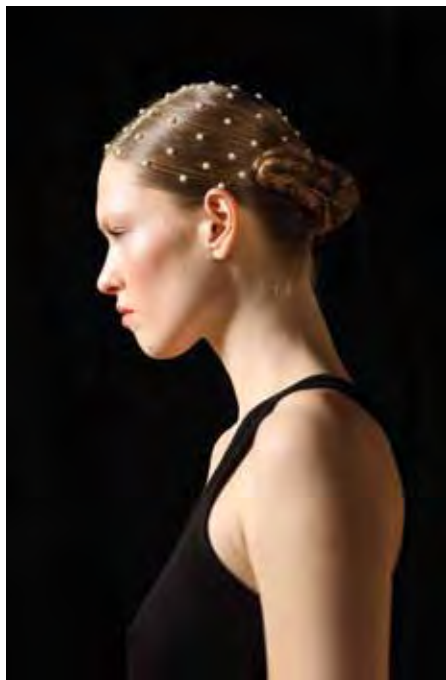
One of the most popular looks this spring is soft, undone waves that highlight natural movement and create a relaxed yet elegant appearance. This effortless style reflects our growing preference for beauty that feels authentic while remaining easy to maintain.

Sleeker hairstyles return to the spotlight with slicked-back ponytails, polished buns, and sharp, structured bobs. These refined and sophisticated hairstyles provide a clean yet dramatic contrast to the softer waves.

Haircuts emphasize movement as well as versatility. Soft layers, curtain bangs, and side fringe framed the face in flattering ways. Popular lengths ranged from chic chin-length cuts to shoulder-grazing tresses, giving wearers flexible options that can be styled either casually or with a sleek finish.

Hair color trends lean toward increasingly rich, dimensional tones. A particularly popular shade this season is “cherry cola.” This color blends deep red and brown tones for a vibrant yet natural look.

Subtle balayage and ombré techniques remain popular as well. These create depth and shine without requiring frequent maintenance.



wwd.com
Zuhair Murad Spring 2026 Couture



wwd.com



elle.com

MAKEUP & NAIL TRENDS



harpersbazaar.com
Cynthia Rowley Spring/Summer 2026



whowhatwear.com
Sportmax Spring/Summer 2026



@bynatashad

Spring beauty trends mix a natural glow with bolder accents.

Complexion makeup focuses on radiant, healthy-looking skin. Lightweight foundations and luminous highlighters help create a fresh, dewy appearance that complements spring lighting this season.

Eye makeup has become more playful. Popular styles include winged eyeliner for a classic and dramatic look; pastel eyeshadows like lavender, soft blue, and delicate pinks; and subtle, light-weight shimmer for a more luminous effect, especially in the evening.

Lip colors shift slightly darker this spring. Instead of bright red, many looks feature berry-toned lipsticks and glosses. These add depth, yet still feel seasonally light.

Nail trends are increasingly creative this spring. Popular manicures now include minimalist micro-designs, pastel colors, metallic accents, and detailed nail art.

This year's spring beauty trends encourage individuality and creativity, allowing experimentation with colors and styles that complement personal fashion choices.

The 2026 spring fashion trends encourage uniquely creative choices in clothing, hair, and overall beauty, blending softness with structure, flowing movement with polished details, and classic staples with modern flair.



@moyou_london



@brittany_nailart

Phyllis Collar is an Appleton lover who hails from Long Island, New York. She is a fashionista and foodie, a lover of words and music, and an absolute hopeless romantic. Phyllis is delighted to share with you all things stylish. She contributes to Appleton Monthly with her Style & Fashion article as well as monthly features.

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BY: SARAH PETERSON

Send your photo submissions to: editor@appletonmonthly.com



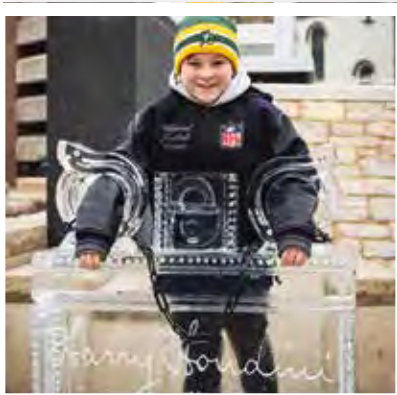
Tracey and Cindy show off some new arrivals from **Lillians of Appleton** at the **Friends of Kimberly Library Fashion Show**.



Local author Tammy Borden shares her book *Waltraud: A True Story of Growing Up in Nazi Germany* with a crowd at the **Appleton Public Library**.



Appleton West students Bea, Julia, Izzy, and Mariah dress up for kids at the **Child Care Resource & Referral Fairy Tale Ball: Magical Memories**.



A young man gets “locked up” in the Harry Houdini ice sculpture during the **Appleton Downtown Inc. Avenue of Ice**.



Hank, Margot, and Beau welcome their dad as he returns from Nashville at **Appleton International Airport**.



Amanda, Vanessa, Cori, and Taryn pose for Debbie Dannen Photography at **Appleton's Parks and Recreation's 2026 Mom Prom**.



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GAME NIGHT

(ACTION & COMEDY, 2018)

STARRING: JASON BATEMAN (MAX), RACHEL MCADAMS (ANNIE), & KYLE CHANDLER (BROOKS)



Annie and Max found love through their competitive drive. Each week, they host a game night with their friends. Max's competitive brother, Brooks, is looking to host the best game night by doing a murder mystery party. The party starts off with Brooks getting kidnapped, and the goal is to find him before it is too late. Each team starts the search, but as the night goes on things aren't quite adding up. They discover that

this might have been a real kidnapping. Now they must work together and try to figure out what is real or just part of the game.

HOW TO LOSE A POPULARITY CONTEST

(ROMANTIC COMEDY, 2026)

STARRING: SARA WAISGLASS (ELLIE), CHASE HUDSON (NATE REED), & GRAHAM VERCHERE (ROWAN)



Ellie believes the only way to win class president is to be popular. To her surprise, her nerdy boyfriend Rowan wants to run. After voicing her concerns about how he isn't popular enough to win, he breaks up with her for doubting him. At the same time Nate, the most popular guy in school, gets dumped for not taking school seriously. Ellie believes if she can get Nate to win class president, they can both

get what they want. Ellie will show Rowan that she was right, and Nate will show that he is serious about school. But it isn't going to be as easy as they think.

MASTERMINDS

(COMEDY & CRIME, 2016)

STARRING: ZACH GALIFIANAKIS (DAVID), KRISTEN WIIG (KELLY), & OWEN WILSON (STEVEN)



This film is based on a true story about the Loomis Fargo Bank heist from 1997. David works as an armored driver for Loomis Fargo Bank, seeing millions of dollars every day. After his co-worker Kelly gets fired, she finds herself barely getting by. Her friend Steven convinces both David and Kelly to take part in robbing the place. David has always had feelings for Kelly and will do anything to

help her out. Thinking this heist will end in his happily ever after with Kelly, he instead finds himself alone in Mexico running from the cops.

SOMETHING FROM TIFFANY'S

(ROMANCE, 2022)

STARRING: ZOEY DEUTCH (RACHEL), RAY NICHOLSON (GARY), SHAY MITCHELL (VANESSA,) & KENDRICK SAMPSON (ETHAN)



This film is based on a Melissa Hill novel. While Gary and Ethan are looking to get the best Christmas gifts from Tiffany's, a huge mix-up happens. Ethan's engagement ring and Gary's diamond earrings accidentally get swapped. This leaves a big surprise when their girlfriends open the wrong gifts on Christmas morning. Leaving both men shocked, they must now figure out what

happened, creating confusion in their own relationships.

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

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GO!

Top 10 reasons to fill up your calendar this month

By SARAH PETERSON

1. 1000 LITTLE WONDERS - FROGS & TOADS

Children ages 3-5 and their parents will listen to *Toads* by Eileen Ziesler, explore the outdoors, and create a themed craft. Be sure to dress appropriately for the weather. The event is free, but pre-registration is required. *April 3, 9:30-10:30 a.m. at 1000 Islands Environmental Center.*

kaukauna.govevent/1000-little-wonders-frogs-toads

3. EASTER AT THE BEACH

Celebrate Easter Sunday with family, friends, and all your brunch favorites at Waverly Beach. Reservations are required. \$38.99 for adults, \$17.99 (children 4-12), FREE (children 3 and under). *April 5, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.*

waverlybeach.com/event/easter-at-the-beach

5. LOVE LOCAL SATURDAY

Show your love for downtown Neenah! The first 125 people in line at Future Neenah will receive a Neenah-branded tote bag filled with coupons, swag, and a chance at special prizes! *April 11 at 10 a.m.*

futureneenah.org/event/love-local-saturday

7. APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOOK SALE

The Friends of the Appleton Public Library invite you to their book sale, where you'll find a large assortment of gently used books, movies, and other items at budget-friendly prices. All proceeds benefit library programs. *April 17, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at the Appleton Public Library.*

apl.org/event-calendar

9. MINI GOLF ON THE TOWN

Putt your way through Downtown Appleton by playing unique holes of mini golf at various bars and restaurants. There will be food and drink specials, along with an after-party featuring prizes at D2 Sports Pub. Sign up at any participating location. *April 11, 1-5 p.m.*

appletondowntown.org/events/mini-golf-on-the-town

2. MASTER GARDENER: PERENNIALS

Perennials are the foundation of any landscape garden. Explore the newest varieties and reliable classics that are worth adding to your own garden. *April 4, 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Appleton Public Library.*

apl.org/event-calendar

4. FOX CITIES KIDS EXPO

This fun-filled expo features over 60 booths with interactive exhibits, face painting, characters, and live entertainment, all designed to inspire curiosity and foster community connection for kids. This year's theme is "Heroes in the Making." Free for families. *April 11, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Fox Cities Exhibition Center.*

foxcitieskidsexpo.com

6. FUTURE FOX CITIES CAREER EXPO

This one-day Career Expo brings students and employers together to foster collaboration between schools and businesses, offer hands-on career learning experiences, and help employers connect with future talent. Admission is free for students. *April 15, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Fox Cities Exhibition Center.*

members.foxcc.net/chamber-events

8. CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

Van Zeeland Nursery is hosting a free Earth Day event featuring hands-on nature crafts, including natural bird feeders and wild-flower seed bombs. They will also offer exclusive plant discounts. *April 22, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.*

facebook.com/events/1503883701458444

10. CULTURAL CUISINE WALK

Travel the world while staying close to home at downtown Appleton's Cultural Cuisine Walk. Taste a variety of delicious ethnic foods from local restaurants. *April 25, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.*

appletondowntown.org/events/cultural-cuisine-walk



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WINNING FORMULA WON'T CHANGE FOR BUDGET CONSCIOUS BREWERS

By TIM FROBERG

No baseball team on this planet gets more bang for the buck than the Milwaukee Moneyballers — better known in these parts as the Brewers.

Each year, they slash payroll, trade top players before they get crazy expensive, and prioritize player development in a game gone mad with big spenders.

The Milwaukee way relies on an elite farm system, young, club-controlled talent, and the expert work of manager Pat Murphy and GM Matt Arnold.

The Milwaukee way is the hard way... and the only way that small-market, low-payroll teams with conservative ownership can survive in a messed-up league headed toward implosion.

And you know what? The Milwaukee way works - at least during the regular season. The Brewers have won four of the last five National League Central titles and reached the playoffs seven times in the past eight years.

"We're not supposed to be doing what we're doing with our payroll and our market," said Brewers pitcher Brandon Woodruff in an interview with USA Today. "We kind of defy what's going on."

Those defiant average Joes will use the same frugal but fruitful formula in 2026 after posting baseball's best record (97-65) last season.

It will take another masterful year in the dugout from Murphy and another spot-on job of talent evaluation by Arnold to keep this team swimming with MLB's sharks. The two are terrific at what they do. Murphy has won back-to-back NL Manager of the Year awards, while Arnold has been named as baseball's top executive the past two years.

Both must remain at the top of their games because losing mound ace Freddy Peralta and his 17 wins is a cannonball to the gut.

But I'm not counting the Brewers out of anything because

every time I do with a Murphy-coached, Arnold-created team, I'm proven wrong. Even with the frustrating trade of Peralta, this is a good team — one that finished among MLB's top three last season in important categories like earned run average (3.58), batting average (.258), and runs scored (808).

Murphy has built his underdog Brewers teams around pitching, defense, and disciplined, high-contact offense. Milwaukee should remain rock solid on the mound with

potential ace Jacob Misiorowski and Chad Patrick anchoring a deep starting rotation, and Abner Uribe and Trevor Megill holding down high-leverage spots in what has been an outstanding bullpen.

Keep an eye on two young power arms that were trade acquisitions: Kyle Harrison, a high-upside lefty with electric stuff, and Brandon Sproat, who frequently touches 100 mph with his blazing fastball.

Jackson Chourio, Sal Frelick, Brice Turang, and possibly Garrett Mitchell (the MarShawn Lloyd of Milwaukee) are ascending young players. Mix them with veteran hitters like Christian Yelich, Andrew Vaughn, and William Contreras, and there

should be enough pop to keep Bernie Brewer busy on the celebration slide at American Family Field.

I expect the Brewers to remain a playoff-caliber team and wouldn't be surprised to see them win their fourth straight NL Central title.

Taking the next step and reaching the summit of MLB's Mt. Everest is trickier for low-budget organizations like the Brewers... and always will be until a much-needed salary cap is implemented. But anything can happen once you get into the tournament, and baseball can be a crazy, unpredictable game. Enjoy the 2026 MLB season, appreciate Murphy's stellar work, and the opportunity to follow a winning franchise.

If that's not enough for you, well, become a Dodgers fan.



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

TASTE

CHEF'S TABLE 54 | CARLY'S PASTRIES 56 | BEER + BREWING 57 | FOOD & DRINK 58



A Warm Place to Perch

THE NEST IN GREENVILLE

By JENNI EICKELBERG



When Alyssa and Austin Durham opened The Nest by Birdie & Co. on Oct. 17, 2025, they weren't just launching another coffee shop — they were creating a warm extension of their family story. What started as a simple baking operation in Alyssa's home has steadily grown into a vibrant local food network, which now includes a mobile food trailer, a collaborative commercial kitchen, and a community that's followed their journey from a trailer window to a welcoming brick-and-mortar space.

Alyssa's roots in food run deep. She grew up in a family that lived in the kitchen — learning to bake from her mom and grandmother, working in her uncle's restaurant, and even making cupcakes for weddings during college. After a brief stint in the corporate world, she returned to her first love following the birth of her second child. Little Birdie's Treats began at home, with Alyssa baking for customers while juggling life with two young daughters.

Coffee entered the picture soon after, and by 2023, the Durhams had purchased and renovated their first mobile trailer. The iconic Little Birdie's truck quickly became a local favorite. As demand grew, so did their ambitions.

They opened The Coop near downtown Appleton in April 2024 — a shared commercial kitchen that now houses 20 small entrepreneurs and businesses. By August 2025, they had purchased a second trailer and signed the lease for their next big leap: transforming the former Subway building in Greenville into The Nest.

But the journey wasn't without setbacks. Their original food trailer was totaled in an accident, leaving them with just one. Still, the Durhams pressed forward, pouring their energy into creating a space that felt like home — especially for families. Alyssa, a mom of two young girls, knew exactly what she wanted: a cozy, welcoming environment where parents could exhale and kids could be kids. The Nest now includes a dedicated play area, stools in the bathrooms for little ones, a changing table, a thoughtfully stocked nook with diapers, wipes, and women's essentials, and a drive-thru so busy parents can grab a great cup of coffee without getting out of the car.

Behind the counter, Alyssa leads a three-person baking team at The Coop, crafting recipes rooted in family tradition and travel memories. Her grandma's pecan coconut coffee cake sits alongside cardamom buns inspired by a trip to England. The menu also leans heavily on local sourcing — a deliberate choice to support the local community and manage costs. Coffee beans come from New Morning Coffee in Darboy, meats from The Meat Block, and ingredients are prepped by Sabe Culinary Services, one of the businesses operating out of The Coop.



Austin's background in sales and Alyssa's experience in recruitment shape the way they lead their team. She hires for warmth and connection — people who can brighten a customer's day and make them want to return. He brings a metrics-driven approach. Together, they've built a culture that blends heart and strategy, allowing them to balance business growth with family life.



Today, The Nest is thriving — busy, beloved, and already woven into the fabric of Greenville. For the Durhams, it's more than a café. It's a place built from passion, resilience, and the belief that good food and genuine hospitality can bring a community together.

The Nest by Birdie & Co.
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thenestgreenville.toast.site



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Scalloped Potatoes and Ham

By CARLY CERNIGLIA

These scalloped potatoes and ham are the perfect use for leftover Easter ham. The creamy cheese sauce is an amazing accompaniment to the tender potatoes and salty ham. It's comfort food at its finest!

INGREDIENTS

3 pounds russet potatoes
One medium sweet onion
6 tablespoons unsalted butter
6 tablespoons flour
3 cups whole milk
2 cups sharp white cheddar cheese, shredded
3/4 teaspoon seasoned salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
3/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 pound ham, diced

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and set aside.

Peel the potatoes. Using a mandolin or sharp knife, carefully slice potatoes into 1/8 to 1/16-inch thick slices. Repeat with the onion and set aside.

In a medium pot, melt butter. Make a roux by sprinkling in the flour and whisking until the mixture becomes a thick paste. Cook the roux for about 3 minutes, until it starts to smell nutty. Slowly whisk in milk until smooth. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring, until the mixture thickens, or about 5 minutes. Stir in cheese, salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Remove from heat once the cheese has melted.

Layer the potatoes, onions, and ham in the baking dish. Pour the milk mixture over the potatoes. Cover the pan with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake uncovered for 50 minutes, or until the potatoes are fork-tender. Let cool for 10 minutes and serve. Enjoy!



FRIED GOAT CHEESE & *Blackberry Salad*

By CARLY CERNIGLIA

As if we couldn't love goat cheese enough, frying takes it to a whole new level. Simple to do, these fried goat cheese medallions elevate this salad beyond belief. The creamy, crispy goat cheese blends perfectly with the bright blackberries and zippy dressing. A refreshing salad perfect for the warmer season.

Makes two large salads or four small.

INGREDIENTS

For the Salad:

One egg, beaten
 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
 One 4-ounce log goat cheese
 Vegetable oil for frying —
 about 3/4 cup
 About 4 cups spring mix
 One small cucumber, sliced
 10 cherry tomatoes, halved
 10 blackberries, halved
 1/4 cup red onion, sliced

For Red Wine Vinaigrette:

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 1/4–1/2 teaspoon sea salt
 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
 1/8 teaspoon parsley flakes
 1/4 teaspoon sugar

1–2 tablespoons peach balsamic glaze
 (or regular balsamic glaze)

DIRECTIONS

Whisk together the vinaigrette ingredients and set aside.

Slice the goat cheese into 6–8 medallions, about a 1/2-inch thick. Dip all sides of the goat cheese medallions in the lightly beaten egg and then into the panko bread crumbs. Set aside.



In a small frying pan, heat oil until hot. To test for heat, drop a small piece of panko bread crumbs into the oil. Once it sizzles, it's ready.

Fry 3–4 medallions for about 1–2 minutes per side, until golden brown. Set them on a paper towel-lined plate to drain.

Assemble salad: Place 2 cups spring mix in two bowls. Divide tomatoes, cucumbers, red onion, and blackberries evenly across the salads. Drizzle 2 tablespoons of dressing onto each salad. Drizzle peach balsamic glaze over each salad, as desired. Top with warm fried goat cheese medallions. Enjoy!

Peanut Butter Cut-Out Cookies

By CARLY CERNIGLIA

If you love a soft, chewy peanut butter cookie, then you'll absolutely adore these Peanut Butter Cut-Out Cookies! They're the perfect mix of peanut butter, brown sugar, and fun! I decorated them with royal icing, but feel free to use whatever frosting you like.

Makes about 30 cookies, depending on shape

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup peanut butter
1 cup unsalted butter, room temp
1 cup sugar
1 cup dark brown sugar, packed
Two eggs
1 tablespoon vanilla bean paste
4 cups flour
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

Royal Icing

1/2 cup meringue powder
1 cup water
2 pounds powdered sugar
Food coloring

DIRECTIONS:

In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together the butter and peanut butter. Add sugars and beat until fluffy. Add vanilla, salt, and eggs. Beat until incorporated. Add the flour and slowly mix until just combined. Increase the speed to medium and beat until the dough comes together, about 2–3 minutes.

Divide the dough in half and roll one portion between two sheets of parchment paper to about 1/6-inch thick. Repeat with the other half.

Chill the dough for 1 hour in the refrigerator.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line two sheet pans with parchment paper. Cut out shapes and place them 1/2 inch apart on the sheet pans. Bake for 8-10 minutes; the cookies should be slightly glossy, but dry-looking overall, and a little golden on the edges. Remove from the oven and let cool on the sheet pans for

5 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool completely. Re-roll any dough scraps and repeat the process as needed.

While the cookies are cooling, make the royal icing. Add water and meringue powder to a large bowl. Beat with a hand mixer until the mixture begins to foam. Add powdered sugar and slowly incorporate. Once combined, increase the speed to high and beat until almost at stiff peaks, about 3-5 minutes. Cover with a damp paper towel and a piece of plastic wrap, and let sit for 30 minutes.

Remove the wrap and the paper towel. Divide icing as desired and mix in desired colors. Thin with water to the desired consistency. Use a butter knife to spread icing, or use a piping bag to create designs. Let it harden for a few hours or overnight. Store in an airtight container. Enjoy!



WISCONSIN BREWERS GUILD

By STEVE LONSWAY



**SIP & SAVOR
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The Wisconsin Beer Lovers Festival is now **SIP & SAVOR WISCONSIN!** It's not just for beer lovers anymore...

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I am passionate about the science of producing beer, and even more so about offering craft beer to beer aficionados. It literally takes an army to protect these interests, which I and many in our industry share. This is why I chose to write this month's article on the all-important Wisconsin Brewers Guild.

The Wisconsin Brewers Guild is a collaborative effort to maintain the integrity of independent craft brewers and breweries across our great state. The Guild is a nonprofit organization that relies on donations, event revenue, and memberships, and it plays a crucial role in keeping the craft beers, craft breweries, and brewpubs of Wisconsin alive and well. Many other states have a similar model, and the national brewery scene does as well. The national

institution is called the Brewers Association and is based in Boulder, Colo. The Brewers Association works on the federal level to advocate for the brewing industry, while also creating camaraderie among state guilds so that the voice of our industry continues to be heard. The Brewers Guild is run by an elected board of directors that consists of Wisconsin brewery owners, managers, and brewmasters. Their website states that their mission is to "Promote and maintain standards of excellence in Wisconsin's brewing industry." They accomplish this by providing a network that connects brewers, suppliers, retailers, and craft beer enthusiasts.

The Guild's annual event should not be missed! It has been newly renamed Sip & Savor Wisconsin. This event is a true Wisconsin festival featuring craft beers, ciders, wines, and distilled products from Wisconsin, local food pairings, and live entertainment. Often, the brewmasters and brewery owners are the ones pouring your samples. It is a great opportunity to connect personally with your favorite breweries — and proceeds go to the Guild! This year's event will take place at The Bavarian Bierhaus in Glendale on June 13. To purchase tickets, visit sipandsavorwi.com.

The Guild also operates Wisconsin Beer PAC to advocate, educate lawmakers, and advance legislation that is clear, concise, and supports the efforts of our state's breweries. Since prohibition, several large breweries squeezed out the smaller independents by unleashing massive marketing campaigns that the little guys and gals could not match. From 1933 to the late 1970s, the number of breweries plummeted from about 756 to less than 100. This also brought on legislation that benefits the big and powerful breweries and their distributors. Some laws from that period remain and continue to tie the hands of small breweries. The Guild's quest is to monitor these issues and work to keep the industry fair through education and advocacy.

To learn more or to donate to the Wisconsin Brewers Guild, check out their website at wibrewersguild.com or purchase your tickets to Sip & Savor in June. And, as always, support your local breweries and brewpubs!

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

Cherry Blossom Lemonade



DRINK

Light, floral, and beautifully pink, Cherry Blossom Lemonade is a refreshing ode to spring's arrival. With delicate cherry blossom syrup, zesty lemon, and a hint of fizz, this cocktail is perfect for celebrating Easter, sunny days, or any spring occasion.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ounce vodka
- 1 ounce cherry blossom syrup
- 1 ounce freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 ounce club soda
- Ice
- Optional garnish: Cherry blossoms, cherries, or lemon rounds

DIRECTIONS

In a cocktail shaker with ice, combine the vodka, cherry blossom syrup, and fresh lemon juice.

Shake until well-chilled.

Strain into a cocktail glass filled with fresh ice.

Top with club soda.

Garnish with cherry blossoms, cherries, or lemon rounds.

GRAPEVINE



SIP

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MORE

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Spring INTO BLOOM

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Essential tools
for planting a
vegetable garden.

By HOLLY BOETTCHE

Spring into Bloom

Get Ready to Plant Your Garden

By HOLLY BOETTCHER



There's something uniquely satisfying about walking out your back door to harvest a basket of sun-ripened tomatoes, cucumbers, and fresh lettuce for your evening salad. Starting a vegetable garden isn't just about growing food; it's an invitation to reconnect with nature, live more sustainably, and enjoy the unbeatable flavor of produce that hasn't spent days on a truck.

Whether you have a sprawling backyard or just a sunny corner on a balcony, planting your own seeds is a rewarding journey that transforms both your palate and your perspective. And the best part is you don't need a green thumb to begin — just a little curiosity and the willingness to get your hands dirty.

But, as exciting as it sounds, the idea of starting a garden from scratch can feel overwhelming, especially if you've never done it before. Don't worry! I've put together some simple steps to help you get started on growing your first vegetable garden.

Location, Location, Location

Pick a spot in your yard that gets at least 6–8 hours of sunlight daily because most vegetables thrive in full sun. Make sure the area has good drainage because plants don't like sitting in puddles!

No Room for Vegetables?

If yard space is limited, no worries. Many vegetables do well in raised beds or in containers on a sunny porch or patio. I've experimented and successfully grown tomatoes, green beans, potatoes, and cabbage in containers! Another option is to look no further than that small flower bed in your front yard. Try tucking in a few vegetables, such as tomatoes or peppers.

Starting a New Garden Spot

If you haven't planted in the area before, an organic way to kill the grass is to cover it with cardboard or newspapers (use small rocks or some sod to keep the material from blowing away). Cardboard also helps amend the soil as it breaks

down. Another method is to remove the sod with a spade. Next, either roto-till or turn over the soil using a shovel or garden fork. Raised beds are another great option.



Baby Steps

If you're new to gardening, resist the urge to plant every vegetable you love all at once. Instead, begin with a small plot or a few containers. This lets you experience the joy of gardening without the stress of heavy upkeep. Keep in mind, it's meant to be fun!

Beginner-Friendly Veggies to Try from Seed:

- **Lettuce** – Grows quickly and is perfect for fresh salads.
- **Zucchini** – Prolific and versatile for cooking and baking.
- **Carrots** – Fun to grow and easy to harvest.

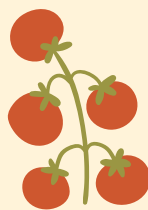
Beginner-Friendly Veggies to Try as Plants from a Garden Center:

- **Tomatoes or Peppers** – Perfect for sandwiches, salads, and sauces. And my favorite way to eat them... right off the vine!

Read the labels carefully and consider how much space each plant needs. Some vegetables, like zucchini, tend to sprawl, while others, like carrots, grow vertically. Use companion planting as a strategy. This means planting complementary vegetables side by side for better yields and natural pest control.

For instance:

- Carrots and onions make great neighbors, as onions can help deter carrot flies.
- Tomatoes and basil grow well together, and basil can help repel creepy tomato hornworms.



Holly's Garden Tip: Plants such as tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant can't be direct-sown, and instead must be started from seed indoors in March or purchased in the spring at a garden center. If you direct sow them, they will not have enough time to mature.

Become a Scientist with a Soil Test

Healthy plants start with healthy soil. Test your soil's potential hydrogen (pH) level. Use a high-quality garden soil or compost mix to provide your vegetables with the nutrients they need. Taking the time to test is often the most overlooked step. This important measure will ensure the soil is suitable for the veggies you're planting. The pH is measured on a scale that ranks the basicity or acidity of substances relative to one another. For most vegetables, it should

be between 6.5 and 7 (slightly acidic to neutral) for plants to be happy. Think about this! The nutrients that your plants need become available or unavailable to them according to your soil's pH level. Hold that thought, because what is the point of planting a garden if your veggies cannot absorb proper nutrients?

To obtain your soil sample, start by making an imaginary "W" in your plot and then dig down about 6 to 8 inches into each "point" of the "W." Your goal is to end up with about one cup of soil.

If you are sending your sample to a lab for analysis, label the bag with your name, address, and phone number before you put the soil in the bag. (Picture me trying to write on the sample package after it's full. That does not work very well.) And don't worry, when you get your soil test back, there will be recommendations from the testing company to help you understand which amendments are needed. Yes, this sounds like plenty of extra work, but it will be worth it in the end!



Holly's Garden Tip: A pH test kit can be purchased at a garden center, or you can take a sample to your local Cooperative Extension Office. (To learn how to process a sample for testing, check out outagamie.extension.wisc.edu/soil-testing.) There is a small fee, but they will send your soil to a lab, and you will get a full report detailing possible deficiencies and how to correct them.

What to Plant?

Now is the time to draw up a plan of what you will plant and how much space is needed. In early spring, I plant cool-weather crops such as lettuce, kale, carrots, peas, beets, radishes, spinach, and Swiss chard between rows of tomatoes and peppers. As they mature, I can harvest them and eventually make room for the others.

Supply List

Gather your shovel, rake, hoe, string, stakes, plant markers, garden gloves, and trellising. It works great to write with permanent markers on paint sticks, use louvers from window blinds that are no longer usable, or purchase labels. A length of sturdy string with wooden stakes tied to each end helps you make straight rows. If you are growing pole beans or peas, you'll need some type of trellising.



Holly's Garden Tip: My favorite place to order seeds is from Baker Creek, rareseeds.com, because they have over 1,200 rare varieties from all over the world that have been passed down for many generations.

Sowing Seeds into the Soil

Most of your garden seeds can be planted directly into the soil. Follow package instructions closely. Teeny-tiny seeds, such as lettuce and carrots, need sunlight to germinate, and for best results, should be sown on the top of the soil. They can be difficult to handle, so I kind of pinch them between my finger and thumb, then lightly sprinkle them in a row. (Reminder: those need to be thinned later!) Before I plant larger seeds, I use the garden string that is tied to the stakes, which I hammer into the ground to make straight rows. Next, I make a trench with my hoe and begin dropping seeds according to directions. After completing the row, I sprinkle with soil.

Take note: certain seeds need to be prepped for planting. Examples include cucumbers, beets, squash, and pumpkin seeds. They germinate more quickly if you soak them overnight to give them a head start. Other seeds benefit from a process called scarification (scarring them) by rubbing them against a nail file or sandpaper. Examples include nasturtium and sweet peas. Seeds such as milkweed need to go through a process called stratification, which mimics Mother Nature going through periods of wet and cold.



Holly's Garden Tip: Some seedlings need to be "thinned" after they pop through the soil and reach about two inches of height. Carrots, beets, and radishes benefit from thinning so they have room to grow. You will find this information on the seed packets.

Be Smart About Water

Consistency is key when it comes to watering your plants. Vegetable gardens need about 1 inch of water per week, either from rain or your watering can. Focus on watering in the early morning or late afternoon when the sun isn't at its peak, as this keeps moisture from evaporating too quickly and prevents leaf burning.



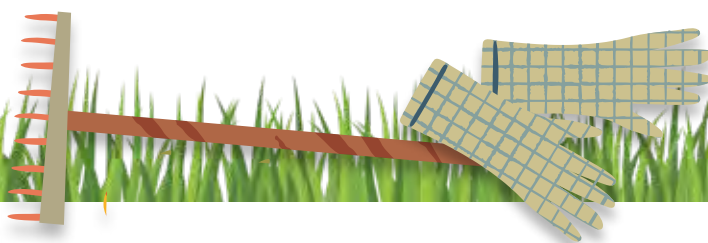
Holly's Garden Tip: Avoid splashing the leaves of plants to reduce the risk of disease. Water only the soil under your vegetables.

Use Mulch to Conserve Water and Control Weeds

Applying organic mulch, such as grass clippings or double-chopped bark, between your rows of seeds or around your fresh plantings, will help retain moisture and keep the weeds away. When applying it around plants, do not allow mulch to touch the stems of the plants, as that will encourage decay.



Holly's Garden Tip: Move straw or chopped leaves to your garden after cleaning up your yard in the fall so it can break down over winter and add additional nutrients to your soil.



Keep Up with Weeding

Repeat after me: "Weeding is great exercise!" Weeds compete with your veggies for nutrients, water, and sunlight. Regularly check your garden for unwanted plants and pull them or dig them out by the roots.



Holly's Garden Tip: Pay attention to your plants. Watch for yellowing leaves or holes, which often indicate pest problems. Also, watch for caterpillar "frass." It looks like tiny black pellets and is the waste from caterpillars.

Watch For Pests to Move In

To keep my kale and cabbage from being devoured by cabbage loopers, I use a weekly application of an organic product called *Bacillus thuringiensis* (aka Bt), which disrupts the pH level of a caterpillar's gut. In simple terms, their gut explodes. Neem oil is another great organic option. You can also plant flowers, such as marigolds, which naturally repel pests. Consider homemade remedies, like a diluted soap spray, to keep bugs away. Pests are inevitable in any garden, but you can manage them without harsh chemicals.

When Can I Plant Outside?

A benchmark for cool-season vegetables like beets, carrots, spinach, and lettuce is when the soil reaches 50 degrees. Warm-weather plants such as tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants, which you either started from seed in March or purchased at a garden center, prefer soil warmed to between 60 and 70 degrees. If I'm too impatient and want to start planting tomato plants in the ground before it's warm enough, I use floating row covers or even soda bottles, cutting the tops and bottoms off to give them extra protection from the chill. Overall, it's best to resist temptation and plant after the last frost, which is usually Memorial Day weekend. Always be aware of any cold fronts moving in before planting.



Holly's Garden Tip: A soil thermometer can take the guesswork out of planting.

Enjoy Your Harvest and Share

Nothing beats the joy of harvesting your homegrown vegetables for the first time! Pick your produce when it's ripe and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing exactly where your food comes from. If your garden produces more than you can eat, share the bounty with friends, neighbors, or a local food pantry.



Holly's Garden Tip: Don't forget sunscreen and your garden hat!

Keep It Fun

Starting a vegetable garden might feel like a big task, but it's truly a gratifying hobby. With a little patience, attention, and love, you'll go from a gardening newbie to a proud grower in no time. Plus, there's nothing quite like biting into a fresh tomato or crunching on crisp lettuce that you grew yourself.

So, grab your garden gloves and start planning your vegetable garden. Planting season is just around the corner! What are you waiting for?

And remember this famous quote attributed to Audrey Hepburn, an avid gardener, "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow."





EGO Mowers Offers Clean, Quiet Lawn Cut

By TIM FROBERG

The days of carefully pouring gasoline into tanks, wrestling with pull cords, and dealing with loud, noisy engines are over. At least that's the case for owners of electric lawn mowers.

Quality brands such as EGO have hit the market in the past decade and offer consumers a legitimate alternative to the noisy gas guzzler.

EGO has developed a full line of cordless, battery-powered mowers. One of EGO's best values is its Power+ 21-inch LM2114 SP mower. Known for its simplicity, efficiency, and affordability, this self-propelled mower offers perhaps the best bang for the buck in the EGO lineup. This 21-inch machine compares favorably with gas mowers in terms of cutting torque (6.0 ft.-lbs.) and powers through higher grass like a heavier machine because of its extremely efficient brushless motor.

The mower's dual-toggle handle system allows users to activate self-propel with either hand and is ideal for maneuvering around tight corners and flower beds. Its push-button start eliminates the often aggravating process of yanking a cord. The mower is also equipped with bright LED headlights, allowing owners to finish the job when they're running out of daylight.

This is a fine machine for small- to medium-sized yards under half an acre. It's 56-volt, 6.0-amp-hour battery that offers up to 50 minutes of run time on a single charge. Those with larger yards can purchase one of EGO's optional mowers, such as its LM2135SP model, which comes with a 56-volt, 7.5-amp-hour battery that offers 60 minutes of run time.

The EGO LM2114SP offers mulching, bagging and side discharge, along with a seven-position height adjustment (1.25 to 4 inches) for both shorter trims and taller grass. Its adjustable handle folds for compact storage.

"The EGO LM2114SP is an excellent midrange self-propelled option in EGO's lineup," said Josh McGaffigan, staff writer and reviewer for the website *Pro Tool Review*. "It's a good fit for homeowners who stay on top of their weekly cutting and want a step up from entry-level mowers without going all the way to the top of the price scale.

"With its balance of performance, features, and price, we expect this model to become one of the top-selling models for customers mowing one-fourth- to one-third-acre sites."

Another advantage of electric mowers is their low noise level. They generally operate at 56-80 decibels, considerably quieter than gas mowers, which can reach close to 100 decibels.

Consumers who want to save even more money can pay roughly \$100 less for one of EGO's non-propelled electric mowers.

The EGO brand is owned by Chervon, a global power tool manufacturer founded in 1993 and headquartered in Nanjing, China. EGO officially launched in the U.S. in 2012 and expanded to Europe in 2014.

Price: \$599

Power source: 56-volt, 6.0-amp-hour lithium battery

Cutting torque: 6-0 ft.-lbs

Weight: 65.81 pounds

Deck size: 21 inches

Cut height: 1.25 to 4 inches

Charge time: 50 minutes

Warranty: Five years (mower), three years (battery).

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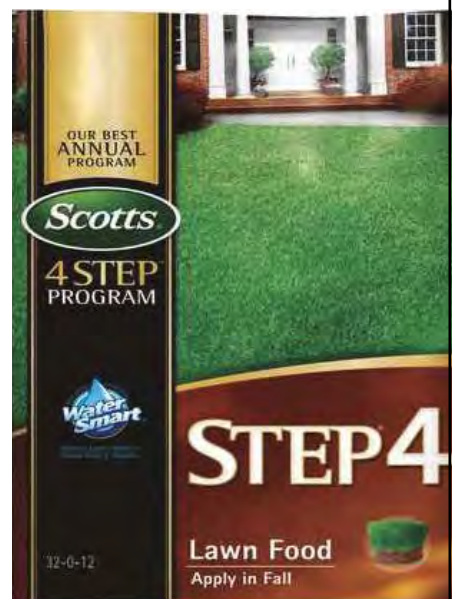


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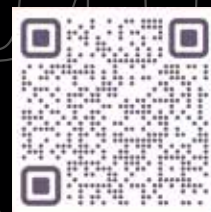
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The Lightness of Being

Why Your Home Needs a Psychological Reset

By NATASHA WINKLER

There is a very specific kind of heavy silence that settles into our homes by late March. It is the weight of those thick wool blankets that have lived on the sofa for months straight. It is the gray film of road salt haunting the floorboards and the dim glow of the lamps we relied on to fight off those 4 p.m. sunsets. For most of the winter, our houses have been our fortresses. They were intentionally crowded and insulated to keep the cold at bay.

But then April finally arrives. Suddenly, those same cozy layers start to feel like wearing a heavy parka indoors. They feel restrictive, dusty, and just a little too warm. Even the few warm weekends that pop in early have us feeling "some type of way."

We are all familiar with the tradition of spring cleaning, but if we treat it as just another boring checklist of chores, we miss the real point.

The magic of April isn't actually about hygienic cleanliness. It is about a psychological reset. It is the process of shedding our winter skin and aligning our surroundings with the new energy building outside. By understanding a simple concept called "visual weight," we can change our homes from stagnant winter dens into spaces that actually breathe again.

The Science of Seeing: What is Visual Weight?

In the world of interior design, visual weight is just a fancy way of saying how much a specific object or texture grabs your attention. During a Wisconsin winter, we actually crave high visual weight. We want chunky knit throws, dark leathers, and rich colors because they feel grounding and safe when the world outside is a frozen white void.

However, as the light changes, those same objects start to clutter our subconscious. A dark navy velvet pillow doesn't just sit on a chair. It absorbs this new spring sunlight and makes the whole room feel smaller and a bit more somber. When our eyes hit heavy objects or messy stacks of mail, our brains register them as "unfinished business."

Psychologically speaking, a clear surface like a bare kitchen island or a minimalist coffee table acts as a visual exhale. By intentionally lightening the load in our rooms, we aren't just tidying up. We are actually lowering our stress levels and making mental room for the creativity that spring always seems to draw out.



The Interior Flip: From Velvet to Vapor



The fastest way to lighten your mood is to audit your fabrics. If your living room still looks like a scene from a December catalog, your brain is going to struggle to transition into the new season.

Start by editing your textiles. Swap out the heavy wools



and faux furs for linens, light-weight cottons, and open weaves. You don't need a full renovation to do this because it's really about a sensory shift. When you replace a heavy, dark rug with a lighter jute or a simple cotton version, the

entire room feels like it has lifted two inches off the ground.

Try following the "clear surface" rule. During the winter, we tend to nest. We surround ourselves with books, candles, and mementos. In April, I challenge you to leave at least 30 percent of your flat surfaces empty. This "white space" in your home gives your eyes a place to rest. It signals to your brain that the survival mindset of winter is over and the season of growth has finally started.



The Exterior: The Instant Gratification of the Wash

Once you've lightened the interior, the next psychological hurdle is usually waiting for you right on the other side of the glass. Winter leaves a literal gray film on our lives. It's the salt on the porch, the spiderwebs in the eaves, and that dull, dusty coating on the siding. We get so used to seeing it through the window that we stop noticing it, but our brains are still registering it as "grime."

There is a profound, even therapeutic satisfaction in power washing away the winter. It's the ultimate "reveal" moment. When you blast the winter silt off the walkway or see the true color of your siding for the first time in six months, it feels like a real-life metaphor for a fresh start.

Curb appeal is often talked about in terms of real estate value, but I like to think of it as a form of self-care. Think about the psychological difference between pulling into a driveway that looks weathered and gray versus one that looks

bright and scrubbed. Seeing a clean path to your front door changes your mood before you even turn the key in the lock. It tells you that you've arrived at a place of order and peace, not just another place that needs work.

Three Things to Toss Right Now

The "Dead" Decor: We've all been guilty of it. Those dried winter arrangements, stray pinecones, or evergreen wreaths that have turned a questionable shade of brown. If it belongs in a snowy landscape, it doesn't belong in your April living room. Let it go to make room for something green.

The Entryway Logjam: This is the biggest source of "visual weight" in a home. The mismatched mittens, the salt-stained boots, and those heavy parkas that you hopefully won't need for another six months. Pack them away. Clearing the entryway floor is like clearing a path for your mind.

The Winter Pantry Slump: Take 10 minutes to look through your spice rack and pantry. Toss the heavy, expired "comfort" ingredients and make space for the lighter, brighter flavors of spring. A clean, organized shelf makes the prospect of cooking fresh meals feel like a joy rather than a chore.

Bringing the Outside In

With the weather still a bit unpredictable, you might not be ready to sit on the patio with a book just yet, but you can certainly start the transition. One of my favorite tricks for April is orienting furniture toward the views. In the winter, we tend to point our chairs toward the fireplace or the television. In April, try angling your favorite armchair toward the window.

Even if the grass is still mostly brown, watching the birds return and the trees start to bud provides a natural rhythm that our brains crave. If you want to take it a step further, bring in some early spring clippings. You don't need a fancy florist for this. A few simple branches or the very first willows in a tall glass vase can signal to your subconscious that the season has officially turned.



RUSTIC MODERN STYLE

By JOEL LAPER

RUSTIC MODERN style combines two of the most sought-after décor styles and has recently had a huge surge in popularity. This style combines natural materials with a neutral color palette. Together with natural light, these elements bring a feeling of warmth to any design space. It is a perfect blend of the cozy feeling you get from traditional design and the clean lines that modern, minimalist, and functional design provides. By mixing natural wood and textured accents with modern pieces and colors, you can create your own version of the rustic modern aesthetic.



A natural wood bookcase with unglazed pottery in neutral tones, a handmade woven basket, stone bowls, and metal bird figurines keep this rustic modern display interesting and fresh.

Decorating a home in only one style can make it feel dated over time. Mixing two complementary styles like rustic and modern keeps your space grounded with a timeless and traditional style while introducing a modern design flair.

When considering this design style, keep these key elements in mind to help you focus on the overall design plan and vision:

NEUTRAL COLORS – Rustic style is grounded in colors found in nature. Shades of brown evoke the feel of wood, deep greens give a nod to organic plants, and creamy or warm whites add warmth, while keeping the space feeling light.

TEXTURE – Honed marble and travertine are the perfect marriage of rustic and modern. They are a great choice for floors, countertops, and backsplashes.

METAL ACCENTS – Darker metals like wrought iron, aged copper, or brushed brass bring a modern edge and richness without being fussy. Use these in light fixtures and accent pieces on shelves and tables.

CLEAN-LINED FURNITURE – Keep spaces modern with furniture that has clean, sleek lines. Make it rustic by adding a nubby textured throw or a natural sisal rug for added warmth and texture.

ADD A TOUCH OF GREEN – A live plant or indoor tree is a great way to bring the outdoors and nature inside. If you do not have a green thumb, faux branches in a piece of pottery can also add movement and texture to your space.

FABRICS – Linen, wool, jute, and leather all provide a modern texture while looking rustic and feeling comfortable.

While designing your rustic modern space, remember the words of the famous designer Coco Chanel, who said, “Before you leave the house, look in the mirror and take one thing off.” This simple rule of accessory editing will help you create a more polished, less overdone look when combining these two styles into one cohesive design.

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

Glass Container

Inspiration for Spring

By SARAH PETERSON



Mason Jar Lanterns

Add some soft light to your backyard for the upcoming warm-weather nights.



Easter Favor Jar

Fill a glass container with lid with trinkets and chocolate eggs for Easter.

Succulent Terrarium

Build your own miniature terrarium with easy-to-grow succulents



Everyday Vases

Display a few fresh blooms in any drinking glass for a quick vase.



Lemon-Fresh Solutions

FOR A CLEANER HOME

By SARAH PETERSON

Spring is here, bringing the perfect opportunity for a fresh start at home. It's time to get winter dirt and stale air out of our homes, and when it comes to cleaning, lemons are a versatile, natural household agent that can get the job done. Due to their high concentration of citric acid, lemons can cut through grease, dissolve mineral deposits and soap scum, deodorize, polish, and even act as an antibacterial agent - not to mention leave a fresh, chemical-free scent. Here are some useful ways to incorporate lemons into your spring cleaning regimen and beyond:

Clean microwave: Combine lemon juice and water in a microwave-safe bowl, heat for 3-5 minutes, then wipe away loosened grime.

Freshen garbage disposal: Grind frozen lemon peels, ice cubes, and salt to clean and freshen the disposal.

Deodorize cutting boards and sinks: Scrub cutting boards and stainless steel sinks with a halved lemon and salt to remove stains and odors.

Polish chrome and copper: Rub faucets, drains, and copper pots with a lemon-and-salt mixture to remove tarnish and spots. Rinse well.

Clean windows: Mix 1/2 cup lemon juice with 1 cup each of water and white vinegar for a sparkling, chemical-free window or glass cleaner.

Disinfect toilets: Sprinkle 1 cup each of baking soda and white vinegar in the toilet bowl. Add the juice of one lemon and let sit for 15-20 minutes. Scrub with a toilet brush, then flush.

Remove rust: Squeeze lemon juice over mild rust spots, sprinkle with salt, scrub, and rinse thoroughly.

Eliminate odors and freshen air: Simmer lemon peels with rosemary and water on the stove. Place halved lemons in the fridge to absorb odors.

Polish furniture: Mix one part lemon juice with two parts olive oil to gently polish wooden furniture. Apply in a circular motion, then buff with a clean cloth.

Brighten laundry: Add half a cup of lemon juice to your laundry during the wash cycle to naturally whiten whites and remove stains.

Repel insects: Place lemon peels near doorways, windowsills, or cracks to help repel ants and other small insects.

Add color: A bowl of bright lemons is the perfect pop of color for your table or counter. Their natural, fresh scent energizes any space.

There's no need to use harsh chemicals when cleaning our homes — look no further than your fruit bowl. Take care with surfaces that might be sensitive to acid, such as natural stone (marble, granite, or travertine), hardwood floors, cast iron, delicate fabrics, or brass-plated items. Always test on a small, hidden area first. Happy cleaning!



The Problem with Dogs (and Cats)

By DR. JIM ZIEGLER

A frequent reason for an owner to surrender a pet to a humane society is a behavioral problem. This can be anything under the sun, but with dogs, it is often a problem with aggression, and with cats, it is frequently poor litter box use. Aggression in dogs is not always toward a human, but often another pet in the house. Litter box problems in cats are frequently due to a cat urinating outside of the box.

I have always said that the problem with animals is that they act like animals. Dogs will act like dogs and cats will act like cats. For them, what we consider to be a behavior problem may simply be natural behavior for their species. Dogs will fight, and cats will mark, among other things. We, as pet owners, often expect them to comply with our expectations and to meet our standards. If they do not, they may not continue to live in their existing home.

Everyone will have their own tolerance level for what issues they are willing to take on as a project. Some people are willing to work with almost any problem. Others have no tolerance at all. And then there are the masses in



between. Plus, every pet with a problem has a certain degree of salvageability. Many problem pets are never going to be "cured" but can be trained and managed with the proper time and attention. Others may have a very poor prognosis, even with intense intervention.

One of the frustrating things about working in a humane society is that we often see pets who were essentially ruined by their owners. Whether they

come in as a stray or a surrender, they were set up for failure through no or improper intervention for their issue. Many behavior problems, if addressed early, can be resolved, or at least well managed. It is often the case that by the time a pet gets into a humane society, a behavior problem is a big challenge and sometimes beyond hope. That does not mean that efforts are not made to try to rehabilitate the pet, but it takes time and effort that may or may not succeed.

Caring for a pet involves many things. Addressing their behavioral needs is as important as anything, if not more so. Not providing the proper training and enrichment for a pet could essentially be a fatal blow if the behavior problem spirals out of control. It is always heartbreaking to see the demise of a pet occur, knowing that it was potentially avoidable.

Pet ownership should never be taken lightly. It is a huge responsibility and requires time, resources, and commitment. All facets of a pet's well-being should be considered before committing to a long-term relationship.

Dr. Jim Ziegler has been a veterinarian for close to four decades. He loves working with animal shelters and rescue groups. He currently works part-time at the Fox Valley Humane Association and the Humane Society of Waupaca County, along with doing some independent work helping pets and pet owners in need.

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Rocky

Rocky is a 5-year-old male neutered husky mix. He has a bright and outgoing personality and loves every person that he meets. Rocky prefers the company of humans and is seeking a home without other dogs.



Theodore & Leonora

Theodore is 3.5 years old, and Leonora is 2.5 years old. This bonded pair loves bathing in the sunshine and watching over their humans. They are an adorable matching set who enjoy attention on their terms.



Marguerite

Marguerite is a 2-year-old spayed female. She has proven to be outgoing in her foster home, is curious, and enjoys head pets and ear scratches! She may enjoy having another feline companion in the home.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF A GARAGE

For a certain type of person, the interior of their home is like a showroom for their lives — a curated selection of throw pillows, family photos, and word art that says, “This is how we like to think of ourselves.” I’d suggest most of us are this way, perhaps without the word art.

But if the house is the showroom, the garage is the archive. It’s the detritus of a family’s distinct eras, represented by physical callbacks you can hold in your hand, accumulating in layers. Part unspecified utility space, part oversized junk drawer. Sometimes you can even put a car in there.

Stepping inside, I see the cobwebbed remnants of hobbies I pursued passionately for less than an hour, hiding behind the plastic tchotchkes that overtook everything when my sons started gobbling up real estate. And these disparate items tell a story, told in two parts so far.

The first act begins when my wife and I purchased the home after getting married in 2016. Our house was (and is) small, with limited room for stretching our legs or, more importantly, entertaining our dirtbag friends. Fortunately, we had the garage: covered with TVs and neon bar signs on all sides, it acted as an exposed-beam sanctuary for countless Packer games and all-hours gatherings of all persuasions. These were special years, if not always productive.

That era eventually gave way to the one we’re nearing the end of now. As

our boys grew, we entertained less frequently, playdates notwithstanding. We laid down carpet so the kids could crawl. The same rafters that once vibrated with the cheers of a Jordy Nelson touchdown now held Fisher-Price swings, and the dark corners where we once hunted for



ONE MORE THING

By TYLER SJOSTROM

lost beer-pong balls now gathered the fine, multicolored dust of pulverized sidewalk chalk. These were special years as well, and as different as could be from the previous ones.

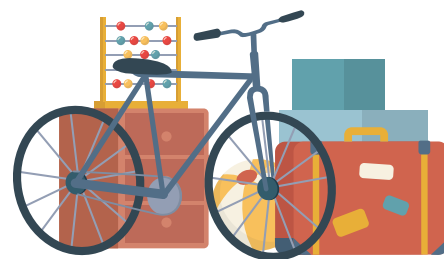
In the background, a dramatic B-plot was unfolding. The decadence of the “party-hut” years caught up with me

at the dawn of the Fisher-Price years, and the garage sometimes acted as a different setting entirely. It was where I hid. It was where I tried to disguise the fact that I was struggling. Later, after I got myself together (4.5 years this month), I’d go there at night with my guitar to write songs about all these strands — the honeymoon years, the parent-in-training years, and the messy education in between. The garage contains multitudes.

We’re entering a new era now. The plastic toys have been replaced by bikes and baseball bats. We keep a table up year-round exclusively for puzzles and Lego sets. We still host friends for the Packers, so the previous eras are still present in the new one.

All the ebbs and flows of a family, housed in one unassuming parking structure. These next six or so months are the best of the year with the door up, and there will be many new chapters to pile atop the old ones. Because while the showroom is nice, the garage is where the real signs of life accumulate.

Sometimes you can even put a car in there.



Tyler Sjostrom is an Appleton-based writer who will show you pictures of his kids whether you ask for them or not. Heckle him at tysjostrom@gmail.com or read more at tyler-sj.com.



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