

# FoxCities Magazine



## The Big Idea

*Five nonprofits share their top initiatives*

Kitchen design trends | Breaking down menopause | Meat markets bring nostalgia

December 2014

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*Celebrating the Place We Call Home.*



foxcitiesmagazine.com

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#### *The Big Idea*

Five area nonprofits examine their impact on the Fox Cities and the initiatives they hope to accomplish moving into the New Year.

By Amy Hanson

## foxcitiesmagazine.com

● The days are dwindling and soon we will be able to unveil our new gift to you! Coming in 2015, watch for the brand-new website.



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Alex Tyink of Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin.  
Photo by Dave Jackson of Jackson & Co., Appleton

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## Creating comfort Thompson's knits bring coziness to cold-weather ware

Cathy Thompson has a lot on her plate. She has a part-time job, works with local organizations to boost civic engagement, is conducting a study on the rising threat of human trafficking in our area, volunteers with her church and, in the winter months, strives to keep the Fox Cities warm with the wide assortment of hats, mittens, scarves, socks and other cozy clothing she creates as a fiber artist.

With such a busy schedule, Thompson says the arts play a vital role in keeping her life balanced. "The knitting and the gardening and the photography really help me keep my sanity. As I said before, if you're working in the realm of politics, ... it's stuff you have no control over. So, you do what you can do. You do your diligence, and then you go home and make some bread or you go home and make a sweater and hope it all comes out all right," she says.

Looking at the displays of the Atlas Mill Boutique, where Thompson has been a resident artist for the last four years, it appears she goes home to knit quite often. Sweaters, wraps, scarves and hats in many beautiful colors and fibers are

prominent figures in the boutique.

"Left to my own designs, I knit eight to 10 hours a day," she says. Most of the time, her other activities keep her from all-day sessions, but knitting in a sunny spot in her home supplies a euphoria that can be difficult to walk away from.

Though she was first introduced to the fiber arts as a young girl, she didn't pick it up in



Photos by Jennifer Clausing



earnest until after she finished art school at Lawrence University. In school, she focused on pottery. Knitting provided a more mobile way to express her artistry. "You can do it while you're waiting at the doctor's office and that was a big thing for me actually," she says. "I hate waiting."

Her artistry has only grown as she has learned and created new techniques, many times on trans-Atlantic flights, and found new materials with which to work.

Thompson uses natural fibers from all over the world to help create unique and comfortable pieces that have structural integrity and really catch the eye. "This is a fabulous time to be knitting, absolutely fabulous, because there is so much available," she says.

With all of these resources, Thompson is able to keep doing what she loves—being creative. "I hope that people will enjoy what they buy," she says. "Every project has some love that goes into it."

For Thompson, the next project on her plate is localizing wool sales. She wants to connect alpaca breeders with local spinners to bring down production costs. "I really have a dream of working with the area alpaca breeders association in terms of doing some dialogue," she says. "If we can get to a point where it would be more competitive (with foreign wool), I would feel good about that."

**Name:** Cathy Thompson  
**Residence:** Appleton  
**Medium:** Fibers  
**Price range:** \$5–250; \$35 on average.



—By Jennifer Clausing

## HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT



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**WE STUMPED YOU!**

the correct answer is Saint Timothy  
Lutheran Church in Menasha



*Centennial Centre is a vibrant mixed-use development project.*

## Village of Hobart — Greatness is growing

Hobart has its own Jack-in-the-soybean-field story, a tale that has led to the village's new motto: "Greatness is Growing." Hobart's acquisition of a 350-acre soybean field along State Highway 29 has become a project receiving high praise and statewide recognition. In 2009, the Village launched its master plan for Centennial Centre at Hobart, with immediate implementation, even in the darkest economic times.

Centennial Centre is a vibrant mixed-use development project within a Tax Increment District that has installed more than \$100 million in private/public partnerships for new homes and

engineering, architectural, infrastructure and construction jobs for the local region, along with excellent business for local industry suppliers. There is no doubt that Hobart's mixed-use development project contributes steady paychecks to many regional households, and helps stabilize the regional economy as Brown County continues to move through difficult economic times.

Prior to Centennial Centre at Hobart, and an additional mixed-use tax increment district in southern Hobart, the village's housing stock, consisted of very expensive homes and farms. Today, the housing diversity for residents of various lifestyles and income levels provides town homes, apartments, more affordable homes and continued growth of new higher-priced homes. The housing stock of Hobart more appropriately accommodates its residents and workforce.

So, how has all this happened? The Village Board of Trustees authorized a simple and time-sensitive planning and approval process that understands time is money to developers and builders.

"We waste no time and are willing to call special meetings when necessary to get shovels in the ground that provide a cost-efficient process for developers while simultaneously requiring high-quality projects," said Andrew Vickers, village administrator. The two-step process includes moving a project through the Site Review Committee while simultaneously moving a developer's agreement through the Village Board. Staff works intensely and closely with project applicants to ensure successful outcomes for their projects.

Readers are encouraged to visit [buildinhobart.com](http://buildinhobart.com). It's one thing to read great words; it's quite another to see the beauty of Centennial Centre at Hobart. We look forward now to the commercial phase of this very successful mixed-use development project.



*Master Plan of Centennial Centre at Hobart*

manufacturing firms. The village is now launching its commercial core for Centennial Centre with a refinement to its original master plan that will create "downtown Hobart" for upscale transition from an essentially bedroom community of Green Bay to a self-sustaining government now bringing commercial and personal services to its existing and new residents. At the start of Centennial Centre, Hobart's population was 5,890. Today in 2014, the population is 7,600.

Hobart has seen a workforce on-site at Centennial Centre every day since November 2009. Centennial Centre has provided ongoing



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## Holiday events

### 1-7 | Festival of Trees

Join the Fox Cities Building for the Arts as designer trees and wreaths are put on display, along with a silent auction and kids' activities. Various times. Trout Museum of Art, Appleton. 733-4089.

### 1-9 | Merry-Time Festival of Trees

Visitors are invited to see a grand extravaganza of trees. Attendees will have the opportunity to enter a raffle in the hopes of winning their favorite tree. 10am-5pm. Door County Maritime Museum. 743-5958.

### 1-31 | Downtown for the Holidays

Stroll the Avenue and shop the 60-plus unique shops or enjoy the 70-plus pubs, clubs and restaurants! Downtown Appleton. 954-9112.

### 1-31 | Oshkosh Celebration of Lights

From the 100-foot tree to the animated light displays and holiday music, visitors will escape to a magical place. Mon., Dec. 22, 5-9pm; Tues.-Sun., 5-9pm. Menominee Park, Oshkosh. 303-9200.

### 1 thru Jan. 4 | Christmas in the Mansion

Ribbons, packages, lights and frivolities will warm your visit with traditions from Christmases past. Tue.-Fri. 10am-4pm, Sat. & Sun. 11am-4pm. Rahr-West Art Museum, Manitowoc. 683-4501.

### 1 thru Jan. 11 | Deck the Halls

Stop in to participate in activities, events and exhibits, including a Christmas Village and Sawyer Family Traditions. Tues-Sat, 10a.m.-4:30p.m.; Sun, 1-4:30p.m. Oshkosh Public Museum. 236-5799.

### 2 | Electric City Christmas Parade

Starts at Wisconsin and Depot, goes down Wisconsin to Hwy. 55, then south to Third Street; west on Third to end at Reaume. Join us at City Hall after the parade for cookies and hot chocolate with Santa. 6pm. Municipal Building, Kaukauna. 766-6335.

### 2-27 | A Frank's Christmas

Visit the Christmas windows of days gone by at Prange's, but this time they come to life. Various times. 8pm. Meyer Theatre, Green Bay. 494-3401.

### 3 | Holiday Barbershop Bistro Dinner Show

The Fox Valleyaires and the Neenah-Menasha Roundtable Kiwanis are combining their efforts to kick off the 2014 holiday season. Enjoy a 5-star dinner and cappella four-part entertainment. 6:30pm. Grand Meridian, Appleton. 766-1861.

### 3 | Midweek Matinee

Featuring "A Christmas Story." Refreshments will be provided. 1pm. Kimberly Public Library. 788-7515.

### 3 | Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis

7:30pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. (800) 895-0071.

### 4 | Santa Claus is coming to town!

For children ages 3 through 2nd grade and their parents or guardians. Refreshments will be served, along with a visit from Santa. Parents welcome to bring their cameras. 6-7pm. Washington Recreation Building, Neenah. 886-6060.

### 4 | Sparkling Glass for the Holidays

Create a small dish perfect for the holidays. Experience with glass cutting is helpful. 6-8pm. Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass, Neenah. 751-4658.

### 4-7, 11-14 | Christmas Stars 2014

A dazzling revue featuring songs, dances, a re-creation of New York's Christmas parade and a live nativity. Various times. Xavier Fine Arts Theatre, Appleton. 733-8840.

### 5 | A Very Neenah Christmas

Rudolph Run/walk from Shattuck Park to the Christmas tree at Gateway Plaza, live mannequin window displays, caroling, ice carver, handbell choir, free horse-drawn carriage rides and Santa! 6-8pm. Downtown Neenah. 722-6335.

### 5 | The Christmas on the Avenue Concert

Davina and The Vagabonds perform. Lawrence Memorial Chapel, Appleton. Doors open at 6:30 pm. (877) 508-9191.

### 5-6 | UW-Manitowoc Lakeshore Ensemble Festival of Christmas

7:30pm. Capitol Civic Center, Manitowoc. 688-2184.

### 5-6 | Victorian Tea at Historic Hazelwood House

Includes a luncheon, short program and tour. 1-3pm. Hazelwood Historic House, Green Bay. 437-1840.

### 5-7, 12-14, 19-21, 26-30 | Green Bay Botanical Garden's WPS Garden of Lights

More than 250,000 lights crafted into botanical-themed spectacles! Visit gbbg.org for more info. 5-9pm. Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay. 490-9457.

### 5, 12, 19, 26 | Victorian Christmas

Experience Victorian Christmas traditions. 6-8pm. Hearthstone Historic House Museum, Appleton. 730-8204.

### 6 | Chilton Parade of Lights

The parade will begin downtown near the Central House and proceed west on Grand Street to State Street. Then, the parade will head south on State Street to Washington Street to end at City Hall. 5pm. Downtown Chilton. 849-4042.

### 6 | Christmas Open House

Kids are welcome to enjoy craft activities and decorate Christmas cookies. 11am-2pm. Navarino Nature Center, Shiocton. (715) 758-6999.

### 6 | DOOR CANcer Holiday Home Tour

Tour homes are beautifully trimmed for the holidays including the Merry-Time Festival of Trees display. 10am-4pm. Door County Maritime Museum, Sturgeon Bay. 743-5958.

### 6 | EAA's annual Christmas in the Air

A day full of holiday cheer, treats, local music, choral and dance groups, and a visit from Santa Claus. Weather permitting, he may even make his arrival via helicopter. 11am-4pm. EAA AirVenture Museum, Oshkosh. 426-4800.

### 6 | A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Modeled after the historic festival at Kings College, Cambridge, the ceremony includes beautiful seasonal music and readings that tell the Christmas story. 1-4pm. Lawrence University Memorial Chapel, Appleton. 955-2224.

### 6 | Holiday Art & Craft Sale

Featuring more than 30 artists and craftspeople. Free admission and parking. 9am-2pm. Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Appleton. 731-0849.

### 6 | Holiday Bells Are Ringing in the Glass Studio

Make a glass bell ornament. 10am-1pm. Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass, Neenah. 751-4658.

### 6 | Live Nativity

Gather with the animals residents in a Belgian Cathedral barn for carols and seasonal readings. Dress warm and bring a small flashlight and bell to ring. 7-8:30pm. The Bridge-Between Retreat Center, Denmark. 864-7230.

### 6 | Santa on the Tugboat 'John Purves'

Join Santa on board the historic tugboat to share your Christmas wishes. Due to the size of the tug, only two adults can accompany each child. 10am-1pm. Door County Maritime Museum, Sturgeon Bay. 743-5958.

### 6 | UW-Green Bay Messiah with Choral and Concert Choir

A performance of Handel's Messiah. 7:30pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. 465-2726.

### 6 | Wreath Making Workshop

Learn how to create a 24-inch wreath using natural materials from the wildlife area. RSVP by Dec. 3. 9am. Navarino Nature Center, Shiocton. 751-4658.

### 6-7 | The Nutcracker

Presented by Makaroff Youth Ballet, in collaboration with the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center. Accompanied by the Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra and the Lawrence Academy Girl Choir. Sat. 7:30pm, Sun. 1pm. Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, Appleton. 730-3760.

### 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28 | Timm House Christmas

Featuring themed decorations in each room according to a special theme. A guided tour of the house will be provided, along with entertainment and refreshments. 1-4pm. Herman C. Timm House, New Holstein. 948-7748.

## 'The Nutcracker' returns

One joyous Christmas Eve, as young Clara celebrates with friends and family, the mood shifts as a mysterious figure enters the parlor and gives her a small toy nutcracker she soon finds out is more than a simple wooden toy.

For the second time, the Makaroff School of Ballet will present the classic Christmas musical "The Nutcracker" filled with action and fantasy Dec. 6-7 at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center.

"Both Makaroff Youth Ballet and the Fox Cities P.A.C. are excited to bring this title back to the community after the successful premiere in December 2012," says Tara Brzozowski Fox Cities P.A.C. director of marketing and public relations.

The Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra and the Lawrence Academy Girl Choir will bring Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's musical score alive as Clara wakes up in the night and realizes her new Christmas nutcracker is much more than a children's toy.

"There's something magical about this music," says Brian Groner, music director of the Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra. "This is a charming work and the music varies from tender and evocative to powerful and inspiring."

Local ballet students between the ages of 5-18 have been practicing since September and will be joined by three professional dancers for the performances. Kyle Davis, playing the Cavalier, and Jahna Frantziskonis, a Sugar Plum Fairy, will travel from the Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle, along with Jennifer Ferrigno, playing the Snow Queen, from the Milwaukee Ballet, will dance alongside the ballet students.

"This isn't a recital school," says Renee Ulman, president of the Makaroff Youth Ballet board of directors. "Our girls are dancing at the same caliber as some professional dancers."

This classical ballet performance is a chance to bring



Photo by Woodrow Leung

families together and watch as local musicians and dancers deliver a time-honored holiday performance.

"If audiences aren't used to ballet, The Nutcracker is a good intro into what classical ballet is," says Renee Ulman, president of the Makaroff Youth Ballet board of directors. "This is an art form that I don't think a lot of cities the size of Appleton can say that they have and this is a really good opportunity for families to start their own holiday tradition."

— By Haley Walters



8 | Cookie Decorating

Join us for a continental breakfast, cookie decorating and entertainment for the whole family. 9-11am. Thompson Community Center. 225-1700.

9 | Caroling, Caroling

Performance by the Fox Valleyaires, One Button Short and Street Corner Harmony, which is produced around a holiday radio show. The Badger State CORO Angeli Girl Choir also performs under the direction of Dr. Kevin Meidl. 7-8:30pm. Perry Hall, UW-Fox Valley, Menasha. 734-9495.

9 | Jingle Jingle, Mix & Mingle: Silent Auction and Tree Raffle

Join our festivities, including heavy hors d'oeuvres buffet, silent auction of unique holiday items and our Merry-Time Festival of Trees raffle drawing. 5:30-8:30pm. Door County Maritime Museum, Sturgeon Bay. 743-5958.

12 | JJ Heller Christmas

Folksy, acoustic songs. Heller is complemented by harmonies sung by her husband, Dave. Doors open 30 minutes before each show. Bring a non-perishable food item for local pantries. 6:30pm, 8:45pm. Cup O Joy, Green Bay. 435-3269.

12 | The Lettermen Christmas Show

Tony Butala, Donovan Tea and Bobby Poynton will delight the audience. 7:30-9:30pm. Capitol Civic Center, Manitowoc. 683-2184.

12-14 | Green Bay Nutcracker Ballet

The Northeastern Wisconsin Dance Organization will perform "The Nutcracker." Various times. Meyer Theatre, Green Bay. 433-3343.

12-14, 19-21 | A Celtic Christmas Show

A live concert of Celtic songs and traditional Christmas carols by soloists, Tom Clegg, Kerryynn Kraemer-Curtiss and Mandy Randloff, with a choir of adults and children. 2:30-4:30pm. or 7:30-9:30pm. Plymouth Arts Center. 892-8409.

13 | Holiday Make & Take

Make eight unique gifts and wrap them up with the assistance of our volunteer team. Appropriate for K-5th-graders. Registration due by Nov. 30. 9-11am or 11am-1pm. Mosquito Hill Nature Center, New London. 779-6433.

13 | Lawrence Academy of Music Girl Choir Performance

The girl choir at Lawrence University will perform. 2-3:30pm or 7-8:30pm. Lawrence Memorial Chapel, Appleton. 832-6632.

13, 20 | The Spirit of Christmas Past

Performers, dancing, baking, crafts, Christmas stories, wagon rides and a visit from Santa. Everyone who attends with a canned food item will receive \$1 off admission. Noon-6pm. Heritage Hill State Historical Park, Green Bay. 448-5150.

13-14 | A Holiday in History

Celebrate holiday traditions of the past with music and family activities. 11am-3pm. Pinecrest Historical Village, Manitowoc. 684.4445.

15 | Christmas Concert and Dessert

Join us for the sounds of Christmas with desserts and coffee. 1-3pm. Thompson Community Center. 225-1700.

18 | Cory Chisel's Evening of Holiday Mischief

Appleton's hometown balladiere returns to rock the Chapel with original and holiday tunes. 7pm Lawrence Memorial Chapel. Mileofmusic.com.

19 | Boogie and the Yo-Yo'Z - Christmas With You

Back by popular demand! 7:30pm. The Grand Opera House, Oshkosh. 424-2355.

19-20 | Holiday Pops

The Green Bay Symphony Orchestra, The Dudley Birder Chorale and Birder Studio of Performing Arts team up to present a program of Christmas carols and holiday favorites. Fri. 7:30pm., Sat. 2:30pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. 465-2726.

20 | Christmas at the Chapel

Featuring Christmas songs, audience sing-alongs and a candle-lit finale. 2pm. or 7:30pm. Lawrence University Memorial Chapel, Appleton. 832-9700.

20 | Holiday Fun Fest

Thrivent Financial's Avenue of Ice, visits with Santa and his reindeer, horse-drawn carriage rides and more! 10:30am.-2:30pm. Houdini Plaza and College Avenue, Downtown Appleton. 954-9112.

20 | Krause Family Christmas

Fabulous family harmonies featuring gospel, folk and more. Bring a non-perishable food item for local pantries. 7:30pm. Cup O Joy, Green Bay. 435-3269.



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Photo courtesy of Heritage Hill State Historical Park

## Park recreates historical Christmas traditions with upcoming event

Those with a wonder for Christmas unspoiled by holiday materialism can consider attending The Spirit of Christmas Past at Heritage Hill State Historical Park in Green Bay.

The park will host two afternoon events, one on Dec. 13 and the other on Dec. 20 from noon to 6 p.m., each allowing visitors a chance to explore Christmas traditions from different periods in history.

"There will be several different time periods represented," says Kayla Filen interpretive events coordinator for the park. "We focus on the 1870s to 1930s. People can go to different areas of the park and see the different styles of decorations and enjoy our eight different Christmas tress decorated for that time period."

Filen says the decorations and activities throughout the park are a unique and interesting way to look at Christmas.

"I love seeing the Christmas trees and decorations from different time periods," says Filen. "The park has a nice atmosphere and ambiance about it during the event."

Aside from all of the historical decor, visitors will have the chance to listen to live music performed in the Moravian Church and throughout the park grounds.

There also will be plenty of historical dancing, horse-drawn carriage rides, a visit from St. Nick and concessions for sale.

Visitors with a sweet tooth can frost their own Christmas cookie or purchase a cheesecake — or just a slice — from Cheesecake Heaven, who will be attending both events with their desserts.



Photo courtesy of Heritage Hill State Historical Park

Tickets are available on the Heritage Hill website, heritagehillgb.org, or at the door. They are \$9 for adults, \$8 for senior citizens, \$7 for children and children 3 and under are free.

If visitors bring a canned good for the Salvation Army, they will receive \$1 off of their admission price.

Filen says the event is not possible without the help of the park's volunteers and all proceeds made through admission will go back to the park.

This event will have visitors remembering Christmases long before them, and they may even learn a thing or two about history they did not expect.

— By Haley Walters

- 21 | **The Oak Ridge Boys: Hits and Christmas Show**  
Award-winning music along with Christmas favorites. 3-5:30pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. 465-2726.
- 22 | **Lorie Line — The 25th Anniversary Christmas Special**  
Featuring the Fab 5 and special vocalist. 7:30-10pm. Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, Appleton. 730-3760.
- 27 | **Jim Brickman on a Winter's Night**  
Sounds of the season with lush instruments and soaring vocals. 7:30-10pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. 465-2726.
- 31 | **Mile of Music's New Year's Encore Eve**  
Six artists return to ring in the New Year in style. Dinner, 5pm; concert 8pm. Radisson Paper Valley Hotel Grand Ballroom, Appleton. 733-8000.

## Arts events

- 3-6 | **Forever Plaid**  
One stormy night in the 1960s "The Plaids" — Sparky, Jinx, Frankie and Smudge, four eager singers — are tragically killed in a car crash on the way to their first big gig. They have one chance to return from the afterlife and put on a show. 7:30pm, 2pm. The Grand Opera House, Oshkosh. 424-2355.
- 14 | **Opening Reception and Awards Ceremony**  
Join us for the opening reception and awards ceremony for the Watercolor Wisconsin exhibit, an annual exhibit since 1966. 2-4pm. Racine Art Museum. (262) 638-8300.
- 15 | **Sister Act**  
"Sister Act" tells the story of Deloris Van Cartier, a wannabe diva whose life takes a surprising turn when she witnesses a crime and the cops hide her in the last place anyone would think to look — a convent! 7-10pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. (800) 895-0071.

## Music events & concerts

- 7 | **UW-Fox Jazz Band Concert**  
This event is free and open to the public. 7-9:30pm. James W. Perry Hall, Menasha. 832-2625.
- 10 | **UW-Green Bay Wind Ensemble and Symphony**  
The UW-Green Bay music students will present a musical performance open to the public. 6:30pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. 494-3401.
- 12 | **UW-Fox Winter Concert**  
The Fox Valley Concert Band under the direction of Dr. Marc Sackman. Free and open to the public. 7:30pm. James W. Perry Hall, Menasha. 832-2625.
- 12 | **We are Leo**  
Doors open 30 minutes before the show. Bring a non-perishable food item for local pantries. 7:30pm. Cup O Joy, Green Bay. 435-3269.
- 13 | **Saturday Night Dance**  
The dance will feature Arline Schneider Country, waltzes, polkas and rhumbas. 7-10pm. Thompson Community Center, Appleton. 225-1700.
- 13 | **George Winston**  
Pianist performs seasonal selections, including Vince Guaraldi. 8pm. The Grand Opera House, Oshkosh. grandoperahouse.org or 424-2350.
- 13 | **Isthmus Brass Ensemble**  
Directed by brass icon John Stevens, Isthmus Brass is Wisconsin's premier large brass ensemble. 7:30pm. Historic West High School, Green Bay. 338-1801.

- 13 | **Lawrence Academy of Music Girl Choir Performance**  
2 & 7pm. Lawrence Memorial Chapel, Appleton. 832-6632.
- 14 | **Neenah Community Band Winter Concert**  
The Neenah Community Band will be performing a free concert. Donations are appreciated. 2pm. Perry Hall, UW Fox Valley, Menasha. 886-6060.
- 14 | **Sunday Concert Series**  
The Neenah Public Library presents a performance by Bill and Kate Isles. 2pm. Neenah Public Library, Neenah. 886-6315.
- 14, 22 | **Music @ the Library**  
The Appleton Public Library features Sunday afternoon concerts at the library. 2-3pm. Appleton Public Library, Appleton. 832-6392.
- 19 | **Danan Kane**  
Doors open at 6:30pm for the performance. Please bring a non-perishable food item to stock local pantry shelves. 7:30-10pm. Cup O Joy, Green Bay. 465-3269.
- 20 | **Saturday Night Dance**  
The dance will feature Still Cruisin' Band and '50s, '60s and '70s country rock. 7-10pm. Thompson Community Center, Appleton. 225-1700.

## Opening exhibits

- 5 | **19th Annual Holiday Membership Exhibit**  
Thru Jan. 23. Two- and three-dimensional fine art media. A festive reception will be held Dec. 5, 4-4:30pm with live music and complementary appetizers. Plymouth Arts Center. 892-8409.
- 14 | **Watercolor Wisconsin**  
Thru April 25. A statewide competition organized by the museum annually since 1966. The exhibition takes a contemporary approach, while it emphasizes the possibilities inherent in painting on paper in a wide range of sizes and formats. Racine Art Museum. (262) 638-8300.

## Community & cultural events


- 3, 10, 17 | **Family & Teen Open Gym**   
Open gyms will be held on Wednesday evenings for teens and their families (14 and under must be accompanied by an adult). The gym will be supervised, a volleyball net and balls will be provided, but attendees should bring their own basketballs. 6:30-8:30pm. Shattuck Middle School, Neenah. 886-6060.
- 4 | **Owl Prowl**  
Join a naturalist and venture out on the sanctuary trails in search of owls! Hot chocolate will be offered after the hike. 4:30pm. Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Green Bay. 391-3671.
- 4, 18 | **Soup & Ski**  
Ski and explore the sanctuary's trails with a staff naturalist, then head back to the Nature Center for a warm bowl of soup. Noon. Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Green Bay. 391-3671.
- 6 | **Can't Depend on Snow**  
Festivities including sled dog ride, races, pictures with santa and more. 10am. Rolling Meadows Golf Course, Fond du Lac. cantdependonsnow.org or 924-0132.
- 6, 7, 13 | **Christmas Tree Sale**  
Cut your own tree for \$20. Sizes range from eight feet to 20 feet. Pre-cut trees available. 11am-3pm. Navarino Nature Center, Shiocton. (715) 758-6999.





Photo by Joe del Tufo

## George Winston takes the stage

The Grand Opera House in Oshkosh is getting a treat this season with the arrival of George Winston on Dec. 13 at 8 p.m. Winston

has previously performed at the Grand Opera House and spoke fondly of the venue during a recent phone interview.

"The acoustics are great, I really like the area, and the venue is the right size for me," Winston says.

Many of the songs he released have been inspired by the seasons. "Growing up in the North around Montana, the seasons were all there, and they were so different," Winston says. "There are so many different topographies, and that's my inspiration to play. I just sort of think that way (in music), like English is your first verbal language."

Winston began playing the organ in 1967 at age 18, and later switched to the piano around 1971. He has been performing piano for audiences for 34 years, starting in 1980. His music draws from a few different music traditions, including New Orleans R&B, and stride piano, an older jazz style from the '20s and '30s.

His upcoming performance will feature songs inspired by the fall and winter seasons, as well as compositions by Vince Guaraldi, a major influence of Winston's. "Over the years I have played about 60 of his pieces, but a lot of them are from the Peanuts soundtrack and are seasonal because of the nature of the Peanuts episodes," Winston explains.

Some of the techniques in the songs Winston performs utilize the piano in ways beyond simply playing the keys. "I have some songs that want certain sounds that are available in the inside of the piano, meaning the attack of the strings is different," Winston says. One of these techniques involves, "playing harmonics where you touch the string lightly and pluck it for sort of a chime sound; it's more known on guitar for that technique, but the strings in the piano can do the same thing," he explains.

Whether you enjoy the winter or not, Winston's performance featuring seasonal-inspired tunes at the Grand Opera House is an experience you do not want to miss. If you plan to attend, consider bringing a donation of canned food for an area food bank. For more information about the performance, visit [grandoperahouse.org](http://grandoperahouse.org) or call 424-2355.

— By Jessica Morgan

### 9 | Free Legal Assistance

Volunteer lawyers, paralegals and pre-law students will be on hand to assist with simple legal questions, forms or referrals to attorneys offering reduced-cost and/or unbundled services. 4-6pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

### 12 | Wright Brothers Memorial Banquet

Darrell Collins, a foremost authority on the Wright brothers and their effort to perfect powered flight, will highlight the event. The banquet commemorates the 111th anniversary of the Wright brothers' first powered flight. 6-9pm. EAA AirVenture Museum, Oshkosh. 426-5907.

### 15 | Knit2Together

Knitters of all experience levels are welcome to join us at this fun, informal knitting circle. Bring your current project, learn new stitches and patterns, or learn to knit from the cast-on. 6:30-8pm. Appleton Public Library, Appleton. 832-6392.

### 27 | Bingo Bonanza

Community members are invited to play bingo at the library as a part of its Winter Break-It-Up program. 1-2pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 27 | Paper Valley Model Railroad Club Open House

Public open house. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated. 10am.-6pm. Paper Valley Model Railroad Club, Kaukauna. 475-2659.

### 31 | Nearly New Year's

Neenah Public Library is hosting a New Year's Eve event as a part of its Winter Break-It-Up program. 11am-noon. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 29 | Winter Fun at the Museum

Try experiments, do crafts, play games and get out of the house for a while! 1:30-3pm. New London Public Museum. 982-8520.

## Fundraisers

### 1-7 | Give-a-Kid-a-Book Campaign

Bring a new, unwrapped book suitable for a child up to age 12 to the Neenah Public Library. 9am-4pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

## Lectures, readings, presentations & discussions

### 1 | Adult Afternoon Program: Letting Go of What Holds You Back

Sandra Peterson will be the guest speaker. By letting go of what holds us back, we free ourselves to begin again and live a more balanced life. 2pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

### 1 | Embracing Wellness:

Mindfulness & Meditation  
Spiritual counselor, Judy Owen, returns to guide you through practices to create a more mindful you. 6:30pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

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Photo courtesy of Rahr-West Art Museum

## Local impressionist's work is coming home

The Rahr-West Art Museum in Manitowoc is currently hosting "Johann Berthelsen: An American Artist." The exhibit features the work and personal affects of the acclaimed impressionist artist who called Manitowoc home.

Johann Berthelsen was born in Copenhagen in 1883, but spent his formative years in Manitowoc. He then lived much of his adult life in New York City, where he painted the city snowscapes for which he became famous.

The Rahr-West Art Museum owns the snowscape pictured here, "Brooklyn Bridge." This painting, donated to the museum by Johann's wife, Helenya, provided the connection with Johann's son, Lee, and the Johann Berthelsen Conservancy, LCC in Milwaukee, which brought this exhibit to life.

"We have always thought that the proper place to start an exhibition of my father's work would be his hometown," says Lee. A family connection between the Berthelsens and the Rahrs also makes the Manitowoc museum a fitting venue for the exhibit.

From humble beginnings, Johann soon became world-renowned. During his lifetime, he met and painted for many stars including Frank Sinatra and Louis Armstrong. Sinatra owned more than 30 of Johann's paintings.

For Lee, the exhibit is very personal. "I get to say 'thank you' to the people of Manitowoc, to the people of Wisconsin for the role played ... in forming him."

The exhibit is sure to have something for everyone with history, music and a wide variety of Johann's work in oil, pastel, watercolor, monotype and charcoal depicting scenes from Wisconsin to New York. Come and appreciate the local artist who made it big, but still made it home.

For more information on the exhibit going on through Jan. 18, visit [foxcitiesmagazine.com](http://foxcitiesmagazine.com) or [rahrwestartmuseum.org](http://rahrwestartmuseum.org).

— By Jennifer Clousing

### 2 | Grief Support

Gatherings for adults who have experienced the death of a loved one. 2:30pm. Thompson Community Center, Appleton. (886) 236-8500.

### 3 | Downtown Book Club

Discuss the preselected book or join us on a "Free-for-All" day where we'll just talk about the books we love, hate and everything in between. Noon-1pm. Appleton Public Library, Appleton. 832-6392.

### 4 | Great Lakes/Great Books Club

The Door County Maritime Museum and Write On, Door County partner to present a monthly book club that features books with a Great Lakes focus. The group meets on the first Thursday of each month 10:30am. Door County Maritime Museum, Sturgeon Bay. 743-5958.

### 6 | Outagamie County Master Gardeners

The Appleton Public Library offers monthly discussions on gardening topics. 10-11:30am. Appleton Public Library, Appleton. 832-6392.

### 8 | Suburban Homesteading – Home Creamery Series

With Linda Conroy of Moonwise Herbs, Sheboygan. 6:30-8pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

### 13 | Find Your Ancestors

A speaker will provide information and tools to research your family history. 1pm-3pm. Appleton Public Library, lower level, Room C. 832-6173.

### 15 | Memory Café: Lyrics and Laughter

Memory Cafés are for those experiencing early stage dementia, mild memory loss or cognitive impairment and for family and friends of those affected. 1:30-3:30pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

## Films

### 2 | Tuesday Night Movie: How to Train Your Dragon 2

Free and open to the public. Free popcorn and pop. Rated PG. 6pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

### 4, 11, 18 | Thursday Afternoon/Night @ the Movies

The Appleton Public Library invites people to spend the afternoon or night watching movies. There will be two sessions: 4-6pm and 6-8pm. Appleton Public Library, Appleton. 832-6392.

### 16 | Tuesday Night Movie: The Wind Rises

Free and open to the public. Free popcorn and pop. Rated PG-13. 6pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

### 26 | Annie

Community members are invited to a screening as a part of the library's Winter Break-It-Up program. 1-2pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

## Classes & workshops

### 2 | Acrylic Painting Workshop

Snowman design by Julie Wilber will be painted on a glass block or an item of your own. 9am-1pm. Navarino Nature Center, Shiocton. (751) 758-6999.

### 2, 9 | Creative Journey

The Appleton Public Library invites people to participate and share ideas as we explore and nurture our inner creativity. New members welcome. Come join the Journey. 10am-noon. Appleton Public Library, Appleton. 832-6392.

### 4, 18 | Brewing Workshops: Adult Brewing Series

These are hands-on workshops led by Kevin Cullen during which participants will brew beer. 6-7:30pm. Neville Public Museum, Green Bay. 448-4462.

### 6, 13, 20 | Stroke Clinic

Don't let your child's swimming abilities regress over the winter! Each one-hour clinic focuses on perfecting a different stroke. Classes are limited to four children, so call today to book your spot. 3:15-4:15pm. Swimtastic Swim School, Menasha. 722-7946.

### 11 | Creative Writing @ the Library

The Appleton Public Library offers writing sessions led by Sharrie Robinson. 10am-noon. Appleton Public Library, Appleton. 832-6392.

### 30 | Memory Keepsakes and Thank you Cards

Neenah Public Library is hosting a card-making event as a part of its Winter Break-It-Up program. 1-2pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

## Children's events

### 1, 15 | Animal Stories For Preschoolers

Learn all about animals that hibernate. Sanctuary staff will read the stories "When I'm Sleepy" by Jane R. Howard and "Time to Sleep" by Denise Fleming. 10am. Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Green Bay. 391-3671.

### 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12 | Toddle Time

For ages 12-23 months, with a caregiver. 10:30am, 9:15am. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 2, 9 | Our Time

For ages 3-5. Caregivers welcome for newcomers and transitioning 3-year-olds. 10am. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 3 | The Teen Book Club: Throne of Glass by Sarah J. Mass

The club is open to teens in grades 6-12. The book club creates an environment for teens to spark new friendships, read books they might not have otherwise read and participate in literary discussions. 4:30pm. Oshkosh Public Library. 236-5211.

### 3, 4, 10, 11 | Lapsit

For 2-year-olds and younger 3-year-olds, with a caregiver. 10am. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 3, 10 | Baby Time

For children birth-11 months, with a caregiver. 9:15am. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.


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## Dog sledding come rain, shine or snow



True to its name, the 11th annual “Can’t Depend on Snow” event brings the excitement of dog sled races to Wisconsin regardless of the weather.

“We’ve ran in the down pouring rain, in a blizzard, when it was close to 40 degrees, and nothing stops us ... except for lightning. When it’s lightning we will delay it,” says Mike Schwant, founder of the event.

Schwant gained experience riding sled dogs in Alaska where he ran the Yukon Quest, a 1,000-mile race from Whitehorse, Yukon to Fairbanks, Alaska. “I ended up moving back here, I got a couple of dogs together and started playing around with (putting together a race) ... and then my sister got involved and as more people got involved it got bigger and bigger,” he says.

The festivities take place on Dec. 6 starting at 10 a.m. at the Rolling Meadows Golf Course in Fond Du Lac. The races, consisting of two-dog and four-dog sleighs, have been held at this location for the last 10 years. “It’s a really nice course. Even the really good teams have fun running it and it’s easy enough for beginners to run and be in an actual race,” Schwant says. “The race itself is about 2.5 miles and goes right down the fairways, and we never go on the greens. There are a few uphill runs, and of course what comes up has to come down. It’s just a really smooth, wide open course. There is only about 50 yards where you kind of go through trees.”

In addition to the races, participants can get involved in a Siberian Husky toss, silent auctions, get their picture taken with Santa, receive sled dog rides, participate in a four-person sled dog relay race challenge, and a weight-pull competition. The amount of weight the dogs pull in the competition is remarkable. “When you get up to the bigger dogs, the weight gets up to like 4,500 pounds,” Schwant says. “It’s really impressive, and the dogs have fun.”

Each year, the proceeds of the event go toward the Make A Wish Foundation. Schwant and his wife choose Make A Wish because they wanted to put the money into an organization dedicated to helping children. Through the years, they have had great experiences with Make A Wish. “I don’t think you could pick a better organization to work with,” Schwant says.

Whether you wish to adventure into the winter weather, or just want to try your luck in a silent auction for a good cause, the Can’t Depend on Snow event is an outing for everyone. For more information, visit [cantdependonsnow.org](http://cantdependonsnow.org) or call Schwant at 924-0132.

— By Jessica Morgan

### 4, 18 | Page Turners

Join in on this advanced book group for children ages 8-11. Read the book before meeting and plan to stay roughly 45 minutes. 3:30pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 4, 18 | The Middle Shelf ☎

This group is aimed at advanced readers, ages 11-14. Preregistration is required in person or by phone. 4pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 6 | Knot Tying Workshop: Cub Scouts

Complete Elective 22 “Tying it All Up”; learn how to tie five important knots and how to handle rope. 9-11am. Paper Discovery Center, Appleton. 380-7491.

### 8 | Stage Doors Education Series: Junie B. in Jingle Bells, Batman Smells ☎

Find out what Junie B. will do after she draws the name of her arch nemesis, Tattletale May, for her Secret Santa! 10am & 12:30pm. Weidner Center for the Performing Arts, Green Bay. 465-5101.

### 12 | Baby Story Times

Birth to age 2 with a parent or caregiver; older siblings may attend. The focus is on songs, finger plays, rhymes, music and movement, board books, baby playtime, developmental and age appropriate activities for babies and toddlers. 10am. Menasha Public Library. 967-3670.

### 28 | Legos @ the Library

Bring a bucket of your own Legos and see what you can create in an hour! 1:30-2:30pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6315.

### 28 | Family Games

The library will be providing family games as a part of its Winter Break-It-Up program. 1-2pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

### 29 | Science Fun

Neenah Public Library is hosting a science-themed event as part of its Winter Break-It-Up program. 1-2pm. Neenah Public Library. 886-6335.

*Calendar listings submitted to FOX CITIES Magazine are subject to change. The public is welcome to submit events online or to [calendar@foxcitiesmagazine.com](mailto:calendar@foxcitiesmagazine.com).*

### More on the Web

#### ► Expanded Calendar Listings

Our online events calendar is updated daily with concerts, classes, exhibits and more. Find out “What’s Going On” every day of the week.

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# Cooking up *togetherness*

By Emma Martin

*Kitchen design trends for  
cuisine, conversation*

Studio Kitchens photos by Tricia Satorius



**t**he oven timer dings, ice clinks at the bottom of glasses and laughter abounds from one of the most popular rooms of any home, the kitchen. Today, they are often designed with both functionality and entertaining in mind. Chopping vegetables while chatting with guests and serving beverages is made easier in kitchens that are created with multitasking in mind.

Homeowners now work with design professionals and contractors to develop spaces that can serve as hubs for their homes. Kitchens are built for both everyday life and large dinner parties. Considerations for new kitchens and remodeled spaces include items such as appliances, seating, counter space and technology integration.

## *Latest in layouts*

"The current trend is to design kitchens with entertaining in mind. Layouts are open with large islands and room for guests to be in the kitchen with the hosts," says Amy Gartzke of Gerhards in Appleton. Gartzke adds, "Islands are in demand and if space allows, some homeowners are incorporating two islands."

Islands enhance the functionality of a kitchen by serving as both a food preparation area and a space to dine. "More people are interested in how their kitchen functions for their family not just how it looks," shares Gary Fassbender of Distinctive Renovations in Appleton.

According to Ali Fagerlind of Mosquito Creek Home Renovations and Outdoor Living in Appleton, today's kitchens and dining spaces are all-in-one. "Many homeowners are choosing to have a large kitchen and entertaining space instead of having a formal dining room."

Nancy Nygaard of Studio Kitchens in Appleton shares that it also is possible to achieve the desired open concept when renovating a home with an existing dining room. "Kitchens are definitely being designed with entertaining in mind. We often take down walls between the kitchen and dining spaces to open up the area. People are finding they no longer need a formal dining room."

Homeowners are placing a priority on having large open kitchen spaces. Gartzke says, "Even if homes are getting smaller, kitchen are not." She is finding that homeowners are allocating more square footage space toward kitchens even if it means compromising space in other rooms.

## *Maximizing appliances*

Placement of appliances is a key consideration in kitchen design to maximize the cooking and preparation work efficiency of the space. "Appliance placement tends to stay with the traditional work triangle of the refrigerator, stove

and sink," shares Fagerlind. She adds, "People are also adding secondary sinks in kitchens for prep work purposes."

While the cook triangle includes the appliances primarily used for cooking, additional appliances also are being added to the mix. "In appliance trends, people are choosing double ovens often with a separate cooktop. We are also seeing more appliances being incorporated such as microwave drawers and wine refrigerators," says Gartzke.

Fagerlind concurs, "There is a big demand for double ovens and larger, almost commercial size appliances." She shares, "Like most appliances, refrigerators are increasing in size. The style trend is large french doors with bottom drawer-style freezers."

Nygaard is seeing more people choosing to incorporate convection steam ovens into their kitchens. She adds, "The steam oven steams food while it cooks. This is a healthier way to cook and works great for tasks such as reheating leftover food. It cooks faster than a traditional oven, but slower than a microwave."

There is no question appliance colors have a big impact on the overall look of a kitchen. Who can forget the avocado green and harvest gold shades of the 1980s? Currently, there is one appliance finish trending. "Stainless steel is still the most popular finish for appliances," adds Gartzke.

Though Fagerlind says there is another on the rise lately, "We have been placing GE slate finish appliances in a lot of homes."



### Beverage breakaway

“Minibars with a small, beverage-only refrigerator are also popular to keep drink preparation apart from the cooking,” says Fagerlind.

A similar setup can be done to provide quick refreshments for kids. Separate from the main cook space, a small refrigerator can be stocked with water, juice and snacks.

Nygaard adds that she works to design kitchens with three zones in mind:

- A food cleanup area
- A food preparation/cooking area
- A beverage area

“The beverage center is set up so people don’t need to cross over to the cooking zone in order to get a drink,” shares Nygaard.

### Top it off

Kitchen countertops are an eye catching and important component to any kitchen design. Homeowners are leaning toward solid surface countertops when selecting materials for their new kitchen.

“People are liking solid surface countertops such as corian, quartz and granite. We are currently seeing quartz being chosen a lot,” shares Fassbender.

Gartzke agrees, “Quartz countertops are gaining



Gerhards photo by Spencer Imhoff, Imhoff Imagery, LLC



Gerhards photo by Spencer Imhoff, Imhoff Imagery, LLC

popularity. It is a surface that is nonporous, has consistent patterns and comes in a variety of colors.”

“Granite still tends to catch people’s eye with its natural beauty,” adds Nygaard. She concurs that all three solid surface materials are being chosen based on the homeowners’ style preference. Corian is especially popular in more contemporary kitchen designs.

### Cook tablet

Electronics such as mobile phones and tablet devices have revolutionized communication and have become an integral part of the daily lives of most people. These devices have made their way into kitchens to serve purposes such as recipe organizers or food blog tools. Kitchen designers now take these electronics into consideration when developing plans.

“Hidden charging stations are being integrated into kitchen countertops, they pop up and contain outlets and USB ports for electronics,” says Gartzke.

Fagerlind adds, “Outlets with USB ports are frequently being incorporated. Technology in the kitchen is definitely growing, it is something we always speak to homeowners about.”

Gartzke shares how times have changed,

“Kitchens used to be designed with under cabinet shelves that flipped down to hold cookbooks, now people use iPads for recipe storage and need stands for their tablets.”

“More and more people are using iPads or laptops for recipe references and their countertop space concerns are something we always work to accommodate,” says Fassbender.

### Have a seat

Kitchens serve as a gathering space both for entertaining guests and for everyday family life. The latest trends in seating rise to the challenge of accommodating people in bustling kitchens through counter-height stool seating.

“Seating is often designed to help busy families have together time. A lot of people like to have seats around a central island so everyone can visit while still cooking or preparing the next day’s lunches,” shares Fagerlind.

Nygaard agrees, “People want to be as close as possible to the cook to converse and help.” She adds that she always tries to incorporate one or two soft chairs into kitchens. A variety of people gather in kitchens, each with different seating needs and preferences.



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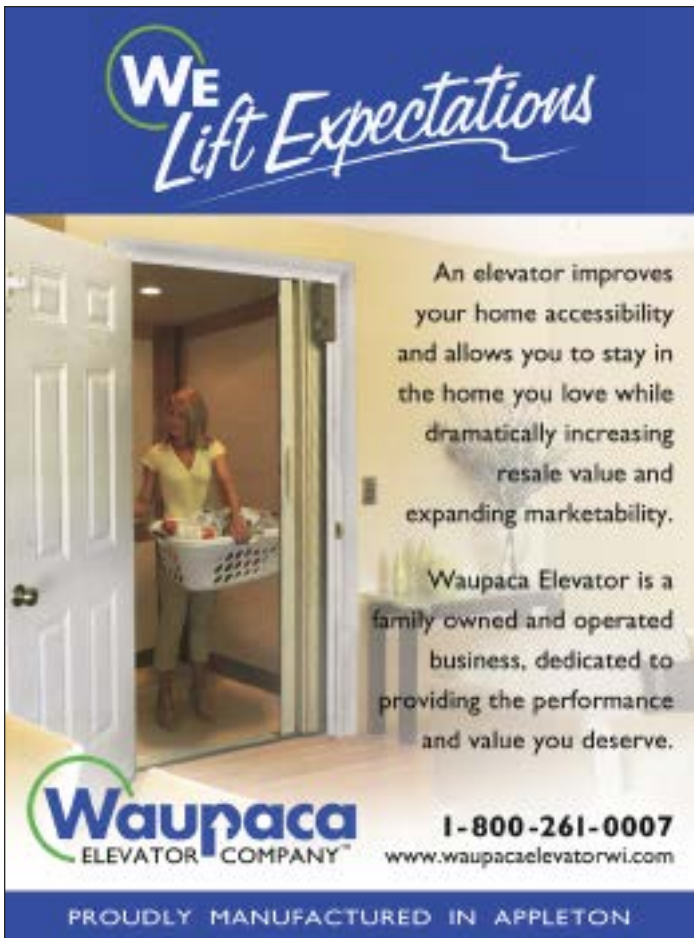
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*Distinctive Renovations photo by Susan Fassbender*

### *Dazzling details*

From lighting to backsplashes, no detail is overlooked in modern kitchen design.

“Homeowners are taking great pride in the materials used for their kitchen backsplash. Many people view it as the signature look for their kitchen,” says Fassbender. He adds that the popular materials he finds are being used for backsplashes are natural stone, glass and metal.

Gartzke shares that open shelving storage is an alternative being used to decrease the amount of upper cabinets in kitchens.

“We are seeing fewer upper cabinets being used to create room for more windows in the kitchen,” says Gartzke. The windows allow for more natural light and a view of the outdoors.

To provide task and ambient light, Fassbender recommends LED tape lighting.

“LED tape lighting is small and inconspicuous for under cabinet lighting, it is also very efficient to operate,” shares Fassbender.

### *Focus on functionality*

Whether a kitchen is being designed in a new construction home or a remodel is taking place in an existing home, having a focus on the functionality of the space is important.

Fassbender says, “Kitchen remodels are about making the best use of the kitchen space that exists.” He adds, “How you utilize the space of the kitchen is essential for functionality.”

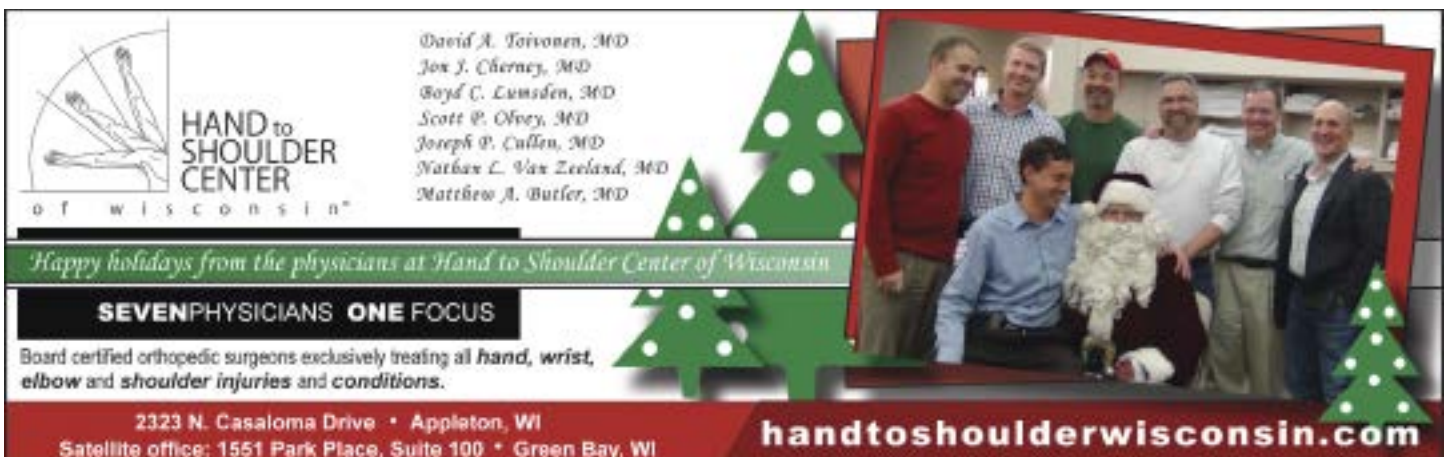



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Bob and Sue Milkie

Bob Milkie has a remarkable life. Born on a farm in Ohio, he was involved in the Future Farmers of America and the 4-H Club in high school. There he learned about showing and judging cattle, hogs, sheep and horses. He received his Bachelor of Science in dairy technology from his beloved Ohio State. He later went on to graduate school at Michigan State through a fellowship he earned judging dairy products, earning a Master of Science in agricultural and mechanical engineering. His career focused on the dairy industry, working at the Borden company as the chief engineer of its International Division, and later in charge of the design and construction of the largest ice cream factory in the world.

He and his wife's love and expertise of horses brought him to judging international horse shows in France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Argentina, Germany, Italy, Austria, Japan and New Zealand. They operated a 130-acre horse farm in Burlington for 29 years.

Bob has stories to tell of Florida alligators, the New York mafia and Venezuelan terrorists, but cancer is nondiscriminatory. Even though Bob is now cancer free, complications from surgery and a bad reaction to the anesthesia, along with Parkinson's disease, left Bob in need of therapy. A nurse at a local hospital told Bob and his wife, Sue, that Brewster Village was the best place to be. Six months ago, Bob could barely swallow or walk, but he now focuses on and tracks his daily exercises to improve his balance and strength. He reports that

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# Making sense of *menopause*

By Amy Hanson

## *What women should know before it happens*

**M**enopause. Once viewed in a fashion synonymous with an Alfred Hitchcock movie, the medical diagnosis is garnering more attention as female celebrities and women experiencing this phase of life grow the dialogue and decrease the stigma.

"It's an anatomically, biological process that all women go through," says Danielle Vanevenhoven, advanced practice nurse prescriber, family practice with ThedaCare. "A lot of times we see this as a life change since they (women) can't reproduce anymore. ... I feel like women nowadays are embracing this change and they realize it is not a curse."

Dr. Elina Pfaffenbach, an OB-GYN with Women's Health Specialists, S.C., stresses going into menopause with a positive attitude since "it is what it is, and it's going to happen."

It also doesn't need to be "anything awful," notes Affinity Health System's Dr. J. Michael Gonzalez, medical director for the OB-GYN Department South Regions at Mercy Medical Center and "everyone transitions through menopause differently," adds Dr. Shawn Laibly, OB-GYN with Aurora Health Care.

### *What is menopause?*

"We can't officially call it 'menopause' until a woman goes 12 months without a period," says Gonzalez.

Once that phase in a woman's life occurs, it marks the end of her menstrual cycle and fertility. Vanevenhoven emphasizes to her patients that they are still very much a woman even though those female traits have gone away.

### *Being prepared*

Knowing when a woman's mother went through menopause may be a benchmark of when she can expect to experience symptoms, but it isn't a definitive answer. It also doesn't mean she will go through menopause in the same way, Gonzalez shares. "It's interesting to watch that actually," he adds.

Leading up to this phase in a woman's life is the period known as, "perimenopause" which typically happens a year to five years prior to menopause and is the onset of experiencing symptoms. On average, women between the ages of 48–52 present with

indications of menopause. The median age for a woman in the United States is 51, says Pfaffenbach.

"As long as they're still getting periods and they're still irregular, that's still perimenopause," says Vanevenhoven.

Further diagnostic testing may be needed to determine the root cause of issues like mood swings, longer or heavier periods, increased cramping and pain, and bleeding or pain with intercourse. Ruling out that it isn't a problem with the lining of the uterus or precancerous changes are important as well, stresses Pfaffenbach. Since symptoms also can mimic those of pregnancy, often a first step is a pregnancy test.

"It's variable how a woman will present with symptoms," Gonzalez says. He also notes that about 80 percent of women have symptoms, but only about 20 percent seek help.

He starts by getting a patient's history and doing an evaluation of her life to determine if the clinical picture fits. Some women present with little to no problems and don't require treatment, he explains.

"There's not a great way to test for it," Gonzalez adds. Follicle-stimulating hormone testing, a blood test, can be used to measure the amount of hormone being produced by the pituitary gland. FSH controls menstrual periods and the production of eggs by the ovaries. The amount produced varies, but is highest during ovulation when eggs are released.

### *What to expect*

Symptoms of menopause can include — but aren't limited to — breast discomfort, hot flashes, irritability, depression, agitation, difficulty sleeping, decreased sex drive and vaginal dryness.

"A hot flash can really show up in several different ways," Pfaffenbach adds. They can cause a woman to turn bright red, move from the face to the chest and vice versa, and develop into raging night sweats. Pinpointing personal triggers like hot drinks, alcohol, sugar and spicy foods, the weather and stress may reduce symptomatic effects, she explains. Dressing in layers, setting the thermostat lower and regular exercise also are ideas to try. Situational triggers like home life, work and taking care of parents or children can exacerbate the effects of menopause, too.



"That's enough to rock your world," adds Pfaffenbach. "I have women who breeze through menopause and others suffer through it."

Even the smallest of fluctuations, however, can be felt in some women, Gonzalez notes.

"It's different in severity for each woman," Vanevenhoven says. "In family medicine, we want to treat the patient and their symptoms, not the disease."

### Treatment

If menopause is decreasing a woman's quality of life, she should discuss options with her physician, says Laibly. Conversations he has with his patients are generally age specific and happen during well-women exams regarding changes like menopause.

"There's a checklist of things that they should be going through," he adds. "Whatever you're going through, you should be talking about it on an annual basis."

Black cohosh, ginger, soy products, herbal remedies, bioidentical hormones and over-the-counter supplements, may be helpful in controlling the effects of hot flashes and other symptoms, while water-based vaginal lubricants could ease vaginal dryness, according to the area medical professionals. Physical therapy also could alleviate possible pelvic discomfort, while antidepressants or anti-anxiety medications also may be beneficial. It's about the result the patient is hoping to achieve from treatment.

"I have a lot of women who use them and think they really help," says Laibly of patients who have improved their quality of life by trying alternative treatments. The only issue he has with this course of action is that some offerings may not be regulated. "The qualifier is we just don't know if there's a bad side effect that could take 20 years to manifest itself," he explains.

Relaxation techniques and weight loss also may decrease symptoms, Gonzalez notes. Estrogen levels have not been linked to corresponding with symptoms. "Some newer evidence shows that vitamin E can help, but there hasn't been enough research on that yet," Gonzalez adds.

### Continued care

Heightened awareness for preventive health measures also increase for women going through menopause. This includes taking vitamin D and

calcium to protect bone health, checking cholesterol levels, colon cancer screenings and mammograms.

Because a woman's ovaries no longer produce estrogen after menopause, they are at an increased risk of decreased bone health and warding off heart disease.

"Once women go through menopause, then their clock is kind of set for heart disease," Laibly says. "When you hit 50, heart disease is what takes the majority of people."

Women used to be placed on estrogen therapy to help ease menopause, but there is now more data that shows increased risks associated with it, Gonzalez says. Hormone therapy is a controversial area of treatment, Laibly adds noting he'd like to see more research on the safety of the drugs.

However, for some women under age 60 who are placed on lower doses of estrogen only as long as needed, the benefits of slowing bone density loss and decreasing risk of fracture for example, outweighs the potential risk of breast cancer, stroke, heart attack, blood clots and other possible side effects.

"I have some patients who have been on these for 20 years and when I walk into the room they say, 'Don't you dare take me off my estrogen,'" Laibly says.

Two years after menopause, Vanevenhoven likes to do a bone density scan to check for osteoporosis. The painless procedure involves imaging of the thigh bone, hip and lower back. The test takes 20-30 minutes to complete and results are usually available within a day or two.

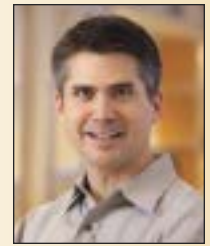
### Keep talking

Area medical professionals encourage women to talk with their doctors to determine the course of action that is right for them.

"If we're open about this and raise more awareness, women are more likely to come in and discuss it with their physician," says Vanevenhoven.

Physicians are seeing more female patients taking charge of their health care and choosing to be informed.

"It's very nice to see that," says Pfaffenbach. "Now that women are living longer, they can expect to live 1/3 of their life after menopause. ... They're much more involved now with the internet, Facebook and all the books that are out there."



**Dr. J. Michael Gonzalez**  
Affinity Health System



**Dr. Shawn Laibly**  
Aurora Health Care



**Dr. Elina Pfaffenbach**  
Women's Health Specialists, S.C.



**Danielle Vanevenhoven, APNP**  
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# The BIG Idea

By Amy Hanson

Photography by Dave Jackson of Jackson & Co., Appleton

## Five nonprofits share their top initiatives

**F**acing the future can be an intimidating and exciting task. For five area nonprofits, it's a time to examine their impact on the Fox Cities and the initiatives they hope to accomplish moving into the New Year.

The focus of this year's Big Idea is the role these organizations play in each sector of the community through their mission, programming and an expanded reach. Whether it's guiding youth, developing the arts, innovating food growth options, spreading education or making the community aware of healthy choices, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fox Valley Region, Fox Cities Building for the Arts, Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin, the Northeast Wisconsin Chapter of the American Red Cross, and The Weight of the Fox Valley have their own mountains to climb as the calendar turns to 2015.

Here's how they plan to reach the top.

## Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fox Valley Region

Time, money, commitment ... these are the roadblocks Melissa Graber knows all too well as the director of marketing & special events for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fox Valley Region. Her challenge is to emphasize the importance of finding "Bigs" for "Littles" waiting to be matched in Calumet, Outagamie, Waupaca and Winnebago counties. Some wait more than a year, Graber shares.

"We're serving hundreds and we're doing it the right way," she says. "I would love to have every child matched. That's not always the case, but we're trying."

As of late November, 150 area youth — 79 percent boys — were hoping to find their match. Adults involved with the organization are asked to give a one-year commitment, for one hour a week to the boy or girl they are paired with.

"In the New Year, we're trying to rephrase those a bit so it's not scary," Graber says. "Some people think they're going to have to be a parent."

There are two different match programs available—"community-based" where Bigs and Littles do things that they decide to do together and "site-based," which occurs in a school or off-site setting during the lunch hour during the school year.

Bigs and Littles are matched based on a number of criteria, including shared interests. For that reason, Littles remain on the list until the right match presents itself and not necessarily by how long they've been on the list.

Graber hopes a first-time initiative for the local Big Brothers Big Sisters will prove successful here as well. The campaign for "50 Bigs in 50 Days" is being kicked off now and recruitment will run from Jan. 1 to Feb. 19. The idea is to recruit 50 adults to get involved.

"There are so many (kids) out there, but our thing is how do we get more mentors," she says. "Really, the child just wants someone to hang out with."

Graber, a Big herself to 12-year-old Aaniya, notes that matches build trust with children and others, self-confidence and improve grades.

Sixty percent of Littles matched and 65 percent of Littles ready to be matched live in homes headed by a single parent, according to Big Brother Big Sisters of the Fox Valley Region.

Both the families requesting the Big and the adults looking to fill that role go through an intensive screening process, including background checks, with the match specialist team. Once a Big is cleared to participate, he or she is presented with two Littles to choose from. The team also follows up to see how matches progress once they are underway.

"We have that one-to-one relationship where we're mentioning that child at that time," says Graber. "We have the positive outcomes that show what our programs are doing out in the community."

Graber also is working to develop a scholarship fund for graduating Littles who are going onto college, she says. Anyone interested in donating in



*"We're serving hundreds and we're doing it the right way."*

— Melissa Graber, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fox Valley Region

a monetary fashion; providing tickets to events Bigs and Littles can attend together; offering coupons or contributing equipment, like an

iPad or camera, for events or the office, is welcome to contact Big Brothers Big Sisters or drop by their new office on Ballard Road in Appleton, which the staff is settling into this month. The organization also welcomes opportunities for one-time event programming to engage children still on the match list.

## Fox Cities Building for the Arts

Collaboration. It's a word that resonates with Pamela Williams-Lime. As the president of the Fox Cities Building for the Arts and The Trout Museum of Art in Appleton, she's examining how both programming and operational unions can help the organizations within the Building for the Arts operate more efficiently. Those organizations include the Appleton Boychoir, Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra, Makaroff Youth Ballet, newVoices, and The Trout Museum of Art.

"Philanthropy has changed and is changing," Williams-Lime says. She is looking for more opportunities to provide creative and meaningful interactions with the arts.

The SPARK! Alliance, which develops cultural programming for people with memory loss in Wisconsin, is one such avenue. The History Museum at the Castle, the Building for Kids Children's Museum, and The Trout engage care partners and people with dementia in multi-sensory explorations of collections. Because of the joint effort, The Trout Museum is able to participate in four of the 12 activities planned for the year instead of having to figure out a way to absorb the time, cost and resources it would have taken to manage a dozen. It also provides more options to increase marketing visibility.

"It's the caregiver and the person with memory loss coming in and being engaged with the arts," says Williams-Lime. "That's a program that we could not have done on our own."

A consultant also will be brought in sometime



during the coming year to analyze business areas where the organizations within the Building for the Arts can be collaborating in natural ways on an administrative or operational level to their benefit. Once common denominators are revealed, it will be easier to determine when to work from within and when to invite in other community resources to expand reach, Williams-Lime shares. Donors also like to know their money is being used efficiently to benefit multiple resources instead of contributing to like causes, she adds.

"Funders are really looking for collaborative programming," Williams-Lime says. "I think all of us want to continue operating as strong as we can to offer the community what they want."

Because The Trout is still in its infancy stages as a museum, Williams-Lime says that the groundwork is being laid to increase offerings and build museum standards to attract quality exhibits. Of course, with those standards, come increased costs for that type of work, security, insurance, staffing and operations. If standards aren't met, The Trout can't attract exhibits of a certain caliber.

"We find that if there's an exhibit with name recognition, the community is more comfortable with coming in," Williams-Lime says. "It's selecting things that will draw different areas of the community." An example is the recent exhibit, "Under the Hat! The Many Worlds of Dr. Seuss," which ran Aug. 2 to Oct. 31. The exhibit brought in youth and older fans of Dr. Seuss. "Katharine Hepburn: Dressed for Stage & Screen" was another successful exhibit that brought in community patrons, along with film and design students. The exhibit's initial run of Sept. 13 to Dec. 15, 2013 was extended to Jan. 12, 2014.

"We've done a lot to increase our programming this year without increasing our budgets," Williams-Lime notes.

Bigger exhibits should be booked three years out to allow time for planning, marketing, funding and



*"We're trying to find ways to engage the community so they know this asset is theirs."*

— Pamela Williams-Lime, Fox Cities Building for the Arts and The Trout Museum of Art in Appleton

programming, she adds. The Trout is not at that point yet. "It's really an exciting place to be because everything is new and a first-time experience," Williams-Lime says. "The community awareness and appreciation for the visual arts helps sustain the organization."

A Regional Artist Gallery also is available to the public. Admission to see the artwork is free during regular museum hours. The Members' Biennial Exhibition is another way the public can become engaged with The Trout. Artists are welcome to submit their art for consideration. The exhibit is slated to open Feb. 6. Opening beginning Dec. 16 and running through the month of January, a display of nativities and menorahs from local collectors will be on view, too. Some are vintage pieces while others are new; all come from a variety of diverse ethnic backgrounds, Williams-Lime says. More classes for adults and children are in the works for the future as well.

"We're trying to find ways to engage the community so they know this asset is theirs," Williams-Lime says. "It's not just about what we want to present, it's about what does the community want to see."

Moving forward, it is Williams-Lime's hope that the Building for the Arts is able to maintain the integrity of its affiliated organizations and continue to make an impact in the lives of children and adults.

"A year makes a big difference to us," Williams-Lime points out. "We're so busy planning the next thing that sometimes you don't stop to say, 'Wow!'"

## Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin

"In the future, our economy has to be based on helping people," says Alex Tyink, program leader of Goodwill Grows, part of Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin. His goal is to effect social change and make more people aware of how they can grow food in an environmentally efficient manner.

A vertical indoor farming system Tyink created may just be the solution and change the face of farming. Measuring approximately five feet high and 12 square feet in size, the framework is an interesting sight with leafy greens poking out and aglow from a high-pressure sodium bulb.

The system offers a 99 percent land efficiency increase, Tyink estimates. Currently, experiments are being done to control temperature, humidity and carbon dioxide levels to determine the ideal growing environment for seven different romaine cultivars. The goal is to figure out potential yield for each to diversify product offerings.

"There's definitely a market for strawberries with this that would make sense," says Tyink. "My thing is let's pick one thing and grow it well and then let's add onto it and expand the farm."

Leafy greens, garnish greens, edible flowers and tomatoes are other viable options. Food that doesn't need consistent turnover, however, and keeps longer, like carrots, radishes, barley and wheat wouldn't be the best choices for the system, Tyink says.

Leafy greens are expensive to ship and go bad

quickly. "(Greens are) the most nutritionally dense product out there and you get the most bang for your buck," explains Tyink of his reasoning to start with greens. "The minute you harvest leafy greens, they deteriorate in value."

"That's a problem that we've run into with local farmers because you're dependent on the season," he adds. The former opera singer is a graduate of Appleton West High School. Tyink graduated from Northwestern University with a bachelor's degree in opera and vocal performance. After discovering he disliked pursuing that career path, he volunteered with organizations in New York that were affiliated with urban gardening. Later, he pursued two years of



*"In the future, our economy has to be based on helping people."*

— Alex Tyink, Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin

research with Cornell and Northwestern universities on how he might expand growing food in an environmentally efficient manner. Tyink's research led him to open Fork Farms, a niche consulting company, prior to moving back to the Appleton area and finding a home at Goodwill NCW. To him, the infrastructure of Goodwill made sense to pair with his work and system. The system is patented by Fork Farms and being used for the social initiative with Goodwill NCW.

"This is like my pet project," he says. "Along the way, you have these eureka moments."

Tyink's indoor farming system took 20-plus iterations before settling on the design prototype that was made and donated by Bassett Mechanical based in Kaukauna. He started with the principles of hydroponics and switched to aeroponics, or growing plants with their roots out in mid-air to speed up their metabolism. The system does not depend on soil and recycles water not absorbed by the plants or through evaporation by pumping it through the system. About 97 percent of the water is recovered.

Systems are being slated to rent or own, but are being manufactured just to order at this time. The cost of a system is about \$5,000, or \$7,000–10,000 with programming from Goodwill who wants to

assist newcomers and fine tune what they can offer. If more than one system is manufactured at a time, the cost goes down. Tyink estimates systems will cost about \$300–500 annually to run and maintain.

To start the process, 400 plants begin in biodegradable rock wool, which go into a germinator for 10 days before being transferred into the indoor farming system for roughly another two weeks depending on the product.

The future of the indoor farming systems lies in the hands of schools, nonprofits who could create a revenue stream and interested farmers. Tyink is hoping to get students involved and coordinate customized curriculum that matches the criteria teachers need to accomplish as well. An AmeriCorps educator was recently hired through their Farm to School Program to assist with the process.

Tyink is waiting to hear about a \$100,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture grant that would assist in getting 10 area schools started with farm to school programs estimated to cost \$190,000. Each school would receive one indoor farming system.

“For students, it’s all about creating a consistent connection with their food,” says Tyink. “We don’t just eat for a couple months out of the year, we’re always eating.”

Two of the systems could feed an average school of 300-450 people with leafy greens for the entire year, he adds.

“Can we grow food and can we sell food and what does that look like?” says Tyink of future endeavors. “We eventually want to be a reserve center.”

Tyink sees his role with Goodwill NCW as an opportunity to develop a grower networking coalition aggregator of sorts that would balance the relationships between the growers and the businesses while working through revenue sales of the systems.

“We don’t want to say that our way is better than anybody else’s, it’s just a different way,” says Tyink.

## Northeast Wisconsin Chapter of the American Red Cross

Getting back to center is top of mind for Steve Hansen, chapter executive and regional chief operating officer of the Northeast Wisconsin Chapter of the American Red Cross.

“We’ve got a real focus in on our core mission,” Hansen says. “We are laser focused on what we do in those four core areas.”

Those points include: the disaster services cycle (readiness, response and recovery); services to the armed forces; health and safety training, including first aid, CPR and water safety; and blood collection.

Hansen also is cognizant of how those areas are structured and services are delivered to maximize efforts. Engaging volunteers is part of that equation. Ninety percent of the Red Cross’ workforce is volunteer.

“So much of our activity happens through volunteers in our community,” says Hansen, noting there are just over 1,000 Red Cross volunteers in Northeast Wisconsin currently. A 20 percent growth is expected over the course of the next three years.

Community preparedness and prevention is another avenue Hansen says the Red Cross plans to emphasize, specifically through a home fire

prevention campaign, which also will go into schools. On average, seven people die every day of a home fire, according to The American Red Cross.

“It’s amazing how many people don’t have working fire alarms in their homes,” says Hansen. “People do have the misconception that even if they have a fire, they’ll be able to get out of their home.”

According to Hansen, individuals may have as little as two minutes to get out of a burning structure before it can be consumed by flames or smoke.

“Families don’t practice that escape plan on a regular basis and that is part of our mission to the community,” he adds.

Efforts like door-to-door canvassing in at-risk neighborhoods to provide and install working fire alarms is planned during a five-year span, starting with Milwaukee and branching out. The Pillowcase Project, a national effort sponsored by Disney, also is bringing preparedness to children in grades 3-5 through Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops, along



*“It’s amazing how many people don’t have working fire alarms in their homes.”*

— Steve Hansen, Northeast Wisconsin Chapter of the American Red Cross

with in the classroom. The purpose of the pillowcase is to teach children to put their comfort and safety items into a pillowcase.

“It’s that reinforcement at an early age so that they’re prepared when and if a fire happens,” Hansen explains.

Just over 919 families in the Eastern Wisconsin region were displaced by a fire from July 1, 2013 to June 1, 2014. Just over 200 of those families were from Northeast Wisconsin. Approximately 1,435 families were assisted across the state during that timeframe. The Red Cross is hoping to increase resources including shelter, food, and emotional and mental support by 10 percent.

“As they’re picking up the pieces and going through their homes, we’ll provide assistance right on the spot,” Hansen adds.

The Red Cross also is getting away from traditional classroom-style training and making more courses available online for subjects like CPR and first aid. Certifications are still completed in-person with an instructor. Apps “put information at people’s fingertips” as well, Hansen notes. The free downloads cover anything from what to do in an

emergency situation to immediate weather reports to shelter information and more. It enables people to have information with them on the go and play a role on a volunteer basis, too.

“We really like to make donating or giving as easy as possible,” says Hansen. “Any gift can make a significant impact in our community.”

## The Weight of the Fox Valley, United Way Fox Cities

In spring 2013, Fox Valley organizations and the four area health systems joined together at a summit to discuss an issue of growing concern — obesity. It was during those discussions that developing the early stages of a course of action began and The Weight of the Fox Valley initiative was conceived. Today, 35 partners and the health systems have joined forces to tackle this weighty topic.

“There’s a movement in this community about obesity and weight loss,” says Keren Rosenberg, manager of The Weight of the Fox Valley. The United Way serves as the backbone for the initiative. United Way’s 2011 Life Study shows that above 60 percent of individuals in the Fox Valley suffer from being overweight or obese, Rosenberg adds.

She is no stranger to tackling health issues. Rosenberg moved to the area 2½ years ago from Israel with her husband who was relocated for his job with Kimberly-Clark Corporation. Prior to her move, Rosenberg worked with a national nutrition and health program for at-risk families. Because of her work, she was invited to the White House and met with individuals involved with Let’s Move!, a comprehensive initiative launched by First Lady Michelle Obama to take on childhood obesity.

The Weight of the Fox Valley covers Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties collectively. This is the first time the counties have targeted a big issue with a united front. The vision of the initiative is for individual’s to “achieve and maintain a healthy weight at every age.”

Since Wisconsin already has an obesity plan in place for the state, The Weight of the Fox Valley Leadership Team decided to implement a variation on the plan created by the Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute. Six action teams — Health care, Early Care and Education, School, Active Communities, Food System, and Worksite — will target different sectors and work together to carry out the initiative’s goals and vision. The Active Communities and Worksite teams are currently underway and Rosenberg hopes to have two more teams up and running by the beginning of 2015.

The initiative is centered on a collective impact model where all partnering businesses, groups, government and nonprofits will work together utilizing the same information and forms of measuring success. “We know that people tend not to be honest about their weight,” Rosenberg says. A partnership with the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health was developed to measure Body Mass Index in the





*“Every one of us can make a small change.”*  
 — Keren Rosenberg, The Weight of the Fox Valley

same manner. Area health systems have agreed to utilize this form of measurement and share data. “We know that is going to be a very long process,” Rosenberg says. “We’re hoping to make this community a healthy place to live in.”

She would like to see more people utilizing the trail systems, the number of sidewalks increased and an awareness of healthy food options. One contributing factor to obesity is eating on the go. The Wisconsin Health Ranking found that around

40 percent of restaurants in the valley are fast food options. “If a person wants to have lunch or dinner, those are the popular options,” Rosenberg notes. As The Weight of the Fox Valley evolves, Rosenberg is hopeful she and an action team will meet with more restaurants, along with schools and daycares to discuss healthy opportunities.

“We are new and we want people to know about us,” says Rosenberg stressing that the initiative belongs to the community. The Weight of the Fox Valley currently has a Facebook page and will be launching a new website that will be a collective starting point for information. Her main goal is to bring all the food and community initiatives together under one umbrella resource. The Weight of the Fox Valley initiative is not necessarily something new, but to support and enhance resources that are already available and “collaborate efforts,” Rosenberg adds.

She has worked to engage the community through the Facebook page by holding contests with themes like “healthy sandwich” and “what’s in your lunchbox,” along with the monthly Family Dinner Club. The Family Dinner Club turns the tables on family meals in a non-threatening way to improve healthy eating habits. Families are asked to submit a photo of them at dinner and a breakdown of their meal. A dietician offers friendly feedback about what they’re doing right and wrong in the provided example and where they might consider doing things differently in the future.

Another way the community can get involved is through The Pledge, which is a commitment to helping them improve their lifestyle in a healthy way.

“We ask people to think about their pledge. It should be something very, very simple that they think they can accomplish,” says Rosenberg who decided to cut back on soda. The idea is to take a selfie with the sign that’s available stating that you took The Pledge. Community members can message Rosenberg through Facebook to receive a sign. After three weeks, participants will receive a reminder about The Pledge and in three months, they will get another reminder. The pledge can be taken as an individual or in a group.

“Every one of us can make a small change,” says Rosenberg. “If you decide to go with your kids for a walk, you’re a role model.”



### Want more information?

Looking for more details on how you can get involved with a particular organization? Visit their websites.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Fox Valley Region**  
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**Fox Cities Building for the Arts**  
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[redcross.org/wi/oshkosh](http://redcross.org/wi/oshkosh)

**The Weight of the Fox Valley**  
[facebook.com/WeightoftheFoxValley](https://facebook.com/WeightoftheFoxValley)



# 'Meat' me for dinner

By Amy Hanson

## Neighborhood markets garner attention around the holidays

The holidays evoke a sense of nostalgia tied to the scents of favorite foods wafting from the oven. As stomachs begin to rumble at the ready and curiosities pique, it's not uncommon to associate a treasured gathering with dishes only served at that special time of year. Joining to enjoy the coveted feast means bringing together friends and family. At the center of it all is the main course — meat. While butchers and corner markets may not be as prevalent as they once were, there are still hosts who make a habit to visit local meat markets to find just the right cut.

### On the menu

While Thanksgiving tends to be all about the bird between turkeys and roasting chickens, customers switch to tenderloin, home-smoked hams and prime rib for their Christmas meals, says Luke Jacobs, co-owner of Jacobs Meat Market in Appleton.

Richard Niemuth, co-owner of Niemuth's Southside Market in Appleton, also sees customers gravitating to steaks, rib roasts and seafood for their celebrations.

"It used to be a really big ham holiday," says Philip Schmidt, owner of The Meat Block in Greenville. Now, customers prepare other cuts "that look pretty on the table."

"It's the prime rib that really shoots to the top of the list," adds Peter Ellenz, owner of Cedar Creek Marketplace in Appleton. "It's a great cut of meat. It's like getting a rib eye, but whole."

Niemuth encourages hosts to avoid waiting until the last minute to make their selections. He works with Supreme Lobster, a supplier based in Chicago, for his seafood, another popular option.

"I always tell people, if they don't have it, you're not going to find it," he shares. "Don't call up on Christmas Eve looking for lobster."

Tim Haen, co-owner of Haen Meat Packing Inc. in Kaukauna, seconds that sentiment.

"A lot of people say, 'Oh my gosh, Christmas is next week!'" he shares. Haen Meats prefers to receive orders at least two weeks in advance of the holiday. With a week or less notice, they will do the best they can to serve customers, Haen notes. Customers should check with their market of preference to ensure they're able to get their preferred cuts.

Around the holidays, it also is not uncommon to splurge on what's served at the table to impress guests, says Jacobs.

"Most of the families get together and can present a bigger meal," adds Haen.

### Give a gift

For those who are not able to gather this time of year, meat market offerings also work as a holiday gift-giving option.

Niemuth notes that he has a regular customer, a gentleman from Manhattan, who orders meat for his sisters who live in the De Pere area. Niemuth's also has been operating their own smokehouse for just under a year and handles venison processing, in addition to making their own ham, bacon, summer sausage and hot sticks.

"We're finding heat sells and for some of our customers, the hotter the better," Niemuth says.

The market also includes a liquor store on

the opposite side and is able to offer pairing suggestions, too.

"We do quite a bit of gift boxes," adds Schmidt of the interest he sees at The Meat Block.

### Tradition in taste

Jacobs is a third-generation owner with his dad, Ed, of the family business, which started in 1945.

"We see the same customers coming back, they're just ordering different things," Jacobs notes. Many comment that they're not allowed at family gatherings unless they show up with a Jacobs ham, he notes with a chuckle.

The business recently celebrated 69 years in the Fox Valley. "The fact that we've been around for so long tells a great story," says Jacobs. "We were started when there was a corner grocery store



Luke Jacobs, co-owner of Jacobs Meat Market, shows off a Jacobs ham.





The Haen brothers – Dan, left, John, Tim, and Tom – now own Haen Meat Packing Inc.

Pictured below are some of their offerings.

on every corner. ... (Customers) come in and they walk around and they're just amazed that a store like ours still exists. They're immediately brought back to when times were more simple."

Meat markets also have become more specialized.

"There are a certain number of people who value that service of a full meat counter," says Niemuth who has been in the meat business for 40 years starting with his parents business, which was open for 58 years. "(It's a) nostalgia thing. Especially with the baby boomers. We all grew up with that back in the day."

Haen Meats also has become a tradition. "The people who do support us, that's why they're coming," Haen says. The business has been in the family since 1959 and is operated today by the Haen brothers — Dan, John, Tim and Tom.

Ellenz hopes to evoke the feeling of days gone by at Cedar Creek Marketplace. "We hope that we have that draw of the small-town, old-time meat market," he says. "We still have that window where customers can watch us slice the meat." Cedar Creek also does meat grinding.

### Making the grade

Quality is key among the meat markets in the Fox Valley.



appreciate the support we get and try to provide a quality product," adds Haen.

What customers want has changed over the years, Haen shares. Roasts used to be a staple 30 years ago, but customers are now gravitating toward time-savers, like ready-to-eat meals and marinated turkey and chicken, he says. Haen also stocks flavored beef patties and brats, among other offerings, Haen Meats makes.

"People want to know, or at least talk to a person who knows, where a product is coming from," says Haen. "They just want to be able to talk to someone who has the answer."

Cooking channels and foodie magazines have made an impact on consumers, says Niemuth.

He finds that customers are looking "beyond the basic pork, beef and chicken." Among his stock, customers will find goat, goose, duck, pheasant, quail, bison, elk and seafood varieties. Niemuth's also carries air-chilled, organic, free-range turkeys, along with items like turduckens.

The Meat Block offers a full line of soups and

"With the age of the internet, people are more inquisitive where their food comes from," Jacobs says. "We do it the old school way.

It takes more time, but it's the right thing to do." He notes that Jacobs sources their offerings based on quality versus grocery stores who make purchases based on price. Due to this philosophy, customers know what they're getting and don't have to worry about what they're putting on the table.

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## ask Chef Jeff

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**Q.** *What's the best way to home-cook a steak so it turns out restaurant quality?* —Melissa, Grand Chute

**A.** Melissa, all of my friends in the restaurant business would much prefer if you keep going out for steaks, but I will share my thoughts with you for the rare occasion when you choose to prepare your own at home. First, buy the best piece of meat you can afford. We are blessed in the Fox Valley with several excellent meat markets and specialty stores. Season your steak several hours prior to cooking it to allow the flavors to penetrate the meat, in the morning for dinner that evening works best. Allow steaks to come to room temperature for about 30 minutes before grilling. To get a good crust on a steak, you need a really hot grill. I ALWAYS spray my steaks with pan spray before grilling. I wrote this several years back in a column called "Great Grill Marks." Pan spray allows the heat of the grill grates to sear the steak nicely and also will prevent it from sticking to the grill. Grill the steaks to one doneness below your desired doneness as the heat from the cooked steak will carry-over one full doneness (like medium-rare to medium). Allow the steak to rest for about 10 minutes to relax the fiber of the meat, which will help retain moisture during the eating process. Last but not least, brush the steak with a little steak butter or similar dressing to give it that little perk-up as you eat it. Enjoy!



### Chef Jeff's Steak Butter

- 1 pound butter
- 2 tablespoons fresh garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire Sauce
- 4 tablespoons beef base or bouillon
- 1 tablespoon salt, kosher or course
- 1 tablespoon black pepper, course ground

Combine all of the ingredients in a mixing bowl. Brush on steaks immediately after grilling or just prior to service. Serve and enjoy.

Yield: 1 ¼ pounds

## DRINK OF THE MONTH

▶ For another seasonal drink recipe, Basil's Hot Gingerz, visit [foxcitiesmagazine.com](http://foxcitiesmagazine.com).

*It may be cold outside, but this drink will definitely warm you up on a winter day, says Michelle Knaack, marketing manager for Basil's Pub. If you enjoy a nutty hot chocolate mixed with the saltiness of bacon, this will become your go-to drink for the season.*



### BASIL'S HOT BACON CHOCOLATE

- 6-7 ounces hot chocolate, of choice
- 1 ounce Frangelico
- 1 ounce Makers Mark Bourbon
- Whipped cream, to taste
- Bacon pieces, crumbled to taste

Mix hot chocolate according to directions in mug. Add alcohol to hot chocolate and stir. Top with whipped cream and bacon pieces

Makes 1 drink.



Cedar Creek Marketplace

homemade meals, which is a welcome option for families on the move who still want to sit around the dinner table and enjoy a good meal together, says Schmidt.

"We pride ourselves on developing that relationship with our customers," he adds. "They like that they can come to us and ask questions." Schmidt stresses developing relationships with his clientele, along with educating them on their purchases.

Ellenz also works with customers to inform them on types and cuts of meat, along with how to thaw and finish off dishes both through conversations and literature. His customers are interested in buying local and request grass-fed beef.



Jake Zaddack, meat department manager at Cedar Creek Marketplace, slices some rib eye steaks.

"I think it's all about preparation and serving a quality cut of meat," Ellenz says. "When people come in, it's to solve a problem. By that, I mean 'What do I need today?'"

Why not pop in your neighborhood meat market to see what could be on your dinner table tonight? You may just find your next meal.



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