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Vol. 35 No. 12

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

'Tis the shopping season in preparation for Christmas but also a good time of year to reflect and appreciate the little things. In this issue we share some local shopping hotspots – including Cornerstone, the history about Christmas Card Town and the impact being made for the holidays by an area Jeeps on the Run event.

STOCK PHOTO
Spirit of Geneva Lakes



IT'S COMIN' UP DECEMBER EVENTS

Dec. 1-3 Elkhorn celebrates

Christmas On Friday, Dec. 1, the Elkhorn Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held at 5:30 p.m. downtown on the square in Veteran's Park. After the lighting of the tree, all are invited back to Uncle Hunk's Junk Building (the Chamber office), 203 E. Walworth St., from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. to enjoy the first night of Let It Glow.

The Let It Glow celebration, now in its fourth year, will be at a new location this year. It will still feature light displays, and Santa and his elves with games and goodie bags but will be held at Uncle Hunk's Junk Building and Park.

Guests of all ages are encouraged to stop by and walk the outdoor patio down Balsam Blvd. Photos with Santa will be available each night of Let It Glow.

"Enjoy the decorations and twinkly lights with a hot cup of cocoa in one hand and a glow wand in the other," chamber staff said.

Let It Glow will also be happening Saturday, Dec. 2, from 5 to 8 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 3, from 5 to 7 p.m.

On Saturday, prior to visiting Let It Glow, don't miss the 42nd annual Christmas Card Town Parade that makes its way through downtown Elkhorn.

Dec. 2 48th Annual Lake Geneva Electric Christmas Parade

Visit Lake Geneva is proud to present the 48th Annual Electric Christmas Parade at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023. Join the joyful celebration of the season as this colorful, light-filled parade moves down Broad and Main streets in downtown Lake Geneva.

Through Dec. 30 Santa Cruise A magical 40-minuted, heated Christmas Cruise that includes a visit from Santa at his lakeside hideaway.

Begin your magical journey with a walk through the Christmas Tree Festival where kids get to send their wish list directly to Santa. Then, ship off on our Christmas cruise boat, decked out in holiday lights and decorations, for an enchanting tour of holiday lights on the lake. Sneak a peek at the shoreline for Santa Claus himself and hear your child's name read from his "nice list."

The Christmas Tree Festival raffle, which supports local charities, gives guests the chance to win amazing prizes.

Cruises run from the day after Thanksgiving to Dec. 30. Beverages for children and adults are available from Santa's Bar at the Tree Festival before boarding.

For more information, or to purchase tickets, visit cruiselakegeneva.com.

Dec. 1-17 The World's Tallest Glass Tree

Witness the building of the World's Tallest Glass Tree, live glassblowing, steel sculpting and woodworking at Yerkes Observatory.

Free to the public, the World's Tallest Glass

Tree promotes lifelong family memories, inspiring children, and adults alike. A portion of proceeds from the nine-day event are donated to help charitable organizations and schools of Greater Walworth County.

In addition to watching the beautiful glass tree come to life visitors can expect:

- A Winter Maker Market comprised of local artisans, craftspeople, and custom handmade glassware made by Mack.

- Yerkes Observatory will conduct its Space and Spaces Tours inside the Observatory at set times throughout the event.

- Special guest Rae Ripple will collaborate with the Mack Glass team to create custom handblown glass and steel art pieces.

The event runs weekends, Dec. 1-17 during the hours of 4 to 7 p.m., Fridays; noon to 7 p.m., Saturdays; and noon to 5 p.m., Sundays. The star topping event will take place at 2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 17.

For more information and to make a reservation, visit worldstallestglasstree.com.

Ongoing events

Tristan Crist Magic Theater, at 609 W. Main St., Lake Geneva. One of a kind performer that wows audiences with with, jaw-dropping illusions and gut-wrenching escapes! For show dates and times call 262-248-0505 or visit www.lakegenevamagic.com.

Dancing Horses Show. At the Dancing Horses Theatre, 5065 Highway 50, Delavan. This dazzling spectacle features an array of horse breeds that perform alongside their trainers in this cavalcade of equestrian artistry. Visually stunning, and performed in a state-of-the-art, 300-seat theatre. For show dates, ticket prices and additional information call (262) 728-8200 or visit thedancinghorses.com.

Beginner Pickleball Clinics every other Tuesday, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. - Lake Geneva Tennis Club, 630 Veterans Pkwy., Lake Geneva. Free of charge (a deposit will be required for new clients to hold their spot), eight people per class. Learn the fastest growing sport in America. Men and women welcome - no experience necessary and all equipment will be provided. Register by calling 262-812-0033 or email john@lakegenevatennis.com.

Free Xtreme Bar Bingo, Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Geneva Tap House, 252 Broad St., Lake Geneva. Players can win big prizes!

The calendar of events is compiled from a variety of sources including area chambers of commerce and visitor bureaus and contains events available as of press time.

Dates and times may change and events may be canceled. Please verify details and locations prior to making plans.

THE SPIRIT

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THE SPIRIT

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Christmas gift ideas galore

Get out and shop locally this holiday season

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

It's that wonderful time of the year again – The holiday season, when we gather with family and friends, and enjoy sharing meals, cookies and other sweet treats and exchanging gifts. It's also a time when children's eyes are full of wonder as they dream of what Santa may leave under their tree.

We begin to bustle around getting ready for the holiday. With preparations taking up much of our time we scurry around as we look forward to the coming days. While there are a variety of holiday preparations, it's often Christmas shopping for those we care about that's one of the most important tasks.

As times have changed, so has the way some people shop for Christmas including some who choose to order gifts online, avoiding the stores, crowds and sometimes, hustle-bustle that comes with the season.

However, there are likely just as many people who enjoy the spirit of Christmas and along with it, shopping in person for their family and friends. For that group, the best gifts are the ones carefully chosen after spending time shopping in local stores.

Whether spending an afternoon, entire day or several days meandering through the villages, towns and cities in the area, enjoying the beauty of the Christmas decorations while purchasing from local businesses is important as it keeps communities vibrant.

Before sitting down at the computer to



A cute holiday wreath, like this one, which is available at The Apple Barn Orchard and Winery, could be the perfect addition to someone's Christmas display, or an ideal seasonal gift for a new homeowner.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

order gifts, consider venturing out. Not only is there a good chance suitable gifts will be found but with it will be a sense of supporting small businesses in local communities.

Here is a list of suggestions to get the shopping trip started.

One of the best ways to kick off Christmas shopping is by attending one of the local holiday markets held in the area as

they feature a wide variety of decorations, handmade crafts and more.

The Apple Barn

The Apple Barn Orchard and Winery is a well-known place to purchase freshly grown fruits in season, but they also shine in the fall and early winter with their the freshly made cider and fruit wines produced on site.

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They produce a line of freshly made jams and jellies under the label the Farmer's Daughter, which make great gifts for just about anyone.

The Apple Barn's freshly baked items – from cider donuts to freshly baked pies – are a favorite of regular customers. Take a pie home to enjoy immediately or place it in the freezer as a special treat for the holidays.

While they offer a variety of decorative items year-round, Christmas at the Apple Barn is a special event worth a stop while shopping. In addition to the many items normally available, there are holiday decorations, candles and handmade items by local artisans and crafters.

The event will be held weekends through Dec. 8-10. Friday and Saturday hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday is 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Apple Barn Orchard and Winery is at W6384 Sugar Creek Rd, Elkhorn. For more information, call 262-728-3266 or visit applebarnorchardandwinery.com.

Duesterbeck's Brewing Company

Just a short distance from the Apple Barn is Duesterbeck's Brewing Company which

is celebrating the start of the Christmas season with their 4th annual Indoor/Outdoor Christmas Market.

On Dec. 1 and 2, they will have more than 40 vendors participating in the Christmas Market, which will be spread throughout the brewery. Food trucks will be available on site in addition to the brewery's usual offerings. And of course, a variety of beers for the season will be available.

Besides freshly brewed beers, Duesterbeck's will have brewiculture coffee, gifts from vendors and items found in the brewery's gift shop.

Duesterbeck's Brewing Company is at N5543 County Rd. O, Elkhorn. For more information, call 262-729-9771 or visit dbcbrewery.com.

Staller Estate Winery

A stop at Staller Estate Winery while holiday shopping should be near the top of anyone's list, especially for those seeking gifts for the wine drinkers in their life. All of the wines are produced and bottled onsite by owners Joe and Wendy Staller.

While at the winery also check out the many locally made cheeses they sell. They also offer custom charcuterie trays, a great

option to enjoy when entertaining at home or to bring to a holiday party or gathering elsewhere.

Check the gift corner at Staller as well for special items such as hand painted wine glasses and unique wine accessories.

The winery is open 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday and will be open Dec. 23 as well as Christmas Eve, according to the website.

Staller Estate Winery is at W8896 Highway A, Delavan. For more information, call 608-883-2100 or visit stallerestate.com.

Premier Wine and Spirits

The newest – and perhaps most elegant – place to purchase fine wines, unique spirits and a variety of craft beers for a variety of holiday celebrations is Premier Wine and Spirits.

There is no doubt this new venue has one of, if not the, largest selections of wine, bourbon, whiskey and beer. And for the cigar smokers on a holiday shopping list, pick out a brand or two of choice from the humidor.

While there shopping, take a break in the Speakeasy Lounge and enjoy a classic

left: A great gift for a baker, or to show off while hosting family over the holidays are these Christmas spatulas, available at Duesterbeck's. **right:** These hand-blown glass ornaments were created by Jason Mack, who also created the tallest glass tree for Yerkes Observatory last year. The ornaments are available at the Geneva Lakes Museum gift shop.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

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The gift of a meal

As an add-on to a Christmas gift or all on their own, a gift card to a restaurant is a great way to give someone special a meal out while supporting local businesses. They especially come in handy – and likely will be appreciated by the recipient – for use after the busy holiday season.

Here are some local restaurants in the area to consider if shopping for gift cards:

- Chris' USA, 724 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington, 262-763-9968
- East Troy Brewery, 2905 Main St. on the Historic Square, East Troy, 262-642-2670
- Foley's Irish Woods, W3905 Highway 50, Lake Geneva, 262-245-6966
- Gino's East Pizzeria, 300 Wrigley Dr., Lake Geneva, 262-248-2525
- Local Folks Restaurant & Pub, 39601 60th St., (Slades Corner) Burlington, 262-539-3200
- Luisa's Pizza, 6806 317th Ave., Salem, 262-537-4795
- Mars Resort, W4096 Shore Dr., Lake Geneva, 262-245-5689
- Pine Street Café, 141 N. Pine St., Burlington, 262-763-9800.

at right: This glass fish sculpture, available at Caravelle Lighting, would add a splash of color to a room and serve as a unique Christmas gift. **top:** JellyCat produces some unique stuffed animals such as these, which can be found at Allison Wonderland.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



cocktail, a relaxing way to end a busy shopping day.

Premier Wine and Spirits is at 32400 Geneva Rd., Salem. For more information, call 262-537-8010 or visit premierwinewi.com.

The Jewelry Center

For that special someone on a Christmas list, the Jewelry Center in downtown Burlington likely has the perfect gift to make the holiday special with added sparkle to boot.

Jewelry can range from a simple bracelet or pair of earrings to pieces featuring

semi-precious or precious stones as well as custom-created items. This store offers a wide variety sure to please any gift recipient.

Popular jewelry such as items by Pandora and Alex and Ai offer contemporary choices at moderate prices.

Quality watches are another favorite and meaningful gift including brands such as Movado and Citizen for both men and women on the Christmas list.

Stop in at the Jewelry Center and let their staff help find the perfect gift.

The Jewelry Center is at 348 Pine St., Burlington. For more information, call 262-

763-8085 or visit shoptjc.com.

Caravelle Lighting

Caravelle Lighting is the place to go if you are looking for light fixtures, fans and lamps as they carry a large number of major brands with countless styles on display in their store.

For Christmas gifts, they have a variety of small lamps that add a finished look to a room. Many are in stained glass, which never seems to go out of style. There are also whimsical night lights with Christmas scenes that make a perfect stocking stuffer or special gift.



Caravelle Lighting is at 9307 Highway 12, Richmond, Ill. For more information, call 815-678-4558 or visit caravellelight.com.

Lyle's TV & Appliance

While Lyle's TV and Appliance offers a variety of items that may make life easier, the latest washer dryer combo by GE Profile washes and dries a load of laundry without transferring it from one machine

to another. It's 50% more energy efficient in the dry cycle and the compact size takes less space than most washers and dryers or combo units.

Perhaps it's the perfect gift for the family and is one of several combination units available at Lyle's.

In addition to other appliances and services, they also sell a variety of televisions that make good Christmas gifts. And for the guy who has everything, maybe

a new grill would be perfect, even if he does have to wait a few months to be able to use it.

Lyle's TV and Appliance is at 17 S. Washington St., Elkhorn. For more information, call 262-723-3477 or visit lylestv.com.

Allison Wonderland

Those looking for a local place to shop for quality toys not found everywhere for

right: Hand painted wine glasses by artist Sandra Glinner are available in various holiday patterns at The Apple Barn and Staller Estate Winery. **left:** Those who recall the fun of making a latch hook run as a child can get a kit for the special kid in their life at Allison Wonderland, which has stores in Burlington and Lake Geneva.

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kids on their list are encouraged to stop at Allison Wonderland.

Gift givers will find quality and a wide variety of unique, interesting, fun toys at one of two Allison stores in the area.

Allison Wonderland first opened as a small toy store in 1972 in Burlington. The goal was to create a store that provided unique toys for children of various ages. The small Burlington store was so successful that they soon opened a second, larger location in Lake Geneva. The original family continues to own it.

Toys that can be found at Allison Wonderland are sure to be enjoyed by children while also bringing back memories of toys many adults enjoyed as a child. The selection includes games, puzzles, arts and crafts, dolls, Brio trains, unique stuffed animals such as those from Jelly Cat. Jelly Cat stuffed toys are made of high-quality materials and are often difficult to find in many toy stores.

Allison Wonderland is at 720 W. Main St., Lake Geneva and the phone number is 262-248-6500. The Burlington store is at 472 W. Pine St. and the phone number is 262-763-9718. For more information, or to shop their selections online and have the gifts delivered, visit www.allisonwonderland.com.

[allisonwonderland.com](http://www.allisonwonderland.com).

Hannah's by the Lake

While shopping along Main Street in Lake Geneva, Hannah's is a great option to shop for unique clothing and decorative Lake Geneva memorabilia.

Hannah's opened as a family-owned store in 2008 known as Geneva Jake's, a Life is Good Genuine Neighborhood Store. It continues to be owned by the same family but has expanded to include a variety of merchandise including jewelry by Alex and Ani and a variety of other brands fitting for any member of the family.

Whether looking for an upbeat Life is Good shirt, jewelry for that special someone, or unique Lake Geneva memorabilia, Hannah's won't disappoint.

Hannah's By the Lake at 772 Main St., Lake Geneva. For more information, call 262-249-7894 or visit www.hannahsbythelake.com.

Note that there is a second store at 414 Lake St. in Antioch, Ill. known for its home décor, jewelry and scrapbooking supplies. For more information on the Antioch location, call 847-395-3355 or visit www.hannahs.com.

Geneva Lake Museum

A place that might not be generally thought of but worth a visit if looking for a different variety of gifts, is Geneva Lake Museum, which has a gift shop on site.

For the readers on a Christmas list, there are plenty of books to choose from, sharing the history of the area, some of which were written by local residents.

The new glass ornaments created by Jason Mack are handblown and feature custom color mixes. They are available in the shape of a tree, a ball or a pickle. Last year, Mack created the World's Tallest Glass Tree (36 feet) in a display at Yerkes Observatory.

For regular visitors of the museum, or for someone on the list who is a history buff, consider a membership so they can enjoy it throughout the year.

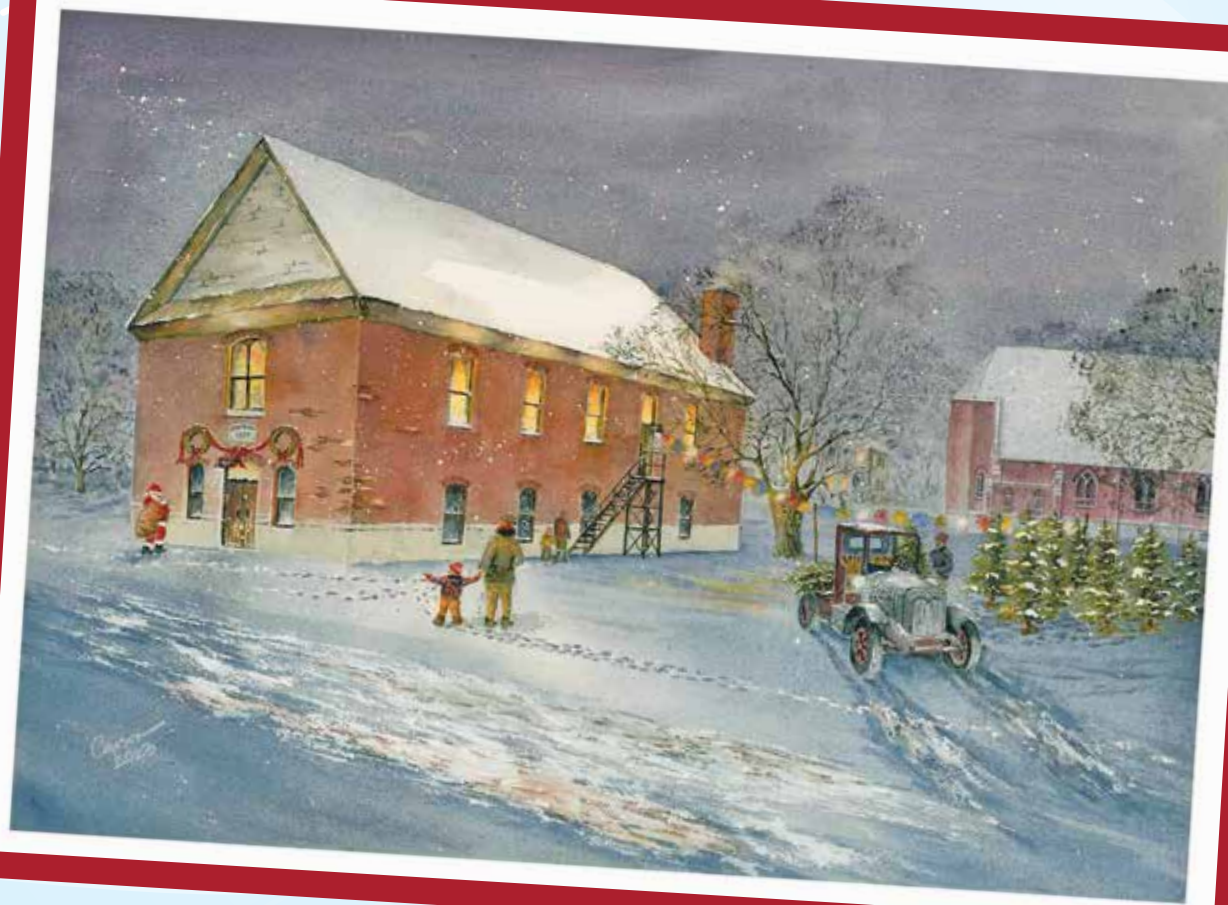
Gaming fans might enjoy some of the new Dungeons and Dragons memorabilia available, which coincides with the museum's new E. Gary Gyax exhibit.

Whether shopping at the museum or elsewhere in the area, don't miss the 5th Annual Parade of Trees at the museum, which are hand decorated by local businesses.

For more information, call 262-248-6060 or visit www.genevalakemuseum.org.

right: Hannah's, formerly known as Geneva Jake's, offers a variety of items including Life is Good brand shirts, sure to bring a smile to whoever is gifted one. **left:** Those looking for a big gift for their own family might want to consider this one and done washer-dryer combo, available at Lyle's TV & Appliance.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



A RICH *holiday* HISTORY

Christmas Card
Town shines bright
during the season

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Each year as the Christmas holiday nears, we bring out the boxes that hold our decorations, ornaments and other mementos and begin to recreate memories that have been part of our holiday traditions.

While we are in the process of preparing for the holidays in our homes, in Elkhorn, the county seat of Walworth County, the entire community embraces the beauty of the season and retains the old-fashioned country feeling of years past.

Elkhorn is a unique community. Built

around a town square, it goes back to times when gathering here in the town square was the center of the community's social activities. The square still today functions as the center of many community events.

The community itself dates to the 1880s and many of the original homes were constructed of local Elkhorn yellow brick. Many were built in the Victorian style – two stories with circular turrets, gabled roofs and gingerbread lattice works. With many windows and broad front porches, they were – and many still are – perfect for holiday decorating.

Preparing the community with decorations goes back to the days of World War II, when a Christmas decorating program was initiated to add joy to the trying wartime days. It was an attempt to transform the downtown area into a scene that looked as if it was a Christmas card and, in the process, bring joy to the

residents of the community for the holidays.

“In 1952, a television series known as March of Time came to Elkhorn to film one episode of its program that would depict a small American town during the Christmas season,” shared Chris Clapper, Executive Director of the Elkhorn Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism.

In preparation for the episode, the town square was decorated on three sides with scenes constructed of wood. Among those scenes were a church, a gingerbread house, and a Santa, giving it a true American Christmas card look.

It was this program that resulted in the moniker “Elkhorn the Christmas Card Town,” a name that has continued through the years.

The episode was viewed by millions of viewers and was so successful that it was rerun for several years during the holiday

This is T. James Carson's art for the card named Holiday Night for Elkhorn. The city is also known as Christmas Card Town and Carson has been creating the cards each year since 2012.

PHOTO COURTESY ELKHORN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

right: For the 2020 card Carson depicted Santa checking his list, created in honor of Gary Wallem, who portrayed Santa in the annual parade from 1990 until his death in 2019. **below:** Castle-Reed painted this view of Elkhorn's Lorraine Hotel as it looked in the 1920s. It shows the spirit of Christmas from a decorated tree and a family transporting their tree home to carolers singing on the street corner. **bottom:** The 2021 Christmas card by Carson depicts the Elkhorn train station and a Christmas tree lot from years ago.

PHOTOS COURTESY
ELKHORN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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season and can still be found on You Tube.

The sharing continued

That episode would not be the end of interest in Elkhorn as the Christmas Card Town.

In 1958, a mere six years later, Elkhorn and its many holiday decorations became the subject of interest when the Ford Motor Company commissioned a New York City artist, Cecil Johnson, to produce six watercolor paintings. The paintings were to be used to illustrate an article in the company magazine, *Ford Times*.

The purpose of the article was to depict Christmas time in America and what community showcased Christmas time in America? Elkhorn, of course, The Christmas Card Town.

Not surprisingly, Elkhorn was chosen to be featured in the paintings. The pictures and article were well received by readers of the *Ford Times* magazine.

“While Johnson painted the scenes for Ford, five of them were picked up by a major publisher of artwork and reprinted as artwork for their Christmas card lines,” Clapper explained.

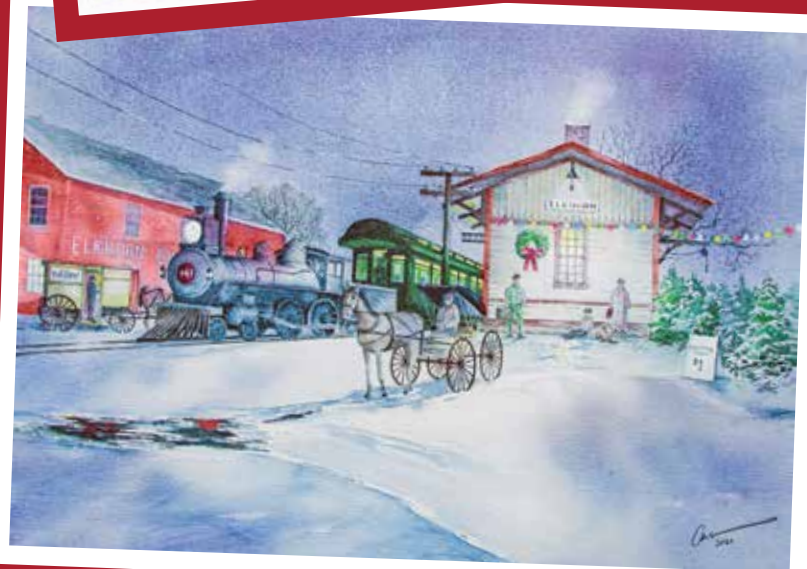
“These scenes of the Elkhorn community made their way into homes throughout the nation as hundreds of thousands were said to have been printed.”

The original paintings – which were owned by the Ford Motor Company as they had commissioned them – eventually found their way back to Elkhorn. Ford initially donated one of the paintings to the City of Elkhorn and later, the other five made their way back to Elkhorn. Two hung in City Hall while the other four were displayed at Matheson Memorial Library in Elkhorn.

Now, according to Clapper, they are all at the library and are displayed periodically along with some of the later Elkhorn Christmas Card Town paintings.

Long lasting tradition

The tradition of the Christmas Cards did not end with the first paintings, in fact, it had just begun. It was 1996 when the next commissioned painting



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that would be turned into a Christmas card appeared.

That year Jan Castle-Reed was commissioned to paint a card that would again focus on the Christmas spirit for which Elkhorn was so well known.

Castle-Reed, who was known as “Elkhorn’s artist in residence” accepted the commission. Her work would be different from Johnson’s as she used the medium of oil paints not watercolors.

Her choice for the scene was a building of significance to Elkhorn. It was the Frank Holton home, which had been built around 1930. Holton was the head of the Holton Instrument Company in Elkhorn, which he decided to move to Elkhorn. The company was well known for manufacturing trombones and trumpets.

At the time of the painting of the former Holton house in Elkhorn’s history, it should be noted it was owned by Castle-Reed and her husband. She would go on to create paintings for each of the next two years for the annual Christmas card design, each featuring a different holiday scene.

“The year 1999 brought a change in the artist hired to create the Christmas card,” Clapper said.

Earl Gustaveson, a wildlife painter, was chosen to create a wildlife scene for that year’s Christmas card. The painting was that of a fox sitting alongside a tree with a set of elk antlers hanging from one of the tree’s branches. It was a scene that not only honored Elkhorn’s wildlife but also the history of the community’s name.

Elkhorn was named by Col. Samuel F. Phoenix when he was crossing through the area and noticed a set of elk antlers hanging from a branch in a tree. The card by Gustaveson – the only one he designed – commemorates that event.

Castle-Reed would return in 2000 to continue the tradition of designing Elkhorn’s annual Christmas card. Each year through 2010 she would create an additional holiday scene incorporating the Christmas Card Town and its Christmas traditions.

Her 2010 painting was of a Victorian style house decorated for the holidays and her style at the time seemed to have evolved into less details painting, the reason of which would be learned the following year.

“In 2011, she started the painting for that



top: What better way to begin to shop for Christmas than at the Walworth County Fair, as depicted by Castle-Reed on this card. **middle:** This beautiful winter scene of an octagon house with two birds checking out the bird bath for water – was painted by Castle-Reed.

at right: This family scene of the Webster family preparing for the Christmas holidays was used twice as the annual card, first in 2002 when it was originally painted by Jan Castle-Reed and again in 2011 when she became too ill to finish the one she was making that year.

PHOTOS COURTESY
ELKHORN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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year's Christmas card but shortly before the painting was due, we were notified that she was unable to complete it due to medical concerns. This was possibly due to her having diminished vision." Clapper shared. "So, a substitute had to be found on short notice."

Because of the short timeline, Clapper said the decision was made to reissue the card that had depicted Christmas at the Webster House, first issued in 2002. It featured Joseph Webster playing his piano while his wife Joanna decorated the tree and their four children played in the room.

"The card was softened and lightened which gave it a slightly different appearance than that of the earlier card of the same subject," Clapper explained.

The following year, in 2012, T. James Carson took over as the artist who would produce the annual painting to be reproduced as that year's Christmas card.

Carson, an engineer by trade, was a local artist who worked in watercolors.

As art is original work and varies based on the style of each artist, Carson's work was different than Castle-Reed. He did, however, use many of the same subjects as Castle Reed such as the Frank Holton House, the Old Sprague Theater and the Christmas Card Town Parade.

His 2015, card featured Gary and Susan Wallem who filled the all-important roles as Santa and Mrs. Clause in the annual parade

from 1990 until Gary's death in 2019.

Since T. James Carson was transferred to the Green Bay area for his job, it has become more difficult for him to return to do the yearly painting. The Chamber has begun to look for a local artist to carry on the tradition when Mr. Carson feels he can no longer take on the project.

The Christmas card this year will feature the Knights of Columbus building.

'Tis the season

A community can't be known as Christmas Card Town without knowing full well how to offer quite the Christmas celebration, which will take place the first weekend in December this year.

On Friday, Dec. 1, the Elkhorn Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held at 5:30 p.m. downtown on the square in Veteran's Park.

After the lighting of the tree on Friday, all are invited back to Uncle Hunk's Junk Building (the Chamber office) from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. to enjoy the first night of Let It Glow.

The Let It Glow celebration, now in its fourth year, will feature a change in location this year. It will still feature light displays, and Santa and his elves with games and goodie bags but will be held at Uncle Hunk's Junk Building and Park, 203 E. Walworth St., Elkhorn.

Guests of all ages are encouraged to stop

by and walk the outdoor patio down Balsam Blvd. Note that photos with Santa will be available each night of Let It Glow.

"Enjoy the decorations and twinkly lights with a hot cup of cocoa in one hand and a glow wand in the other," chamber staff said.

Let It Glow will also be happening Saturday, Dec. 2, from 5 to 8 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 3, from 5 to 7 p.m.

On Saturday, prior to visiting Let It Glow, don't miss the 42nd annual Christmas Card Town Parade that makes its way through downtown.

If you haven't been to Elkhorn during this festive time of year, it would likely be worth a visit whether taking in a related event or just strolling downtown on your own. Only by experiencing it in person is it possible to gain an understanding of why Elkhorn continues to be known as Christmas Card Town.

The annual Christmas Card Town cards are available for sale at various businesses throughout the community as well as at the Chamber office, in Uncle Hunk's Junk Building, 203 E. Walworth St.

For more information about any of the Christmas events planned, contact the Elkhorn Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism by calling 262-723-5788, sending an email to info@elkhornchamber.com or to go the website, visitelkhorn.com.



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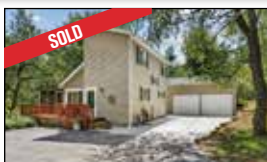
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N7474 Mariner Hills, Elkhorn - Lake day or pool day? You can do both when you purchase this home. Steps to the association pool and walking distance to association lakefront park on Lauderdale Lakes. Rustic charm with modern touches describes this charming 2BR, 1BA home located in Mariner Hills. Updated kitchen and bath, natural stone fireplace, vaulted ceilings, screened porch, wrap around deck & large fenced back yard makes this home even more desirable. Finished 2.5 insulated detached garage can be used as a Rec-Room. This can be your vacation getaway or year-round residence. The association owns and maintains a private 6-slip member only pier. Close to boat launch and minutes to Kettle Moraine Trail head offering hiking, mountain biking and Nordic skiing. **\$275,000**



N8115 Pleasant Lake Rd, East Troy - Spectacular Lakefront home on Pleasant Lake offering sand beach leading out to crystal clear swimming & endless sunsets is just the start. This private 5 BR, 4.5 BA home boast of 6,300 sq ft of luxury living. Vaulted ceilings throughout the main level & wood flooring. Master ensuite with private office. Eat-in Kitchen with large island/bar & access to brick patio with fountain, soaring living room with water views & fireplace, LL family room walk out to patio with water view & waterfront. **\$1,595,700**



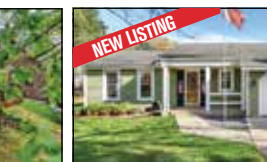
W5141 Plantation Rd, Elkhorn - Start your morning off with a cup of coffee on your private balcony off the master bedroom & end your day on the back patio. This home checks all the boxes, no need for updating here! Stunning New Construction 3 BR, 2.5 BA Lauderdale Lake Access, 2-Story Home w/ partial water views. Open concept, main floor w/ Birch flooring featuring large eat-in kitchen with large island/bar, granite tops, SS appliance & pantry. Ample living area that leads to dining room overlooking the back yard with slider to paver stone patio. **\$864,900**



L10 West Shore Dr, Elkhorn - Green Lake vacant lakefront lot with 75' of level Sunset filled frontage on 0.65 acre lot on Lauderdale Lakes. Lot features slight wooded slope from road which leads you to level frontage and private pier. You'll appreciate the additional 50 x 100 lot across the street offering additional parking and storage. Walking distance to Lauderdale Landing and minutes to boat launch. Kettle Moraine trails 3 miles away. Build the home you've been dreaming of. **\$549,900**



W7461 Woods Ln, Elkhorn - Located across the street from Bubbling Springs and the boat launch you'll find this 3 Bdrm, 1.5 bath ranch on wooded lot with view of a pond. Inside features vaulted ceilings throughout the main level. Kitchen with large dining room, living room with sliding glass door to deck, hardwood floors & woodburning stove. 2 of the 3 bedrooms offer wood flooring. Walkout unfinished Rec Room basement with 1/2 bath & laundry. 2 car detached garage. New Pelco windows installed last year. Access to Pleasant Lake Beach & short drive to Kettle Moraine Trail system. **\$319,700**



W5001 Paddock Ln, Elkhorn - Located in Charming Charl-Mar Subdivision you'll find this well cared for 3 Bd, 1.5 bath ranch on just under an acre. Private treelined backyard that abuts up to a corn field featuring 18 x 36 inground pool and 20 x 24 shed with cement floor and electric. Inside featuring family room with hickory floor, gas brick fireplace and French door to large cement patio that leads you to the pool. Eat-in kitchen with updated appliances and the floor with adjacent formal dining room that leads you to the living room. Lower-level rec-room with wet-bar, office, work room, laundry and Bilco outside door. Minutes to Lauderdale Lakes and Kettle Moraine Trail head. **\$399,700**



W5485 Baywood Dr, Elkhorn - Updated inside and out with boat slip on Lauderdale Lakes situated on wooded 1.658 acres overlooking spectacular wetland, you'll find this 4 BR, 3 BA, 1.5 story. Main floor Great Room w/vaulted ceiling, wall of windows with two sliders to deck, brick natural fireplace, kitchen with island and SS appliances, two bedrooms and full bath. Upper level with left overlooking Great Room. Bdrm and full bath. Lower-level large Family Room with access to patio under deck. Bdrm, full bath and laundry room. Short walk to association lakefront park with sand beach and boat slip. Minutes to Kettle Moraine Trail system. **\$589,700**



N7627 Pleasant Point Circle, Elkhorn - Lakefront Dreams can come true as you walk inside this spectacular 3BR, 2.5BA, 1.5 story home situated on 1.09 acres with 50' Mill Lake frontage. Inside you'll be impressed with the open concept with wall of windows and vaulted ceilings that welcomes the lake inside. Wood floors, kitchen with quartz tops, breakfast island and SS appliances, dinette lakeside, LR with French door to brick patio, foyer with hall bath and laundry. Upper level offering 2 BRs, loft and full bath. Finished Rec-Room off garage with vaulted ceilings, full bath and lift, with access to brick patio. One-of-a-kind boat house, sun-room over the water with 16x28 deck above, along 17x34 lakeside patio makes this ultimate entertaining area. Forever pier with L shaped deck. Move in ready inside and out! **\$1,989,700**

THE CORNERSTONE OF



Lake Geneva shopping

They love their store and make listening to customers a priority

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

A visit to Lake Geneva would not be complete for many shoppers without a stop at the Cornerstone Shop & Gallery located on the corner of Broad and Main streets.

Whether looking to purchase a gift, holiday decorations, specialty clothing, exquisite jewelry, or local art, there's sure to be something that will catch the attention of guests.

Karin and Bruce Bennett have owned and grown Cornerstone since they

purchased the property from Al and Peggy Rohde in 2007.

"We originally had a small business in Lake Geneva called Artopia Shopping Gallery. We were looking for a larger space and one that would be located on Main Street, something about 2,000 square feet," Karin said.

"I was on a board with Al Rohde and mentioned that we were looking for space on Main Street – something a bit larger than what we had. At that time, it was unusual for a Main Street property to go up for sale. Al surprised me by saying that we could purchase his property as they were considering selling," she said.

"This was a shock. We didn't know it was up for sale and it was 10,000 square feet, much larger than what we were considering," she added.

But sometimes things happen for a reason.

At the time Bruce had received notice that his full-time job would require a transfer to the East coast. Since they didn't want to move from the area – and Bruce had expressed interest in having a business of their own – it seemed time to take the plunge. And so, they did, purchasing the large space and turning it into what today is known as Cornerstone Shop & Gallery.

"We started slowly, bringing merchandise from our other shop and thankfully our customers. Many of the Rohdes' customers also continued to shop with us. There was an emphasis on Yankee candles, silk flowers and home décor along with calendars and Christmas cards," Karin explained.

Today these types of items are still found in the store but are not in as much of a demand as styles have changed. The newer style, battery-operated candles are popular and while home calendars are not used as

Karin and Bruce Bennett, owners of Cornerstone Shop & Gallery stand near one of their beautifully decorated trees. They purchased the store in 2007.

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much as they were in the past, those created by popular artists are still sold.

Making it their own

The Bennetts slowly began to add artisan items to their inventory, along with apparel, filling up the space with merchandise that would appeal to their customers.

They also did a lot of customer surveys so they could tailor the merchandise available to the styles, needs, and wants of their customers.

And most importantly, they listened to what their customers had to say, something they continue to do today.

Now, when entering through the main door of the store, which is located near the corner of Main and Broad streets, visitors are immersed in a favorite department of many women. There are racks of quality clothing to peruse, even if it wasn't the reason for stopping. From casual to elegant evening wear, the latter ideal for a formal event or a wedding, there is likely something that can be added to any wardrobe.

Now that it's fall, there are also some elegant coats out on the racks that will not only keep a person warm during the cold winter months but also looking good.

Along the walls there are also some very popular accessories including some by Vera Bradley – known for her unique patterns and styles, and Baggallini – known for versatile bags with multifunctional organizational options.

But also in this room is a favorite accessory of many women, jewelry. Cornerstone is known for carrying popular brands of jewelry that are loved and stand the test of time.

Patricia Locke designs, Lizzy James and Firefly are among the popular designs. Firefly is a company from Guatemala that uses beautiful Swarovski crystals in a variety of colors to provide the perfect accent to an outfit. Bright and colorful they can also add a holiday look when desired. Patricia Locke jewelry includes some beautiful Christmas pendants and pins for the holidays.

Décor and gifts galore

This time of year, it's the Christmas decorations and accessories that are featured throughout much of the store.

With beautifully constructed Christmas trees in every room – each one with a theme – it can entice shoppers to upgrade their own décor and Cornerstone is the perfect place to begin.

Maybe it's time to add a lighted water lantern, or a beautiful collectible Santa to your own holiday collection. For the newly married couple, there is a wedding collection of ornaments to commemorate the important day that will likely be treasured for year to come.

Shopping for a bridal or baby shower, Cornerstone is a great choice to find a



above: The store's children's department has many items from clothing and books to toys.
top: Paintings and prints from local artists are on display in the artist's corner at the store.

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special and unique gift. The store also has a registry, which can be accessed online or call or stop in and one of the staff will be happy to help with getting it set up. Cornerstone's knowledgeable and helpful employees aim to make shopping here a delight.

The store is well known for high quality Lake Geneva décor items as well as paintings and prints by local artists. They also support local authors, with book signings held being held on site.

During the pandemic, like many retail outlets, the Bennetts said they dealt with changes in their business as customers did not go out to shop but they found a way to keep their employees who wanted to, working. They also made some upgrades.

"We continued to provide work for those who wanted to work at this time while adhering to COVID safety rules," said Karin. "It was at this time that Lexi Sharkus redesigned our website, working with Bruce and me. She made it easier to use for us and our customers. Whoever wanted to work, we found jobs they could safely do. We were ready with a team when it was time to go back to work."

And go back to work they did. With the return of their staff and their customers, Cornerstone continued to grow and got back to providing the finest products available.

During this time, they also added their Sore Muscle Jelly – which has been available for several years – to the Cornerstone website. The jelly features more than 20 essential oils and is formulated to relieve pain and inflammation associated with fibromyalgia, arthritis, muscle spasms, neuropathy, multiple sclerosis, headaches, migraines, sinus issues, colds and back, shoulder, neck, leg and hip pain.

Sales took off during COVID, to the point they launched a separate website for the Sore Muscle Jelly.

Ready for the next step

Over the last few years, the Bennetts have decided it may be time to slow down and spend more time with family. They have



above: Cornerstone has a wide variety of women's clothing. **top left:** Pottery created by Hilborn of Canada include whimsical notes explaining the use of the dish or perhaps why it shouldn't be an asparagus dish "because you hate asparagus." **top right:** When looking for a bridal gift, Cornerstone is worth a stop, and they have a registry that can be set up through the website or in the store with assistance from a staff member.

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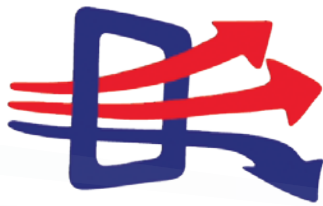
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had the business for sale for a while but are looking for the right buyer, one who will love it as much as they do.

In their latest newsletter, Karin and Bruce shared their love of the Cornerstone Shop and the many customers who have become friends through the years.

"We would ultimately like to pass the baton to someone who shares our love of the Cornerstone Shop and who has the same creative passion, business acumen, and vision to take it to the next level. We would of course be more than willing to help with the transition," they wrote.

"We are still looking for that special someone and if you are interested or know someone who might be a fit, we are here to answer any of your questions," they added.

One only needs to talk to the Bennetts to understand the love they have for the Cornerstone Shop & Gallery, along with their staff and their customers. While they feel it's time to move on, they're not in a hurry to do so. Finding the right buyer – one who will love and cherish the business as they have – is more important to them than merely selling the business.

"While it is a difficult decision for us to consider leaving Cornerstone, it's the right thing for us to do," said Karin.

"Every day we meet so many people who are happy to be here. The biggest compliments we receive is when we hear them describe their visit to the store as a trip to their happy place," she added.

The Bennetts placing an emphasis on continuing to listen to their customers while providing the best in quality and service to them is the key to their success.

And their store truly is the cornerstone of shopping in Lake Geneva.

Cornerstone Shop and Gallery is at 214 Broad St., Lake Geneva. For more information, call 262-248-6988 or visit the website at www.cornerstonelakegeneva.com.

Store hours are Sunday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.



above: For new parents, this set of baby ornaments would be a fitting Christmas gift. **left:** Decorative oars featuring painted scenes can add a special artistic touch to a home's décor.

SANDRA LANDEN
MACHAJ
Spirit of Geneva Lakes

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It's a Jeep thing



Ray Scarpelli (left) of Ray Chrysler Dodge Jeep and Ram, and Mike Missak, founder of Jeeps on the Run Toys for Tots, have teamed up for the event. It features hundreds of Jeeps that parade from Fox Lake to Lincolnshire, where a collection of toys for area children in need are donated and a new Jeep is raffled off. Toys can be dropped off at the Ray dealership, 23 U.S. Highway 12, Fox Lake. SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ Spirit of Geneva Lakes



Jeeps on the Run gearing up for annual Toys for Tots event

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

On Sunday, Dec. 3, hundreds of Jeeps will begin a trek from Ray Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep Ram in Fox Lake to the Marriott in Lincolnshire. The dealership has been a sponsor of the Jeeps on the Run program for the past four years and once again will be working with the group to provide toys for children in the area, just in time for Christmas.

The program was created 11 years ago by Mike Missak to provide toys for children in need during the holidays. Prior to the Jeeps on the Run event, toys are donated and collected at the Ray dealership where they are then loaded into the many Jeeps as they arrive for the event. Many of the Jeeps are decorated for the event, creating a fun, colorful parade while spreading Christmas cheer.

The Jeeps will travel with a police escort to Marriott in Lincolnshire where the toys are unloaded with the help of Marines.

The event kicks off at the dealership at 8 a.m. when participating Jeeps begin to arrive on site. The Jeeps must be registered in advance and pay a registration fee of \$30 for each vehicle to participate. The registration fee covers the Jeep so there is no additional charge for passengers.

“There is no extra charge for the passengers,” said Missak, who created the Jeeps on the Run Toys for Tots program. “Each Jeep must donate at least one toy and are welcome to donate more. Other toys that have been collected at the dealership for months before the event will be added to the Jeeps for transport to the Marriott.”

The toys, which are collected from Jeep owners and the community, must all be new, in their original packaging and unwrapped so that it’s possible when disbursing them to choose toys appropriate for the various ages of children who will receive them. Members of the community and beyond are encouraged to donate toys at the Ray dealership in Fox Lake prior to the Jeeps on the Run event.

Organizers request stuffed animals are not donated as they are not usually encased in plastic and can get dirty during the parade. The other request is that toy guns that look like real guns not be donated.

“Nerf style guns are okay,” Missak explained. “The toys are all distributed to needy children in the local area – Lake and McHenry counties.”

The toys donated by the Jeep owners – as well as the greater community – are what have helped make this event successful, year after year.

Preparing for the parade

When the Jeeps begin to assemble that morning, parking fills in quickly on the lot at the Ray dealership. Some drivers may need to repair their decorations if they came loose on the drive to Fox Lake as participating Jeeps and their owners come from a wide range of communities to participate.

It’s a special event where the Jeep owners get together, admire each other’s

decorations, share their love of Jeeps, and get to be part of a good cause all at once. There will be a grab-and-go style breakfast as well as some events for the kids as the group of Jeeps prepares for the start of the ride to the Marriott.

The parade-style ride is possible thanks to help from local police and Lake County Reserve Officers who make certain that busy intersections are open for Jeeps on the Run to make their way through.

In the early days, according to Missak, his wife would call the next community they were approaching to let law enforcement officials know an approximate time the group would be there. Today, with the Lake County Reserve Officers coordinating the event, it runs smoothly and is more efficient.

The parade of Jeeps attracts many watchers who often line the parade route to admire the sheer number of vehicles, many of them decorated, as they wind their way through Lake County to the destination in Lincolnshire. There, the toys are transferred from the Jeeps by Marine volunteers and loaded into semi-trucks.

After the Jeeps on the Run parade – which features more than 500 Jeeps – there will be an after party at the Marriott. Tickets for the after party are \$5 each and are available to the public. The gathering is a family-oriented event that features food, activities for children and raffles for the adults. It’s open to all – people do not have to be a Jeep owner or participate in the parade to attend the after party.

New Jeep raffle

The highlight of the event is the raffle for a brand new Jeep donated by Ray Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep Ram with one lucky winner going home as the owner. Tickets for the

Many of the hundreds of Jeeps that participate in a parade from Fox Lake to Lincolnshire feature festive holiday decorations.

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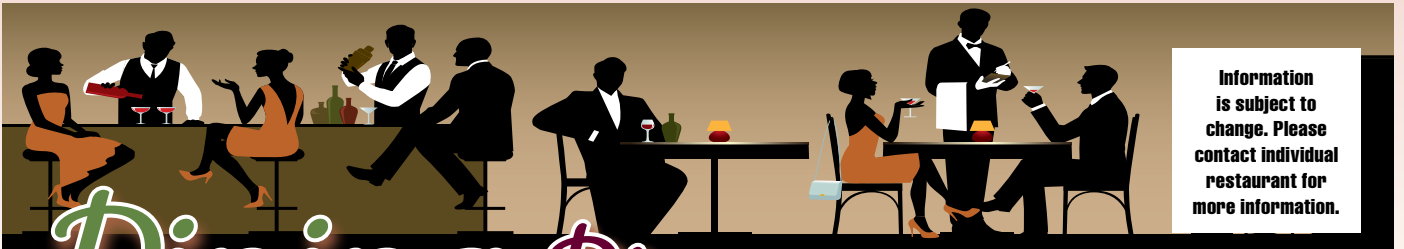
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raffle can be purchased for \$20 each and a maximum of 3,000 tickets will be sold. All the money raised from the sale of the tickets is used to buy additional toys.

“The first years that Ray sponsored us they provided a three-year lease of a new jeep as a raffle prize which was a wonderful prize to win,” said Missak. “When they switched to donating a Jeep that the winner would actually own, I was so pleased. Last year’s winner was so happy to win the Jeep that she said she would be at the Jeeps on the Run Toys for Tots with her new Jeep this year and every year that she owns the car.

“The gift of the Jeep for the raffle was a total gift from Ray CDJR,” added Missak. “All money raised by selling the tickets goes into purchasing additional toys.”

According to Missak, shopping for the additional toys is a treasured activity for his family. His son, Charlie, who was an infant when the Jeeps on the Run program began,

is now 11 years old. Charlie explains in a video about the event that shopping for toys for children his own age is fun.

There is likely no better choice than a child to pick out the best toys for other children.

“Jeep owners are a special group,” Missak said. “I fell in love with Jeeps when I was 17 years old, and that love continues.”

So, more than 11 years ago, Missak decided it would be nice to get together with a few Jeep owners and go to lunch or dinner and learn more about each other and their love of Jeeps. He said he hoped to get several Jeep enthusiasts to come together but was surprised when he had responses from 35 people for the first event.

They decided they should do something worthwhile such as donating to a charity. The group came up with the idea of bringing a toy to donate to Toys for Tots. Much to their surprise, they were able to fill a

Suburban with the toys that the generous attendees showed up with that year. That was the beginning of Jeeps on the Run, which now attracts up to 1,000 Jeeps and brings in thousands of toys, filling more than two semi-trailers and making Christmas special for local children in need.

The first event was so successful they decided to continue it. At the time, they didn’t have a Jeep sponsor but continued to look for one. In the third year, they found a Jeep dealership to sponsor the event who also donated a Jeep light kit to raffle off.

Dealership steps up

In 2020, the Ray Auto Group came on board as sponsor of the event and donated the three-year lease of a Jeep. The dealership is well known for its many contributions to charitable events in the community as well as its ongoing support of local community activities.

During the pandemic, there was talk of cancelling the event for that year. However, knowing the need for the toys was perhaps even more important – considering many families lost jobs with some even becoming ill – they decided to hold it with safety restrictions in place. The Jeeps came to the dealership in Fox Lake but everyone stayed in their vehicles. Despite the restrictions



top: Marines unload toys from the Jeeps and place them into semis before transporting them to a warehouse for distribution. **left:** The parking lot at Ray Chrysler Dodge Jeep and Ram fills up at the start of a past Jeeps on the Run event, to be held this year on Dec 3.

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in place, 650 Jeeps participated and a semi-truck full of toys was collected.

Jeeps on the Run is gearing up to celebrate peoples' love of Jeeps, parade once again from Fox Lake to Lincolnshire, welcome families to the after party, raffle off a new Jeep and most importantly, make an impact on children throughout the area this Christmas.

If you have a Jeep, consider signing up to be part of Jeeps on the Run. Those who don't have a Jeep or are interested in supporting the event in other ways are encouraged to donate toys, stop by the Ray dealership, cheer and wave along the parade route and attend the after party. And don't forget to purchase a ticket for the Jeep giveaway – it may be your lucky day!

For more information or to purchase tickets go to www.jeeps-ontherun.com or follow them on Facebook.

To donate toys, drop them off at Ray Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, 23 U.S. Route 12, Fox Lake. The dealership is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

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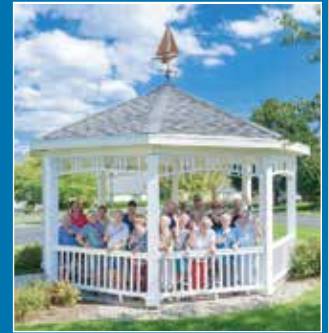
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