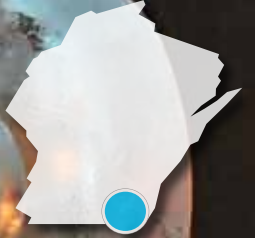


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Vol. 36 No. 2

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## ON THE COVER!

### Winterfest!

A young child is in awe at one of the displays during last year's Ice Sculpture Walk, which will again be held in downtown Lake Geneva as part of Winterfest. The annual event kicked off Jan. 31 with the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Championship and will run through Feb. 4.

PHOTO COURTESY VISIT LAKE GENEVA  
*Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



# IT'S COMIN' UP FEBRUARY EVENTS

**Jan. 31-Feb. 4 Winterfest** – Visit Lake Geneva and the City of Lake Geneva will present the 29th Annual Winterfest, featuring the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Championship. The event welcomes the most talented and award-winning sculpting teams from across the country. Witness 15 state-champion teams at work during an epic three-day competition where their artistry is put to the test in creating remarkable, larger-than-life snow sculptures.

The snow sculpting competition began Jan. 31 and continues through 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 4 at Riviera Plaza and Flat Iron Park along the beautiful shore of Geneva Lake. It's free to attend and view, and sculptures will remain on display through Sunday (and until they melt).

Also enjoy an array of more wintery fun throughout the Lake Geneva region during Winterfest. Don't miss the Downtown Ice Sculpture Walk, bonfires on the beach, live entertainment, and much more for the whole family.

Read more beginning on page 5. For more information, go to [visitlakegeneva.com](http://visitlakegeneva.com).

**Feb. 3 In The Flesh (A tribute to Pink Floyd) & Laser Show** – 8 p.m. at Geneva Stage, 244 Broad St., Lake Geneva.

Tickets range from \$40 to \$55. For more information about this show and others, or to purchase tickets, visit [genevastage.com](http://genevastage.com).

Geneva Stage is a fully restored, live entertainment venue located in the heart of downtown Lake Geneva. The historic main auditorium and balcony have a capacity of over 300 with leather rocker seats, near-stage standing and dancing area, and special VIP spaces.

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**Feb. 7, 14, 21 and 28 Local History Series** – Go on a journey through time in Lake Geneva with the Local History Series, presented by Badger Community Education.

- Feb. 7 (Room 813) – 1942, The Year That Tried Our Souls, presented by Dave Desimone
- Feb. 14 (Room 711) – Remarkable Women II-Connections, presented by Chris Brookes
- Feb. 21 (Recital Hall) – Let's Celebrate Walworth County's Historic Places, presented by Michael Rehberg
- Feb. 28 (Recital Hall) – The Prairie Project-One Year in the Linn Township Nature Preserve, presented by Dave Desimone

The cost is \$5 per class. Classes are held from 6 to 7 p.m. (in the rooms listed above after each date) at Badger High School, 208 E.

South St., Lake Geneva.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [lakegenevaschools.revtrak.net](http://lakegenevaschools.revtrak.net), choose Badger Community Education, followed by Winter and Local History Series on subsequent pages.

**High Tea Saturdays** – Looking for an elegant and sophisticated way to spend your afternoon? The Baker House, 327 Wrigley Dr., Lake Geneva hosts High Tea Saturdays from 1 to 3 p.m. (last seating at 1:45 p.m.)

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Cost is \$42 per person plus tax and gratuity. Reservations are mandatory. For more information, call 262-248-4700 or visit [bakerhouse1885.com](http://bakerhouse1885.com).

## Ongoing events

**Beginner Pickleball Clinics** – Lake Geneva Tennis Club, 630 Veterans Pkwy., Lake Geneva. Offered every other Tuesday, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. 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](mailto:john@lakegenevatennis.com).

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

*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

IS A PUBLICATION OF



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Winterfest

# Snow sculpting competition, bonfires, ice sculptures highlight annual event

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**  
CORRESPONDENT

**T**o many, Lake Geneva is a summer resort town, a place to enjoy the beauty of the lake and take in summertime activities such as swimming, boating, biking, hiking, and shopping. But the city is a happening place year-round, including unique winter events and activities that can make the cold, snowy days of late January and early February an ideal time for people of all ages to head outdoors.

The annual Winterfest event is the highlight of activities in the Lake Geneva area during the colder weather. For the past 29 years, it's featured the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Championship, where champions from around the country make their way to Lake Geneva to compete against each other in creating beautiful, detailed snow sculptures.

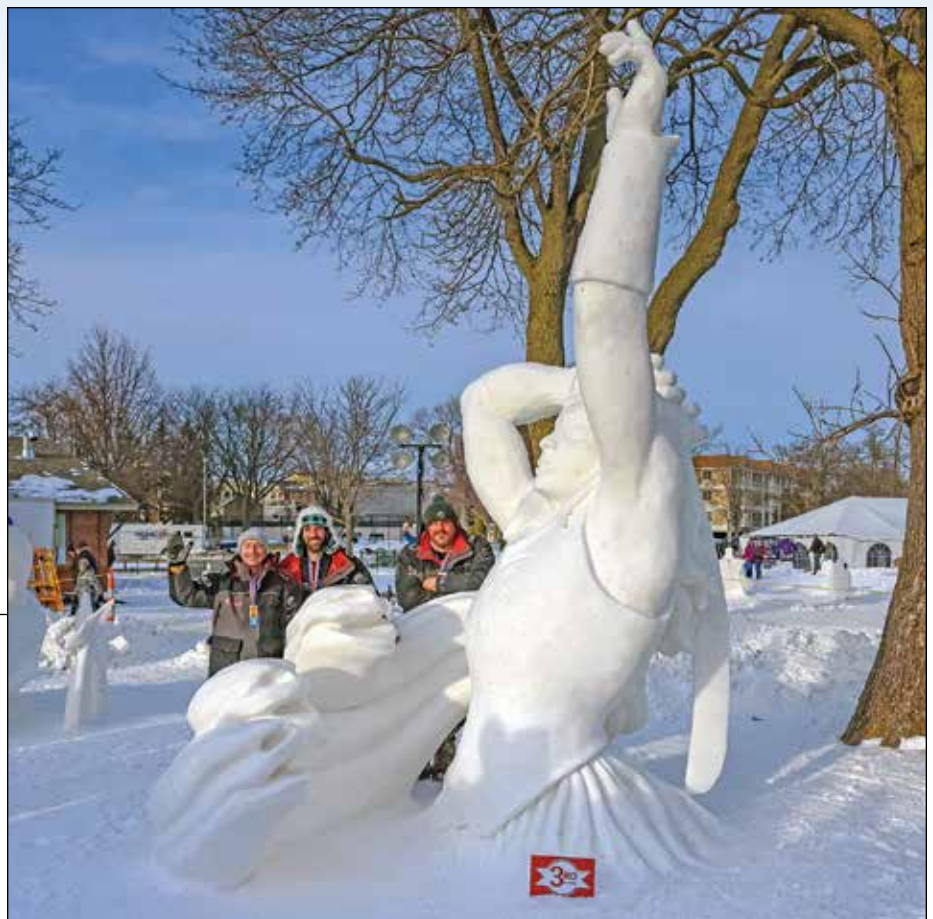
This year, Winterfest and the snow sculpturing competition kicked off Jan. 31 and runs through Feb. 4. The sculptures can be seen in front of the Riviera and in Flat Iron Park.

Visitors can wander and watch as the teams turn large blocks of snow into creative sculptures, working on them during the day, and often, through the night.

---

**opposite:** The 2023 winner of the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Competition was the North Dakota Team with their piece titled "The Nemean Lion." They also won first place in the People's Choice event, which is voted on by visitors. **top:** Last year's second place snow sculpture, "You are not Alone" was created by the team from Alaska. **at right:** The Wisconsin team earned third place in the juried snow sculpting competition in 2023. Their sculpture was named "Love Hurts."

PHOTOS COURTESY VISIT LAKE GENEVA *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



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“Although in some years there is no snow or very little that has accumulated at the time of Winterfest, there is never a problem with holding the snow sculpting competition. We are fortunate to have the support of Grand Geneva Resort, who produce man-made snow for their ski runs. They produce enough snow for the event and deliver it to the Riviera for use by the sculptors,” said Deanna Goodwin, Vice President of Marketing, Communication, and Development for VISIT Lake Geneva.

“The City of Lake Geneva works with Grand Geneva and helps transport the snow to Riviera Plaza by Wednesday when the competition starts,” she added.

According to Goodwin, while the snow provided by Grand Geneva is needed for the sculptures, it’s nice to have some natural snow covering the ground, as it gives the area “a cleaner palate to display and enjoy the sculptures.”

### The competition

The sculptures, she explained, which are up to nine feet tall, are judged by a panel of judges comprised from the teams competing in the event.

“Then there is an additional judging called the People’s Choice where visitors vote for their favorite displays,” Goodwin said. “They vote by ballot from 10 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 3 through 3 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 4. Ballots are deposited at the Riviera or may be sent to ballot@riviera.com. Emailing ballots began during COVID when many viewed the displays online rather than gathering. It also allowed visitors in their (the sculptors’) home states the ability to vote.”

The snow sculpting begins on Wednesday, Jan. 31 and the teams can work on them until 1 p.m. Saturday. At that time, it is “all tools down” and judging commences. At 3 p.m., the awards ceremony is held inside the Riviera.

The teams of snow sculptors come from several states.

Last year’s championship team was from North Dakota, and they not only won the first place prize in the juried competition but also placed first in People’s Choice. The North Dakota team will return this year and attempt to earn the championship two years in succession.

Not surprisingly, the second-place team in 2023 was from the snowy state of Alaska, and they too will be returning to compete. The home state team from Wisconsin, who finished in third place last year, will also again be back to compete.

In all there will be 15 teams competing, including one from Maine called the “Chickadees” – an all-female sculpture team who will create a sculpture paying



homage to Artemis, the goddess of the moon and the first woman on the moon.

The Riviera will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 3 and 4 for visitors to stop in, warm up and enjoy some concessions. There will be several

bands playing live music throughout the day for the enjoyment of the visitors.

The snow sculpting teams also team up with local children on some special projects while sharing their passion.

“On Thursday and Friday, we invite two

**above:** Visitors to Winterfest enjoy a stroll down Main Street as they take in the Ice Sculpture Walk. This will be the 5th year it's been part of the Winterfest event. **top:** The snow sculpting teams often work late into the night and, in the event of extremely cold temperatures, will work in shifts.

PHOTOS COURTESY VISIT LAKE GENEVA *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

local schools to participate in the children's sculpting program in Flat Iron Park. Here the children work with sculptors to create their own special snow sculpture displays," Goodwin said.

The snow sculptures will remain on display until the warmth of the sun melts them. They are usually in good shape through the Monday after the competition, so many visitors stop by on the weekend so they can see the wintry creations once they've been completed by the snow sculpting artists.

### Take a winter walk

For the last five years, in addition to the snow sculpting competition, there has been another featured display throughout downtown Lake Geneva during Winterfest.

"On either side of Main Street there are ice sculptures in front of various businesses. There are 40-plus sculptures commissioned

and created by Art Below Zero that will be on display," Goodwin said. "The businesses along Main Street – along with the Lake Geneva Tourism Council – help with the cost of these sculptures."

The ice sculptures have a very different look than the snow sculptures as snow and ice have different textures. The ice sculptures, though, will melt from the sun shining on them, and those on the side of the street where the sun hits longer tend to melt first.

The ice sculptures will be in place along Main Street beginning Thursday, Feb. 1. The distance between the sculptures is easily walkable, and wandering throughout the downtown is doable even in the event the temperatures are cool as there are plenty of places to stop and warm up.

For more about the Ice Sculpture Walk, see the related sidebar with locations coinciding with the accompanying map.

The map can also be accessed online at [visitlakegeneva.com](http://visitlakegeneva.com).

Bonfires will be held on the beach on Friday and Saturday from 4 to 8 p.m. Gather around one of the bonfires and warm up with hot cocoa while making s'mores over the warm fire. As a bonus, fire arts performances will be happening as well.

### Make a day of it

Many restaurants and pubs in Lake Geneva have specials in conjunction with Winterfest, but even those that don't will offer a place for visitors to warm up and get some nourishment before heading back out to see more ice sculptures or head down to the beach for a bonfire.

Winterfest is a free event as there is no charge to enjoy the snow or ice sculptures. For those visiting from out of town, there are many hotels in the Lake Geneva area, including some in the downtown area

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adjacent to Flat Iron Park.

For those spending a day or more in Lake Geneva for Winterfest, there are a variety of other activities offered. Visit the Geneva Lake Museum, enjoy some fun competition at Lake Geneva Axe Throwing or Lake Geneva Billiards, or book a group at the Lake Geneva Clue Room and work together to see if you can find a way to escape.

Those looking to spend more time outdoors can stop by Clear Water Outdoors and rent snowshoes for a winter walk in local parks, or visit Lake Geneva Zip Lines. On Saturday, Feb. 3, Grand Geneva will be hosting its Winter Carnival and has snow tubing as well as 20 ski runs on the Mountain Top.

Whether it's for a quick walk around Riviera Plaza to see the snow sculpting competition or following that up with a meal in a warm restaurant, the Ice Sculpture Walk and s'mores by a lakefront bonfire, Winterfest is family friendly and a great way to get outdoors and take in some fresh, wintry air.

For more information, stop by Visit Lake Geneva, 201 Wrigley Dr., call 262-248-4416 or visit their website at [visitlakegeneva.com](http://visitlakegeneva.com). This time of year, the office is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., every day other than holidays.



This ice sculpture of a woman in a dress holding a fan over her head, shows the detail in these creations.

PHOTO COURTESY VISIT LAKE GENEVA Spirit of Geneva Lakes



## Ice Sculpture Walk



Downtown Lake Geneva's annual Ice Sculpture Walk is set for Feb. 1-4, and will feature numerous artfully crafted, Insta-worthy ice sculptures near entrances to businesses throughout the downtown district.

The ice sculptures will be installed Feb. 1 and remain on display as long as weather remains cold enough.

Share your favorite ice sculpture pics on Instagram and tag #winterfestlg.

The ice sculpture walk is sponsored by participating businesses and the City of Lake Geneva Tourism Council.

Below is a list of sculpture locations, coinciding with the numbers on the accompanying map.

1. Lake Life Market, 607 W. Main St.
2. The Bottle Shop, 617 W. Main St.
3. Maxwell Mansion, 685 W. Main St. (Starbucks)
4. Sabai Sabai, 306 Center St.
5. Board & Brush Lake Geneva, 262 Center St.
6. Brick & Mortar Home & Outdoor, 222 Center St.
7. Compass Real Estate - Donna Brongiel, 703 W. Main St.
8. Geneva Lakes Vacations, 703 Main St.
9. Pink Moon Bay, 717 W. Main St.
10. Evr Drygds, 719 W. Main St.
11. Marigold, 725 W. Main St.
12. Twelfth & Brown, 729 Main St.
13. Edie Boutique, 737 W. Main St.
14. JAYNE Boutique, 771 W. Main St.
15. The Olive Oil Shops, 221 Broad St.
16. Circa, 237 Broad St.
17. Lake Geneva Spice Company, 255 Broad St.
18. Thumbs Up, 260 Broad St.
19. Geneva Tap House, 252 Broad St.
20. Elemental Skin & Body Medical Aesthetics, 222 Broad St.
21. Egg Harbor Café, 827 Main St.
22. Paws for Treats, 851 W. Main St.
23. Brick & Mortar Home, 832 Geneva St.
24. Delaney Street Mercantile, 905 W. Main St.
25. The Candle Mercantile, 870 W. Main St.
26. Market of Lake Geneva, 830 W. Main St.
27. Queen Bee Artisan Market, 830 W. Main St.
28. Guac Star, 120 Broad St.
29. REMAX Plaza, 101 Broad St.
30. Hogs & Kisses, 149 Broad St.
31. Kilwins, 772 Main St.
32. Clearwater Outdoor, 744 W. Main St.
33. Sopra Bistro, 724 W. Main St.
34. Lake Geneva Harley-Davidson, 704 W. Main St.
35. Maggie's Den & Pen, 642 W. Main St.
36. Lake Geneva Balloon Co., 642 W. Main St. (Maggie's)
37. Lake City Social, 111 Center St.
38. Bella Vista Suites, 339 Wrigley Dr.
39. Baker House, 327 Wrigley Dr.
40. Harbor Shores on Lake Geneva, 300 Wrigley Dr.
41. VISIT Lake Geneva, 201 Wrigley Dr.
42. Lake Geneva Lodge, 201 Wrigley Dr. (Visitor Center)
43. Interstate Insurance Group, 811 Wrigley Dr. (Popeye's)
44. Oakfire, 831 Wrigley Dr.
45. Barrique Bistro & Wine Bar, 835 Wrigley Dr.

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# Evergreen

## OFFERS WEDDING OPTIONS GALORE

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**  
CORRESPONDENT

While a wedding can be one of the most exciting events to plan, it can also be one of the most difficult to organize. For many, where to begin – and when to start the planning process – are the first questions to be addressed.

Once that engagement ring is on, it's time for the couple to start planning their wedding. They may think they have ample time to begin the task, but if the big day will be within a year or a bit farther out, it's not too early to start. One of the first things to take



care of is finding a venue. Other priorities needing to be considered are shopping for a wedding dress and tux; choosing outfits for the wedding party; deciding on flowers, decor, food, and cake, and ordering wedding invitations as well as thank you cards. Many couples also send out “save the date” cards as soon as they have chosen a wedding date.

Then there is the photographer, photo booths if desired, and possibly videographers along with music for the ceremony – whether a band or a DJ. In other words, the to-do list is not for the faint-at-heart.

But let's go back to the first order of business, the venue – especially important because it needs to be booked well in advance. Evergreen Golf Club in Elkhorn is the wedding venue of choice for many couples.

“Most couples come in one to one and

a half years before the wedding to reserve their date and make plans for the wedding,” said Lexi Simmons, Wedding Coordinator for Evergreen Golf Club. “While we may have some dates available closer, if you have your heart set on a certain date, it is best to come in as early as possible to reserve that date.”

While some couples have an idea of where they wish to hold their wedding and reception, for others finding the place that's perfect for them is a challenging task. They need to begin by checking out area venues and deciding which ones would be appropriate for their wedding.

“Among the things the couple will want to share with the wedding coordinator when they make an appointment and come in for a visit are the size of the wedding, their approximate budget, and whether they plan to have the ceremony on site,” Simmons explained.

A couple kisses with the beauty of the room serving as an ideal backdrop.

PHOTO COURTESY EVERGREEN GOLF CLUB *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

## A view. Inside and out

In the past, most weddings were held in churches, however, the trend now is that the wedding is held at the same place as the reception. Many venues chosen for weddings offer an outdoor site for the ceremony but also have an alternate, indoor space that can be used in case the weather doesn't cooperate.

"Here at Evergreen, we have a beautifully landscaped hillside complete with a waterfall and our beautiful 27-hole golf course in the background," Simmons said. "If the weather is inclement or if you prefer an indoor ceremony, it will be held indoors in front of the floor-to-ceiling, Frank Lloyd Wright-style windows in the reception room with its 15-foot vaulted ceiling. The view is incredible, looking out on the hillside where the ceremony would have been held. In addition, no golfers will pass through this area while the ceremony is being held. They will be rerouted so as not to interfere with the wedding ceremony."

According to Simmons, each meeting with a prospective couple is different. Some come in and have an exact idea of just how they want their wedding to look. They have already figured out the size of the wedding, the style and colors for the bridal party, as well as the reception. They may have even decided the type of meal they hope to have served, either buffet style or plated, and what courses the meal will feature.

But some couples have no idea what they want the wedding to look like, and that's perfectly acceptable. During the initial meeting with Simmons, she said she's happy to share ideas and learn what options are available for them.

Over the last few years, wedding styles have varied, with some choosing to have a traditional, formal event with dinner and dancing, while others opt to make it a more casual event or follow a theme. Any of those options and more will work at Evergreen, as the couple can bring in whatever decorations will give the room the look that they desire.

There is ample time allowed for weddings to set up the decorations prior to the ceremony as well as time after the guests leave to remove them.

## Venue, menu upgrades

"This winter there have been changes made to add to the beauty of the reception space. A new floor has been laid in the bar room and the carpet in the reception room is being replaced to give the room a warmer and more up-to-date look," Simmons said. "The chef and I have also gone through the menu and have upgraded it, including adding some very elegant and tasty new items."

Choosing the menu and type of dinner service for the event is often dependent on the budget and the number of guests who will be attending the wedding.

The room at Evergreen where receptions will be held is spacious with a high vaulted ceiling, which adds to the grandeur of the space. The style is a Frank Lloyd Wright design with massive windows. The walls have cherry stained panel accents, and the bar is in an adjoining room. The dance floor is spacious and portable, allowing for flexibility in size and shape depending on the setup for the event. Just outside the room is a beautiful patio with a cover overlooking the



**at right:** With bunting on the ceiling, the reception room at Evergreen takes on a romantic look. **top:** The reception room at Evergreen can be changed to suit the wedding, from decorations and centerpieces to colors chosen as highlights.

PHOTOS COURTESY EVERGREEN GOLF CLUB *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

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golf course where guests may mingle.

Evergreen has a bridal room – a special place for the bride to relax, refresh her hair and makeup prior to the wedding ceremony and as needed during the evening. The room remains locked during the reception with only the bride and groom having access in the event they need a break.

### **Food, room options**

The banquet room at Evergreen will hold 220 guests for a buffet dinner or 250 for a plated dinner, according to Simmons.

“We offer a variety of packages with many choices in foods. Prices vary with options. When we meet, we will go through the options to help you decide on the perfect dinner choices and appetizers for your wedding – one that suits your appetite and falls within your budget,” she said.

Appetizers can be passed by a server – generally the hot items – or there are appetizer choices that are stationary for visitors to serve themselves. The stationary choices include vegetable or fruit trays, cheese and sausage, or shrimp cocktail, while passed items include rumaki, crab cakes, Hawaiian chicken skewers, Thai steak skewers, meatballs, or stuffed mushrooms.

While there are many choices to be made regarding the food, Simmons said those don’t need to be focused on immediately. However, the date does need to be reserved as soon as possible to secure the venue.

All food and beverages are purchased through Evergreen with the exception of the wedding cake, which can be brought in from the bakery of the couple’s choosing.

The room setup for the reception is round tables that each hold eight guests, and there are a few tables that can be used for the wedding party or some of their immediate family members. The head table can include whomever the couple choose, and some prefer a table just for the two of them.

The bar is in an adjacent room, which gives more space for gathering in the main reception area. There is one bartender for each 75 guests.

Evergreen offers a trio of wedding packages with varying prices depending on what’s included, but they range from \$73 to \$111 per person and include a four-hour standard bar. Each package includes a variety of included options,



which will be explained by Simmons during the initial meeting.

Many weddings now offer a late-night snack that can be purchased such as pizzas or a food bar featuring nachos, hot dogs, or sliders. Others might opt for a dessert table to be enjoyed later at night.

### **Support throughout**

After the initial meeting, Simmons will provide the couple with a packet that lists all of the items included in the package options, items that can be added, and a list of the preferred vendors such as the officiant, photographer, florist, disc jockey, and shuttle services, if needed.

As the wedding coordinator, Simmons’

goal is to be there for the couple, answer questions, and offer guidance as they decide what will make the day perfect for them. On the day of the big event, she will be there to see that everything goes as is planned.

Evergreen offers the elegance of a country club, including several scenic areas on the golf course that provide the perfect setting for photographs of the bride and groom, who are escorted to those areas via golf cart, along with their photographer.

Evergreen Golf Club is at N6246 U.S. Highway 12, Elkhorn. For more information, contact Lexi Simmons, Wedding and Events Coordinator at 262-741-6203 or [weddings@evergreengolf.com](mailto:weddings@evergreengolf.com).

**above:** Tables decorated with napkins that compliment wedding colors and gold handled flatware to match the gold backed chairs deliver an elegant look. **top:** The outdoor site for a wedding ceremony at Evergreen Golf Club features a hill, beautiful landscaping and a waterfall, providing a picturesque background.

PHOTOS COURTESY EVERGREEN GOLF CLUB *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



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PHOTO COURTESY BODI'S BAKE SHOP Spirit of Geneva Lakes

# The *icing* on top

Wedding desserts vary from traditional cakes to small, casual options

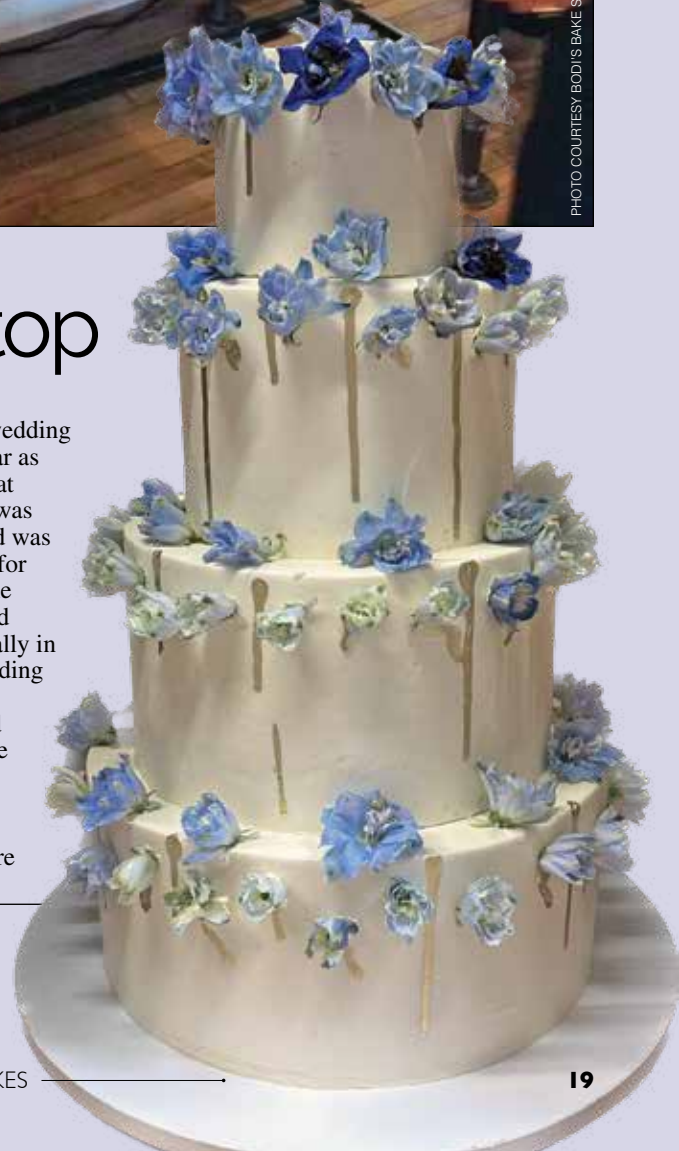
by **Sandra Landen Machaj**  
CORRESPONDENT

If there is a wedding in your future, choosing the wedding cake will be an important task on the list of things to do. Choosing the baker, flavor and style of cake, and the colors for frosting, flowers and other embellishments are all part of the

process.

The history of the wedding cake goes back as far as Ancient Rome. At that time, a cake of wheat or barley was broken over the bride's head and was thought to signify good fortune for the newly married couple. By the Middle Ages, wedding cakes had progressed to fruitcakes, especially in Europe. Through the years, wedding cakes have continued to evolve.

Since the 1900s in the United States, most wedding cakes were white cake, with decorative white frosting and several tiers. For a period of years, groom cakes were also popular and were



**top:** Not every wedding has a big cake, such as the couple who opted for donuts and pastries with a small cake for the ceremonial cutting, all created by Bodi's Bake Shop. **at right:** Pastries by Chad created this cake, featuring 4 tiers, smooth frosting, and blue flowers to compliment the colors the bridal party wore.

PHOTO COURTESY PASTRIES BY CHAD Spirit of Geneva Lakes

often whimsical in the shape of something important to the groom such as a car or truck. The tradition of the groom cakes did not last long, but the multi-tiered wedding cakes survived and were usually the centerpiece at the reception with a plastic couple on top.

The cutting of the cake was the last formal event to be performed by the couple before enjoying dancing and socializing with friends and family.

Today, choosing a wedding cake is much more complex. Many weddings bypass the traditional route and are choosing cupcakes, pastries, and yes, even donuts in its place.

There are many fine bakery chefs in the area who create cakes and other desserts for weddings, including Bodi's Bake Shop in Twin Lakes and Pastries by Chad in Elkhorn.

### Bodi's Bake Shop

Bodi's Bakery is well known for its delicious donuts and custom designed cakes for special occasions, such as birthdays, graduations, and especially weddings.

"I began baking special cakes, working out of a commercial kitchen in Andre's Steak House in Richmond, Illinois in 1997. I began baking a few cakes a week for special occasions, and as people enjoyed them, more were ordered each week, changing the baking from a small hobby to a full-time job," owner Jane Bodi

explained.

"When this space in Twin Lakes opened up, I was in need of more kitchen space, so I knew we had found a permanent home for the bakery," she added.

Wedding cakes became a specialty, and Bodi said it was not long before her cake creations were found at many of the local wedding venues.

"We create cakes for weddings at Lake Lawn in Delavan, Celebrations on Wells in Lake Geneva, Geneva National, Twin Lakes Country Club, and the Country Club at Nippersink," Bodi said. "We will deliver to most venues in the southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois area."

While Bodi began with cakes, when donuts became popular, she added those to her menu.

"We are known for our donuts, which are hand rolled the old-fashioned way," she said.

Bodi's Bake Shop is open 6 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, and welcomes early morning visitors who stop in to purchase donuts or a breakfast sandwich.

Throughout the day, customers stop by for sandwiches or soup to either eat in or take out, as well as a variety of cookies and pastries to enjoy.

Because of the work and time involved in creating one-of-a-kind wedding cakes, Bodi said there's a limit to how many she

can do any given week, so she recommends the couple call as soon as they have a firm wedding date and venue arranged.

"Creating a wedding cake takes several days. The first day the layers are baked, the second day the fillings are added and on the third day the cake is decorated. Then the cake has to be packed to safely move it to the reception venue," she explained.

If Bodi has the date they desire available, the next step is to make an appointment to talk about the cake and decide what the couple wants.

Gone are the days when all wedding cakes were white cake with white frosting, usually three to four tiers high, with a traditional bride and groom on the top. Some wedding cakes are still traditional, but not very often, according to Bodi.

"We make an appointment for them to come in at least three months in advance and share their dreams of the perfect cake. Today each cake is unique. I have seven flavors of cake, 10 different fillings, and three icings to create the cake of their dreams," Bodi. "We talk about their cake and have a tasting of some of the choices. I use a lot of butter cream icing, not fondant."

Flowers are one of the most popular cake decorations, often in the bride's favorite color and perhaps the color worn by members of the bridal party or similar to her bridal bouquet.

Bodi said not all couples have a big



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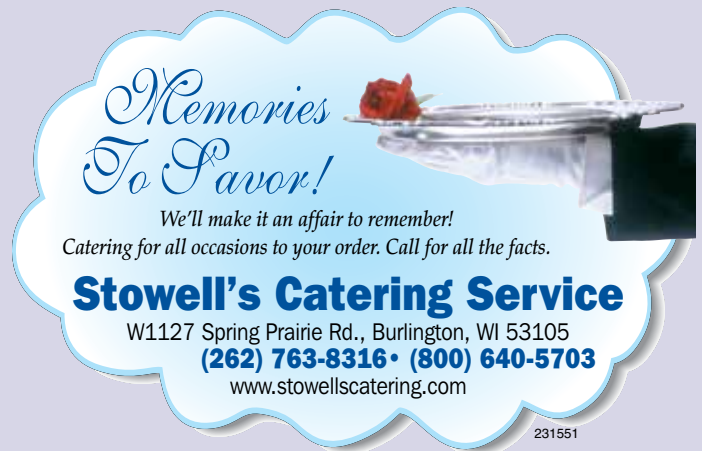
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wedding cake.

“Some prefer a donut tower – something we are very well known for producing,” she said. “Or they may want a display of cookies and donuts, with just a small cake for the cutting ceremony and pictures.”

Regardless of which option is chosen, Bodi is ready to do her part in making sure dessert is the “icing on the cake,” so to speak, for the couple

Bodi’s Bake Shop is at 306 E. Main St., Twin Lakes. For more information, call 262-871-8090 or visit them on Facebook.

### Pastries by Chad

Pastries by Chad is owned by Chef Chad Visger who studied culinary at Johnson & Wales University in Denver, Colorado.

After several years of working in the field, he moved to Chicago and worked in a high-end French Patisserie, where he also learned to embrace the artistic side of baked goods.

Upon moving to Wisconsin, he concentrated on pastries, and was recently

honored as the best bakery and the best dessert in Walworth County.

Visger began his business by renting a commercial kitchen from a restaurant, but when the space in Elkhorn became available, he said he knew it was time to open his own bakery.

He began working on the bakery space in June 2023 and opened the first weekend in September with a full bakery line. It’s run by Visger and his family – including his wife Samantha, his brother, and his sister-in-law.

All along, he’s continued to create wedding cakes and other special desserts for weddings. Visger said creating a wedding cake is a tall order but using the right ingredients is one of the keys to make sure the end result is everything it should be.

“Weddings are a special time, and the wedding cake needs to not only look good, it has to taste good. To be certain that our cakes both look and taste good, we use the best quality ingredients,” Visger said.

He said the wedding cakes of our parents

are not the wedding cakes enjoyed today. The traditional cake that was popular for many years is no longer the most requested cake.

“In the past four years, the traditional large cake is a dying breed. Today’s bridal couples are not as enamored with a big cake as those over the age of 50. Older folks seem to love cake,” Visger said.

“Today’s wedding cake is smaller and often only two tiers instead of the three or four that were popular in the past. Or they have a tiered cake but only the top layer is real. It still has the look for pictures and the cutting,” he added.

He said many of his wedding cake customers opt for a smaller cake along with a variety of petit fours.

Visger said the variety of petit fours are often preferred for guests. They are more extravagant sweets, appeal to a variety of tastes, and with many options to choose from, there is something to enjoy for everyone.

He said the finishing touches on wedding cakes have also changed. They are

**Left:** This 4-tier wedding cake, done by Chad Visgers, is a modern version of the traditional wedding cake. It has smooth icing, greenery decorations and features the newly-married couple’s name on top.

PHOTO COURTESY PASTRIES BY CHAD *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

**right:** Elegantly dressed with flowers is this more traditional 3-tier wedding cake created by Jane Bodi.

PHOTO COURTESY BODI’S BAKE SHOP *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

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decorated with a much cleaner look, and instead of massive amounts of frosting, they are often smooth with pops of color, fresh flowers, or gold, silver or bronze accents. Toppers are often the last name or a symbol important to the couple.

Some of the decisions for couples are a result of the budget for the wedding.

“In an effort to save money on the cake, couples may order a small cake and then a sheet cake to be served,” Visger explained. “There used to be a time when groom’s cakes were popular. They were often in the shape of a car, boat or football. Today, they are rarely seen.”

Couples interested in seeing what Pastries by Chad can do for their wedding are encouraged to reach out and set up a time to meet with Visger for a complimentary wedding tasting.

“We will have you choose four different petit fours and up to three cake flavors. We will discuss cake and frosting colors and special flavors,” he said. “We will also discuss other options such as a donut wall or cookies to take home. The petit fours are made in a variety of flavors, including apple pie, key lime pie, or the flavors of your choice.”

In addition to wedding cakes and desserts, Pastries by Chad has a variety of fresh bakery items, including breads, donuts, crescents and pies. Make this the bakery not only for your special cakes, but also for your everyday bakery treats.

Pastries by Chad is at 29 N. Wisconsin St., Elkhorn. For more information, call 262-379-1187, go to the website, [pastriesbychad.com](http://pastriesbychad.com) or follow them on Facebook.

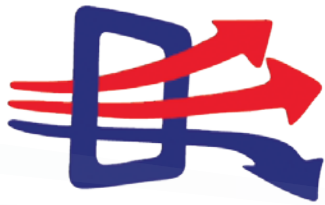


**above:** Chef Chad Visger (right) and Ryan Burnes stand in front of the 75-year-old baking oven still in use today to create a variety of baked goods. **top:** Jane Bodi, owner of Bodi's Bakery is known for her wedding cakes, old-fashioned donuts and cupcakes.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

**at left:** This individual key lime pie pastry is a favorite mini dessert served at weddings in place of a traditional wedding cake, according to Visgers, who owns Pastries by Chad.

PHOTO COURTESY PASTRIES BY CHAD *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



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# Valentine's Day:

## A time for flowers and jewelry

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**  
CORRESPONDENT

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, love is in the air – or will be soon. Red and pink hearts decorate store windows, chocolates are found in heart shaped boxes, and floral displays featuring red roses are available in abundance at floral shops and beyond. Jewelry stores sparkle with special items for the special someone, and there are now Valentine's Day cards for nearly everyone from lovers and spouses to friends and other family members.

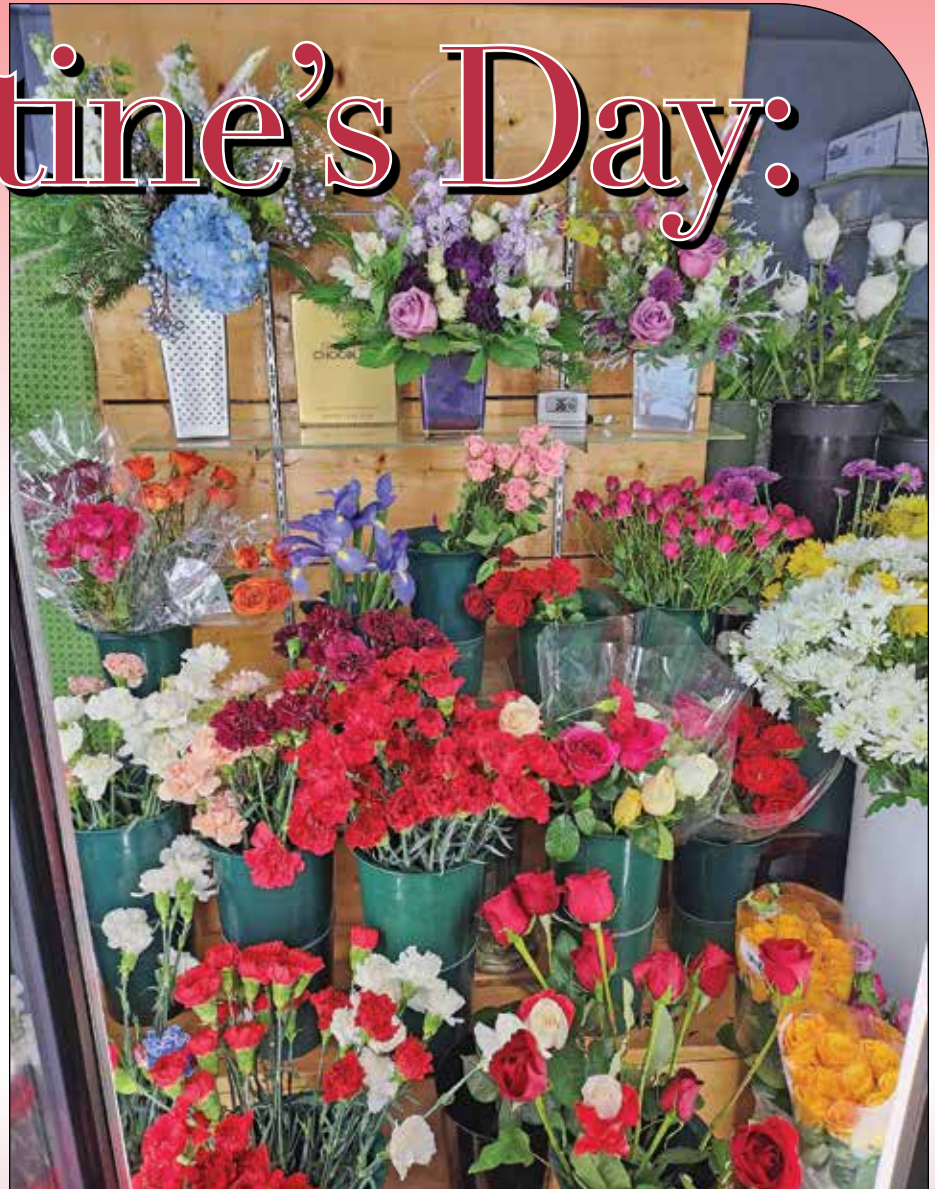
According to the Wisconsin Historical Society, handmade valentines – generally just written notes – most likely began in the United States in the 1700s. In 1847, Esther Howland – who is known as the Mother of the American Valentine – received an elaborate valentine from England and was inspired to create her own valentines. She convinced her father, who at the time owned the largest book and stationary store in Worcester, Massachusetts, to order paper lace and supplies from England and New York so she could create them.

Howland hoped to sell \$200 worth of cards. Her brother took samples of them when he went on his next sales trip and came back with \$5,000 worth of orders, far exceeding her expectations.

Valentine's cards are created by a variety of companies today. Howland's company did so until 1942, when the cards were discontinued due to the paper shortage during World War II.

We continue to send cards and give gifts to those we love for Valentine's Day. The most popular gifts are candy – especially fine chocolates, flowers and jewelry. There are even chocolates made in the shape of a rose and wrapped in foil paper to look like a long-stemmed version.

If you haven't purchased your



**above:** With a large variety of flowers, Wishing Well in Elkhorn can create the perfect bouquet for everyone on your list. **at left:** If shopping for an engagement ring for Valentine's Day, choose from a wide variety at Beall's in Delavan. Many also have matching wedding bands available.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ  
Spirit of Geneva Lakes

Valentine's Day gifts yet, it's time to do so, and here are two area shops that can make the task easier.

## Beall Jewelers

If you're looking for the perfect gift for the love of your life, head to Beall Jewelers in Delavan.

Jim Beall opened Beall Jewelers in 1980, and shoppers have found it to be a great place to find good quality jewelry. Today, Jim continues to run the store with his sons, Chris and Dave, and his daughter-in-law, Chelsea.

They offer a wide variety of jewelry including silver, white gold, yellow gold, and rose gold items, as well as quality diamonds. Clock repairs are also available.

When shopping for a Valentine's Day gift, your budget may determine which items to consider.

"Shopping for Valentine's Day is a busy time here in the store," Chelsea Beall said. "From Christmas to Valentine's Day is a big time for the purchase of engagement rings, along with other jewelry items for gifts. For many years, white gold has been the choice for jewelry, but that is starting to change as yellow gold is again becoming the color requested."

The days when one went into a jewelry store and purchased whatever diamond ring was available are, for the most part, in the past. There are several choices, and the couple can now pick out a setting and the stone that they would like to have put in. Diamonds



from the left: Chelsea Beall, Dave Beall, and store owner Jim Beall are ready to help customers select the perfect gift for their Valentine.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

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come in a variety of shapes to make the ring unique, and some are set with small colored jewels, such as sapphires, on the side.

The size, shape, cut and quality of the stone will be chosen, and the jeweler will then set it in the ring.

“Another decision that has to be made is whether they want a natural or lab created diamond. Both are real diamonds, but there is a difference in their origins – created in the ground by nature or in the lab by humans. Both are genetically the same, but the cost of a lab created diamond is much less,” Chelsea explained.

But it’s not only engagement rings that bring in shoppers for Valentine’s gifts. According to Chelsea, diamond stud earrings are also a very popular gift. They can be worn every day and go with casual dress or a fancy outfit for a big night out.

“They come in a variety of sizes from ¼-carat to as large as 1-2 carats. These, too, can be purchased as natural diamonds or lab created,” she said. “It’s a question of taste. Some will only be pleased with a natural diamond while others are content with the lab created diamond.”

Other popular Valentine’s gifts – ideal for those not quite ready for an engagement ring – are a heart shaped pendant or locket. They’re still symbolic of Valentine’s Day and can be found in white or yellow gold or silver.

“It isn’t only men who come in and shop for gifts for their wives or girlfriends,” Chelsea said. “Women often come in to find a gift for their boyfriends or husbands. Gold chains are popular for both men and women, with heavier ones usually worn by men.”

Whatever kind of jewelry you might be seeking for Valentine’s Day, Beall’s is one of the jewelry stores in the area worth visiting.

If you are looking for a gift for your valentine, stop in at Beall Jewelers is at 305 E. Walworth St., Delavan. For more information, call 262-728-8577 or visit the website, bealljewelers.com. Store hours are Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are closed on Sunday.

## Wishing Well Florist

Jerry Rahn, owner of Wishing Well Florist in Elkhorn, said Valentine’s Day is one of the busiest days for florists, as many people purchase flowers as a traditional gift for those they love.

“Christmas is the busiest month for flowers, while Valentine’s Day is the busiest day, and Mother’s Day is our busiest week. It seems that on Valentine’s Day it’s important that they arrive on that day,” Rahn said.

Flowers are always a welcome gift, and what better way to say “I love you” than with a beautiful bouquet of flowers. And because it’s Valentine’s Day, that bouquet is very likely to be roses, probably red roses.



**Left:** A variety of heart shaped pendants with diamonds are available at Beall’s. **top:** Diamond stud earrings are always a welcome gift, including on Valentine’s Day, and come in a variety of sizes.

SANDRA  
LANDEN MACHAJ  
*Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

Why red roses?

Because they are said to be a way of telling someone that you love them. Although roses are available in a variety of colors – including white, yellow, pink, peach, and lavender – on Valentine’s Day, red roses are often the first choice.

With proper care, roses should last for five to seven days. Rahn said the yellow ones tend to last the longest. When you bring flowers home from the florist, their stems will have been cut and they will have been placed in water with plant food.

Once you have them home, change the water every few days, re-cut the stems, and add fresh plant food, he said. Also take time to mist the blossoms to be sure they have enough moisture, and keep the flowers in a cool place.

“For Valentine’s Day, we usually use

about 1,000 roses,” Rahn said.

Wishing Well Florist also carries Valentine’s Day arrangements that feature a variety of flowers. These bouquets may contain mums, daisies, carnations, and baby’s breath, or other varieties. They often have roses – either red or one of the beautiful pastel colors available – included in the arrangement.

All the arrangements available at Wishing Well are made in house from fresh flowers. They will work with customers to create an arrangement that will please them and the recipient.

The flowers are purchased from markets in Milwaukee or Wausau. While they purchase theirs locally, roses are grown all over the world, in places such as South America and Holland.

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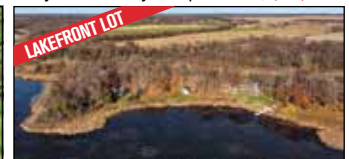


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**N7626 Pleasant Point Circle, Elkhorn** - 50' of level Mill Lake sand frontage with extended lake views compliments this 3BR, 2BA ranch with walk-out to covered cement patio. Inside you're welcomed by the lake as you walk into the foyer/kitchen, large living room with two sliders. Natural sunlight fills the room. Bedroom, office area and full bath complete the main level. Lower-level family room with brick fireplace and sliding glass door that leads you to the cement patio and level lakefront yard and pier. On LL you'll find two bedrooms, 2nd kitchen, full bath and laundry room. Come make this home yours and create lasting memories. Easy access off Hwy 12/67, short walk to Lauderdale Golf Course and minutes to Kettle Moraine Trail system. The ability for a quick close! **\$1,099,000**



**W3361 Lost Nation, Elkhorn** - You're welcomed to the lake as you walk in with extended southern views of Mill Lake with 50' of frontage. Updated 3 BR, 3.5 BA makes this an ideal lake retreat. Open concept main floor featuring LR, Sunroom, Full bath and kitchen with quartz tops, SS appliances, breakfast bar and coffee bar with wine fridge, grilling deck, dining area & wood floors throughout. Upstairs features two lakeside bedrooms, one with powder room, full bath and game area. Lower level walk-out with lakeside bedroom and full shared bath, laundry and small rec area with slider to lakeside deck that leads to firepit and pier. 1.5 detached garage across the street with wooded area behind. Dive off the pier into some of the best swimming on the lake. Turn-key furniture package included and quick closing. **\$1,549,700**

**W4910 Oakwood Dr, Elkhorn** - Rare opportunity to own a private 1.5 acres with 93' of frontage on Pleasant Lake. You'll enjoy the main level with vaulted ceilings and hickory flooring. Living room has a stone fireplace, galley Kitch that leads to lakeside dining room with slider to deck, offering outstanding lake views. Also included on the main, there's a large Primary BR, 2nd BR and full bath. Lower-level Family room walk-out to cement patio. Family room features wood fireplace, 3rd BR, full bath, laundry room & storage. Slight slope leads you to the L-shape pier. Backside of the lot is level and open. Short drive to Kettle Moraine Trail head offering Mountain Biking, Hiking and Cross Country Skiing. Minutes to a boat launch on Lauderdale Lakes. Quiet Pleasant Lake road is great for long walks. Come take a look! **\$749,900**

**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. **\$299,700**

**11c26-29 N Lakeshore Cir, Elkhorn** - Located on a waterfront island w/ a total of 330' of frontage (95' of southern exposure on one side of the island & 236' of northern exposure on the other side) on beautiful, quiet, & peaceful North Lake, you'll find this 0.672 acre parcel w/ a gradual slope to the water. Build the lakefront home you've been waiting for on this exceptional piece of paradise offering extended water views, sunrises, & sunsets. The property includes a cordwood fence, hosta-lined trails, fruit trees, mature oaks & maples, native plants & perennials. **\$139,900**

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**top:** Wishing Well Florist owner Jerry Rahn and his sister, Kathy, display one of their arrangements that would make a beautiful Valentine's gift. **at right:** Roses arrive at the floral shop in boxes of 12 and there are a variety of colors available, sure to please whoever the recipient will be. **above:** The Wishing Well Florist, in downtown Elkhorn has been a place to go for fresh flower arrangements for 42 years.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

“Stop and smell the roses,” in reality, roses – especially red ones – have very little, if any, scent. That’s because roses usually have thorns, and most people do not appreciate getting stuck with the thorns, so they are removed. According to Rahn, once you remove the thorns, the flowers lose some of their scent.

To keep up to date on current trends in floral arranging, Jerry and his sister, Kathy – who helps run the shop – frequently go to floral shows to learn new techniques and to see the new colors and flowers that are

available and popular.

Rahn opened Wishing Well 42 years ago and has seen it grow throughout the years.

“I saw a need for a floral shop in Elkhorn, so I opened one. After six years, it was obvious that we needed more space, so we moved to our present location in downtown,” Rahn explained. “My sister, Kathy, came to help me in the beginning, and now 42 years later, she is still here working with me every day.”

Over the years, the shop has continued to be a success, likely because customers

are pleased with the quality and style of the flowers they purchase from Wishing Well.

The flower shop offers local delivery, though their items are also delivered out of the area, through Teleflora.

Wishing Well Florists is at 26 S. Wisconsin St., Elkhorn. For more information, call 262-723-6677, visit the website, [flowerswishingwell.com](http://flowerswishingwell.com) or follow them on Facebook. The shop is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are closed on Sunday.

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