

A group of people in historical costumes, including a woman in a red hat and a man in a brown hat, are seated at a table with wine glasses and plates. The background is blurred, showing other guests and festive lights.

THE *SPIRIT* of Geneva Lakes



Vol. 35 No. 11

COMPLIMENTARY

NOVEMBER 2023

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ON THE COVER

Guests to the Ye Olde Christmase Feaste madrigal dinner are treated to music performed by the choir during the multi-course meal. The event features jesters, the presentation of a boar's head (as a prop), and all of the participants in costumes that represent earlier times.

PHOTO COURTESY YE OLDE CHRISTMASSE FEASTE
Spirit of Geneva Lakes



IT'S COMIN' UP NOVEMBER EVENTS

Nov. 3-4 Lake Geneva Ghost

Walks, 7:30 to 11 p.m., 515 Baker St. This isn't just a resort town for the living... Creepy old mansions with echoing halls and dusty relics. The weird happenings at Otto Young's 100-room Stone Manor. These beautiful homes and buildings are really something else, and on this 90-minute walking tour of downtown Lake Geneva, your guide focuses on the haunted history of places such as the Maxwell Mansion, the Baker House, and the eponymous lake itself. Witness these beautiful Nineteen Century landmarks, in addition to more than a handful of stops around downtown to places such as the lakefront and a haunted movie theater. While this tour is meant to uncover some of the darker secrets of this resort town, you also learn more about indigenous people who first lived here, and hear about the famous residents such as the Wrigley, Sears, Maytag, and Schwinn families who once spent their summers here. On this ghost walk, you'll find out that there's plenty of strangeness right in the downtown. Tickets are \$25 a person for the 90-minute walk with some dates offering two start times. For tickets or more details, visit americanghostwalks.com.

Nov. 5 Fall Wine Walk

noon to 4 p.m. Join the Fall Downtown Lake Geneva Wine Walk. Spend a lovely afternoon strolling through the streets of Lake Geneva, enjoying samples of wine along the way. Proceeds of this event will benefit the Never Say Never Playground project. Tickets are \$45 each; designated driver tickets available for \$20 each. Tickets include: wine glass with sponsor logo, wine samples at each location, snacks along the way, a brochure with the map of participating vendors and participant discounts and/or promotions, the required participant lanyard and a complimentary bag. Tickets can be purchased at downtownlakegeneva.org. Event check-in will be at The Bottle Shop in Lake Geneva.

Nov. 11 The Looney Lutherans

7 p.m. Presented by Big Foot Fine Arts, The Looney Lutherans are a trio of wacky gals who use music, comedy, and some help from the audience to share their age-old wisdom for living a long and lively life, the Lutheran way. Material is comedic and family friendly, and you don't have to be Lutheran to love it! Using music, comedy, and some help from the audience, these gals love to share their tips for living a long and healthy life, the Lutheran way. All original material is comedic, family friendly, and interactive. Tickets are \$5-\$35, available online at bigfootfinearts.org. Big Foot Auditorium, 401 Devils Lane, Walworth.

Nov. 24 - Dec. 17 Christmas

Trains in East Troy. Take your family on a magical ride from the East Troy Train Depot to Santa's Workshop at the Elegant Farmer, where children can visit Santa, enjoy cookies and hot chocolate, and take home a small gift. This 10-mile round-trip takes just under two hours and the cars are heated. Trains depart from the East Troy Depot, 2002 Church St., East Troy, at 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., noon, 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays from Nov. 25 through Dec. 17. Tickets are \$23 for adults, \$20 for kids and \$8.50 for toddlers. Reservations are required and can be made by visiting the website at easttroyrr.org.

Ongoing events

Beginner Pickleball Clinics are offered every other Tuesday, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Lake Geneva Tennis Club, 630 Veterans Pkwy., Lake Geneva. The clinics are available free of charge (a deposit will be required for new clients to hold their spot) with a limit of 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!

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

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The calendar of events is compiled from a variety of sources including area chambers of commerce and visitor bureaus and contains events listed 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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Mars Resort

celebrates 100 years

by **Sandra Landen Machaj** • CORRESPONDENT

This summer, the Riviera in Lake Geneva rocked as Mars Resort celebrated its 100-year anniversary in business at a magnificent gala featuring a gathering of customers, family and friends with a beautiful view of Geneva Lake serving as the backdrop.

“The event was held June 22. It was a ticketed event and included food, drinks and a variety of music. Many of the music groups that routinely play at Mars Resort played at the gala to help us celebrate our 100-year anniversary,” said Arney Silvestri, owner of Mars Resort.

Silvestri purchased Mars Resort in 2016. The 45-foot pontoon boat owned by Mars Resort that’s normally used to provide rides on Lake Como for those waiting in line at Mars or after dinner there, was transported to Lake Geneva for the event. It was launched in Geneva Lake, ready to provide visitors to the gala a relaxing free ride. On this evening, the Riviera and the boat gave guests breathtaking views of the sun setting on the water.

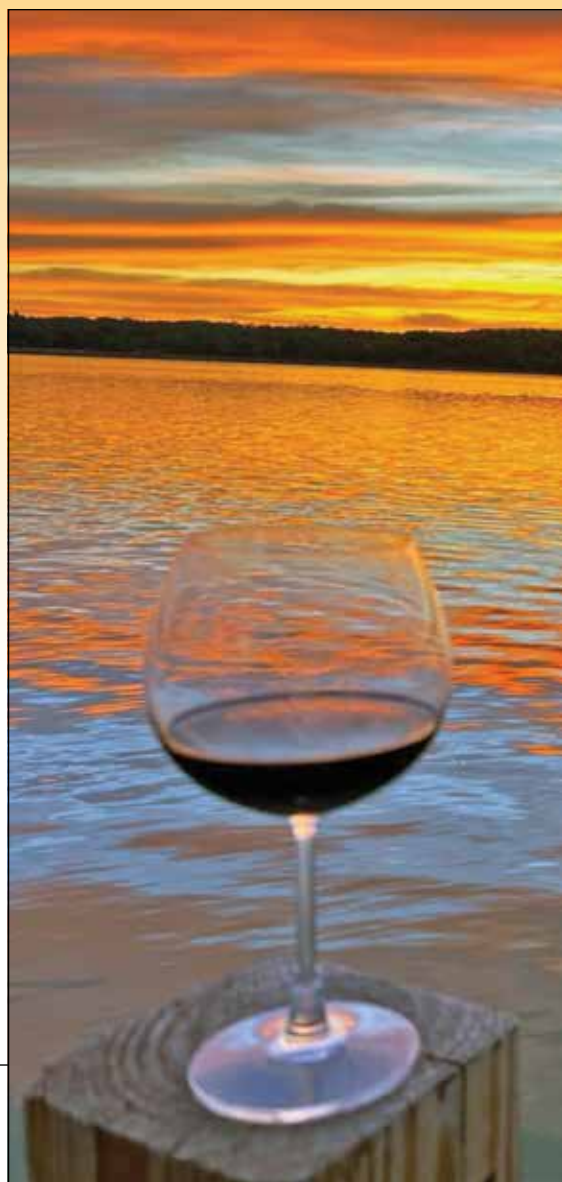
“All the food that we served were the favorites that are enjoyed at Mars Resort,” said Silvestri.

According to Silvestri \$10,000 was raised at the gala and donated to the local charity Kisses from Keegan. The charity provides help for families who have a child suffering from cancer, as Keegan did when she was 7 years old.

“We had wonderful cooperation from many of our suppliers, such as Greco Foods and Tito,” added Silvestri. “We were able to give away gift cards to be enjoyed at a later time by the guests who were lucky enough to receive them.”

Silvestri said they had such a good time at the gala, and such an amazing turnout, that they may do another one in the future, not as a special anniversary, but simply as a charity event.

When asked why they did not hold this celebration at Mars Resort, the answer was simple. Mars Resort is not large enough to hold the number of



top: Mars Resort, on the shore of Lake Como, is a favorite of locals and visitors to enjoy fine food and a magnificent view of the lake. **at right:** The sunset on Lake Como from restaurant is a sight to be enjoyed whether having dinner or a drink.

PHOTOS COURTESY ARNEY SILVESTRI *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

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celebrants they hoped to attract.

The Riviera was the perfect alternative as it's also located on the shore of a beautiful lake, is large enough to hold all the people who wished to celebrate the 100-year anniversary and while it was not Mars Resort, it still offered a beautiful lakefront view. It's also a treasured building – although not yet 100 years old as it was built in 1932 – and has a long history in the Lake Geneva area.

History of Mars Resort

The history of Mars Resort goes back to 1923 when Fred and Olga Schmidt purchased a single cabin, equipped with an outhouse, along the shore of Lake Como. The cabin had been used as a single-family dwelling, but the Schmidt family had big dreams for the space. They opened a seasonal restaurant, added additional cabins and named their new business The Old Glory Camp.

There were other owners and name changes before it was purchased by Robert and Christine Marsalek, sometime around the year 1949. The Marsaleks, using a shortened version of their name, renamed it Mars Resort and that name has stuck despite attempts to change it.

With another ownership change – when it was purchased by Helen and Ray Cisco along with Joe Payne – they tried to make the name The Last Resort, but the public would not stand for it and customers continued to call it Mars Resort. The Ciscos were also said to have added the specialty ribs to the menu around 1980. The ribs continue to be a favorite of Mars' guests today. They can still be ordered Cisco-style – coated with the Cisco's special seasoning – or they can be ordered with a more traditional barbecue sauce.

When Silvestri purchased the resort in 2016, it was in need of repairs and



above: In spring, fall or summer, sitting out on one of the decks is a place to enjoy the beautiful lake view from Mars Resort.
at left: Arney Silvestri and his wife, Sue, and daughter, Rachel, celebrate 100 years for their resort this summer.

PHOTOS COURTESY
ARNEY SILVESTRI
Spirit of Geneva Lakes

remodeling, he said. The goal was to make it more attractive to today's customers while still retaining the charm of an on-the-lake supper club.

Silvestri who is a builder of elegant housing, began the renovations and enlisted the aid of his longtime friend Scott Pohl. Pohl was brought on as the managing partner who runs the day-to-day operations of the restaurant.

"Scott and I have been friends since childhood. My parents originally had a home on Geneva Lake, which they eventually sold and then purchased a condominium at Interlaken, which is now

The Ridge. We spent much of the summer up here. I met Scott here as his parents – who were teachers during the school year – rented wave runners and boats on the shore of Lake Como from Interlaken to Mars Resort. We met at that time and have continued our friendship over the years," Silvestri said.

Food, drinks with a view

Located on the shore of Lake Como, the Mars Resort building is small but welcoming. It has windows on three sides, giving customers a panoramic view of the lake regardless of where they're seated.

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They maintained that view and added a new bar to take advantage of the gorgeous view.

The piano bar, another favorite of supper clubs, is played by a pianist on weekend evenings to the delight of the patrons, who gather around and enjoy their cocktails either before their table is ready or while enjoying an after-dinner drink.

During the warmer weather, there are often long lines of people waiting for tables at Mars, especially on the weekends. According to regular customers, it's worth the wait. Most Wisconsin supper clubs were, or are, known for their signature cocktails and Mars Resort is no different. Their signature Old Fashioned remains a favorite as does the ever-popular Manhattan.

The food at Mars is also in line with supper club options and the specialties – such as the ribs introduced in 1980 as well as fish fry, chicken, shrimp and steak – remain at the top of many visitors' favorite items.

“Our most popular foods continue to be the ribs, the charred chicken, the chicken skewers, shrimp skewers and of course our steaks,” said Silvestri. “Our fish fry is also very popular.”

The fish fry at Mars Resort is unique in that it's available on days other than Friday, when most fish fries are on the menu at many restaurants in Wisconsin. At the resort, fish fry is also available on Wednesdays and at lunchtime.

In addition to the above-mentioned favorites, Silvestri recommends some of his lunch favorites, including the patty melt and the turkey and ham club.

“The turkey and ham club is only available at lunch. It's made with in-house fresh roasted turkey and baked ham – not processed lunch meat,” added Silvestri. “We have served 16,000 half-pound burgers made from fresh, never frozen top quality ground beef. Our steaks are hand cut in house, from the very best quality meat. All of our food is of the finest quality.”



top: At night, the lights from Mars Resort reflect beautifully on the water of Lake Como.

above: The docks are often full as boaters arrive at for lunch, cocktail hour or dinner.

PHOTOS COURTESY ARNEY SILVESTRI *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

Throughout the rest of this year there will continue to be special 100-year celebration activities at Mars. The most recent was Monster Rest, held Oct. 28 that featured costume contest giveaways, free appetizers, a DJ spinning spooky tunes and specialty drinks.

Year-round outdoor dining options

One big draw at Mars during is that eating indoors is not the only option. There are three outdoor decks on the waterfront that were added by Silvestri. On summer weekend evenings the sounds of the outdoor live music are enjoyed by those choosing to dine outside.

While the decks are enjoyed on the warm summer days and evenings, it might also be surprising to some that one of the decks at Mars is also enjoyed in the winter. Each winter, igloos appear on the west side deck. They are heated and the perfect place to gather with friends or family members

and enjoy the beauty of the outdoors and the lake views, even in winter. There is a special igloo menu which includes many favorite appetizers that are also enjoyed indoors.

“The igloos, which are heated from a furnace, will hold up to eight people and there is a minimum spend in the igloos of \$100,” said Silvestri, who added that reservations must be made for the igloos.

If you haven't been to Mars Resort – or not recently, now is a good time to visit and help celebrate their 100-year anniversary.

Mars Resort, Silvestri and his staff, as well as their customers will continue to celebrate 100 years in business on the shores of Lake Como for the last two months of the year.

Mars Resort is at W4098 S. Shore Dr., Lake Geneva, and is open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. For more information, call 262-245-5689 or visit www.mars-resort.com.

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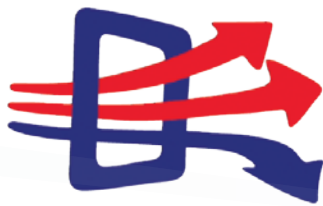
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ENJOY A MADRIGAL EXPERIENCE

Dinners offer guests an opportunity to step back in time

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Medieval days and the time of the Renaissance were the beginning of the Madrigal dinners still held today. The early dinners were said to have been held in the great halls of England from the times of the early medieval period as preparation leading up to the Christmas holidays.

The events included singing and dancing, the court jesters providing laughs and an exquisite feast of many courses was served. The head of the boar was marched in by the servers as a sign of having overcome evil as the boar was considered to be from the devil.

These feasts were very fancy and the Lords and Ladies attending or as sponsors, enjoyed the singing and other acts along with the great feast. All the guests left sated with good food and drink and enjoyable time.

The Madrigal dinners made their way to the United States and most are now held by schools or community groups as most homes do not have the grand ballrooms found in the medieval castle. To accommodate a true Madrigal event – with its large a capella choral singing group, jesters and servers for the gigantic feast – a very large space is required.

If you haven't been to a Madrigal Feast,

at left: Before the meal is served, the boar's head is brought into the dining room, not to be eaten but as a symbol of prosperity and peace.

inset: The jesters play a fun but important role in madrigal dinner events. Their costumes are intricate and are handmade by volunteers.

PHOTOS COURTESY YE OLDE CHRISTMASSE FEASTE
Spirit of Geneva Lakes

it might be worth a start to this year's holiday celebration by one with several feasts in the area. Here are some of the local Madrigal dinners.

YE OLDE ENGLISH CHRISTMASSE FEASTE

The Ye Olde Englishe Christmasse Feaste has been a tradition hosted by Kenosha high schools for the past 49 years. The program was started by Kurt Chalgren, then director of the Tremper High School choir. It has continued to grow each year, first held at the Elks Club in Kenosha, then moved to St. Marks, and finally to Tremper High School. Today all three Kenosha high schools – Tremper, Bradford and Indian Trail – are involved in the production with each school providing members of the cast for the annual event.

The Madrigal Feaste is a step back into Merry Old England when the Lords and Ladies of the Manors opened their homes for festivities prior to the Christmas holiday season. It was a time of music, dancing, singing and



The Lord and Lady enter the dining hall to begin the festive meal.

PHOTO COURTESY YE OLDE CHRISTMASSE FEASTE
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especially, feasting.

It's a carefully planned event that requires many months of auditions and practice to provide a quality program to be enjoyed by all.

"Auditions are held in spring of the year," said Polly Amborn, choir director at Tremper High School and also co-choir director for the Madrigal Feaste with John Choi, choir director at Indian Trail High School and Emily Armurecht, choir director at Bradford High School.

"We start rehearsing on Sept. 7. It is daunting for those who are doing this event for the first time. There are 20 to 25 pieces of music to learn, some in different languages including Latin, French and German," Amborn said.

The music changes each year with each school choosing some of the selections. While the choir directors are preparing the Madrigal singers, other members of the program are working with the jesters, tumblers, bag pipers, drums, bass, recorders and strings players to produce their portions of the show.

The seamstresses – mostly volunteers, led by Heather Miles – begin the hard work of preparing the costumes for the event. Although the costumes are dry cleaned after the performance, they must be pressed, checked for damage, and if needed, repaired. With changes in the program new costumes may need to be created and others

may need to be altered for the current cast.

Miles, who is now a teacher at Gateway Technical College, has been involved in the program since she was a high school student.

"Our volunteers spend hours getting the costumes ready and other volunteers spend additional time getting the cafeteria transformed into a medieval castle," she said. "Many of our volunteers have been involved in the program for many years. We have one family that has had four generations of family members involved in the program and continue to be involved."

Along with the theatrical performance, guests enjoy the Feaste itself. The meal served is prepared by Sophisticatering, a quality catering company located in Kenosha.

"We have been preparing the Feaste dinner for about 19 years," said Annette Flynn, who owns Sophisticatering with her husband, Matt.

Sophisticatering is well known in the area for their quality food, with everything made from scratch including all the bread served being baked fresh the day of the event.

"The feast is served family style with the exception of the salad and soup," Annette said. "Our menu has remained pretty much the same over the years but there have been some minor changes. We used to serve a crab spread but stopped because too many

complained about allergies. We also served homemade liver pate – another favorite from the early days – but it was not enjoyed by many as they did not know what it was."

Annette said the menu this year is expected to be the same or similar to last year's menu unless there is a problem with price increases or supply chain issues.

A preset salad with three choices of dressing will be in place upon arrival. Appetizers will be passed and in past years have included house smoked trout and big bread bowls with spinach dip. The salad and appetizers are served one hour before the show.

A tradition at the Madrigal Feaste is the serving of hot Wassail, a drink made with apple cider and secret spices to celebrate the holiday season.

Then comes the homemade beef barley soup, brought on a tray with a large bowl of dry ice which lets off steam and is said to be an impressive sight. It's served with the homemade bread.

"There is a tradition at Madrigal Feastes that the Boar's head is brought in and carried through the room," Annette said. "This is done here but it's a prop, not a real boar's head. It's followed by roasted pork loin with dressing served on platters and passed family style. Next comes the vegetables, green beans and carrots."

While one would think that would be the end, remember this is not just a meal; it is

Guests to the Ye Olde Christmasse Feaste are treated to music performed by the lords and ladies in different languages during the multi-course dinner.

PHOTO COURTESY YE OLDE CHRISTMASSE FEASTE *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

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a feast. The next course is roasted chicken on the bone madrigal style, and of course, potatoes.

“We use either small red potatoes or Yukon gold served in a dill cream sauce,” Annette said.

The perfect dessert for an English style meal is none other than figgy pudding, which is a bread pudding prepared with figs and custard.

The Ye Olde Christmasse Feaste will be held Dec. 8-10 with Friday and Saturday events being at 6:45 p.m. and an afternoon performance at 2:45 p.m., Sunday. Tremper High School is at 8560 26th Ave., Kenosha. Tickets are \$40 per person and go on sale Nov. 15 at www.feaste.org.

Sophisticatering is at 8048 Sheridan Rd., Kenosha. For more information, visit www.sophisticatering.com or call 262-657-3663.

McHENRY HIGH SCHOOL MADRIGAL DINNER

“This will be the 19th year that McHenry High School has held a Madrigal show and dinner,” said Derek Galvicius, choir director at McHenry High School in McHenry, Ill.

The program is a fun and whimsical introduction to the times of the Renaissance, that romantic and musical time when Lords and Ladies gathered together and enjoyed music and food to celebrate the holiday season.

“It is a competitive event where the choir members compete for the various spots in the program. The top 24 performers become the Royal Court while 30 to 50 students become part of the Banquet Brigade. The students delve into this magical and mystical time with the spirit of true immersion. This era is so different and transformative,” Galvicius said. “The students work very hard, spending nine weeks diving into the spirit of the Madrigals, learning the scripts and the music.”

While the show has a script, it’s not always followed to the letter which adds to the enjoyment and spontaneity of the show.

“This has been a successful fundraiser which benefits the musical program either by putting funds back into the Madrigal show or being used as scholarships for members of the music program who cannot afford the tours that we sometimes undertake,” Galvicius added.

While the musical performance is the highlight of the event, the Madrigal dinner is also a favorite of the attendees.

“The dinner is prepared by the cafeteria staff. It consists of a full dinner starting with appetizers, salad, a main course, and dessert. In the past they have prepared main courses of such items as a bread bowl filled with beef stew or Chicken Kiev. The menu for this year has not been released at this time,” Galvicius said.

There’s also a serving of Wassail, the



Each of the costumes for Ye Olde Christmasse Feaste are hand made by volunteers using high quality fabrics, which helps them last for several years.

PHOTO COURTESY YE OLDE CHRISTMASSE FEASTE *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

warm holiday drink typically is served during the holidays.

“This is a long-standing tradition at McHenry High School. We enjoy sharing it with the community. It is the first and best way to kick off the holiday season,” he said.

The program will be held on Dec. 2, at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are available at the school for the two-hour program, including the full dinner for \$30.

Tickets for the show only along with a cup of Wassail are \$22. The program is held on McHenry High School’s East Campus, 1012 N. Green St., McHenry.

JOHNSBURG HIGH SCHOOL MADRIGAL DINNER

“This year marks the 20th anniversary for the Johnsburg High School Madrigal Dinners,” said Samantha Thielen Pak, choral director at Johnsburg High School in Johnsburg, Ill.

To participate in the Madrigal program, students must complete an audition with only the best of the best coming part of the event.

“The program is a combination of a theatrical comedy performance and a

musical presentation intertwined throughout the performance,” Thielen Pak said. “This year one of the students wrote the script specifically for those involved. We have an entire royal court.”

The traditional costumes are passed down from generation to generation she said with new ones being added as needed. The dinner is produced by the in-house cafeteria staff and the meal is a plated, sit-down dinner.

“Each year the meal changes as it has a different theme. This year’s meal will consist of roasted turkey, fresh stuffing, roasted green beans, homemade mashed potatoes and gravy and be finished off with hot apple crisp.”

Johnsburg’s Madrigal dinners will be held on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 1 and 2 at 5:30 p.m. Tickets will go on sale in early November at <https://ites.google.com/Johnsburg12.org/madrigals>.

The program will be held in the Johnsburg High School auditorium, 2002 Ringwood Rd., Johnsburg. Ticket prices for this year’s event are \$20 for adults and \$17 for seniors, children and Johnsburg High School students.



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Making **music** together

Orchestra brings harmony to stages, schools, community

By **Tom Ganser**
CORRESPONDENT

Many people in the Southern Lakes area and beyond know about the Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra.

What may fly below the radar is the LGSO's partnering with many musical organizations – including colleges, universities and high schools, and its long-standing goal of promoting music appreciation and music education.

David Anderson is in his 14th season as the LGSO Music Director, following Andy Dogan who in 2001 guided its transformation from a handful of players into a full symphony orchestra.

LGSO bass player Louis Dolmon has worked with more than 20 orchestras and similar organizations over five decades.

"I have not encountered a conductor or music director as committed to musical

education as Mr. David Anderson. He is a naturally gifted teacher and leads by example. He has conducted both youth orchestras and adult groups alike. He teaches by providing context to the pieces we play and knows the interpretation he wants to elicit. The orchestra improves every year and because of his efforts (backed by the fine music educators in the area) more secondary education students enroll in music classes," Dolmon said.

Anderson, named winner of the American Prize in Conducting in the community orchestra division in 2019, compares selecting the music for a concert to creating a diet.

"You have to have a nice diet throughout the concert and throughout the season," he said. "You need certain kinds of music, but you can't do all of one kind: all desert or all main course or all appetizers."

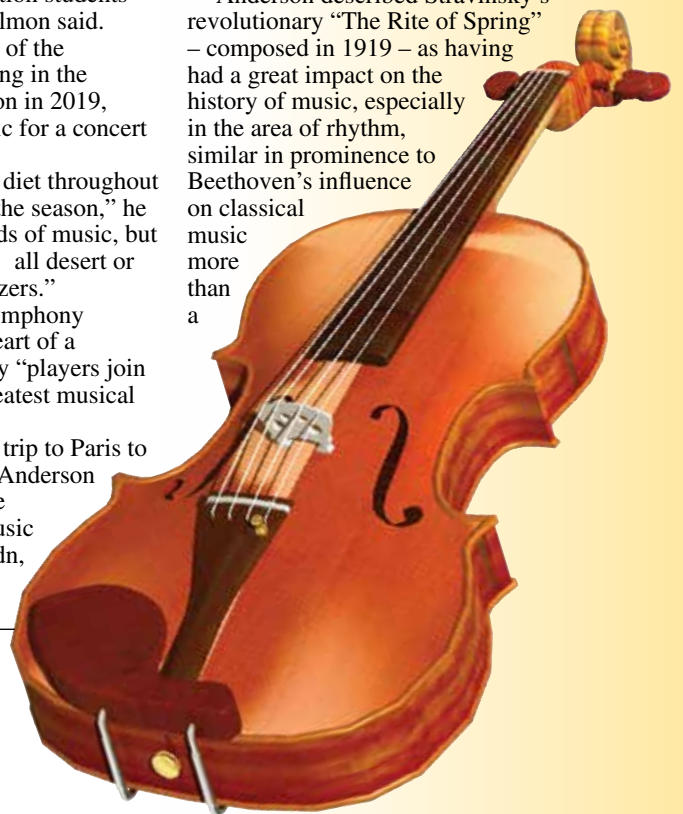
For Anderson, a major symphony or concerto is often at the heart of a memorable concert, and why "players join the orchestra, to play the greatest musical works."

Unlike the need to take a trip to Paris to see the original Mona Lisa, Anderson said, "You can hear the huge monuments of orchestral music -- Brahms, Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart – right here."

His recommended musical diet recipe also calls for shorter and often well-known pieces like "Hoe Down" from Copland's "Rodeo" or "Finlandia" by Sibelius.

He said an important part of what all orchestras should do "is perform music that is being composed now, because all of the music we play now was at some point new music."

Anderson described Stravinsky's revolutionary "The Rite of Spring" – composed in 1919 – as having had a great impact on the history of music, especially in the area of rhythm, similar in prominence to Beethoven's influence on classical music more than a



left: Keri Kelley performs as part of the Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra's Fellows program, a partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Music Department that offers undergrad and graduate students a scholarship to play in the orchestra for a season. **right:** The Lake Geneva Middle School Fiddle Club performs at a family concert that also featured the LGSO.

TOM GANSER *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

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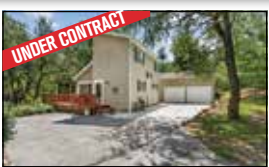
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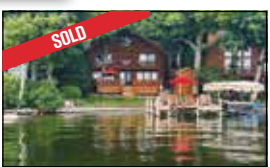
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W1306 South Shore Dr, Palmyra - Newly constructed home on pristine Blue Spring Lake. 1.17 acres. 170 feet of level lake frontage. 3BR, 2.5 BA & lookout basement w/9ft ceilings. Chef's kitchen w/ SS appliances, custom cabinets, quartz countertops, coffee bar & beverage fridge. 2 stone fireplaces, living room built-ins & family room w/level bar. Upstairs Bonus room. Master suite w/hi-top closets. Master BA w/large shower, standalone tub & heated floors. 2 large bds w/ walk in closets and J&J bath. Laundry area w/storage lockers & dog wash. Large, covered porch boasts gas heaters & sound system. 2BR guest house w/attached dream garage. 12 ft high doors, upper storage & heated floors. Incredible boat house w/forese through access to lake. Professionally landscaped w/2 outdoor fire pits. \$2,795,700



N7474 Mariner Hills, Elkhorn - Lake or pool day? You can do both with this home. Steps to the assoc. pool and walking distance to assoc. lakefront park on Lauderdale Lakes. Rustic charm with modern touches this 2 BD, 1 bath home located in Mariner Hills. Updated kitchen and bath, natural stone frplc, vaulted ceilings, screened porch, wrap around deck and Irq. fenced back yard. Finished 2.5 insulated detached garage. The association owns and maintains a private 6-slip member only pier. Close to boat launch and minutes to Kettle Moraine Trail head. \$329,700



W5187 Lauderdale Dr., Elkhorn - 6 BR, 5 bath log sided, two story home on 60' of level Middle Lake frontage with extended lake views. Updated kitchen with granite tops, SS appliances, large island and dinette lakeside with access to deck. Living room with stone frplc and wet bar. Master bdrm. en-suite with slider to deck. 2nd bdrm offering slider to deck. Upper level is a 25x25 bdrm. or family room with full bath. Two car detached garage with finished 22x23 guest suite. Whole house generator. Minutes to Kettle Moraine. \$2,225,000



N7729 Laura Lane, Elkhorn - Lakefront estate on 142' of sand frontage on Lauderdale "Gold Coast" situated on manicured 1.28 wooded acres completely fenced and gated. 4 bedroom, 4.5 bath main house with open foyer to eat-in kitchen and lakeside dining room. Living room with fireplace and slider to screened porch with vaulted ceiling. Master en-suite lakeside with private deck. \$3,499,700



N8115 Pleasant Lake Rd., East Troy - Spectacular lakefront home on Pleasant Lake offering sand beach leading to crystal clear swimming and endless sunsets. This private 5 bedroom, 4.5 bath home boasts 6,300 sq. ft. of luxury living. Vaulted ceilings and wood flooring throughout the main level. Master en-suite with private office. Eat in kitchen with large island/bar and access to brick patio. Soaring living room with water views and frplc. Lower level family room with walkout. \$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



Lt. 0 West Shore Dr., Elkhorn - Green Lake vacant lakefront 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 additional 50x100 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



N7461 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 Pella windows installed last year. Access to Pleasant Lake Beach & short drive to Kettle Moraine Trail system. \$319,700

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century earlier. Accordingly, he described “The Rite of Spring” as “the Beethoven 9th Symphony of the 20th Century.”

Variety of venues

LGSO musicians showcase their skills in larger churches, high schools and the Young Auditorium at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater for regular concerts; small churches for the chamber music series; elementary and middle schools for school day concerts; parks for summer concerts; and the Ferro Pavilion at the George Williams College of Aurora University in Lake Geneva for “Music by the Lake.”

The orchestra’s musicians offer three chamber music concerts each season on Sunday afternoons that feature small ensembles from trios to octets.

Laurie Cornue is a violinist who frequently performs in the chamber music concerts.

“The chamber music series is valuable to the community because the musicians bring their love of music-making on a smaller scale to a more intimate setting, usually in the acoustically rich sanctuaries of our local churches. In addition to nourishing our own souls, we are hopefully able to touch our audience members through incredible music. It is our desire that people can sense our love of making-music together and that we bring that joy to those listening,” Cornue said.

Anne McCord, cello player, said it’s like having a conversation with friends.

“Everyone has something to say and an important role to play. In small group playing, there is no conductor, so it is up to the members to decide on elements such as tempo and dynamics, and which part is the most important at any given moment. Playing with other musicians who ‘feel’ the music the same way is truly a joy,” McCord said.

The annual LGSO Gala is the orchestra’s major fundraiser for the year. It’s scheduled near Valentine’s Day with the next set for Feb. 10, 2024, at 6 p.m., at the Abbey Resort in Lake Geneva.

“The wonderful thing about the Gala is it’s the best way for the orchestra and audience to mingle and get to know each other. The orchestra isn’t on a stage and that bridges the distance that is usually between us. Orchestra members and the audience are side by side as they enjoy an elegant dinner and cocktails, a silent and a live auction, a paddle raise for donations, and dancing to the LGSO Swing Band,” said piccolo player and Gala Chair Sue Childress.

The Swing Band spotlights musicians in a fun way.

Percussionist Brad Boyle said it’s different than playing in the orchestra.

“Orchestra music is very strict. Every note is written out not only when to play but how to be played. Swing music has a completely different feel. Not all the parts



above: David Anderson is in his 14th year serving as director of the Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra, shown in a Music by the Lake concert at George Williams College in Williams Bay.

top: The LGSO presents a summer concert at the Phoenix Park Bandshell in Delavan.

TOM GANSER *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

are written out, which leaves opportunity for interpretation. That said, it’s just as important for the players to be listening to each other to keep the music tight. The biggest difference is probably the dancing. People dance to swing music, so maybe our greatest responsibility is to keep them on the dance floor,” Boyle said.

The summer concerts in the parks and the Music by the Lake concert often include music from popular movies and television series, as well as classical selections the audience may recognize from commercials or cartoons.

LGSO musicians are all volunteers. For Anderson, providing them with a variety offers them the opportunity to develop their musicianship.

There are two ways for an orchestra to get better, he said. One way is by new players coming into the orchestra, the second is for the current musicians to improve over time – both of which are happening in the LGSO.

“If you’re playing with people who are experienced, it’s going to raise your level of playing,” Anderson said.

Partners in harmony

As a community-based symphony orchestra, the LGSO continues to build a solid history of partnerships.

Christopher Martin, former principal trumpet of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, joined the LGSO in a performance of the Trumpet Concerto by

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Arutunian. Frank Almond, former concert master for the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, performed the Violin Concerto by Bruch.

In 2019, the LGSO performed Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in Young Auditorium on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater for the first time.

The all-volunteer LGSO orchestra of 75 musicians from southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois teamed up with a chorus of 150 students from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, the University of Northern Illinois, and the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.

In 2022, the LGSO teamed up with the Dance Factory of Delavan and Whitewater Lincoln Elementary School's 5th grade chorus to perform "The Nutcracker" by Tchaikovsky.

Tina Hansen, Director of the Dance Factory, said it showcased the youngest cast ever.

Christine Hayes, Lincoln Choir Director, said any time you can connect music with another art form, there is a new level of artistic experience.

"The Nutcracker" is an eternal classic, studied yearly by elementary children, focusing on the instruments and music used to portray various cultural dances and the endearing tale of Clara's beautiful dream about her Nutcracker Soldier coming to life and traveling to the land of sweets. This production was the opportunity for our singers is a once in a lifetime behind the scenes event," Hayes said.

On March 16, 2024, the LGSO will join musical forces for a first time with the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Symphony Orchestra in a performance of Holst's most famous masterpiece, "The Planets," and "Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis" by Vaughan Williams.

More to the music

Supporting the musical education of audiences and musicians has always been a lasting trademark of the LGSO. To begin with, students through college receive free tickets to all regular LGSO performances.

During nearly every concert, Anderson and the orchestra spend a few minutes introducing the audience to a larger work.

For Saint-Saëns's Symphony No. 3 – the "Organ Symphony," Anderson helped his audience to understand Saint-Saëns's use of "thematic transformation," a compositional technique the composer learned from his teacher, Franz Liszt.

Anderson explained that "the original theme comes back but in a totally different mood." To show this, the orchestra played the first version, which Anderson described as "restless, uneasy, constant churn, perpetual motion" followed by a second version "in totally different guise, like the sunshine is coming out."

The annual school day tours are funded in part by the Walworth County Arts



The all-volunteer Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra boasts approximately 75 members and performs at various venues throughout the area.

TOM GANSEY *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

Council and are often the first time many students hear a live symphony orchestra. They also learn how a symphony orchestra is constructed with sections (strings, winds, percussion) and how they all work together. Students are even able to walk through the orchestra while a selection is being played.

LGSO percussionist Stacey Zwirlein arranged a school day tour at Walworth Middle School. She said it's an opportunity for students to get an up-close performance experience with the musicians.

"The students get to be curious, imaginative, and ask questions to learn more about the ensemble. Seeing the musicians in this way shows the students that they, too, can achieve music performance at a high level. This type of inspiration is priceless for young musicians and school music programs," Zwirlein said.

Following a concert at Lake Geneva Middle School, members of the LGSO showed children how the instruments are played, and in some cases, the students were able to try them out.

Supporting students

The LGSO Private Lesson Scholarship Program provides financial support for instrumental music students in public schools to take private lessons.

While more and better music is a great end itself, that's just the beginning. Members of the LGSO encourage them to be involved in music and be musicians, but also to have all the advantages music study provides.

The program is not based on financial need and is presently open to string students in Lake Geneva public schools though the LGSO hopes to expand the program.

Through a partnership with the Rotary Club of Lake Geneva, the orchestra hosts

an annual competition for outstanding vocalists and instrumentalists in high schools located within 35 miles of Lake Geneva. The winner is invited to perform with the LGSO the following season and receives a \$750 prize supported by the Rotary Club of Lake Geneva's Neal & Dotsy Heffernan Art Scholarship Fund.

That's not all the LGSO does to support students.

For example, before the LGSO's regular and summer concerts, members of the Delavan-Darien High School String Choir perform under the direction of Jennifer Bayerl. This is a select group from the 70-plus member DDHS Orchestra that performs for community events and studies advanced level music.

Recently, high school string students – sharing music stands with LGSO string players – were offered the opportunity to join in a performance of the "Egmont" overture by Beethoven.

"I think this was an extremely valuable experience for a few reasons. First, one of the most important things that we as music educators don't do a great job of teaching our students is how to continue playing music after they leave our program. I think it's very important for students to see that community orchestras exist and are thriving, so they know they have a future in music if they want it. Second, I really wanted as many of my students to participate in this event because one of the best ways to improve as a player is to play with better players," Michael Riggs, Director of Orchestras at Antioch Community High School and an LGSO bass player, said.

"It was a nice experience. I got to see what it would be like if I joined an orchestra in the future. It gave me a feeling

of how it would be,” said Debora Hernandez, a violinist who participated.

Bassist Hudson Swan said it was nice to be in an orchestra with people who really knew what they were doing.

“Because if you had any questions, you had 20 people right next to you who could give you answers. I’m in the bass section, and it was pretty cool to be able to play with your director,” Swan said.

Fellows program

The LGSO Fellows Program is a partnership with the UW-Whitewater Music Department in which undergrad and graduate string students can receive a scholarship provided from the LGSO to play with them for the season.

“I think the LGSO Fellows program is a great opportunity for college students to participate in a ‘professional’ orchestra outside of school, while also still being in a supportive learning environment, as well as making connections with other musicians in the area,” violinist Keri Kelly, a music performance major, said.

“Being able to work with so many different musicians and play a vast repertoire can really help students broaden their musical horizons and gain valuable experience for their future careers. My favorite LGSO experience has been playing the Beethoven triple concerto with my teachers from UW-W, including my violin teacher Leanne Kelso, who is an amazing role model and musician,” she added.

Emma Dutcher, a music education major/theatre minor said her

takeaways included “learning to be a good ensemble member, to play higher level music, making connections with peers outside of an educational setting, practicing music outside of rehearsals as efficiently as possible under a short time restraint, checking many iconic pieces of symphonic music off my bucket list, and bonding and becoming even closer” with other Fellows.

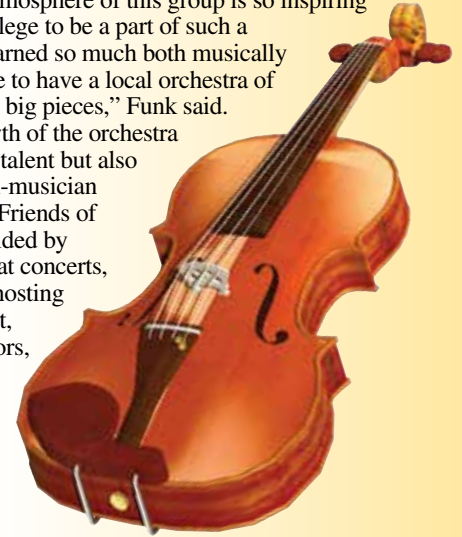
“It has been a priceless and valuable experience,” Dutcher added.

Fellow violinist Eric Funk – now serving as interim concert master for LGSO – said it’s an amazing opportunity.

“It has just been an absolute pleasure to work with these amazing musicians and people. The atmosphere of this group is so inspiring and warm. It’s truly is a privilege to be a part of such a phenomenal group. I have learned so much both musically and just in life. It’s really nice to have a local orchestra of this caliber willing to take on big pieces,” Funk said.

The prominence and growth of the orchestra not only depends on musical talent but also on the work of dedicated non-musician volunteers who make up the Friends of the LGSO. The support provided by this group includes ushering at concerts, sorting music, planning and hosting events, financial development, mailings, approaching sponsors, community outreach and integration and publicity.

For more information about the Lake Geneva Symphony Orchestra, visit lakegenevaorchestra.com.



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His imagination lives on



Gary Gygax honored for his impact on people, the greater community

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

On a hot, humid and sunny day late this summer, friends, family members, and city officials gathered at the west end of Elm Park, commonly known as Library Park, in Lake Geneva. They were there to honor E. Gary Gygax, co-creator of the famed Dungeons & Dragons game, who was also a New York Times Best Selling Author as well as the founder of Gen Con and the company TSR (Tactical Studies Rules) with a park bench.

Gail Gygax, Gary's widow, shared her joy.

"The place for the bench was the perfect location for Gary used to come and sit in this corner of the park and read, think and enjoy the sight of Stone Manor in the distance. We hope to have a statue erected in this area and hopefully change the name of this section of the park to Gary Gygax Park in his memory," she said.

The ceremony began with Paul Stormberg, president of the Gygax Memorial Fund, welcoming all to Gary Gygax Day. He reminded those present that July 27, 1938, was Gygax's birthday, so this July 27 was the perfect time for the city to recognize it as Gary Gygax Day.

Other speakers included Stephanie Klett of Visit Lake Geneva and Mayor Charlene Klein, the latter of whom

top: The plaque on the bench dedicated to Gary Gygax honors his creation of the Dungeons & Dragons game.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

left: On the left, Stefanie Klett of Visit Lake Geneva, and City of Lake Geneva Mayor Charlene Klein take a seat on the bench dedicated to Gary Gygax this summer.

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presented Gail with a large silver sword. Gail, in turn, presented the sword to their son, Alexander, who cut the ribbon dedicating the bench to his father,

Two weeks later, on Aug. 10, many of the same members of the group who had gathered for the bench dedication could be found just east of the bench at the Lake Geneva Public Library for the dedication of the Appendix N Alcove where the Throne of Reading was dedicated. This alcove contains the books that Gygax loved – fantasy books, including some that he had written.

The large throne chair where visitors can sit, read and fantasize will be a favorite corner in this library for those who enjoy these special books. The chair was donated by the Gygax Memorial Fund and is similar to the chair that Gary sat in while allowing his imagination to run wild as he created fantasy books and games during the time he lived in an apartment at Stone Manor.

At this gathering, Stormberg again welcomed visitors and the ribbon cutting sword was passed to Ernie Gygax, Gary Gygax's oldest child. Visitors enjoyed sharing stories of their memories of Gary.

The Gary Gygax Memorial Fund was created in 2010 by Gail to further cherish the memory of her husband and his special contributions to the world of gaming. They also recognized the importance of his hometown of Lake Geneva as a place that fostered his creativity and became the center of gaming.

In 1968, the first Gen Con was held at Horticultural Hall, with about 100 participants. The entry fees barely covered the rental fee.

The popularity of the gaming event continued to grow over the years, outgrowing Horticultural Hall and moving to the Playboy Club, which is now Grand Geneva Resort. From there it moved to Milwaukee and in 2003, Indianapolis became its home to accommodate the increasing number of participants, now numbered at about 60,000 each year.

So, it's not surprising that the next stop to be dedicated would be Horticultural Hall. This dedication – on what was one of the hottest days of the summer – was of a brick in the entryway commemorating Horticultural Hall as the place that the first Gen Con was held.

Fortunately, the dedication event was able to be held indoors with only the actual ribbon cutting taking place in the massive heat. Stormberg made the introductions and shared the history of Gen Con.

Mike Carr was chosen to cut the ribbon. Carr, as a teenager from Minnesota, attended the first Gen Con and has continued to attend every one since then. At Gary Gygax's invitation, Carr also worked at TSR from 1976-1983 as an author, editor, game designer and vice president of production.

The honors continue

Some additional events related to Gygax were held this fall in Lake Geneva including



Alex Gygax, Gary's youngest son, sits in the throne chair at the Lake Geneva Public Library. It's similar to one that Gary Gygax used to sit in while coming up with his ideas for fantasy games and books.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

a walking tour, which began in front of 330 Center St. in late September. This was Gary Gygax's home and the place where Dungeons and Dragons was created. The home is currently owned by Yolanda Frontany who embraces the history of it.

The Fantasy Crossroads of the World Celebration was held Oct. 13-15, again celebrating Lake Geneva as the birthplace of Dungeons and Dragons. The entire downtown came to life with a Renaissance Faire in Library Park featuring historical as well as gaming activities at the various Gygax sites including the library, Horticultural Hall and 330 Center St.

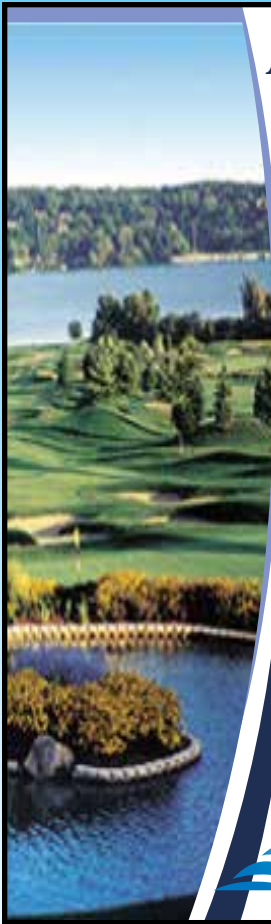
A visit to the Lake Geneva Museum gave guests an advance peek at the new Gygax exhibit with its beautiful game table and the original stained-glass window – on loan from Gail – that hung in the window of Gary's gaming store.

The Gygax Memorial Fund continues to work on the placement of a Gygax Memorial Statue, which will be of Gary sitting in a throne chair at a gaming table looking as though he is ready to play or offer advice to players. The plan, if the city approves, would be to place the statue in the end of Library Park, near the Gygax bench. Permission from the city has been requested but is still under consideration. Along with that request is one to rename that portion of the park in honor of Gygax.

According to Stormberg, funds are still being raised for the statue and donations are appreciated. For more information or to donate, visit gygaxmemorialfund.com.

A special exhibit

Stormberg is a gaming historian and owner of The Collector's Trove, an online auction house as well as serving as president of the



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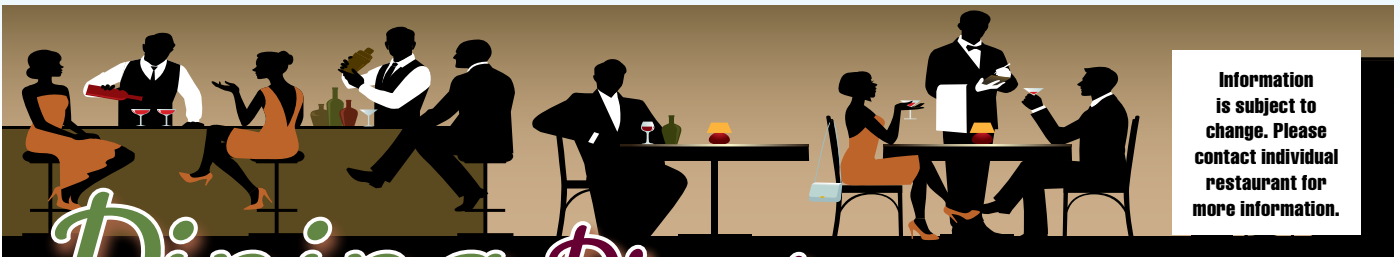
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Gygax Memorial Fund.

It's not surprising that these two gaming specialists, Stormberg and Carr, have teamed up with Geneva Lakes Museum to create an impressive, 600 square foot display room that will highlight the story of Gygax, the game Dungeons and Dragons, and TSR.

Entering the exhibit – which has been named The Wizard of Lake Geneva – one has the feeling of entering a dungeon in a medieval castle. But it's not just a dungeon; it's a special space that captures the spirit of Gary Gygax and his imagination.

From pictures on the walls to displays of games created by Gygax – and his company, TSR, which made its home in Lake Geneva from 1973-1997 – the story of these games of imagination will be told.

“These games were unique role-playing games with no winners or losers,” said Ed Schwinn, president of the Board of Directors of Geneva Lake Museum.

The display room has three back-lit, stained-glass pieces that catch your eye immediately upon entering. Two of the pieces are newly designed by Jeff Easley, a former TSR artist and fabricated by stained glass master craftsman, Ed Gilbertson, of Lake Geneva. They are fantasy action scenes created from vibrant colored glass with one featuring a gigantic dragon while the other depicts a possible dungeon master who appears to be Gary Gygax.

The third back-lit, stained-glass piece is the historic Dungeon Hobby Shop Sign that hung in the window of TSR's downtown retail store. It's another piece loaned to the exhibit by Gail Gygax.

In the center of the room is a beautiful, deluxe, custom-made wooden playing table donated by Hammered Games Tables of River Falls. It's likely a table that will be the envy of every game player who visits the display at the museum.

From those who know a lot about Gary Gygax and his creations, to people who are just learning of the man who brought fantasy role playing games to life, viewing the display is sure to be a learning experience. Enter the dungeon and become a part of the fantasy world that Gary Gygax created.

“After 50 years, we are now beginning to recognize the importance of role-playing games as they continue to become more popular over the years,” Schwinn said.

The Wizard of Lake Geneva display will tell the story of Gary Gygax's ability to create unique games of fantasy in the little lakeside community of Lake Geneva, fueled only by his imagination.

This exhibit required the work of many volunteers and donations of both materials and time. The museum is a 501(c)(3) institution and welcomes donations to support the establishment and maintenance of this exhibit.

The display has had a soft opening and has thus far been well-received by visitors. It can be viewed with an entrance fee to the Geneva Lake Museum, 255 Mill St., Lake Geneva. Fall hours are Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The museum is closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The entry fee is \$12 for adults 18-60 years old, \$10 for seniors, \$5 for students 13-18 years old, and free to children 12 and younger, as well as active military.

Gail said her late husband continues to make an impact.

“Gary has given millions of men and women the gift of friendship all through the guise of game,” Gail said. “Now 50 years later, they all continue to come together.”



above: The dungeon room at the Geneva Lake Museum is dedicated to the work of E. Gary Gygax. **at left:** This stained-glass piece was in the window of Gygax's retail store. It's on loan to the museum by Gail Gygax. **below:** From the left: Janet Ewing and Ed Schwinn, of the Geneva Lake Museum, sit with Gail Gygax, widow of the late Gary Gygax at the dedication in his honor.

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