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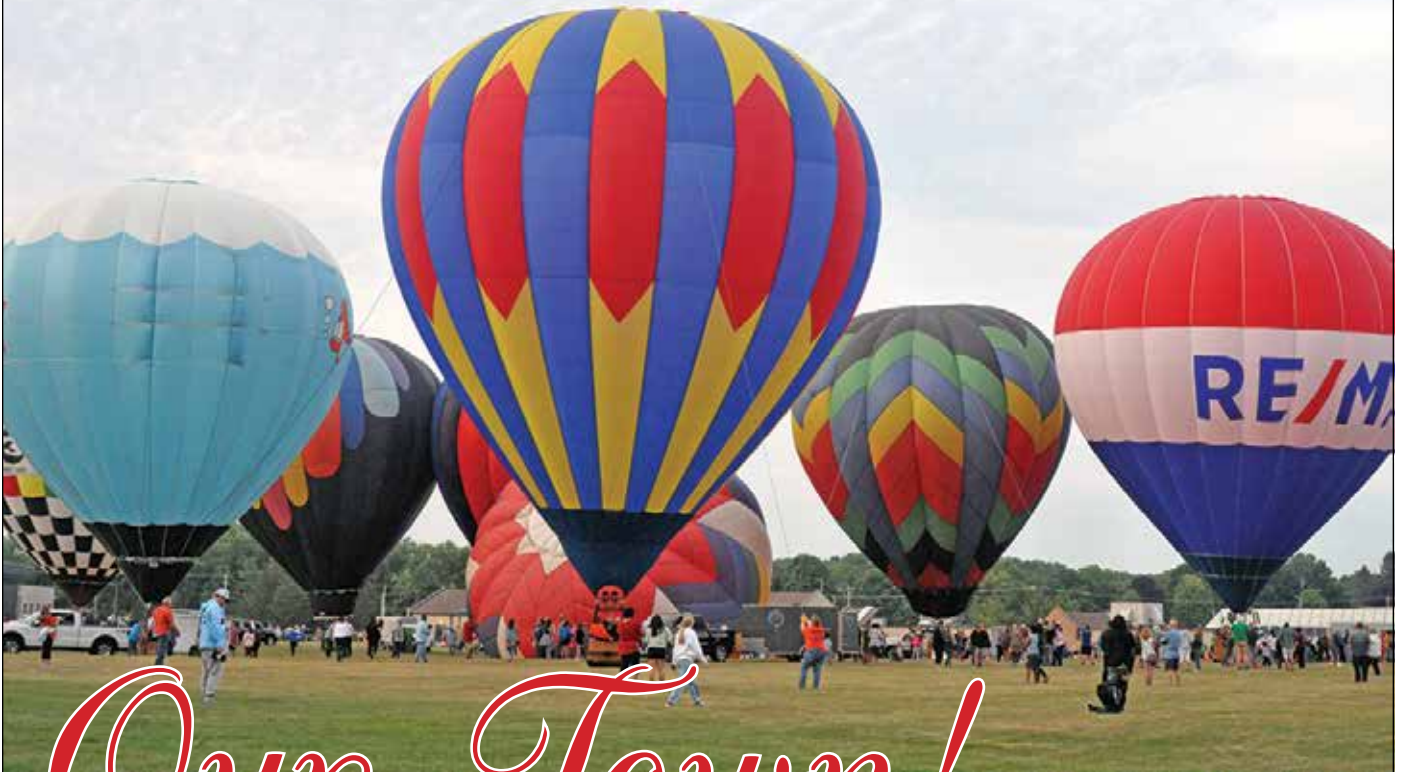


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Waterford began as a town of commerce in the 1800s because of its proximity to the Fox River. The waterway provided the perfect source of access and power for early settlers.

Early settlers came to what would become the Village of Waterford in the late 1830s, led by Levi Barnes and Samuel Chapman. Because of its location on the Fox River, by the 1920s the area became the largest village in western Racine County and a hub of commerce and industry.

Today, the area is home to about 8,000 people, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. The community and the village have grown in the past 150 years with the additions of an industrial park, business park and downtown districts.

The Waterford area, which includes the Village and Town of Waterford, Village of Rochester and the Town of Norway offers small-town living a short distance from big-city amenities.

Only 30 minutes from Milwaukee, the western Racine village and surrounding towns are growing daily.

The downtown business district in the Village of Waterford has been growing, with the additions of the Waterford Stillhouse, Reads by the River and Kravings opening up in the last couple of years. Uncle Harry's Frozen Custard has also added a restaurant, which serves burgers and more.

One of the draws to the area is the event

schedule. The communities host several unique opportunities to enjoy the local flavor.

In the summer, the annual Fourth of July parade in Waterford is a big draw for visitors who join in with the community's Independence Day celebration. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church also hosts its annual Country Fair in early June and events run in the village's downtown all summer long. Balloon Fest returned to Waterford in July, after being moved to Mukwonago for a few years, and the Waterford Lions host a Fun Fest carnival in August.

Add to that the fine fishing, boating and bike trails in the area, and it's clear why people often say Waterford is a "destination."

Fall in the village features Explore Waterford's River's Edge Art Walk and the annual Lion Club's chicken barbecue dinner.

The holidays are also celebrated in style, when the first Saturday in December comes around and the spirit of the season fills downtown with the annual Christmas Parade, sponsored by Explore Waterford. At the end of the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus ride in on fire truck to light the village Christmas tree in the library and visit with the children.

Winter also features an ice skating rink in 10 Club Park, which is open to all, weather permitting.

So, stop by for a visit and enjoy all we have to offer!

2023 Waterford, Wisconsin

## our town

An annual publication of WATERFORD POST & SOUTHERN LAKES NEWSPAPERS

209 N. Dodge St., Burlington, WI 53105

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**above:** Balloonfest made a glowing return to Waterford in 2022, after a three-year absence, thanks to the Waterford Union High School District, which sponsored, organized and hosted the event. Balloons are seen here poised for the "evening glow," which featured the inflated balloons glowing against a dusky sky. Hundreds of people were on hand to watch the colorful event and many had the opportunity to mingle with the balloon operators.

ED NADOLSKI *Our Town*

**on the cover:** A classic tractor flies the flag as it proceeds along the Waterford 2022 Fourth of July parade route.

CHAD HENSIK *Our Town*



# OUR GOVERNMENT

## VILLAGE OF WATERFORD

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Safety Building 262-534-3911  
Treasurer 262-534-2980, ext. 224

## VILLAGE BOARD

The Village Board meets the second Monday of the month (fourth Monday as needed) at 6:30 p.m. at Village Hall. The Village Board trustees are:  
Don Houston, president  
Andrew Ewert  
Adam Jaskie  
Pat Goldammer  
Troy McReynolds  
Tamara Pollnow  
Robert Nash

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Electrical/Plumbing Inspector  
262-534-9236  
Clerk-Treasurer 262-534-2350  
Court 262-534-4880  
Engineers 262-348-5600  
Fire Chief 262-758-8965  
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## TOWN BOARD

The Town of Waterford Board meets the second Monday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall. Supervisors are:  
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Dale Gauerke  
Teri Nicolai  
Doug Schwartz  
Tim Szeklinski

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Assessor 262-542-3332  
Building Inspector 262-895-2732  
Clerk-Treasurer 262-895-6335  
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262-895-6400

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The Town of Norway Board meets the second Monday of the month in the Main Hall at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. Supervisors are:  
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Robert Helback  
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Michael Lyman  
Ralph Schopp

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262-534-2431, ext. 305

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The Village of Rochester Board meets the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at Village Hall. Village Board trustees are:  
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Nick Ahlers  
Gary Beck  
Doug Webb  
Chris Johnson  
Leslie Kinsey



Two mothers fill out their ballots while their children wait at the Waterford Village Hall in November.

ED NADOLSKI *Our Town*



# Independent book store celebrates birthday

By **Tracy Ouellette**

EDITOR

Independent book stores are not as widespread as they used to be, but for one area book seller, the personal touch and small town feel has been a recipe for success.

Kelly Klein, who owns Reads by the River Books and Gifts in downtown Waterford, said the success she's seen can be attributed to the community support the store enjoys.

"It's exceeded our expectations," Klein said. "The community has just embraced us. The word of mouth advertising has been fantastic. Every day someone comes in and tells us, 'my friend or neighbor told me to come.'"

Reads by the River opened up in late November 2021 and Klein said it's been a whirlwind of activity since.

"We have a lot of regular customers and we're adding new ones each day, they're coming from all over, including Milwaukee

and Waukesha," she said. "We're having a great time; we're loving it!"

The bookstore, which sits on the Fox River, stocks books, games, gifts and more.

"It's really interesting to see the variety of what people want," Klein said. "We see a lot of kids and people are interested in all genres. People stop in for the new releases and to see things I've shared on social media all the time."

With the increased traffic over the last year, Klein said they've added some staff.

"I have a really good friend who comes once a week to help me out and we have a part-time employee," she said. "We couldn't do it without them. We're at a level of business that we couldn't do without them. My husband, Steve, does so much, too. He's here every day with me."

To keep things fresh and interesting, Klein said they host events on a regular basis, often working with other local businesses in partnerships.

"We've had three events (recently),

Cocktails and Conversations, with Waterford Stillhouse that have been popular. We have a book club and recently we partnered with a knitting store for a knitting event. We also did, just this month (October), a stuffed animal sleepover for the kids. We also did a cookbook book club with DW Coffee in Rochester and we'll definitely be doing that again, maybe quarterly," Klein said.

The book store celebrated its one-year anniversary during Waterford's Christmas in the Village in mid-November.

"We opened during that event last year and it was really nice," Klein said. "People were out and got the chance to see what we're all about. We're looking forward to it again this year."

Klein added that the Village of Waterford has been supporting local businesses with all its events in the downtown area.

"The Waterford Graded School District

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Children enjoy a story time during the stuffed animal sleepover event at Reads by the River Books and Gifts in downtown Waterford.

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Our Town*





**above:** Kelly and Steve Klein (back), owners of Reads by the River Books and Gifts in Waterford, and Kelly's sister, Wendy Harmon, await kids trick or treating during downtown Waterford's business trick or treat Oct. 28. **left:** Reads by the River Books and Gifts hosted a stuffed animal sleepover in October. Kids stopped by and dropped off their stuffies for a night of fun at the bookstore.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS Our Town



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**BOOK STORE • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5**

has been working with us too," Klein said. "We got an award from the district for our work with the library and schools.

"Thank you so much to the Waterford Graded School District for selecting us for the 2022 Wisconsin Association of School Boards Business Honor Roll," Klein wrote on the store's Facebook page. "We were so thrilled to receive this honor in our first year in business. Partnering with our schools is so important to me as a business owner who is passionate about literacy but also as a parent and former teacher."

The store was also named the best local store by Best of the West (West of 1-94).

But, while the awards are nice, Klein said the reason they created the bookstore was for the community.

"I think we just strive to be a place where everyone is comfortable and where everyone can visit and find something they want," she said.

*Reads by the River is at 102 E. Main St. in downtown Waterford. Hours of operation are Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday from noon to 7 p.m., and 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday.*

*For more information, find the bookstore on Facebook and visit [readsbytheriver.com](http://readsbytheriver.com).*



# Lift a glass

Area distillery serves up premium, local spirits

By **Tracy Ouellette**

EDITOR

The Waterford Stillhouse opened for business officially in July of 2021, but owners, Brandon and Tammie Begotka, had been serving the community long before that.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in spring of 2020, while the couple was in the process of setting up the distillery in downtown Waterford, they saw the need for hand sanitizer was outpacing supply and they used their distilling equipment to manufacture their own hand sanitizer for local businesses and individuals.

At the time, the Begotkas called it a “labor of love” and wanted to do anything they could to help the community. So, even while trying to open a brand new business in the middle of a pandemic, they were serving the community in its time of need.

Today, after two years of hard work, they are serving their locally made spirits to the public in the completely renovated space on Main Street.

The Stillhouse’s vibe is one of friendship and fellowship, Brandon said.

“We’ve got our park-let out front now, thanks to the help of the Village of Waterford, and we’re getting a lot of good feedback with that. People really enjoy a cocktail on Main Street.”

He added they were also excited about the patio out back.

“It’s a big step up from last year’s offering,” Brandon said. “Much nicer for our guests to have this outdoor seating.”

He added that the work on the patio was done by The Reesman Co. of Burlington and they were thrilled with the results.

“Reesman is great to work with,” Brandon said. “They’re an outstanding company and we like to work with local companies whenever possible.”

That spirit of supporting local, small businesses is a passion for the Begotkas, as they feel that support of their business has made the Waterford Stillhouse possible.

“We’re really into local partnerships, the more local businesses work together the more we can elevate the experience for our guests and they really appreciate that. It builds the community. In a world where it’s ‘one-click Amazon’ it’s nice to get back to



**above:** Brandon and Tammie Begotka, owners of the Waterford Stillhouse, celebrate Brandon’s birthday at their distillery. **top:** The parklet at the Waterford Stillhouse allows guests to sit outside on Main Street and enjoy their cocktails.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

SUBMITTED PHOTOS *Our Town*



what it used to be with people helping other people,” Brandon said.

For the Stillhouse, partnerships allow the Begotkas to expand their offerings.

“Right now we’re partnering with Dancing Goat Distillery, they are storing our barrels of light whiskey; we don’t have enough room for that. That will be our next release and it will be limited to six barrels and will probably be released later this summer. We’re real excited for that.”

They are also partnering with Mobcraft, which is putting in a brewery in the former firehouse behind the Stillhouse.

“They’re aging some beer in our used bourbon barrels,” Brandon said.

The community has been supportive of the business in ways the Begotkas never imagined, Brandon added.

“Most of our servers started out as guests and really enjoyed the experience and asked to be part of bringing that to other guests,” Brandon said.

The Stillhouse employs about 13 part-time workers, which is up from only one a year ago. Community celebrations, such as the July event, Celebrate Waterford, have also been important to the success of the downtown businesses, including the Stillhouse.

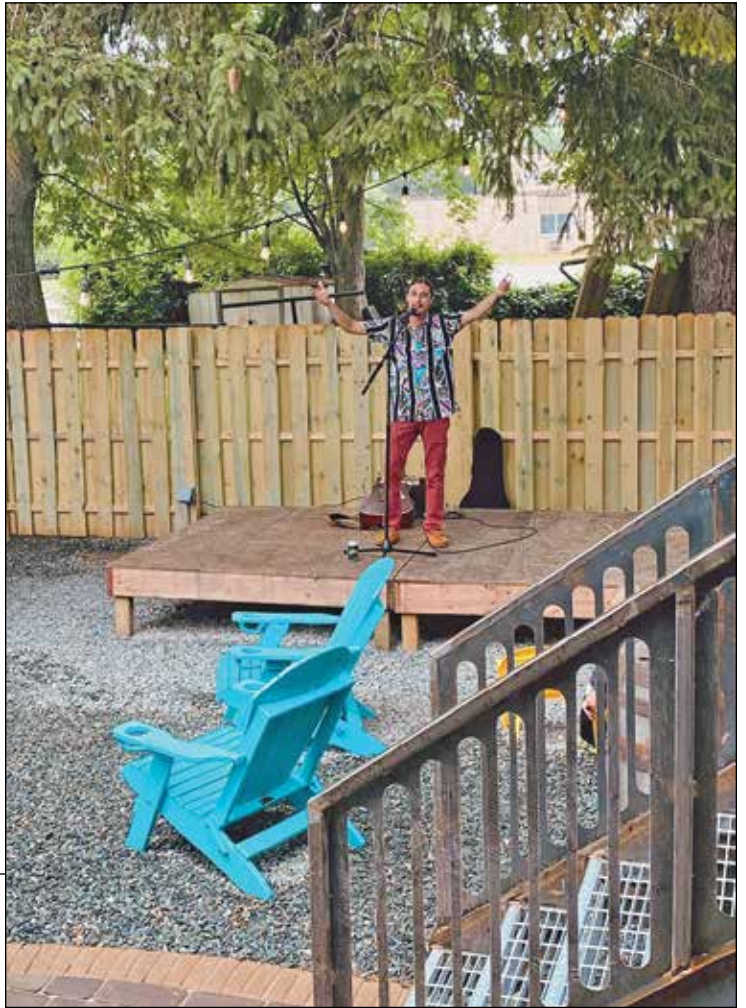
“We’re really excited about this year’s party,” Brandon said before the event. “Last year, that was the day we opened on July 1. It’s a lot of fun and we’re hoping people can make it down here it’s a great way to celebrate all the unique people and businesses in Waterford.”

*The Waterford Stillhouse is at 228 E. Main St., Waterford. Hours of operation are 5 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, 2 to 9 p.m. Thursday, 2 to 10 p.m. Friday, noon to 10 p.m. Saturday.*

*For more information, go to [www.waterfordstillhouse.com](http://www.waterfordstillhouse.com) and find the business on Facebook.*

**below:** The Waterford Stillhouse is open for business in downtown Waterford. The microdistillery offers premium locally brewed spirits. **at right:** Malcolm Wright Music performs in the garden at the Waterford Stillhouse.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS *Our Town*







# Kravings

## IS ON A RAPID GROWTH PATH

Specialty ice cream drinks develop loyal followers

By **Jason Arndt**

STAFF WRITER

With multiple milk shake offerings, ice cream dishes, coffee and specialty items available, as well as more on the way, Kravings looks to literally satisfy anybody's craving.

Jordan Karweik, owner and chief executive officer of Kravings Premium Beverages, noted Crazy Shakes serves as his company's main specialty while offering other options for customers.

"We have our Crazy Shakes, then just regular ice cream dishes, cones, and then we have coffee as well. So we can do coffee, lattes, cappuccinos, things like that," he said. "For us, our main thing is our Crazy Shakes."

At Kravings, which has locations in downtown Waterford and Burlington as well

as another in Mount Pleasant, Karweik said his company has a simple mission.

"What is the Kraving that you have? What do you like? That is what we are looking to satisfy, and for us, we are going to be offering brats and hot dogs and then we are going to be doing hot ham on Sundays, so that is going to be rolling out in the next couple of weeks."

Kravings, according to its website, sells Cedar Crest Ice Cream in multiple flavors, allows customers to tailor a custom shake creation, and specialty items such as craft sides and hot sauces.

### Krazy niche

Karweik, who previously owned an insurance agency, began exploring Crazy Shakes after watching a YouTube clip of somebody visiting New York.

In the YouTube clip, the person experienced a crazy shake, which piqued his interest.

"I saw that and thought it was pretty cool," said Karweik.

Upon discovery of the clip, he sought something similar in southeast Wisconsin, but

couldn't find any establishments.

"Unfortunately, I could not find anything like that around here," he said. "It just kind of jumpstarted the idea to have something like that in the area."

Kravings offers seven different Crazy Shakes, however, two specific flavors have been the most popular among customers.

According to Karweik, Royal Reeses and Mint-o-Brownie continues to draw interest, with Royal Reeses featuring peanut butter cup ice cream, Reeses Pieces, Reeses Chopped Cups and whipped cream.

"Then there is the Mint-O-Brownie. That one is probably my favorite. It has mint ice cream with Oreo on the rim, whipped cream, and then there is a brownie along with more Oreo with chocolate syrup on top," said Karweik.

### Initial launch, aggressive expansion

Born and raised in Waterford, Karweik decided to launch the establishment with business partner Mike Ottelien in his

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

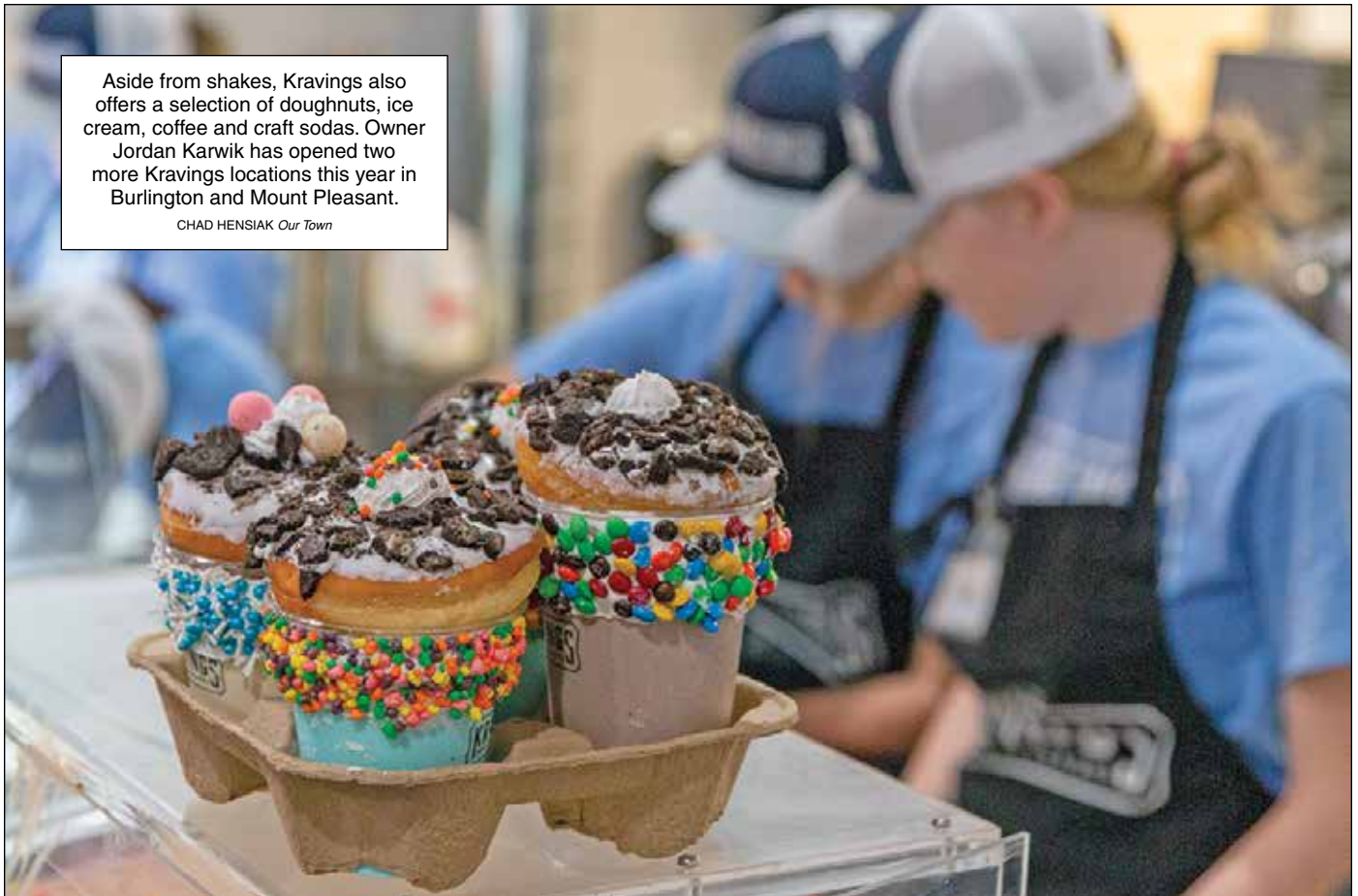
Kravings Premium Beverages, Waterford, opened its doors in late January to a waiting public during the grand opening event. The shop features a selection of shakes topped with M&Ms, Reece's Pieces, Peanut Butter Cups, whipped cream, Oreo Cookie crumble, cookies, doughnut, cake balls and more.

CHAD HENSIK Our Town



Aside from shakes, Kravings also offers a selection of doughnuts, ice cream, coffee and craft sodas. Owner Jordan Karwik has opened two more Kravings locations this year in Burlington and Mount Pleasant.

CHAD HENSIK Our Town



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## KRAVINGS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

hometown at 202 E. Main St., Waterford.

Although the business opened on Jan. 29, when the area saw below freezing temperatures, Karweik recalled seeing an influx of customers waiting to experience Kravings for the first time.

“It was 25 degrees that day and we had lines all the way down the block,” he said. “It was crazy that day.”

Since then, Kravings has quickly expanded to Mt. Pleasant, 5509 Durand Avenue, Unit D, and Burlington, 344 N. Pine Street with plans to add a fourth location in the Village of Caledonia in the beginning of 2023.

Kravings in both Mt. Pleasant and Burlington is for multiple reasons, according to Karweik, who said the quick expansion is part of his company’s long-term plan.

“While I grew up in Waterford and lived in Waterford nearly my entire life, my business partner and I both actually live out in Mt. Pleasant,” he said. “We wanted to try one out near a

denser population and see what that would be like. We were able to do that there. It has shown a lot of success out there because of the population and lack of ice cream shops.”

As for Burlington, many local customers voiced support from bringing Kravings closer to home, according to Karweik.

While the Caledonia location is under construction, with plans to open around January 2023, Karweik has bigger plans for Kravings Premium Beverages.

“After that, our plans are to go towards Kenosha and northern Illinois. If you are looking 10 years down the road, we are looking at having them all across the country. That is kind of what the goal is.”

Kravings Premium Beverages, according to Karweik, currently has about 50 employees.

In Mt. Pleasant, where Kravings has a manager vacancy, Karweik said he has seen an influx of applicants interested in the position.

For more information, visit [kravingswi.com](http://kravingswi.com) or find them on Facebook.



# Who's the fairest of them all?

## Waterford's Bosch named Racine County Fair's ambassador

By **Jason Arndt**

STAFF WRITER

Kennedy Bosch said she was humbled and honored to receive the Racine County Fairest of the Fair crown from predecessor Kynzi Cole.

Bosch, graduated from Waterford Union High School in spring, became Fairest of the Fair during a June ceremony in the Expo building on the Racine County Fairgrounds in Union Grove.

The panel judges of selected Bosch among three finalists, including 2020 Burlington High School graduate and former Racine County Agriculture Ambassador Chase Pirocanac, along with 2019 Racine Case graduate Alyson Buchholz, who served as Racine County 4-H Outstanding Teen.

"To be honest, I really wasn't expecting it," Bosch said. "Chase and Alyson, they are wonderful competitors, they are amazing women in agriculture and I really thought that either one of them could have easily been Fairest of the Fair."

Bosch, a three-year Waterford FFA member, has also been involved with Raymond 4-H Club while showing exhibits at the Racine County Fair ranging from cake-decorating to raising pigs on her grandparents' farm.

She said she felt honored, especially since she selected by a panel judges, who needed to consider the other two finalists.

"I was quite shocked and honored that the judges thought I would be the best ambassador for the Racine County Fair, so there is a lot of honor there," she said.

Bosch said the crown carries special meaning because the Racine County Fair celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2022.

"This is our 100th annual Racine County Fair, so I am really, really looking forward to it," she said at the time she was crowned.

For Bosch, the Racine County Fair has had a lasting impact on her life, which she noted is more than just a one-week event.

The daughter of Theresa Baumann and Kyle Bosch is the older sister of Keegan and spends a year preparing for the Racine County Fair.

"We show swine. All year round

we are working with our pigs in our barn," said Bosch, who raises her show pigs on her grandparents' farm. "It is really a family affair and us working together all year round to make it happen."

Upon graduating from Waterford, Bosch had plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Platteville in the fall.

She intends to major in animal science focused on pre-veterinary medicine with hopes of becoming a Small and Large Animal Veterinarian.

Growing up around animals, she has come to love caring for animals, Bosch said.

### Strong competition

Pirocanac, who attends UW-Whitewater, is studying to earn a degree in elementary education with a minor in special education.

She has been involved with the Racine County Fair for many years including exhibiting through the Burlington Back 40 4-H Club and Burlington FFA Chapter.

Pirocanac, meanwhile, has volunteered for the auctions and youth building judging and served as Fair Board Representative for Racine County 4-H.

"Chase is no stranger to the community as she stays involved as a Racine County 4-H Adult leader and is a collegiate shotgun athlete and coach," the Racine County Fair wrote on its Facebook page. "In the future, she hopes to become an excellent Elementary School teacher by drawing on her experiences from 4-H and FFA leadership positions."

Buchholz attends UW-Madison, where she is studying to earn a degree in agricultural economics with certificates in sustainability and agricultural business management.

"Some of Alyson's favorite involvements in the Racine County Fair include serving as Racine County 4-H Outstanding Teen, competing in the Sue Isaacson Master Showmanship, volunteering at the Case IH Booth last year," fair officials wrote on the Facebook page. "She credits the Racine County Fair for pushing her to grow as a leader and inspiring her to pursue a career in the agricultural sector."



Waterford High School student Kennedy Boasch is crowned 2022 Racine County Fairest of the Fair by her predecessor Kynzi Cole on June 3.

CHAD HENSIK Our Town





Washington Caldwell School hosted its annual Chill Out event in January last year to encourage reading during the winter months. All students read for 2022 seconds and enjoyed hot cocoa provided by the PTO. Pictured are Anika Schreck (left) and Lily Milan enjoying a chance to read with each other.

SUBMITTED PHOTO  
Our Town

## OUR SCHOOLS

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The Waterford Graded School District offers a comprehensive K-8 curriculum that is aligned with the

Wisconsin Model Academic Standards, and adheres to a student-first philosophy.

Waterford is recognized statewide for its outstanding public education system. The district is characterized by above average student performance, teachers equipped with a variety of instructional strategies and excellent facilities.

Students also benefit from a low student-to-teacher ratio and a district philosophy that is committed to meeting the needs of all students.

### NORTH CAPE SCHOOL DISTRICT

[www.northcape.k12.wi.us](http://www.northcape.k12.wi.us)  
11926 W. Highway K,  
Franksville  
262-835-4069

North Cape School District is a K-8 elementary school located west of I94 on highway K and is a feeder school to Waterford Union High School. North Cape School.

North Cape School focuses on a rich curriculum experience that challenges the students

to think critically and problem solve in preparation for a global economy.

### DROUGHT SCHOOL DISTRICT

[www.droughtschool.net](http://www.droughtschool.net)  
21016 W. Seven Mile Road,  
Franksville 414-425-6020

Drought is a small public school with a private school atmosphere of small class sizes.

Students at Drought are high performing, with the majority scoring at or above state proficiency in all core subjects. The unique combination of old-school charm along with the rigor of modern day standards make Drought an ideal school for children to learn and prosper.

### WASHINGTON-CALDWELL SCHOOL DISTRICT

[www.washcald.com](http://www.washcald.com)  
8937 Big Bend Road,  
Waterford  
262-662-3466

Washington Caldwell is a 4K through 8-grade school district in Tichigan (Town of Waterford).

Washington-Caldwell infuses technology in all grades with 1:1 iPads in third through eighth grade. Several programs are available during or after school including Project Lead the Way, National Junior Honor Society, Lego Club, and K-Kids/Builders Club (community focus).

### CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

[www.cchsn.net](http://www.cchsn.net)  
148 McHenry St., Burlington  
262-763-1510  
[www.facebook.com/CatholicCentralHS](http://www.facebook.com/CatholicCentralHS)  
[twitter.com/cchstoppers](https://twitter.com/cchstoppers)

Catholic Central High School, a four-year parochial high school, is an alternative choice to public schools for the Waterford and Burlington area. Accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Catholic Central serves the 17 area parishes and is committed to providing a Catholic-based education.







## OUR AREA CHURCHES

### BAPTIST

#### Honey Creek Community Baptist Church

(American Baptist)  
35512 Washington Ave., Honey Creek  
(262) 534-3585

### CATHOLIC

#### St. Clare Catholic Church

7616 Fritz St., Wind Lake  
(262) 895-2729  
[www.stclarewindlake.org](http://www.stclarewindlake.org)

#### St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

305 S. First St., Waterford  
(262) 534-2255  
[www.saintthomaswaterford.org](http://www.saintthomaswaterford.org)

### LUTHERAN

#### Living Water Lutheran Church

(Wisconsin Synod)  
6525 N. Milwaukee Ave., Wind Lake  
(262) 895-3700  
[www.livingwaterlutheran.com](http://www.livingwaterlutheran.com)

#### North Cape Lutheran Church

2644 124th St., Franksville  
(262) 835-2206  
[www.northcapelutheran.org](http://www.northcapelutheran.org)

#### Norway Evangelical Lutheran Church

6321 Heg Park Road, Wind Lake  
(262) 895-2281  
[www.norwaylutheranchurch.org](http://www.norwaylutheranchurch.org)

#### St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

145 S. Sixth St., Waterford  
(262) 534-3639  
[www.stpeterswaterford.com](http://www.stpeterswaterford.com)

### UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

#### First Congregational Church of Rochester

103 S. State St., Rochester  
(262) 534-6582  
[www.fccrochestervis.com](http://www.fccrochestervis.com)

### UNITED METHODIST

#### Caldwell United Methodist Church

8504 Caldwell Road, Waterford  
(262) 363-2630  
[www.caldwellumc.org](http://www.caldwellumc.org)

#### Community Church

455 S. Jefferson St., Waterford  
(262) 534-2313  
[www.extremefaitn.org](http://www.extremefaitn.org)

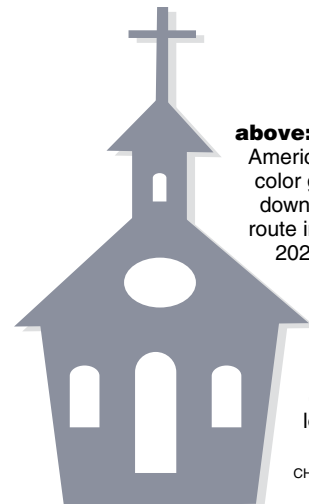
### NON-DENOMINATIONAL

#### Fox River Christian Church

238 E. Main St., Waterford  
(262) 332-7047  
[www.foxriverchristian.org](http://www.foxriverchristian.org)

#### Grace Church

257 Kendall St., Burlington  
(262) 763-3021  
[www.gracechurchwi.org](http://www.gracechurchwi.org)



**above:** The Waterford American Legion Post color guard marches down the parade route in Rochester in 2021. Rochester's Memorial Day parade, which is set for 1:30 p.m. this year, is considered the longest running in the state.

CHAD HENSIK *Our Town*



# Foodies unite

## WATERFORD FOOD SCENE BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS

By **Tracy Ouellette**

EDITOR

The past three years have been tough for restaurants, especially small-town, independently owned eateries.

However, one area community has been benefiting from some gutsy restauraners who have opened new establishments in the middle of a pandemic, adding to the existing restaurants, and helping create a “foodie destination.”

Waterford, for many years, has been the very definition of “bedroom community” with residents often joking that when living in small town, “you’re 30 minutes from anything.”

However, in recent years, that has changed with the village and town of Waterford working



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Our second-hand items are carefully handpicked to ensure high quality. This applies to all areas - including clothing, decor, and other home essentials for every room in your home. We are continually bringing out new items every day so our displays are always fresh. Love Inc. is a not-for-profit, so all of our profits go back into the community through a variety of local programs such as food drives, Thanksgiving food baskets, winter warmth projects, and many more.

430204

to invite more people into the community with new events along with Explore Waterford, the area’s chamber of commerce.

The added foot traffic on Main Street in the Village of Waterford has been a boon for the local restaurants, whether located in the downtown district or nearby.

Local restaurant owners say the new events, such as the carnival and almost weekly downtown events in summer, added to perennial favorites like the Fourth of July and Christmas parades and Tractorcade, are bringing in a steady stream of customers, many of the new to the area.

New on the Waterford food scene are Kravings, Uncle Harry’s Burgers and Rochester eateries DW Coffee, owned by Jane and Bob Willard; and Scungilli’s sandwich.

Scungilli’s, which opened last winter, is owned by Paul and Dana Dagastino. The menu

features Italian sandwiches, sides and desserts.

“We honestly felt accepted into this community on day one,” Paul Dagastino said. “It’s been really humbling and a really cool experience. We haven’t even had the chance to make the rounds to the other restaurants in the area, but people from them have been stopping by nonstop since we opened. We’ve met people from Chances, Spanky’s, Kravings ... we’ve moved from Illinois to Burlington 18 months ago and everything about that has been great.”

Dagastino added that the community and its support meant a lot to them because the whole goal was to create a place where people could gather and have great food.

“That was really my wife’s focus when we were setting up,” he said. “She wanted a spot where people would feel comfortable to come

**above:** Paul and Dana Dagastino, owners of the new Scungilli’s sandwich shop in Rochester, say the community has welcomed them with open arms.

TRACY OUELLETTE *Our Town*



together when she designed this place and it seems we've accomplished that with all the customers we're seeing."

Scungilli's features the family's Italian heritage in the cuisine.

"We're family owned and operated with family recipes and a lot of the stuff is homemade," Dana said.

"That's what we wanted to focus on," Paul added. "Our Italian roots and welcoming atmosphere that was a big target to hit. We wanted to offer something you maybe can't get everyday to separate ourselves and be authentic to our roots."

Restaurants already on the scene before the pandemic, and popular with locals and visitors, include Spanky's Sports Bar and Grill, Marty's Restaurant, Bruno's Restaurant, Pop's Pizzeria, Crossover Cantina and Chances.

### Community interaction

With the wide variety of offerings and building buzz about the food scene, Waterford's Noah Wishau, a local attorney, created a Facebook group, called Waterford Food Scene," for foodies to share favorite meals and local experiences together. The group was created in September of 2021 and has 700 members to date.

"Waterford has been blessed with a burgeoning food scene over the last few years. From old standbys to brand new restaurants, the choices have never been better. This group seeks to highlight and discuss everything the Waterford area has to offer," Wishau wrote in the group's description.

The basic rules of the group are "keep it local," which means the greater Waterford area, including Wind Lake, Rochester, Big Bend, etc. and "don't be a jerk."

Waterford Police Department's Sgt. John Nelson is a member of the Facebook group and offered up some of his observations and favorite meals from the area. Nelson, who lives in Franklin, has been working in Waterford for years.

"I really can't say enough about some of the local restaurants," Nelson said. "All of them take really good care of us and, of course, I've got a couple

favorite eateries.

"Marty's breakfasts are one of our 'go tos'. We really go as much as possible; they honestly have the best huevos rancheros I've ever eaten. I like the soups at Crossover too."

Nelson also recalled meeting Matt Allen, owner of Spanky's, the first time he stopped by for pizza.

"This is actually my funniest and best foodie story for Waterford," he said. "Spanky's is my No. 1 go to for pizza, hands down. Everything is just phenomenal there, but their pizza, the first time I had it, it was like a memory and I realized it tastes like the old Shakey's pizza from when we were kids. I told Matt and he said he's actually heard that before."

Nelson said he's watched the food community form over the last few years with interest and has made a lot of friends with local restaurant owners and customers.

"One of the things I love about the Waterford businesses is that the majority of the employees and owners are from Waterford and because of the strong community that translates into exceptional service from good, caring people. I can't say enough about that."

Nelson added that Spanky's is known for hiring local teens.

"Any kid who wants a job,



**above:** Scungilli's, is on Rochester's Main Street in the heart of the downtown district. **below:** Shannon and Michael Foeckler, of Waterford, enjoy a Sunday morning breakfast at Marty's Restaurant in downtown Waterford.

TRACY OUELLETTE *Our Town*

he'll pay them," he said. "There are other restaurants in the area that are the same way. Again, it goes back to the community and the great service."

Nelson added that many of the local restaurant owners like Allen and Gonzalo Perez from

Marty's, go the extra mile with their charity fundraisers, support of the local veterans and more.

"And it's not just them," Nelson added. "So many of the owners are helping the community in any way they can."





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