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JUNE | JULY 2015

VOL 4 | NO 3

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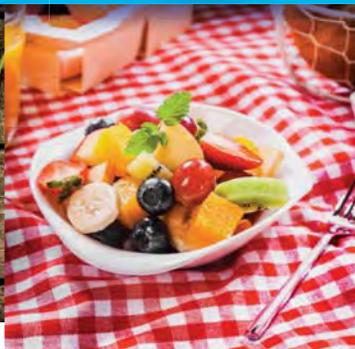


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With an emphasis on equilibrium and personal growth, *5ive for Women* encourages the on-the-go gal to pause for self-nurturing through insightful articles and thought-provoking features—supporting the not-so-simple balance between faith, family, friends, fitness, and finance.

At *5ive*, we are advocates of healthy priorities and fitness for life, while striving to motivate, energize, and inspire camaraderie of the Chippewa Valley sisterhood.



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As I write this, "Summertime and the livin' is easy" plays in my head. I love summer! The Theisen household welcomes the sweet, slowed-down pace of summer with arms wide open. June is for graduations and weddings, and we get to celebrate both. Our eldest, Joe, graduated from college—we are beaming with pride and it's a joy to watch him go! We're also ecstatic to see our sister move into a new and exciting season as she marries her best friend.

It may be summer, but the livin' isn't always easy for everyone. Yet, Angela Meyer would never let you know despite her exceptional challenges. I had the honor of meeting Angela several weeks ago at the nail salon as Sacred Heart staff assisted her visit. This encounter with such a neat lady reminded me what courage looks like and what hope sounds like.

These qualities beamed out of her. She was radiant—her smile contagious. Because Angela is wheelchair-enabled, I initially envisioned the cause to be a horrific accident. However, as we began to chat, I learned early-onset multiple sclerosis (MS) is the culprit. I discovered she is a loving wife and mother who desperately missed her little one at home and who received an MS diagnosis when she was 32. Still, she smiles.

As we continued to gab, I became more and more impressed with her ability to move with dignity and grace through life, marriage, motherhood, and even a life-altering diagnosis. I just knew we needed to share her story to encourage and educate the ladies of the Chippewa Valley. She, too, was eager to share how MS changes lives, how its progression and severity vary dramatically from person to person, and how she chooses to live (and not just survive) with MS.

Since our meeting, I have thought of Angela every day. Today, I had the opportunity to speak with her again and found myself better for it. She rode her horse today, and that made it a good day for her. It also made me smile. I know you'll be inspired by Angela's story. MS may have affected the strength of Angela's arms and legs, but clearly it couldn't touch the mightiness of her soul.

Summer is the perfect time to make new friends, nurture longstanding rapports, and make memories with family. The more relaxed pace lets us enjoy a leisurely read, whip up a new recipe, start a new fitness plan, or try a new adventure. We're confident this issue will give you plenty of ideas! So many great activities are happening throughout the Chippewa Valley—we look forward to seeing you out and about. A grateful shout out to my husband this Father's Day: You're an amazing dad to our crew; I couldn't and wouldn't want to do it without you!

Ladies, the journey continues with faith, family, friends, fitness, and finance.

Jen Theisen
Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

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On the cover: Photo by Jill Chumas Photography with cover model Grace Mackey-Natz



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Above (L-R): Jason Lin, Elena Smith, Sophia Smith, Zoe Smith

Right (L-R): Jason Lin, Colleen Bates (ECCF sponsor and Chippewa Valley Youth Symphony Co-Founder-established in 1980), Natalie Hanson (CVYS president), and sisters Zoe Smith, Elena Smith, and Sophia Smith.

Below (L-R): Natalie Hanson, Jason Lin, Elena Smith, Sophia Smith, Zoe Smith



Eau Claire Community Foundation's Children's Legacy Luncheon

Chippewa Valley Youth Symphony

Several very talented musicians from the Chippewa Valley Youth Symphony performed at the annual Children's Legacy Luncheon at the Florian Gardens on 23 April. It was a great opportunity for these young musicians to perform for an appreciative audience, to do service work, and to see the benefit of volunteerism by adults in our community. The Eau Claire Community Foundation honored volunteers and community members of all ages who have made important and lasting contributions on behalf of children.



44th Annual Partners of HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Charity Ball

This year's "I've Had the Time of My Life" theme featured everything 1980s. On May 16th, attendees chilled in costume at the totally rad Avalon Hotel and Conference Center in Chippewa Falls. Each year the Ball raises tens of thousands of dollars for special projects at the hospital.

Top left: Kendra Weidner, Charity Ball Committee member, takes a moment to sit with "the Golden Girls" for a coffee clutch.

Bottom left: Attendees don Top Gun gear for the Charity Ball. Goose (Kody Kelland) even grew a mustache to more closely resemble his character.

Top right (L-R): Angela Mite, Dual Spurlock, and Sarah North, all with Wisconsin Health and Regional Vent Center, rock the Robert Palmer "Addicted to Love" look.

Middle right: Heather Kunt, 2015 Charity Ball chair, addresses the crowd and thanks everyone for their generosity.

Bottom right: Students from local schools volunteered at the Ball, too.

Taking 5ive with Megan MacLaughlin-Barck

WRITTEN BY HEATHER ROTHBAUER-WANISH

Sometimes life turns out differently than we planned. Megan MacLaughlin-Barck's current reality bears little resemblance to her original plans. After graduating from Chippewa Falls Senior High School, Megan vowed never to come back to the area. She earned her undergraduate degree from UW-Madison, followed by a law degree from Pace Law School. Today, Megan is the sole owner of Larson Construction Co., Inc. (a Chippewa Falls company her grandparents founded). She admits she never envisioned herself in this role—but she has eaten a lot of “nevers” along the way. Nevertheless, while balancing motherhood, a thriving business, and a completely enriched life, she couldn't imagine a better path.

FAITH

Megan grew up with concepts of God and faith through the structure of religion. She realized the importance of her faith in adulthood:

My first conscious memory of faith interacting with God was during our first IVF (in vitro fertilization) procedure, when the doctor expressed that he had used all of the science he knew to create our embryos, but the “spark” that is life was in God's hands. After six years of trying to conceive and armed only with a strong desire to be a child's parent, my prayer that day was that God would help me to see the path he intended for us, and that is what I have come to view as faith—being open to God's plan.

Today, faith intersects with every aspect of Megan's life, as she understands that things may not be what she wants them to be or what she was expecting, but she is called on to have faith that things are unfolding exactly how they are supposed to occur:

I love and accept what is happening—

that is my faith.

FAMILY

Megan has been married to Tim, a Boston native, for 19 years. They have been blessed with two children, Matthew, age 13, and Emma, age 11. Megan's parents reside in the Lake Wissota area, while Tim's family largely remains on the East Coast. Because they have a family-owned business, Megan and her family admittedly spend a great deal of time working:

The family that works together plays together. Since we made a commitment to our business, we also made a commitment to our children, which requires sacrifices from all of us. During the construction season, you will find us together on jobsites, in our construction yard, or in our office; we are all doing our part to get the work done that needs to be done.

While they work hard, the family also celebrates and takes vacations together.

We take our kids just about everywhere. The winter season offers a great time to travel with our children, disconnecting from work and really connecting with each other as a family.

She adds that the best part of vacation is spending time together, relaxing, playing games, making jokes, eating great food, and enjoying each other's company.

FRIENDS

Megan knows that finding time with friends is challenging but is absolutely necessary:

We find time to meet because it is essential to rejuvenate with the laughter and support of friends. Whether we get together once a month or once a quarter, these friends have us laughing and



being more ourselves.

In addition, Megan and Tim see people throughout the Chippewa Valley at various events, and it reminds her that she lives around a great group of individuals that she feels privileged to call friends:

Some of the best times we have ever had with friends are the spontaneous times when we run into someone somewhere or they have called us on a whim.

FITNESS

Megan admits that she used to think of fitness as this “other” part of life, something she did “on the side” of everything else already included in her schedule.

As I have grown, I have come to understand that fitness is part of every aspect of life.

She now thinks of fitness as the little things that we do every day, such as running up and down the stairs, chasing kids around, taking a walk to clear our minds, having a dance contest with the kids, or going on a bike ride.

My best advice about fitness is that if you're thinking that you don't have time to go to the gym, don't! Instead, just go and experience life.

FINANCE

Finance plays a pivotal role in Megan's daily tasks at Larson Construction.

I came into this business with a law degree, so I had a good foundation but had to learn about finance and business from the ground up. My personal and professional goals are heavily

influenced by finances, as there is a constant need to balance the needs and goals of the business with the needs and goals of our personal finances.

Megan encourages women who may be weary of finances to learn as much as they can by focusing on what you don't know and asking questions of others that can help you:

The answers are out there, and, in my experience, life is trying to give you the answers you seek; so the more ready you can be to receive them, the happier and easier your life will be.

Megan originally returned to the Chipewewa Valley so that Tim could work construction with her father. But before she knew it, both she and Tim were in the bridge building business. Even though it wasn't what she had planned, Megan knows she is on the right path:

The challenge to us is to be open to God's greater plan—our reality—and to clear our minds to accept things as they are, rather than trying to fit them into a scheme of how we want them to be.

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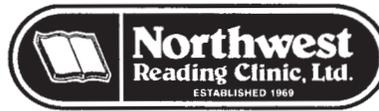
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FAB FINDS!



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Did you know that the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire's climbing wall is available to the community? They offer an orientation class, a lead climbing class, and a skills check class. There are three-and-a-half hour group programs, too, for "interested parties seeking an opportunity to experience the art of indoor climbing. Groups will be instructed on the fundamentals of indoor climbing to include: climbing commands, knot craft, climbing techniques, and proper use of equipment."

The UWEC site provides hours and detailed class info as well as daily, monthly, and semester rates: uwec.edu/recreation/eac/climbingwall.htm. Open Sunday through Thursday. Call 715.836.5601 to schedule a program with University Recreation and Sports Facilities. (And check out "Explore Rock Climbing" on page 32.)

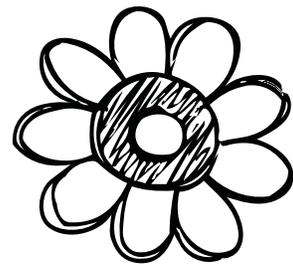
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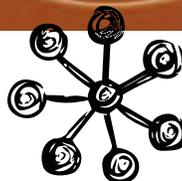
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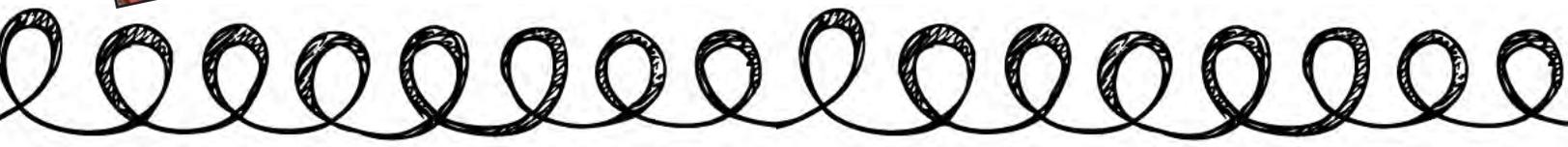
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Baseball is America's pastime and Eau Claire is no exception. The Eau Claire Express team is by far the biggest baseball draw in the area. Established in 2005, the Express is a collegiate summer league wood bat team that competes in the 18-team Northwoods League. Their goal is "is to provide the Chippewa Valley with the very best in affordable family entertainment and quality baseball in an engaging and social environment." And they certainly deliver! Find them on Facebook, and watch them play at Carson Park. For the roster, schedule, tickets, and more, visit northwoodsleague.com/eau-claire-express.



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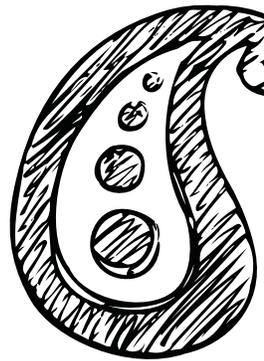


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Photo credit: Tracy Heidike

8



The history of the James Sheeley House building dates back over 100 years. For many years it was a boarding house. Although it hasn't been a boarding house for many, many years, this saloon has stood the test of time. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, most of the architecture has been preserved or restored, while the pleasant outdoor patio is new. Venture back in history while you take in a view of the Chippewa River and share a bite to eat with some very friendly folks. Listen to live music in the ground floor saloon or play pool and darts on the second floor. Under new ownership. Open Tuesday through Friday from 4 p.m. to close, Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m., and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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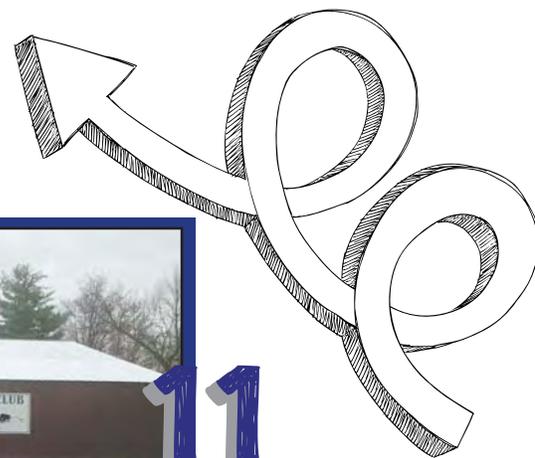


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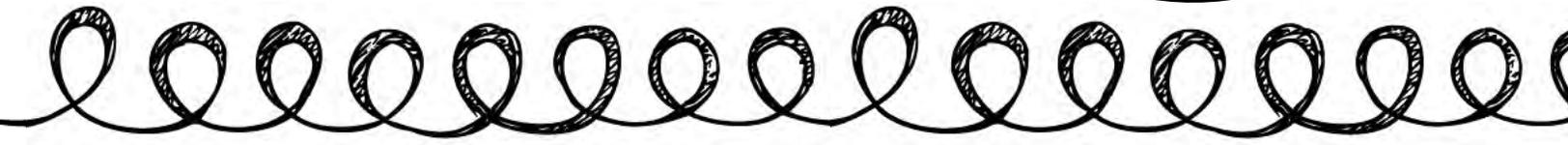
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Tucked away in the city of Menomonie's Wakanda Park, you'll find whitetail deer, elk, and buffalo—all housed by the Menomonie Lion's Club Game Park. Enjoy the splendor of the animals and the area while seated beneath a covered picnic area, or use the guide sign to hike along the adjoining nature trail that winds through forest and wetland areas. Either way, you'll get an up close view of these magnificent animals. Learn more at menomonielionsclub.com/gamepark. Game Park Road in Wakanda Park, Menomonie.



Image credit: iceprotector

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Today's (Not-So) Crazy Cat Lady

By K.C. Powers

When you hear mention of a “crazy cat lady,” does it still conjure images of a woman in a fur-covered nightgown and slippers with her hair in curlers and her face still sporting last night’s cold cream? While the image may continue to garner a chuckle or two, today’s cat lady looks much different.

Perhaps it’s because cat memes abound on the Internet—from our newsfeeds, those furry faces tug on our heartstrings. Or perhaps society is finally fully realizing the power behind the purrrr. Either way, cats are reigning royal as popular pets on the planet.

So much so that Chippewa Falls played host to the Chippewa Valley Cat Club’s cat show at the Northern Wisconsin State Fairgrounds this spring, and the competition was fierce. More than 100 cats strutted in for the event, with caretakers happy to swap stories of cat shows past.

Say hello to Bobbie Gerritz—an Eastern Wisconsinite and traveling cat enthusiast who fell into the dynamic world of competitive cat showing. Gerritz, who use to be a rookie, now knows her way around the arena.

Prompted by her veterinarian, Gerritz rose to the challenge and took her housecat Bozwell to a local cat show; Bozwell brought home a first place ribbon.

“When I told my husband, he asked what the heck the judge saw in him,” tells Gerritz. You see, Gerritz doesn’t show your standard, over-fluffed pedigree cats; she shows rescue cats.

All three of Gerritz’s beauty pageant cat companions are rescue cats: Bozwell, Prada, and Gucci are champion diamonds in the rough. These once tossed-aside kitties now parade in fairgrounds and event centers with VIP treatment from venue to venue.

Unfortunately, not all homeless kitties have the same outcome. “It’s sad, but so many shelter cats get destroyed,” Gerritz reports. This rescue-only meowmie advocates for not only shelter cats, but feral cats as well.

“We trap, neuter, and release through area programs,” explains Gerritz, who works with her neighboring farmers to make sure that even fewer cats die of disease or suffer other tragic fates.

In fact, even Gerritz’s barn cats get the royal treatment. She makes sure they are up to date on their vaccines and shots, too.

Gerritz’s show cats couldn’t know they don’t come from noble lineage. Between the hotel stays, the traveling, and the flashing lights of adoring fans, these kitties run right up there with feline royalty. Then again, don’t all cats love to be paraded around and told how beautiful they are?

Gerritz embraces her modernized cat lady lifestyle, “Cats can be your true BFF and your worst enemy, but I have so much respect for them.”

In a recent *New York Times* Fashion and Style article, *Elle* fashion magazine’s web editor, Ruthie Friedlander, explained why she embraces the “crazy cat lady” label: “If you want to call me a crazy cat lady, I’m fine with that. I am definitely crazy about my cat, and I love when people call me a lady.”

Now that Gerritz’s children are grown, showing her three furbabies is her *me time*: “This is for me now, this is my time.” Plus, she finds cat shows much more relaxing than her past experiences with dog agility and rodeos.

Gerritz encourages those thinking about showing their cats to give it a try, “It’s perfect for everyone from seniors to little kids as a 4-H project. Just go to a local cat show and see if you like it. It’s not just for purebreds.”



Photo credit: KC Powers

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RIDER

on the storm

You have to live your life one day at a time. You can't plan vacations or even outing. I live hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second. You have to live every second and make the best of it.

By Katie McKy

As a child, Angela Meyer dreamed of horses. Poverty precluded owning any horses that weren't palm-sized. So, Meyer played with her plastic ponies and dreamed big: of horse jumping in the Olympics, of owning horses too big to perch atop her dresser, and of becoming a veterinarian. She lost the Olympic and veterinarian dreams when she was the third car in a five-car pile-up in college. In the squeeze, her vertebrae and pelvis rotated and chronic back problems followed. That was just the beginning of having things taken from her, which is why today, Meyer has no distant dreams.

I'm in the second stage of Multiple Sclerosis, where my body starts shutting down. There's no time frame for losing my vision. I might not be able to see tomorrow. It might be five years away.

Walking is already iffy for Meyer. There are days when she can walk. There are times when she is bed-bound or can only walk with a cane or walker. Following some of her grand mal seizures, she has had to relearn walking, as well as her name and date of birth. Such uncertainty means living in each moment.

You have to learn to live your life one day at a time. You can't plan vacations or even an outing. I live hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second. You have to live every second and make the best of it.

A life without plans makes relationships problematic.

I lost a lot of friendships because I can't make plans. I can't plan something as simple as breakfast with a buddy because breakfast might not be doable tomorrow. I'm okay with the few friends who remain.

Some of the ones who remain are her husband, Anders, and his family.

I can't be alone because of my seizures, so we sold our home and live with our in-laws. My husband's family has been amazing. They're wonderful in-laws and we're all very, very close. They take good care of me when I need extra help and they're wonderful with my son when I can't do what needs to be done.

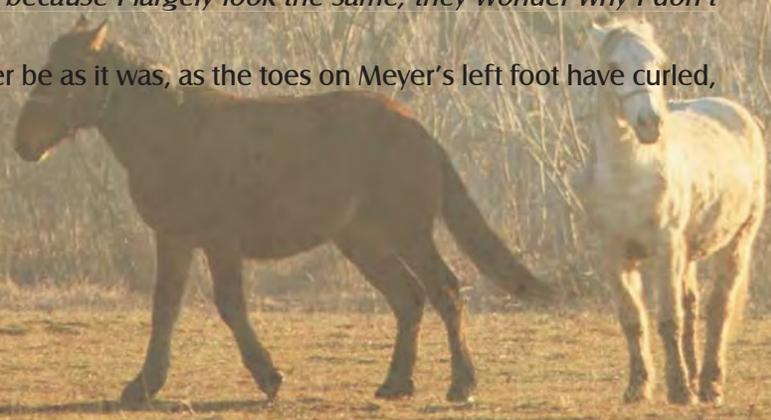
Another source of comfort and joy are her horses, as her husband is a horse trainer and farrier, a person who trims and shoes horses' hooves.

We have eleven wonderful horses now. We do ranch rodeos and give lessons, and I do English riding.

Her ability to ride and walk some days confuses some.

Some people look at me and because I largely look the same, they wonder why I don't get back to the life I led.

However, walking will never be as it was, as the toes on Meyer's left foot have curled,



as well as the fingers on her left hand—symptoms that confused her doctors when they were struggling to initially diagnose her.

The curling toes and fingers on my left side and my left side weakness confused them because those aren't MS symptoms.

Meyer's doctors eventually realized that previously-undiagnosed Cerebral Palsy was also in play. Meyer had been born tiny at three pounds and eleven ounces and her left side had always been weak, but CP was never named. Giving a name to Meyer's MS also took time. Her array of symptoms—from blackouts to weakness to fatigue to numbness to pain—confused her doctors. They considered other causes, such as Lyme disease, and tested accordingly.

The initial event that triggered the testing came six months after giving birth to her now two-year-old son.

I awoke one morning and fed my little one. I just felt really tired. When I put his bottle in the sink, I fell over the sink; so I took a nap, thinking I just needed rest. I awoke to my child screaming and I was unable to get out of bed. I was just unable to move my legs. I always kept my phone with me, so I called my mother-in-law. I told her to come to me and to call an ambulance.

That weeklong hospitalization was the first of several. Following various tests, such as MRIs and video EEGs, she was told she had MS and then told she didn't have MS. The roller coaster ride hit a low when one doctor said it was all in her head.

My husband about choked him to death. He said, "You have no idea what she's endured."

Ironically, it was in her head, as one test revealed over twenty lesions in her brain.

The first time they said I didn't have MS, it was disappointing. I knew something was wrong, but felt people weren't listening. I went to the University of Minnesota and it came back 100% positive I have MS.

And how did Meyer react to such a certain diagnosis?

When I got the full diagnosis, I had a sigh of relief that it wasn't just in my head as I look largely healthy.

A quick and casual look can deceive.

MS shut down my gall bladder; so it's been removed. Due to my optic nerve damage, I'm slowly going blind. My left side will become weaker and weaker as I lose muscle

mass. There's long and short-term memory loss with no cure. Meds only slow the process. Now have a lesion on my lower spine, so I've 60% proper gait.

And what is causing her system-wide shutdowns?

MS destroys the myelin sheath of the brain. It's a demyelination process. MS eats away at the coating that protects the nerves in your brain. Without the protective coating, the brain starts to malfunction. You might trip when you need to walk. It's like a computer malfunction.

The malfunctions have taken much from Meyer.

I was a runner as a young adult. I did 5K events and donated my time to food pantries. I lived in a smaller town and volunteered for different events, such as cancer events. I worked as a physical therapist assistant, doing home care.

Now others help her, which is hard for her.

I miss my freedom. I hate that I have to have to ask for help. I've never been that kind of person. Asking kills me. People look at me and think, 'You have your whole life ahead of you.' I don't what to say. They have no idea. When I worked, I took care of people. I never imagined being the one needing help to shower, and I'm already there at 33.

Her family centers her.

When I was healthy, in a way, my life ended and my child's life began because my new role was to care for him. I still need to be a mom and wife.

Others see Meyer's determination.

I'm not going to let this disease destroy me. My friends and family will tell you I'm very determined.

However, she has her expected grieving, albeit behind closed doors.

I'll have a good cry behind closed doors. I'll be weak in the bathroom, but I'll never be that way around my child and husband. It's not just about me anymore. I'll do my very best to be all I can be for my family and I will fight. It really gives you insight into appreciating what you have.

And when she's out and about, not all giving has been taken from Meyer.

I was always compassionate when it came to other people's pain, but MS has really shown me how precious life and people are. When I see someone struggling, I still open the door for them even though I'm sick too.

It's just not about me anymore. I'll do my very best to be all I can be for my family ...

FATHER

HOW DO I define thee?

By Jackie Tice

Beyond biological reproduction, “fatherhood” becomes a bit difficult to define. We have fathers, adoptive fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, and even family friends or women who brilliantly fulfill the role of fatherhood. It is not uncommon to hear someone say, “Well he’s not my real father, but he is the one I’ve always considered to be my dad.” No ... biology is not the best way to define a father. How *is* fatherhood defined?

Fathers are the kind of people who put worms on the hook. And they take fish off the hook. And when it rains and gets windy and cold, and a kid would rather be anywhere else than huddled beneath an old jacket in the well of an aluminum fishing boat, a father says, “I know where we can catch a nice, hot cup of cocoa.”

Fathers know the value of a Band-Aid®—even when there is no blood. Fathers know that a bump or a bruise, a scrape or a cut always feels a bit better with a Band-Aid. There is some sort of magical healing which occurs when the injury is covered up by a Band-Aid. And a father probably has a Band-Aid in his wallet.

Fathers offer you your first cup of coffee. When you refuse to partake, a father will often wrinkle his nose, shake his head, and act confused. The father will say, “Oh well, I tried. I just thought you might like some coffee.” When you tell a father that you do not drink coffee ... and when you tell a father that you are only seven years old and kids do not drink coffee, the father will pretend that he does not understand. Then the father will say something like, “Well, have it your way. I guess that leaves more coffee for me.”

Fathers carry heavy things. When you move into your first apartment, a father will carry the sofa sleeper your grandmother was going to give away to the Salvation Army. He will carry that sofa sleeper up three flights of stairs. He will tell you that the sofa sleeper looks wonderful in your living room, that you have a wonderful apartment, and that you are going to have a great life. Then, sometime soon, you will get a different apartment. And the father will return, and he will carry the sofa sleeper back down three flights of stairs.

You are highly likely to learn to swear from a father.

Fathers teach you to drive ... and then they pay your first speeding ticket. The first time you crash a car into the garage or a fence or another car, you will call a father. Before a father asks how your car is, a father will always ask if you are all right. A father will say something like, “We can fix the car; I’m just glad that you didn’t get hurt.” And a father will mean what he has said.

Fathers encourage you to get an education, to study hard, to do well in school. Fathers want you to get a good job. A father wants you to move out of his house.

But then, as soon as you move out, a father will let you know that you are always welcome back. You are especially welcome back if you bring small children of your own. Warning: Be careful when leaving small children of your own with your father, especially if the small children do not like coffee.

If you drive home from college and leave your car in his driveway, a father is likely to fill the gas tank ... and check the oil ... and check the brakes ... and make sure that the turn signals work.

Fathers have trucks. When a father does not have a truck, he has a friend who has a truck. You can ask a father to borrow his friend’s truck, and he will be happy to do so. And if your father’s friend is a father, the friend will understand and will loan your father his truck willingly. Do not, however, ask your father’s friend to help your father move the sofa sleeper (that your grandmother should have given to the Salvation Army) up three flights of stairs and into your first apartment. Your father needs to keep his friends. (He might need to borrow his friend’s truck again in the future.)

Non-father parents are different than fathers. Non-father parents will tell you to clean your room. They will tell you that your room is a disaster, that your room is disgust-



ing, that it is unhealthy to live in a room as messy as yours, and that you will remain single the rest of your life because nobody would ever marry someone who kept a room like you do. A father will look into your room. He will observe the layer of soiled laundry, the assortment of dirty eating utensils, and the room's general unkempt state. Then the father will close the door and walk away.

Fathers will talk to you about sports. Fathers spend a lot of time studying up on sports. They know all the rules and all the players, and they enjoy sharing their vast knowledge. (If you cannot take in any more knowledge about sports, have your father call his friend with a truck. Your father's friend with a truck studies sports as much as your father does.) Sometimes fathers coach you in sports, or if not, then they like to act like they are your coach. They also like to act like they are the referee ... or at least smarter than the actual referee.

Young children like to climb. And fathers like to allow young children to climb. Outside observers may feel it ill advised to allow a young child to climb on a rock or a fence or the kitchen cupboard or a tree. Outside observers may comment on the propensity of the young child to fall and get hurt. Outside observers may encourage the father to intervene before the climbing episode turns tragic. But a father is not likely to intervene. "The young child must be allowed to experience the world," the father will say. The father will wait and watch. And as predicted by the omnipotent outside observer, the fall will come. There will be tears. There will be wailing. There may even be bloodshed. Or at least a bump, bruise, or scrape.

And the father will calmly reach into his wallet. And take out a Band-Aid...

Sometime around Father's Day, make sure you call your father. Buy him a cup of coffee. Ask him about sports. Take him fishing. Tell him that your love and appreciation for him is truly undefined.

A father will mean what he has said.

The Diaper Bank is a project of the Junior League of Eau Claire. Through a partnership with Feed My People, we collect and distribute a supply of free diapers to poor and low income families living in Eau Claire County.

THE FACTS

- An adequate supply of diapers can cost over \$100 a month.
- In 2008, the WIC (a federal nutrition program for women, infants and children) office in Eau Claire served 3,875 clients; more than half of those clients were infants and children in diapers. However, the WIC program does not currently include diapers. In fact, no federal social safety net program (e.g. Food Stamps, WIC) currently includes diapers.
- National statistics say that 50% of all babies born are eligible for WIC services.
- Local food pantries provide diapers to families only when they have been donated or when they are available for purchase at a low cost, which is rare.

THE IMPACT

- In poor and low-income families, a baby can spend a day or longer in one diaper, leading to potential health and abuse risks.
- Low-income parents cannot take advantage of free or subsidized childcare if they cannot afford to leave disposable diapers at childcare centers. If parents cannot access daycare, then they are less able to attend work or school on a consistent basis. This in turn leads to increased economic instability and continuation of the cycle of poverty.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

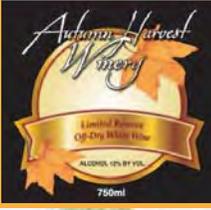
- Contact us and reserve a collection bin for your office lobby. It's easy! All the information you need to host a diaper drive is in our Diaper Drive Toolkit!
- Write a check! With the money you contribute to The Diaper Bank, we can purchase diapers at a reduced cost. The more money we get, the more diapers we can purchase and distribute! Send your donation to: Junior League of Eau Claire, 316 Eau Claire St., Eau Claire, WI, 54701 with "The Diaper Bank" written in the memo.
- Join the Junior League of Eau Claire. Through projects like The Diaper Bank, we are women making a difference in our community! Be a part of something big! Contact us or find us on Facebook.



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That Bad feeling in your **GUT**

By Katie Mcky

Are you one of the many who has a bad feeling in your gut, not when you first meet someone, but after you've eaten ice cream or enjoyed shrimp in a peanut sauce? After the eating, you become bloated, gassy, or suffer through cramping. Does food, which is generally one of life's great pleasures, put the un before your fun?

Leaky gut syndrome, which is as unfun as it sounds, is a catchall phrase applied to many today. It's not a diagnosis, but rather a *call* for a diagnosis. It means food can trigger intestinal discomfort, but the specific precipitator is yet unknown. However, the diagnosis can be as slippery as an oiled newt on crack, because our gut—which is our largest immune system organ—isn't just big; it's complicated too. Then, when this complicated system painfully interfaces with complicated yummys, like shrimp in a peanut sauce, it's hard to finger the culprit. Is it the shellfish? The peanuts in the peanut sauce? Something else that was on the plate such as dairy in the dessert?

This is where the sleuthing begins, and you have to be as methodical and alert as Sherlock Holmes, for there's no blood test or half-million-dollar machine that'll tell you what caused your gas. Doctors and dieticians suggest you **keep a food diary** for a couple weeks. Record everything you eat and also record any uncomfortable, post-eating reactions. Also note how long you suffered gas or bloating. Now that you have a database, **finger the likely culprits and cut them from you diet**. There might be eight or a dozen suspects. This doesn't mean you'll never get to savor those suspects again, for, **one by one, reintroduce them** to your diet and see if they trigger the same symptoms. If one does, you've got your guilty party.

Sadly, knowing the culprit doesn't solve your problem. Let's say you're lactose intolerant, which is quite likely given that lactose, the milk sugar, is problematic for approximately 65 percent of children, teens, and adults. If you're of East Asian ancestry, the likelihood exceeds 90 percent. If you're of African American, Jewish, Mexican American, or Native American descent, that probability is still 75 percent. In the lacto-lottery, the only winners are those of European descent, with only a five percent chance.

If you're not a lacto-lottery winner, this doesn't mean you have to live a life without the bounty of cows. You do have to **become lacto-literate**. For example, buttermilk, yogurt, frozen yogurt, and hard cheeses are often safe for lactose intolerant folks because bac-

teria have broken the lactose down. Butter (which is the fat of milk and not the sugar) and whey (a byproduct of cheese-making and a common additive to many foods) have low lactose levels and also typically can be digested sans cramping. So, you'll be free to enjoy a partial bovine bounty; but in restaurants and when buying processed foods, you'll have to **be alert, asking questions and reading labels**.

When discussing adverse reactions to particular foods, it is important to **differentiate intolerance and allergies**. Reacting badly to a particular food is unlikely an allergy, which are relatively rare. Only one out of 25 teens and adults and one of out every 20 children have a food allergy, showing that many children may grow out of food allergies. Children are typically allergic to peanuts, milk, soya, tree nuts, eggs, and wheat, whereas adults are typically allergic to citrus fruit, nuts, fish, peanuts, shellfish, and wheat. The difference between an allergy and intolerance is that the former can kill you—which is why many airlines no longer serve peanuts lest a whiff of peanut dust trigger a potentially deadly allergic response at 30,000 feet and why many schools are now peanut-free zones bereft of that once-common lunchtime staple: peanut butter.

Food allergies seem to be on the rise and one study substantiates this, showing that the peanut allergy has increased three-fold, from 0.4 percent in 1997 to more than 1.4 percent in 2010. The cause or causes are unknown, but some guess that our sterile, anti-bacterial lifestyles might not be producing the bacterial challenges our immune systems need to become robust. Others suggest that GMOs—increasingly-common genetically modified foods—might not be “read” as safe food by our immune systems or that additives and pesticides might have changed our gut floras, thus making digestion increasingly iffy. Cesarean sections also play a part, as babies born by C-sections are



five times more likely to have allergies, such as pet dander and dust mites. However, we're not completely at the whims of this brave, new world. For example, it is known that mothers who ingest peanuts during pregnancy or while breast-feeding are less likely to have children with peanut allergies.

Even if your child has a peanut allergy, **immunotherapy** is an option. It's a little like injecting someone with a pollen allergy to an extract of grass, weed, or tree pollen to incrementally develop immunity. With the peanut allergy, a minute amount of peanut dust is placed under the tongue. Over time, the amount is increased and the body adapts to the challenge. Of course, the common warning, "this should not be attempted at home," applies ten-fold here.

Perhaps in response to our modern, complex world, we should heed the words of Henry David Thoreau, who wrote, "Simplify, simplify ... instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion."

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LORI MEYER

Reflecting on 21+ Years of Service

By Joe Winter

Exclusive for our St. Croix Valley readers

Lori Meyer, St. Croix County's former clerk of circuit court for several decades, has recently taken a new position in Anoka, Minnesota. Meyer was happy to share with *Five* readers what she's learned from her service in both the Badger and Gopher States.



Meyer served in her St. Croix County post for more than 21 years, starting at age 28.

"Yes, I would think it's a bit unusual for someone to seek public office at a young age, but not unheard of," Meyer said, adding that she worked in child support enforcement for three years before being elected in 1992 to the clerk of court position.

There, she oversaw many changes in the functions of the office as the county grew rapidly. That may have prepared her for her current job in Anoka, a municipality that has an office several times larger in scope.

"My new job title is court administrator. It is essentially the same job, but CAs are appointed rather than elected in Minnesota. The [job title] change there ... was made in the early '80s to give the position a more 'professional' title," said Meyer.

The job entails a wide variety of responsibilities, including leadership and strategic planning, budget and finance, human resource management, facilities, space planning and security, jury management, case management, and records and technology management. And now Meyer must oversee a system with 17 judges rather than four, and a staff of more than 80 rather than 16. Meyer noted that she does have a much larger management team to assist her.

"The biggest difference is that I'm more removed from the day-to-day operations of the courts and involved mostly at the higher level decision-making. In St. Croix County, I was involved at both levels," Meyer said.

Several advancements, mostly involving technology, were made over several years under her leadership here in St. Croix County. In 1992, the jury management system was the only automated function. Then in 1993, the case management system moved away from being manual, and in 1995, the financial functions also became automated. Soon afterward, more updates followed, including

in-court case updating and interfacing with numerous agencies—some nearly simultaneous. These updates also eliminated the need to do such things as manually write off the back of citations or complete fingerprint cards and mail them to Madison or elsewhere; it all became accessible through networked computer programs.

Meyer also helped plan the relocation to a new government center. During her tenure, two new judges were named to the bench, a video conferencing was implemented that saved the sheriff's department inmate transportation costs, and she managed several high-profile trials (some which had been moved to St. Croix County from other counties).

"I enjoyed serving ... getting to know so many people in the community through jury duty, case situations, the legal community, internal and external justice partners, media, etc.," said Meyer.

Now, Meyer is adjusting to work on the other side of the Packer-Viking line. One big difference is that courts in Minnesota are fully state-funded, rather than partially county-funded. Meyer added, "There are numerous challenges in getting to know a system in a different state—laws, terms, acronyms, (especially) a new culture, learning the names of 80-plus staff."

Meyer still lives in Hudson. Regarding the commute, she said, "What I've learned is that commuting is commonplace for many people in the Minnesota court system, and many people commute farther than what I do. I use the commute time to reflect, listen to audio books, and catch up on phone calls."

Meanwhile, Cindy Campbell is now at the helm of the St. Croix County clerk's office. It is fitting that she, too, started serving the community at a young age and has been committed to service for many years.

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John F. Kennedy

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tually unearthing a few remarkable women storytellers, including Mary MacLaine from the Island of Grimsay, in her 80s at the time, who never married but graduated from the university—a rarity in Scotland during the 1920s.

“She understood the value of stories, either personal, family-related or epic myths from the cultural dynamic of her island,” Chipman said.

Another mentor was Morag McNeil, a single mom from the Island of Barra.

“Morag was extraordinary because she was younger (in her mid 50’s). You didn’t often see younger women that would have the time or the inclination to be considered tradition bearers,” she said.

Chipman took an interesting detour after Scotland, earning an M.A. in Vedic science in Southern Iowa and also becoming certified as a yoga instructor at Devanadi Yoga in Minneapolis. Currently, she teaches Ayurveda and hatha yoga classes in Menomonie.

“Yoga and Vedic studies are about the knowledge of life,” she explained. “Ultimately they play into everything. On a more concrete or less esoteric side, both yoga and Vedic studies are ancient wisdom, which can enhance and tap into the deeper inner landscape, the inner wisdom of each individual.”

The interactive process of storytelling—the dynamic between listener and teller—is equally ancient, she added. In Chipman’s experience, the in-the-moment process of actively telling, listening, and imagining through story helps each person connect to an inner, often neglected landscape. Come join her on July 7 and become part of the story.

To learn more about Tracy Chipman, visit listentoatale.com, tlcyoga.weebly.com, and wisconsinconsciousness.net.

Hope McLeod is a staff writer for the Bayfield County Journal in Ashland, Wisconsin, as well as a contributing writer to the Ashland Daily Press, Wisconsin Trails Magazine, Home Education, and Verse Wisconsin. She’s also a published poet and musician with one chapbook, The Place We Begin (Herd a Word 2012) and several recordings including “Time to Dream” and “Frozen in Time.”



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LESSONS FROM Graduation



Photo credit: Frannyanne

By Heather Rothbauer-Wanish

Graduation season is upon us. Some students have taken a traditional path, moving directly to college life immediately after high school, while others are winding down a different path. Meet three local women now embarking on post-graduation life—eager to find out what twists and turns lay ahead as they continue their journeys.

Brianna Brickner, age 18, is a 2015 graduate of Regis High School in Eau Claire. This fall, she will begin attending Providence College in Rhode Island, studying pre-law and majoring in English. For Brianna, high school graduation is a time of reflection.

Graduating from high school means something much more than just receiving a piece of paper with my name on it. It's a time to look at the positive in your life. High school has its ups and downs, but you only get four years to enjoy it.

Brianna knows the memories made high school will always be with her—even after graduation.

High school also taught Brianna about the ongoing challenges of time management for active students.

You're expected to balance your study time, homework, extracurricular activities, and a social life. Getting into a routine and being organized helped me manage my time easier.

Balancing multiple priorities is nothing new for Lisa Keyes of Menomonie. At age 47, she recently graduated from Chippewa Valley Technical College's Business Management program. School brought challenges for Lisa, too.

The biggest challenge for me was time. Working full-time

and attending school is difficult. Even though I had time, it took longer for me because I set such high expectations for myself. Because of this, I spent extra time ensuring that every assignment I submitted was near-perfection.

Lisa started college immediately after high school in 1986, but she had to withdraw for family reasons. Then, Lisa got married and had children, pushing her college pursuits to the back burner for a while longer.

Once my kids were old enough to not need a full-time mom, I was able to finally dedicate my time to something I had started over 25 years ago.

She returned to college in 2011 a little scared.

Entering a classroom knowing that you are old enough to be the mother of nearly all of the students is terrifying.

She feared that students would treat her differently because of her age, but was pleasantly surprised:

Every student I came into contact with treated me as if I was just another student in class.

Another recent graduate from CVTC's Business Management program is Alexx Nevison, an Ellsworth resident. At only 20 years old, she has been taking college courses for several years through the Youth Options program.

I graduated high school with 18 college credits and then finished my two-year degree with CVTC in two years while working full-time.

And, she's continuing her education.

I only have 43 credits left until I get a bachelor's degree. That

means I will have completed a four-year degree in three years.

Allex had to be creative with her schedule. She enrolled in both online and on-campus classes, and she worked with CVTC personnel to stay focused on her graduation goals. During this past semester, after working all day, she traveled to Eau Claire to take night classes two evenings per week.

This semester was challenging because I was working eight-and-a-half hours, driving for two hours to class, attending class for three hours, and then returning home and getting up again at 5 a.m. the next morning.

These women prove that no matter where you are in life, with hard work, determination, and perseverance, you can walk confidently across that graduation stage and into new adventures.

Lisa's advice:

Don't ever feel that you are too old or not smart enough to go to school. I wanted that degree more than anything. So, when I logged into the computer for the first time and had to set-up my CVTC password, I made it something that would inspire me every time I logged in: lwlfns47.

Translation: to finish college when she was 47. And she did.

Allex encourages potential college students to really focus on their education,

This is your education and you only take away from what you put into the educational process. If you do not put in the effort, you won't take anything away from it.

In addition, Allex advises potential college attendees to obtain a degree that is practical and will transfer to many potential employers.

Even though these women's life experiences differ, they each know time goes quickly. Brianna's lesson:

You should take every opportunity when it comes. You don't know for sure if that same opportunity will come again. These four years go by very fast and in a blink of an eye it will be over—all you have left are the amazing memories.

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GIVE SUMMER A HAND

By Katie Mcky

Summer! You can finally be balaclava and mukluk free! Sure, you could simply stroll outside, park on your front porch or front yard and witness summer's balmy dewy mornings, long lovely days, and golden evenings. But is it fair to let summer do all the heavy lifting? Why not take some of the fun-quotient load off summer's back and multiply summer's fun by going to the folks, the food, and the fun? But what to do, what to do? Well, it's up to you, up to you, but here are some options.

NEAR AND DEAR *and* NO TO LOW COST

Chippewa River trail. Pedal, walk, run, or skate with friends and family along and over the river. Even if you go alone, you won't be alone on this popular, meandering path. The Soo Line S-bridge spanning the Eau Claire River and the Phoenix Park Railroad Bridge are especially fun. Note the shoes hanging from the latter and wonder.

Carson Park. Its half-mile of track is described as a kiddie train ride, but don't kid yourself. This is fun for everyone. \$3.00 for big folks and \$2.00 for littles.

Tuesday Night Blues. As chill as the blues are, there's something even better: the blues on Tuesday nights from Memorial Day to Labor Day at the Owen Park bandshell beginning at 6:30 p.m. Long, cooling shadows and long, cool riffs.

LaGrander's Drive-In & Ice Cream. Perched on a peninsula at Lake Wissota, Opie Taylor would feel at home here, with its homemade root beer in frosted mugs. So, fill up the Chevy and pretend it's a two-tone '55 and buy that 16-ounce root beer for a mere buck-fifty.

Lowes Creek County Park. Think of it as a person-powered roller coaster, with tight turns, adrenal-gland squeezing dips, and heart-healthy climbs. The off-road bike trails come in kiddie coaster and teeth-clenching versions.

McDonough Park. Eau Claire's comeliest park, overlooking glittering Dells Pond, is a de facto dog park, popular with pooches and their pals. Sure, booze is a social lubricant, but dogs are a social accelerant. Let your dachshund do the introductions!

Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area. Located northwest of Eau Claire and northeast of Menomonie, this is a verdant gem of a playground. Want to sit beneath trees arching over ponds? Check. Want to climb a tower atop a hill? Check. Want to get away from folks for a bit? Check, as this is often a nearly empty park.

Phoenix Park. Flowers, bald eagles, kettle corn, college kids floating past in their various inflatables, and primo people watching.

Red Cedar State Trail. South of Menomonie, this shady trail parallels the sleepy Red Cedar River, which keeps turning and turning like a NASCAR driver. Four bucks for a daily trail pass and \$20 for the season.

Irvine Park. Cougars and tigers and bears, oh my! The buffalo and elk herds are fun too.

A HOP AND A SKIP AWAY, BUT YA HAVE TO PAY

Rock Fest. This Cadott festival is summer for some, with over 50 bands. Nickleback, Avenged Sevenfold, and Judas Priest headline this year, and Aerosmith and Fleetwood Mac have headlined in the past. Yeah, it's a big deal, but it's also a good deal as presale tickets are only \$129 for four days. There are also games, misting stations, free hot showers, and meet and greets. July 16–19.

Country Fest. From June 25 to 28, Rock Fest's older, twangy brother is also based in Cadott and is the largest, four-day music and camping event in the country. As with Rock Fest, the 7,000 camping sites are within easy walking distance of the concert grounds. Don your cowboy hat and boots and get walkin' to see Rascal Flatts, Tim McGraw, Keith Urban, and Toby Keith.

Eaux Claires Music & Arts Festival. Want something new and different? According to Justin Vernon, the Bon Iver frontman, this festival is intended to diverge from "people jamming together and being uncomfortably hot or cold or wet" with quiet places to rest and locally-sourced food on a 20-acre Chippewa River site. Go hear Boys Noize, Sufjan Stevens, and Indigo Girls on July 17 and 18 in comfort. Expect experimental collaborations, more intimate performances.

YONDER, BUT WORTH A PONDER

Iowa State Fair. Their slogan is "Nothing Compares," and given that this fair makes most "best state fair" lists, they might be right. Des Moines, August 13–23.

Minnesota State Fair. Fair food is taken up a couple notches here, both in terms of quality and creativity. It also makes the "best state fairs" lists. If you think you can hold your milk, there's an all-you-can-drink milk booth for a buck. St. Paul, August 27–September 7.

Wisconsin State Fair. The cream puff was born here, so they make sure their cream puffs are bigger, fluffier, and better. Again, this is a fair that makes the "best state fairs" lists, so get there! West Allis, August 6–16.

Minnesota Renaissance Festival. This is a medieval hoot and a holler. It's bawdy good fun. There are knights, acrobats, lords and ladies, of course, but the wenches and other ne'er do wells are a heap and a half of fun. There's also hearty, good grub. Shakopee, weekends from August 22 through October 4.

So, don't leave all that summer celebration to the crickets. Get out there and sing some too!



Photo credit: Anna Omelchenko



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Go Play **OUTSIDE**

By Benji Williford

Emancipate yourself from the gym and take your fitness outside. All you really need is your own body weight in order to get a great workout anywhere. However, there are countless ways to use elements of your environment to create your own workout equipment in order to spice things up if you prefer. It just requires a little creativity.

Without a doubt, most moms with young children will spend a respectable amount of the summer at the park. Those park swings are the perfect choice to get in a great core workout with three exercises: plank/push-up, back-pull, and side plank. Try these exercises and see if you look at a swing in quite the same way again.

Note: You should have solid form on the plank/push-up and side plank before adding a swing.

PLANK: Hold for 10 seconds eventually building up to one minute while maintaining good alignment. Actively push the ground away even though you are holding a static position. Also, make sure your whole body is active (muscles engaged). This includes your butt and legs.



PLANK

You can also add a **PUSH-UP** and a **KNEE TUCK**: Build up to three sets of 10.

Be sure to keep your chest lined up between your hands. Look slightly forward, as opposed to looking at your feet.



PUSH-UP



KNEE TUCK

BACK PULL: Build up to three sets of 10, keeping a straight line from the back of the head to the heels throughout each rep. Be sure to engage the pull from your back as opposed to your arms. The arms help but shouldn't do all the work. Walking your feet under the swing making your body more parallel to the ground will make the exercise more advanced, as you will have to pull a higher percentage of your bodyweight.



BACK PULL

SIDE PLANK: Hold for 10 seconds, eventually building to one minute. Like the plank, really push the ground away and then pull your lower armpit toward your lower hip. Also like the plank, be sure your butt and legs are active.



SIDE PLANK

Now go play outside and don't come in until dinner. Well ... unless you have to cook it. In that case, I'll cover the Raw Food Diet next time.

If you don't feel safe with your form, find a reputable trainer in your area that offers this type of group training class. It is critical to learn to move well. It's also a great opportunity to build camaraderie with other "kids" your own age. Oftentimes, these classes are offered at a time that gives you the opportunity to workout before your kids get up. You will begin to look at your surroundings very differently. The world really is your oyster when it comes to creativity and endless possibilities for workout equipment. Explore the possibilities!

TO FREEZE OR NOT TO FREEZE

That is the Question!?!

By Kathy Jasper

You've been waiting patiently, and now the time is near. Strawberries—a sign of hope for the summer. Get up early and go out and pick your own, or grab a couple bucketfuls at your local farmer's market. Fresh, juicy, and sweet, it's time to make jam! Freezer jam is easy, fast, and very popular; but this year,

try a different approach: can some strawberry jam. It takes a little more patience, but it's so worth it, and it looks great on your shelves. If you get brave, add a mix of red serrano and banana peppers for a hot 'n' sweet strawberry pepper jam. The recipes are inside the box of pectin. It's great on a cracker with cream cheese. And remember, I'll always be there to help.

STRAWBERRY PEPPER JAM

- 3 cups crushed strawberries
- 1 cup chopped peppers (red serrano and/or red jalapeno)*
- 1 cup cider vinegar
- 5 cups sugar

*Remember to protect your hands when handling hot peppers.

Prepare your jars and lids with hot water. (Step-by-step guides are available at preserving.com.)

Stir the berries, peppers, vinegar, and sugar together in a high-sided pan. Bring to a boil, and keep stirring for about three minutes (or as directed on the box). Add the pectin, and stir a couple minutes longer. Carefully pour into prepared jars. (I like to use the smallest jars for pepper jam.) Cover with hot lids and rings. Set aside and listen for the "POP." Enjoy!

Photo credit: Steiner Wolfgang

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Explore ROCK CLIMBING

Summer's here—and with it is a renewed focus on getting outdoors. People are enjoying running, going for walks, hiking through the woods, hitting bike trails, and even weight training for a toned beach body. Want to try something different? Some area women are reaching for rocks.

Rachel Wolters, a chemistry business major at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, is the U's Environmental Adventure Center (EAC) Rock Wall Team Lead. What began almost four years ago as a way to spend more time with a guy crush has become a true love for the sport.

When I first began climbing, I hated it because I couldn't even hold myself on the wall and was climbing with other teens that had been climbing for at least three to five years. After a while, I took climbing and personalized it for myself. I use it as proof that I can accomplish something, and even when that romance was over, I was still climbing.

Fortunately, Rachel's job is at the same location where she trains.

I have the ability to welcome new climbers to our wall and encourage them to get excited about rock climbing.

In addition, she hopes to cultivate an active climbing community willing to explore the outdoors as a group. In Wisconsin, however, sometimes the outdoors does not cooperate with climbers. Rachel admits that due to our long winters, indoor climbing is a necessary backup plan.

I began bouldering outdoors in Taylors Falls, Wisconsin, and then moved indoors to train. I now climb in Devils Lake, Wisconsin, and Red Wing, Minnesota. Recently, I was able to take part in an outdoor climb in Arkansas.

Another employee at the EAC, Samantha Carney, just started climbing in February. She already loves the sport and feels privileged to work with others who feel the same way:

I would be at the wall every day if I had the chance. However, as many of us know, life gets busy. But, I still make time to climb at least three times per week.

Sam encourages other women to consider rock climbing:

Don't ever worry about not being strong enough or athletic enough. Rock climbing does not rely solely on raw power. Climbing will make you stronger, but it is about knowing how to shift your weight and body placement, which comes as you gain climbing experience.

Rachel agrees that many women get discouraged by their lack of strength when starting out:

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If you try rock climbing, don't be disappointed with your initial inability to climb difficult routes or even to the top—remember that every climber starts at the bottom. I would tell women that it is a lot of fun and rewarding, but it is definitely challenging and physically demanding.

Both women have realized they are capable of more than they initially thought due to their rock climbing adventures. Sam explains that failure is okay, and it's more about challenging yourself to do better next time:

This sport challenges you both mentally and physically. If you always climb a route that you know you can finish, you'll never get better. Climbing a route that pushes you and that challenges your mind and body is the key to improvement.

Rachel encourages potential climbers to visit the UWEC climbing wall, since it is open to the community. Children and parents are welcome, and it is only five dollars per night to climb. Most indoor rock climbing facilities have the gear newcomers need. As you advance in the sport, consider buying your own gear, remembering that some items can be pricey depending upon style and number purchased.

Whether you have climbed continuously or this is your first foray into the field, you'll discover a support system on the wall.

Rachel encourages,

As long as you are challenging yourself and trying hard, it's a reason to celebrate your work in the climbing community—there is no need to be afraid that you are not good enough.

And Sam adds,

Entering into the world of rock climbing means entering into a community of driven individuals who push each other and encourage each other to be the best they can be.

Heather Rothbauer-Wanish owns Feather Communications (feather-communications.com) where she provides freelance writing, communication workshops, training services, and resumé/cover letter assistance. She enjoys researching new topics, interviewing people, and composing articles. In addition, Heather teaches business courses at several western Wisconsin colleges.

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Decorating Dilemmas 03

OUTDOOR SPACES

I was flipping through a magazine and came across an article about a landscape designer that transformed her narrow backyard (160 x 24 feet) into a private, lush retreat. The pictures are stunning. Essentially, she has three rooms: a dining area, a living room type area, and a little hideaway area. Her space includes beautiful all-weather furniture and cushions with punchy pillows, perfectly manicured plants and hedges, a gas fire table, outdoor lighting, and even a water feature.

So what are we “regular Joes” to do? First, **let’s not compare ourselves to a landscape designer with a bottomless budget.** Then we can **decide what we want from our outdoor space.** Is it for gardening? A place space for small children? Entertaining? Just to lounge? Or for all purposes?

I like to **start with the furniture.** There are so many choices out there; gone are the days of choosing between uncomfortable wire or weak wicker. **Metal** now comes in a variety of styles—modern, vintage, or retro. Today’s **durable plastic** looks like wood or basket weave. There is also **wood and wicker**; although in our area, I would shy away from it. I have wood Adirondack chairs that sit on my front porch, and even under a roof, they need new paint every other year.

After you pick your furniture, add another layer with **cushions and pillows.** Often furniture sets come with cushions; if you like the color, then just **add some custom pillows for that punch of color** or just so it won’t look so factory stamped. If you don’t like the color your set came with, **new cushion covers** can be made for a minimal investment. There are so many fun outdoor fabrics available. You can go nautical, trendy, animal, stripe, floral, or tropical. You can also find solid outdoor fabrics in a variety of colors and add color or pattern in just the pillows. I went with a wide black and white stripe on my black furniture. My pillows are also oversized with a coordinating black and white stripe.

Add an **umbrella** or two or three, depending on your yard size. I recommend **solid color** umbrellas, and if you choose to have several, keep them all the same color. I have red. My yard is also very small, but I have one for the table and one for my

double chaise. Umbrellas not only help with shade from the sun, but they also add a little privacy and coziness that often gets lost outside.

Now you need **“walls.”** They can be actual walls made from **privacy fences**, or you might choose **trellises with climbing vines** or **hedges** or a tall **water feature** or **sculpture**. There really are so many possibilities. Surrounding my backyard, I have two privacy fences, and entrance to the yard is via a trellis archway on one side of the garage. One privacy fence is covered by bittersweet vines and another side by grapevines. It’s really very pretty and green by midsummer.

Next—and the part I struggle with the most—**plants.** Plants **in pots**, plants **in the ground**; there are so many options here that if you struggle like me, it may pay off to **invest in a landscape artist to design it** for you. Do **keep our area in mind**; any plants going in the ground need to be hardy in keeping with our zone in order to survive our winters.

Last, add the **“details”**: **outdoor lighting**, **bunting** or **flags**, **birdhouses**, etc. Don’t go overboard here or it will fast look cluttered instead of cute, junky instead of charming! I’ve strung fat-bulbed outdoor lights across my backyard, added some bunting on my front porch, and included a couple hand-made whimsical birdhouses from my nephew.

Just **have fun with it** and do what works for you and your family. Don’t worry about what that landscape designer in Oregon is doing ...

Justine Childs has loved design since she was a little girl and has operated a custom sewing business for almost 20 years. Currently, she works from her home studio, Vintage Hearts, creating custom fit slipcovers, window treatments, lampshades, and a wide variety of home décor along with custom paint treatments. Justine and her husband, Kelly, have three adult daughters, one teenage son, and one granddaughter who is the light of their life. You can address your decorating dilemmas for Justine to vintageheartsis@gmail.com or visit her blog at vintageheartsathome.wordpress.com.



CELERY: Be A Stalker!

By Laurel Robertson, Corporate Chef,
Mega Co-op

I used to think celery was virtually devoid of nutritional value. But now I know it's so much more than a peanut butter delivery method. Check out all of the benefits of this unsung hero:

Watching your **weight**? One large stalk contains only 10 calories! Try celery raw, in soups (see the Chilled Celery Soup recipe on page 40), chili, all kinds of salads, and diced in main entrées. Steamed celery not only retains its flavor but also 99% of its nutrients. So, feel free to get creative with it.

Celery reduces joint and respiratory **inflammation**, providing much needed relief. It can relieve stress, too. Celery contains **magnesium**, and its natural essential oils soothe the nervous system. In the evening, you will **sleep** better.

Since celery aids in **digestion** and elimination due to high water content and insoluble fiber, it is a natural "**detoxer**." Plus, it contains that "good," naturally-occurring **sodium** that is essential for your health.

Did you know celery is excellent for **eyes**? One large stalk of celery can deliver up to 10 percent of your daily need for **vitamin A**.

Celery also reduces "bad" (LDL) **cholesterol**. Here's how: There is a component in celery called butylphthalide. It gives the vegetable its flavor and scent. Research shows that just two stalks of celery a day can reduce LDL cholesterol by up to seven points, all due to the butylphthalide. Furthermore, these phthalides boost **circulatory health** and lower high **blood pressure**.

Super celery can even combat **cancer**. Research shows that a powerful flavonoid in celery called luteolin inhibits the growth of cancer cells, especially in the pancreas, and can significantly delay the formation of breast cancer cells.



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The New CARPET CLEANING Rule in Wisconsin

There was a time when landlords were *not* able to contractually shift the cost of routine carpet cleaning to tenants upon the tenants' departure from a rental unit. Those days are long gone, and landlords may now *require* tenants to cover routine carpet cleaning costs at the end of a tenancy. However, the process of how to shift the carpet cleaning costs and how to collect advance fees must be done correctly on the landlord's end in order for the provision to be enforceable and for the landlord to successfully collect.

In 2013, the Department of Justice (DOJ) was asked to clarify an informal opinion it had rendered in 2001 that concluded that routine carpet cleaning at the end of a tenancy falls within the landlord's duties of keeping the property in a "reasonable state of *repair*" as assigned by law. The DOJ's 2013 opinion distinguished routine carpet cleaning from the landlord's "repair" obligations by concluding that a torn or ripped carpet may need to be repaired, which is a landlord's legal obligation, but a dirty carpet which needs cleaning is not considered repair. Thus, routine carpet *cleaning* may be shifted to the tenant **as long as the parties have agreed to it in the lease agreement.**

Although the DOJ's 2013 opinion allowed routine carpet cleaning to be contractually passed onto tenants, it also clearly stated that landlords are not allowed to deduct routine carpet cleaning fees from a tenant's security deposit at the end of a tenancy. Consequently, landlords may not be able to recover these fees in situations where tenants abandon the rental units, are evicted because they were already behind on rent, or if tenants simply refuse to comply with the lease agreement.

One way landlords may attempt to ensure that they can successfully shift the carpet cleaning fees to their tenants is to collect a carpet cleaning deposit in advance of the tenancy.

However, this is a catch-22 method. Any upfront fees or deposits landlords collect which exceed one month's rent are to be treated as security deposit money, which the DOJ's 2013 opinion clearly stated cannot be withheld for routine carpet cleaning. Landlords who collect carpet cleaning deposits in advance of the tenancy would then have to collect a security deposit less than one month's rent in order to lawfully use the carpet cleaning deposit for routine cleaning. Otherwise, landlords will have to resort to the old-fashioned method of suing departed tenants who fail to pay for the costs or forfeit it all together.

Landlords should take caution to ensure that they have solidly drafted lease agreements so the carpet cleaning provisions can successfully be shifted to the tenants. Tenants should take caution to ensure their lease agreement actually shifts the routine carpet cleaning fees to them. If the lease agreement makes no mention of this, then landlords cannot by default require tenants to pay for the carpet cleaning costs at the end of their tenancy. Whether you are a landlord or tenant, it is important to carefully read and understand the lease agreement to ensure a successful and happy tenancy for both parties.

The process of how to shift the carpet cleaning costs and how to collect advance fees must be done correctly.

Attorney MaiVue Xiong practices in the Business Section with the Weld, Riley, Prens & Ricci, S.C. law firm. She focuses on business formations and sales, banking and financing services, real estate, landlord/tenant, and intellectual property law.

These materials are meant to serve as a guide and should not be construed as legal advice or a legal opinion on any specific fact or circumstance. These materials are intended for general informational purposes only, and you are urged to consult with competent legal counsel concerning your own situation and any legal questions you may have.

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Savings Tips

FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Summer is a time when some of us are lucky enough to have our young adult children at home during a college break. It can be a great time for fun and also to reinforce life lessons such as money management and saving. Young adults today face a variety of challenges in their quest for financial independence. Some of these challenges are similar to those faced by previous generations, while others are unique to the times. Consider sharing these five tips to prepare for their future:

Invest in your future. Rapidly changing technology used in various fields may require continuing education. You may wish to make ongoing education a priority to enhance your skills and increase your professional potential. The more varied and flexible your skills, the more you will have to offer to prospective employers.

Open an emergency savings account. The uncertainty of the workplace may mean that your professional life will be interrupted by career changes. If you need to return to school to change career paths, you may experience periods of time without steady income. Creating an emergency fund to cover several months' worth of living expenses can help you manage work-related transitions. This savings fund may also be used for other endeavors, such as starting your own business.

Save early and continuously for retirement. Saving for your retirement is *your* responsibility. The more disciplined and diligent you are, the better. Social Security provides only a base level of income, and many employers no longer offer traditional pension plans. With employer-sponsored **401(k) plans**, the responsibility of saving rests on your shoulders. Although you may be years away from retirement, the key is to make *time* and *compound interest* your allies.

Let retirement funds accumulate. If you change jobs early or often, consider rolling over your employer-sponsored retirement plan funds into an **Individual Retirement**

Account (IRA) or new company retirement plan. It may be tempting to cash in the account, especially if you have accumulated only a small amount, but doing so would make it immediately taxable, and you may also incur an early withdrawal penalty. Perhaps a greater concern, however, is that you may be unable to make up for time already spent to accrue these savings.

Use credit wisely. Credit card companies frequently target young adults with the lure of "easy money." While credit cards offer convenience (it's virtually impossible to conduct some transactions, such as reserving airline tickets, without one), they also have the potential to create debt problems. Because payments can be extended far into the future, overspending on credit can create an illusion of wealth. Paying off the full balance each month is the best way to manage your use of credit.

Plan Now for the Future

Remember, the funds you accumulate during your working years may be your *primary* source of retirement income. Although inflation may threaten your savings, a little discipline and common sense over time may help you better manage your current and future financial affairs.

Paul Woita of Woita & Associates, Business & Retirement Planning, is a native of Rhinelander, WI, and has resided in Eau Claire since 1977 with his wife, Cathie. Paul has over 30 years of experience in the financial services industry and is passionate about working with his clients to help ensure they reach their personal and financial goals. He enjoys empowering people through teaching and helping to take the mystery and fear out of what can be complicated subjects related to financial planning and insurance.

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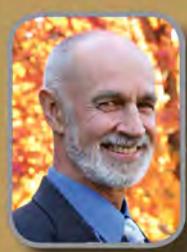
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FODIE FORUM



Adventures in Cooking

Summer is a great time to grill. This Father's Day, we are having Korean short ribs.

Two years ago, my coworker Maggie invited me out to a Korean restaurant in Madison. Despite not being able to pronounce most of the items on the menu, I loved the food and left there with hopes of trying some new things at home. I have much to master, but for now, I enjoy making and eating Kalbi—Korean short ribs. For another adventure in summer cooking, try this chilled celery soup as a light, refreshing meal or side. And be sure to check out all celery has to offer in this issue's Mega tips and tricks below and on page 35. Here's wishing you all a safe, adventurous, and fun summer.

Bon appetit,
Lanette



Lanette Hesse lives with her husband and three children in the Eau Claire area. When she is not computer consulting, volunteering, or enjoying outdoor activities, she loves to be in the kitchen cooking for her family and friends.

KALBI (KOREAN BBQ SHORT RIBS)

**This is a variation of a recipe originally published on allrecipes.com*

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 3/4 cup soy sauce | 2 green onions, chopped |
| 3/4 cup brown sugar | 1 tablespoon Asian (toasted) sesame oil |
| 2 teaspoons fresh ginger, grated | 2 pounds Korean-style short ribs (beef chuck flanken, cut 1/3 to 1/2-inch thick across bones) |
| 3/4 cup water | |
| 1 clove garlic, minced | |



In a bowl, stir together the soy sauce, brown sugar, ginger, water, garlic, green onions, and sesame oil until the sugar has dissolved. Place the ribs in a large plastic zipper bag. Pour the marinade over the ribs, squeeze out all the air, and refrigerate the bag for 5 hours to overnight. Preheat an outdoor grill to medium-high heat, and lightly oil the grate. Remove the ribs from the bag, shake off the excess marinade, and discard the marinade. Grill the ribs on the preheated grill until the meat is still pink but not bloody nearest the bone, 5 to 7 minutes per side. Serve over udon noodles. Serves 4.

CHILLED CELERY SOUP

**an epicurious.com recipe*

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 head celery, chopped | 3 cups low sodium chicken broth |
| 1 large potato, chopped | 1/4 cup fresh dill |
| 1 medium onion, chopped | 1/3 cup heavy cream |
| 6 tablespoons butter | olive oil |
| salt to taste | flaky sea salt |

Combine celery, potato, onion, butter, and salt in medium saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring until onion is tender, about 8 minutes. Add broth, and simmer until potatoes are tender (about 8 more minutes). Purée in blender with dill. Strain. Chill, and serve with olive oil, celery leaves, and flaky sea salt.



Photo credit: Lunov Mykola



tips & tricks by Laurel

Choose celery with upright stalks that snap when bent. The leaves should be fresh and crisp. When selecting celery, remember this rule of thumb: the darker the color, the stronger the flavor. Celery retains more nutrients when cut as needed versus prepping beforehand.

Quick Fixes

by the Sive Crew



Beauty Fix: Style Edit Root Concealer

Spray away your roots quickly and simply. Gently spray on dry hair to make roots disappear and blend into the rest of your color. Available in five shades: medium to light blonde, medium to light auburn/red, light brown to medium blonde, medium brown to dark blonde, and black to deep medium brown. No mineral oil, petrolatum, parabens, and peroxide. Not tested on animals. styleedit.com

Summer Refreshment Fix: SPOR Tea®

This summer, quench your thirst with this nutritious alternative to soda and sugary sports drinks. SPOR Tea energizes naturally while fighting stress. It's delicious over ice, doesn't have that "skunky" flavor that accompanies some health teas, and isn't bitter either. Sugar-free and gluten-free. Contains premium green and black teas, Siberian eleuthero root, ginger, maté, vitamin C, and citrus flavoring. "Energize your day." Try a free sample from sporteatea.com.



Natural Bug Fix: Bug-A-Boo Insect Repellent

Concerned about long-term exposure to the chemical DEET? For folks seeking a DEET-free alternative to send mosquitoes packing, Lemongrass Spa Bug-a-Boo Insect Repellent uses citronella, lemongrass, and cedarwood essential oils to repel insects effectively. Available in a four-ounce spray bottle, a two-ounce spray bottle (perfect for an on-the-go bag), and a convenient stick (great for face and neck). Environmentally-friendly and pet safe, too. Available at lemongrassspa.com or from your local representative.



Photo credit: Gaywornskaya_Yana

Kitchen Fix: Frozen Lemon Wedges

Get more from your lemons. Freeze lemon wedges (intact or already squeezed) to use for zesting or as ice cubes in a water bottle. They're great with SPOR Tea® too! And when you're all done using the wedges, pop 'em in your garbage disposal to refresh your kitchen sink.



Fitness Fix: TrailLink App

TrailLink is part of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy® (RTC) which has converted old railroad lines all over the country into bicycle trails. The nonprofit RTC's mission is "to create a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors to build healthier places for healthier people." Wherever your summer adventures take you, use the TrailLink app to locate RTC trails near you and to read and write user reviews of the trails. Learn more at trailink.com.



Photo credit: BW Folsom

Travel Fix: Contact Case Makeup Storage

For many people, summer adventure means summer travel. For shorter trips, leave some of your bottles behind by packing lotions/creams and makeup foundation in contact lens cases. Your friends and family will thank you when you have room left in your suitcase for souvenirs!



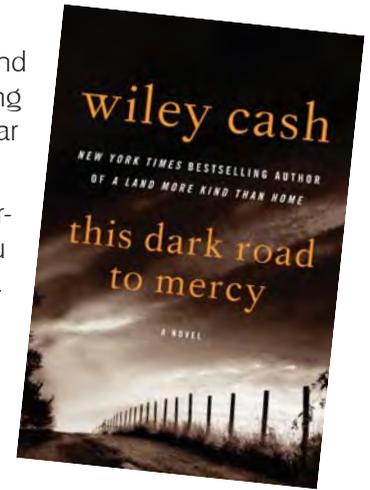
This Dark Road to Mercy

By Wiley Cash

This story is set in 1998 in North Carolina and follows two sisters—12-year-old Easter and six-year-old Ruby—who have been placed into foster care after their mother’s unexpected death from a drug overdose. Just as the girls are beginning to adjust to their new life, their father, Wade, shows up. Although he signed away his parental rights years ago, Wade decides he wants his daughters back, forcing them to live in the middle of his past and present mistakes.

lies, or national obsessions—and asking ourselves ‘Am I believing correctly? Am I seeing with clear eyes?’”

Cash develops strong characters, making you feel you know each one personally. Easter was old beyond her years, and I fell in love with her take charge attitude. This story about both innocence and evil is an out of the park homerun.



Baseball also plays a role in this tale of unending yearning for family. In 1998, Sammy Sosa and Mark McGwire were trying to break the homerun record. In the author’s words—we watched these two American heroes to block out the scandal in D.C., “but now, looking back we realize that that was fiction, that none of that was true ... that’s what this novel is about: It’s looking back at things we once believed to be true—whether about ourselves, our fami-

About the Author:

Wiley Cash and his wife live in North Carolina, where he teaches fiction writing and American literature at Bethany College. He earned his PhD in English from the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. Cash comes from a long line of storytellers and says, “as a six year old, you’re called a liar when you tell a story that you know isn’t true. But if you keep telling stories and wait just a few more years, people will eventually call you a writer.”



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RAYS OF GRACE XX111

WRITTEN BY GRACE THEISEN

MY DAD

He is someone I look up to, who at times is VERY embarrassing, but who loves me and would do anything for me. I'm talking about my amazing dad.

As a boy, my dad lost one of the most important people in his life: his mother. Because of this, he understood from a young age the importance of working together as a family. Every day, he teaches my four brothers and me lessons that we will carry with us for the rest of our lives. In high school, Dad was involved in sports; he was the state champion for pole vault, and he also loved football. In addition, he worked hard academically and attended the University of Notre Dame. Then he taught at an inner-city school in Chicago. After that, he continued his education at the University of Pittsburg and received his law degree from the University of Northern Illinois. Today, he is a judge in Eau Claire County, and I couldn't be more proud. He inspires me to work at being the best version of myself every day.

Now it's time to embarrass him. The other day, Dad was

driving my younger brother Henry and me to school. He told us that someone told him it's "cool" to have nicknames for your wife (for example, my uncle calls my Aunt Becky "Becks"). My mom, Jen, has red hair. So, Dad came up with a "really great" nickname for her: J-Red (... it's not the same, Dad). Although J-Red will not be catching on anytime soon, Henry and I got a good laugh.

It is important to my dad to always take care of our family and show us unconditional love. He knows we will mess up—it's part of growing up—but he is always there to catch us when we fall (although cheesy, it's 100% true).

My amazing dad is someone I look up to, someone who is embarrassing, but someone who loves us more than anything. I love you, Dad.



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What's Going On

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2015

June 12 – 19th Annual Breakfast in the Valley – 5-10 a.m. Celebrate the importance of agriculture in our local economy as more than 300 Eau Claire Chamber volunteers serve a breakfast which includes egg scrambles, muffins, cheeses, bananas, a special dessert, coffee, milk, and juice. Learn more at eauclairechamber.org/programs_and_services/breakfast_in_the_valley.aspx.

June 12-14 – Cornell Community Fair – Rides, tractor pull, live music, great food, family triathlon, and much more. Mill Yard Park, Cornell. For details, visit cornellfair.com.

June 18-20 – Chippewa Valley Parade of Homes – Chippewa Valley Homebuilders Association 41st annual event features 19 homes by 15 builders. For more details, visit cvhomebuilders.com/events/2015-41st-annualparade-of-homes.

June 19-21 – Stanley Rodeo – On Father's Day weekend, head to Stanley for an action-packed show fit for cowboy fans of all ages! Chapman Park, 450 West 4th Ave., Stanley. For ticket prices and more info, visit stanleyrodeo.com.

June 20 – Lake Eau Claire Clear Water Triathlon and Picnic – Head to beautiful Lake Eau Claire for family fun to raise funds for water quality improvement. This non-timed event includes a 2.5-mile walk/run, a 1-mile paddle (kayak or canoe), and an 8-mile bike ride. Hide Away Bar, E19986 Cty. Rd. ND, Augusta. Entry fee includes chicken dinner, beverages, and a live band for dancing! For more details and to register, visit lakeeauclaire.org under Events.

June 20 – Leinie Lodge Annual Family Reunion – 9 a.m. The Leinenkugel family invites you to an annual celebration at the Leinie Lodge to say thank you to Leinie loyalists. Come enjoy family, food, beer sampling, and entertainment. More at leinie.com

June 25-28 – Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat – Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m.; Sunday 1:30 p.m. One of the most enduring shows of all time, this irresistible family musical is about the trials and triumphs of Joseph and his coat of many colors. State Theatre, 316 Eau Claire St., Eau Claire. \$20/adult, \$18/senior, \$10/youth. Call 715-832-ARTS (2787) or visit eauclairearts.com.

June 25-28 – Country Fest – This annual outdoor country music festival features over 20 artists. This year's acts include Tim McGraw, Keith Urban, Toby Keith, Rascal Flatts, and more. Chippewa Valley Music Festival Grounds, Cadott. Adult tickets start at \$87.50. For more info, call 1.800.326.FEST or visit countryfest.com.

June 27 – RCU Charity Classic – 7 a.m. 10K walk/run, 2-mile walk/run, 1/2- and 1/4-mile children's races. Phoenix Park, Eau Claire. Prices, course maps, details, and registration at rcu.org in the events calendar.

JULY 2015

Ski Sprites Water Ski Show – 6:50 p.m. every Sunday and Wednesday evening June through Labor Day. Be entertained by the Ski Sprites team as they perform their well-choreographed ski show, with climbing pyramids and stunning routines. \$3 parking. Lake Altoona Beach, Altoona. For more info, visit skisprites.com.

July 1-5 – Augusta Bean and Bacon Days – Demolition derby, grand parade, car show and burn out contest, fireworks, craft sale, 5K walk/run, and more. Downtown Augusta. Learn more at beanandbacondays.info.

July 4 – Eau Claire Fourth of July Celebration – Events begin at 10 a.m., fireworks at 10 p.m. Once again, the City of Eau Claire is firing up this Independence Day celebration. Enjoy sporting events, music, and fireworks! Carson Park, Eau Claire. For more info including the full schedule of events, visit eauclairewi.gov.

July 8-12 – Northern Wisconsin State Fair – This year's acts include Ronnie Milsap, Tyler Farr, 38 Special, and Here Come the Mummies. Fairgrounds, 225 Edward St., Chippewa Falls. For full details, visit northernwisconsinstatefair.com.

July 9-11 – Spooner Rodeo – It's the 62nd year of Spooner's grand tradition of pro rodeo. Contestants from around the country will vie for points and prize money. For ticket prices and more info, visit spoonerrodeo.com.

July 16-19 – Rock Fest – This annual outdoor rock-n-roll music festival's acts include Shinedown, Nickelback, Judas Priest, Avenged Sevenfold, and more. Chippewa Valley Music Festival Grounds, Cadott. Adult tickets start at \$77.50. For more info, call 1.800.326.FEST or visit rock-fest.com.

July 21-22 – Valley Gospel Choir Concert – 7:30 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30 p.m.) Grace Lutheran Church sanctuary, 202 W. Grand Ave., Eau Claire. \$12. Purchase tickets at the door or in advance from Festival Foods, Gordy's County Market, or individual choir members. valleygospelchoir.org

July 23-25 – Country Jam USA – Camping, cowboy boots, good grub, GREAT music, and much more. Big stars, big hits, big fun—including Blake Shelton, Eric Church, Lady Antebellum, Gary Allen, Hunter Hayes, and more. 3443 Crescent Ave., Eau Claire. Shuttle service available. For ticket prices and more, call 715.839.7500 or visit countryjamwi.com.

July 24 – Relay for Life Chippewa County – 6 p.m. to 12 a.m. This is a non-competitive walk/run and an awareness event for everyone—including cancer survivors, families, friends, co-workers, and the public. It provides an opportunity for everyone who has been impacted by cancer to come together in a warm, positive, upbeat atmosphere. Northern Wisconsin State Fairgrounds, 225 Edward St., Chippewa Falls. relay.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY15MW?fr_id=67472

INDEPENDENCE DAY

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