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ON THE COVER

IRISH DANCING

This foursome dressed in a variety of costumes for an Irish dancing competition, which are held throughout the U.S. as well as in Canada, Ireland and Scotland.

COURTESY MCNULTY SCHOOL OF IRISH DANCE
Spirit of Geneva Lakes



IT'S COMIN' UP

MARCH EVENTS

2 Spring Rummage Sale Clean out your closets, garages, and storage spaces and beat the rush of rummage sales. Register for an indoor space at Hawk's View Golf Club by calling Becky at 262-348-9900. Space is limited and reserved via payment.

A vendor booth space is \$10 for about 10x10 feet and includes an 8-foot banquet table (additional table is \$5.) Vendor set up will be Saturday at 7 a.m. Items to sell must be confined to the vendor's designated area.

The sale will be held 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Hawk's View, 7377 Krueger Rd., Lake Geneva. Parking and admission are free for the public. Concessions will be available in Tail Feathers Bar & Grill.

15-16 Lake Geneva Snocross National at The Mountain Top at Grand Geneva, 7036 Grand Geneva Way, Lake Geneva, presented by AMSOIL Championship Snocross.

Races start on Friday morning and the official opening ceremony will be at 6 p.m. Saturday racing starts at 9:15 a.m. with pro races set to run 6 to 9 p.m.

Tickets are \$25 for Friday or Saturday, or \$35 for a weekend pass. For more information including a schedule and to purchase tickets, visit <https://snocross.com/lake-geneva-snocross-national>.

16 Brothers Quinn Dinner & Concert Series: St. Patrick's Day show at Pier 290 featuring the Brothers Quinn, 6 to 10 p.m., Saturday, March 16.

Guests will be treated to an Irish-themed plated dinner: (appetizers) boxty with sour cream and trout caviar, smoke salmon toast with mustard butter and shamrock veggie skewers; (dinner) howth head seafood chowder and Irish stew with Guinness, carrots and potatoes; (dessert) chocolate whiskey cake.

Brothers Quinn play Irish, old country, hip-hop, modern acoustic rock, classic rock, western swing, blues and more.

Tickets are \$75 per person. For more information or to make a reservation, call 262-245-2100 or visit pier290.com. Pier 290 is at 1 Liechty Dr., Williams Bay.

16 Big Al Wetzel Band Topsy Turvy Brewery will welcome the Big Al Wetzel Band from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., March 16.

"We will be partying in the Beer Garden as long as the weather permits! If not, we will party in the taproom. Either way, come join the fun," organizers said, adding that a variety of festive beers will be available.

Topsy Turvy Brewery is at 727 Geneva St., Lake Geneva.

16 St. Patrick's Party Saturday, March 16 at Evergreen Golf Club, N6246 US Highway 12, Elkhorn. Get your Irish on at Evergreen, which will have Guinness on tap, pitchers of green beer, and shot and cocktail specials. There will be a corned beef and cabbage dinner, as well as homemade Rueben rolls and a baked potato bar.

At 2 p.m. there will be an optional Irish Whiskey Tasting. Tickets available online at evergreengolf.com or at the Pro Shop.

17 Maple Fest Covenant Harbor's annual Maple Fest event will feature a pancake breakfast, outdoor market and family friendly activities. The event is a fundraiser where all proceeds help make camp experiences possible. Proceeds benefit scholarships for local children who attend summer camp programs. Financial need should not prevent a child from attending camp.

Covenant Harbor is at 1724 Main St., Lake Geneva. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call 262-248-3600 or visit covenantharbor.org.

Ongoing events

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.

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

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.

The calendar of events is compiled from a variety of chambers of commerce and visitor bureau listings available as of press time.

Events may change or be canceled. Please verify details prior to making plans.

THE SPIRIT

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THE SPIRIT

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Barbara McNulty, owner of McNulty School of Irish Dance, instructs a group of young dancers still learning what their feet should be doing.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ
Spirit of Geneva Lakes



HONORING Irish tradition WITH RHYTHM

McNulty School of Irish
Dance teaches toddlers
through adults

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

For Barbara McNulty, Irish dancing has been part of her life since her childhood. As the child of a family with Irish heritage, she began Irish dance classes early in life, an event that led to her eventually opening an Irish Dance Studio.

“My parents belonged to an Irish heritage group in Elmhurst, Illinois, located in the western suburbs of Chicago when I was a child. I would often dance at their events,” McNulty explained. “I was approached by a group asking me to consider offering an Irish dance class in nearby Naperville, Illinois in 1971. To my surprise, we initially had 30 participants sign up for the classes.”

And thus, the McNulty School of Irish Dance was formed. The interest in Irish dancing continued to grow until she was soon teaching classes seven days a week, which she continues to do today. That is, unless she’s accompanying students to performance events and competitions, both locally and abroad.

Currently, classes are held in Lake Geneva, the northern Illinois area and Dubuque, Iowa. Several of her long-time students have advanced to become teachers at the McNulty School of Irish Dancing. They have all been successfully involved in major competitions and had many years of lessons before being hired as teachers.

“I am often asked if all my students are Irish,” McNulty said. “While the majority of them are of Irish heritage, others are not. The students without Irish heritage often come either because they have seen Irish dancing and are interested in learning it or their best friends are taking Irish dance, and they want to share the experience with them.”

Her students vary in age, with the youngest starting at 3 years old all the way to adults, some who decide to take up dancing later in life. Boys and girls participate in Irish dancing although

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generally more girls are involved. Some who begin as young children continue taking classes through adulthood and go on to be performers or to participate in competitions.

Riverdance, which began in 1994 as an interval act during the Eurovision Song Contest featured Irish dancing with Michael Flatley. He became perhaps the most well-known Irish dancer in the world and encouraged more interest in Irish dance especially among the male population.

It takes dedication

“Learning Irish dances is constant memorization,” McNulty said. “The head has to tell the feet what to do. It requires concentration and practice. Students can’t just show up for class and expect to be successful. They must put in the practice – both the memorization of the moves and the actual practice of the moves using their legs and feet.”

Observing some of the younger students at a recent class proved McNulty’s point as many of the 4- and 5-year-old children were likely doing their best but were challenged by the footwork involved. Of course, a person of any age new to Irish dancing might very well have the same struggles, especially during the initial learning process.

Despite the difficulty, those who are inspired to learn the dances are usually able to as long as they’re dedicated and put in the time required.

In addition to concentration, memory, and muscle coordination, Irish dance is a great exercise. While some participants take it up just because it’s a fun way to exercise, most decide to join for the beauty of performing the dance.

“The dances are specific, especially for those who are planning to join in competition or to be part of an entertainment program,” McNulty said. “There are two types of dances – those performed in soft shoe and those performed in hard shoe, making much like a tap sound. “

The first dance usually taught is the soft shoe dance the jig, followed by the reel, and another soft shoe dance – which is done by girls only – the step jig. These are all solo dances. The hard shoe dances include the treble jig and the hornpipe. All the other Irish dances are expansions from these basics.



above: Class begins with all of the students in line together working on one of the dances. The younger, less experienced dancers are still learning while the more experienced dancers are able to maintain the movements. **top:** Finnegan Wagner demonstrates one of the high kicks in Irish dance while keeping his hands and arms straight at his sides.

Shamrocks and leprechauns on the wall complement the traditional dress of these Irish dancers.

below: After performing at St. Patrick's Church in Elkhorn, a group of Barbara McNulty's students gather in front of the St. Patrick statue.



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In competition, traditional set dances are used and are expected to be executed perfectly. Position in Irish dancing is very important, such as the dancers' arms straight and held at the sides and their backs straight throughout the performance.

Some say the straight arms and rigid backs were the result of early performances held in small spaces in pubs in Ireland. Another theory is that dancers' arms were kept at their sides because in the early days, males and females were not allowed to touch. Regardless of how it began, it has remained a key to successful Irish dancing.

Ready to perform

As students progress and begin to master the dances, they generally become more involved and their interest in performing evolves. Once they are good enough, if they so choose, they join the group of dancers who perform for a variety of groups, dinners, community events,

weddings and more.

"We do at least one wedding a month," McNulty. "And many other events, especially at this time of year where everyone is celebrating St. Patrick's Day events."

When the students are taking classes, they dress in the studio's preferred outfit. At McNulty's, it's black shorts with a black shirt with the studio's logo.

When performing the dancers appear in traditional Irish dress. For the girls, it's a dress, above the knees, usually decorated with embroidery or beading. The dresses are frequently green – the color of the Irish. Originally the girls' hair was down and curly, but the more professional look today has their hair up and either natural curls or a hair piece that is curled.

Because of the cost of the costumes – and the changing sizes of the younger growing students – most families rent the costumes for the year. However, dance shoes must be purchased

for each student as they need to fit properly.

“The cost to rent the non-embroidered costumes is about \$60 for the year. The embroidered dresses can also be rented at a slightly higher cost,” McNulty said.

Competition time

Competition is popular as the dancers improve their ability to perform. Although not all students of Irish dancing become involved in performing and competing, many of them do. Often, the culmination of working hard to achieve a high level of dancing is sharing it with others.

While most students begin by taking one class per week, those who become more involved in competition often increase their classes to three or four each week.

As students improve, they work toward the performance levels, of which there are eight. The beginners work their way through levels 0-3 before they can work toward performance levels. Students must be at levels 5-6 or higher to perform with the group at events such as weddings. Each level requires a great deal of work to be able to complete them and advance.

Competition is offered both as an individual performer and as a team dancer. Ceili Irish dance competitions includes team dances of two to 16 dancers. Competitions are held locally and across the United States and Canada as well as in Ireland and Scotland.

“The competitions take place in various places here in the United States and also in Ireland and Scotland for those who truly excel in their dancing,” McNulty said.

“In early March of this year, on the 1st and 2nd, a local competition will be held at the Grand Geneva Hotel in Lake Geneva. In July, a major competition will be held in Grapevine, Texas,” she added.

McNulty said many local dancers will be looking ahead to the competition at the Regional Championships, which will be held at the Renaissance Hotel in Schaumburg in the fall. The regional competitions are held under the auspices of the IDTMA (the Irish Dance Teachers of Mid America).

“We were the Regional Champions in 2022 and perhaps this is the year to capture another title,” McNulty said.

During the month of March, the CLRG (the Irish Dance Commission) – founded in 1927 and known as being the oldest and largest governing body for competition in Irish step dancing – is holding the All-Ireland Championships. The competition moves to Glasgow over Easter for the World Championships.

McNulty has been certified as an Irish Dance teacher since 1980 and continues to support and encourage her students in local, national and international competition.

Participation in sanctioned Irish dance competition is open to McNulty’s students because the studio is a member of the official organizations that sponsor the competitions.

And remember, it’s not too late to learn how to Irish dance regardless of a person’s age. The classes in Lake Geneva are held in the Central Dennison School building.

For more information about the McNulty School of Irish Dancing call 224-639-8644, email McNultyDancers@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook.

If interested in booking a group to perform, email McNultyShows@gmail.com.



above: Participating in competition requires traditional dancing costumes including shoes and their hair up in a very formal style. **top:** Dancers from McNulty School of Irish Dance are shown outside Paddy's On the Square, Long Grove, Illinois, which was built with traditional Irish stones.

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Upgrade your space with NEW APPLIANCES

A fourth-generation business, Lyle's offers many options

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

After a winter with some negative degree temperatures and a couple snow storms, typical for Wisconsin this time of the year, many people spent more time at home than usual. But being home more often means cooking meals, cleaning and sitting by the fireplace while enjoying a glass of wine or a warm cup of coffee or cocoa.

While basking in the warmth of our homes this winter, we might have also spent time taking a closer look at the space, with some concluding that it may be time to upgrade appliances.

It could be the kitchen – where a burner or two on the stove doesn't heat evenly or there doesn't seem to be enough space in the refrigerator and freezer. And then there's the laundry room – where clothes

don't come out as clean as they used to or a load takes longer to dry. Replacing older or dated appliances can give us a new outlook, inspire us to try new recipes and even save time when doing laundry.

In other words, it's time to get out of the house and begin looking at the options available, and in this area that means a trip to Lyle's TV and Appliances in Elkhorn.

It's been open at its current location since 1956, when Lyle Schinke first bought the property, a private home where he raised his six children while running his business from the front of the building.

As the business continued to grow, Lyle tore down more of the house and enlarged the business showroom area. According to the business' website, he never closed the store, even for a day while he expanded the business to its 16,000 square foot

showroom.

Today the store is owned and run by Lyle's youngest son, Tom Schinke, and his wife Sue along with some help from their children and grandchildren, making it a business that has had 4 generations involved. Lyle's is the largest and last independent dealer in Walworth County.

"A few years ago, we were given a showroom update by our buying group," Sue Schinke said. "We chose to have our kitchen display area done where we can now showcase the latest in major kitchen appliances."

The showroom may be the ideal place to start when shopping for appliances. There, customers can see not only the newest and often high-end appliances, but also the displays, which offer ideas on how to set up a kitchen and incorporate a variety of items

Many accessories for the Big Green Egg, described as an ideal cooking surface for an outdoor kitchen, are available at Lyle's.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



including large refrigerators, cooktops, built-in ovens and traditional range ovens.

Cooking options galore

One of the newest options is the induction cooktop. An electric smooth glass cooktop, it's unique in that it doesn't heat up, making it safer, especially in homes with young children.

"The induction cooktops can be installed on your countertop, or they can be part of a traditionally styled range. The induction cooktops require special pots and pans made of stainless steel with magnetic ability for use on the surface," Schinke explained. "The induction cooking surfaces are often used to replace gas stoves because of the instant on and off feature, with no hot surface remaining once it is turned off."

People who are used to cooking with gas but are switching to an electric stove may have difficulty dealing with the difference. The gas stove is an instant-off type of cooking. In other words, when accustomed to using a gas stove, food can easily be overcooked when switching to an electric cooktop because the heat doesn't stop cooking immediately upon turning the burner off.

Electric burners, on the other hand, can continue to cook the food in the pot or pan after it's turned off because the burner remains hot. Those who have used an electric stove and switch to a gas unit might have the opposite challenge of turning the burner off expecting the food to continue cooking only to find that the heat



above: Lyle's TV and Appliance has been a fixture in Elkhorn since Lyle Schinke started the business in 1956. It remains in the same location and is now under the direction of Lyle's youngest son, Tom, and his wife, Sue. **at right:** If space allows, these large size refrigerators and freezers can be built into a kitchen.

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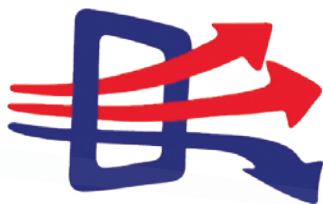
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above: Outdoor kitchen options are at a new level with smokers, which are available at Lyle's. **top, right:** Stoves with induction cooktops are a safer option because the top doesn't get hot though this type of stovetop does require special cookware. **at right:** For a glam look in the kitchen choose a high-end stove with an induction cooktop and gold, brass or bronze handles and knobs.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



stopped much quicker.

With use, people likely learn to adjust to these changes, but an induction cooktop may be an ideal option for those converting from gas.

The induction cooking surfaces are manufactured by several major appliance makers including GE, Bosch, Wolff and Frigidaire, which are featured at Lyle's. Choices begin with a cooktop, a stand-alone range or one that slides into a special built-in space in the kitchen.

While there was a time when there was not much of a choice of style or colors for new appliances, today there are choices. The most popular finish currently is stainless steel, which Schinke said, comes in several finishes including polished satin, gun metal and fingerprint free. A few people still choose to order white but those are less popular and the stainless is most common.

"There is one company Blue Star, that offers a variety of many different colors and if they don't have a match in their large inventory of colors, they can custom match the shade you'd like," Schinke said.

These high-end finishes are often used for an upscale kitchen. They may combine this made-to-order finish with special handles and knobs to provide a "wow

look." For a very high-end look, consider the newer gold handles and knobs for the stove instead of the more traditional look and color.

A popular choice is a dual stove, which has a gas cooktop and electric oven. The stove may also include drawers to keep food warm while other parts of the meal are cooking.

Refrigerators, microwaves and more

Refrigerators also offer a variety of sizes and choices to fit any kitchen. They

are no longer limited to a refrigerator with a freezer on the top, but numerous freezer arrangements and door choices to best suit what the customer desires.

"The top choice today is the refrigerator with French doors," Schinke said. "The freezer is on the bottom. They come, depending on the model, with a variety of high-end options."

The refrigerator may also come with a drawer or door that can be accessed without needing to open the main large door of the unit, generally used for the most common food and drinks. Depending on the model the drawer can be used as an extension of

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at right: To save space in the laundry room as well as time, the one and done offers a convenient washer/dryer combination that takes a load from washing through drying without having to switch machines. Lyle's also has side-by-side and stackable laundry appliances.

far right: Sue Schinke, owner of Lyle's along with her husband, Tom, is shown in the theater room at Lyle's, which has large televisions and other entertainment options.

SANDRA
LANDEN MACHAJ
Spirit of Geneva Lakes



the refrigerator or of the freezer, as needed.

Ice makers and water dispensers accessible on the outside of the door are commonly enjoyed by families these days. According to Schinke, some refrigerators have not one but two icemakers so they can produce different types of ice cubes.

“There are the traditional ice cubes and a craft ice cube. The craft ice cube is usually a large ball of ice – sometimes referred to as a ‘whiskey ball’ because they are used for whiskey – and cocktail drinks are poured over them,” she said.

If ready for an upgrade on a microwave, they have come a long way since the early models, which were all portable and sat on the counter. Today’s microwave ovens are often mounted above the stove or placed out of sight in a drawer to free up counter space.

Some are not only a microwave but include a convection oven feature, allowing the ability to roast foods without needing to turn on a large oven.

The simplest way to determine when it’s time for a new dishwasher is when it’s no longer working properly, from not cleaning the dishes well to being so loud that it’s generally only used when no one will be in the home.

Lyle’s carries a variety of dishwashers including Bosch, GE, Frigidaire, Sub Zero and Miele. Each offers a variety of models with special features.

“When choosing a dishwasher, pick the one that meets your family’s needs.

Don’t underbuy or overbuy when choosing a brand and model,” Schinke said. “And always use a rinse aid in the machine for the best results.”

When shopping for new appliances it’s important to know the dimensions of the space where they’ll be installed. If replacing more than one appliance, many manufacturers offer a special price on a package that allows the replacement of all items at once at a more reasonable cost than purchasing them individually.

Whether updating the kitchen or not, don’t forget the outdoor area. There are a variety of new appliances from pizza makers and smokers to rotisseries just waiting to be installed on a deck – an ideal way to welcome spring and the start of cookout weather.

Keeping things clean

The hardest working appliances in a home are the washing machine and dryer because rarely is there not a full basket of clothes or pile of towels let alone the chore of changing the bedding. Today there is a wide variety of machines to suit the needs of every size family and home. Front or top loading machines, stackable or the traditional side-by-side along with smaller apartment sized washers and dryers are among the many choices. The newest player in the laundry game of life is one machine that does it all.

The new GE One and Done washer-

dryer combination takes less space and less work when doing laundry. Place the load of clothes in the machine, add soap, turn it on and the machine takes it from there, including drying; it’s that simple. It doesn’t quite do everything – because the laundry will still need to be removed, folded and put away – but it does reduce the number of steps in the process.

Lyle’s now carries the Excelsior brand laundry detergent and stain removal products to offer an environmentally friendly way to clean clothes. It’s phosphate-free, bleach-free, safe for septic systems and works in all water temperatures. No additional brighteners, whiteners, fabric softeners or anti-static products are needed. The washing machine cleaner and deodorizer – which is recommended to be used monthly – will remove odors and soap residue in the machine while leaving a clean, fresh lemon scent.

The business personally services most brands of appliances. They will provide service for appliances they sell and for most others even if purchased elsewhere once the warranty has expired.

Lyle’s TV and Appliances is at 17 S. Washington St., Elkhorn. Contact them by phone at 262-723-3477 or visit the website at www.lylestv.com. Hours are Monday through Wednesday, and Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Thursday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The store is closed on Sunday.



A roof over our heads

AMB Roofing offers installation and service in Wisconsin, Illinois

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Every building has a roof but when they are doing their job, they're rarely given much thought. That is until it begins to fail due to age or damage at which time there is great concern. Fortunately, a good roof, when properly installed and maintained, can last for many years.

"Using top quality shingles and having the roof properly installed assures the customer that the roof will do its job – keeping the inside of the house dry," shared Jason Niemi, a project coordinator/estimator with AMB Roofing, a family-owned roofing company that services and installs roofs in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

AMB is often called for a roof inspection because of snow and ice on the roof, especially on an older roof, as it can cause serious problems.

"The problem with roofs is often due to improper insulation of the attic space beneath it," Niemi explained. "For that reason, we often recommend having an insulation contractor inspect the area and

recommend what type of insulation is needed for a tight seal between the roof and the attic space."

There are several ways that moist warm air can make its way into the attic space between the ceiling of the house and the roof. One is warmer air escaping through a vent such as from a fan, meaning the air is drawn back into the attic by the soffit vents. Another is when there's not enough insulation in the attic to separate it from the air in the home.

Mike McNish, of Anchor Building Solutions, often works with AMB to determine the need for additional insulation in the attic to make certain it's tightly sealed. He recommends having the attic space on the underside of the roof coated with sprayed on foam insulation to be certain that the seal is tight and there is no air moving in or out through the roof.

Damage from weather

Damage to a roof can be due to snow which can pull the sandpaper granules off the shingles. This may occur over several years with small amounts being worn down

each year and continue to cause enough wear that granules have been removed making the shingles no longer effective.

One of the main things that can cause damage to a roof as well as the interior of a home is when an ice dam forms on the roof. In many cases, the homeowner doesn't realize there is an ice dam until they find water coming through the ceiling. If not noticed early enough, it can damage the ceiling insulation, and even floors and furniture in the home.

"The ice dams frequently occur when there have been periods of melting and refreezing," Niemi said.

During the formation of an ice dam, the snow buildup melts during the day and then the top layer of it refreezes during the night. With an ice dam forming at the edge of the roof, there is nowhere for the melted water to pool so it will go through the shingles and into the house causing damage to the interior of the home.

There are steps homeowners can take themselves to try and prevent damage to a home from ice dams – or hire a professional to do, the first of which is to use a roof rake

This new build home has a variety of roof styles from steep to flat and varying sized peaks. While the majority features shingles, there is also a portion where metal roofing was installed, adding to the aesthetic appeal of the home.

COURTESY AMB ROOFING Spirit of Geneva Lakes



to pull the snow off the eaves.

And there are things AMB does not recommend.

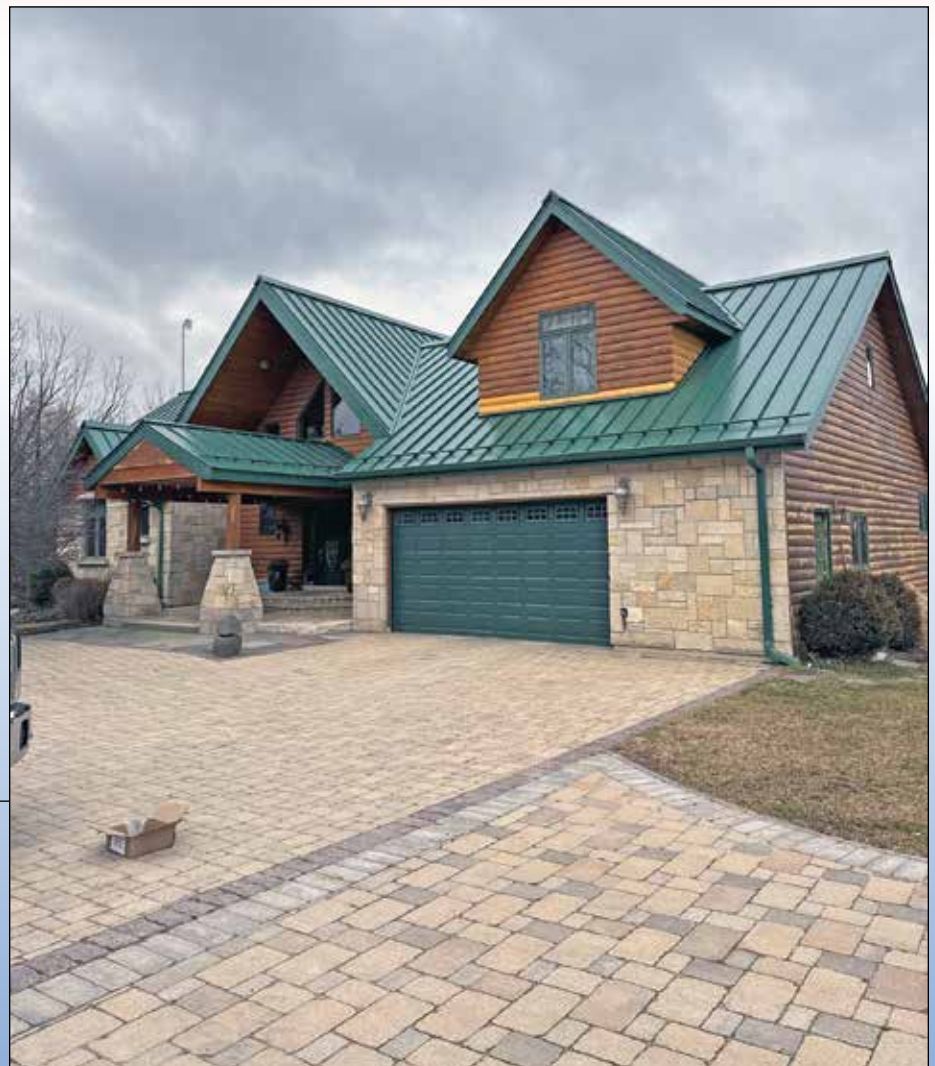
“I am not a fan of heat cables which are often installed on the roof edge to melt the snow. It doesn’t really fix the problem but rather just hides it,” said Niemi. “They also burn out quickly, so they don’t really solve the problem. For these reasons we do not install them.”

Family-owned business

AMB Roofing was founded in 1999 by Art Bentz after 20 years of working for commercial roofing contractors. During that time Bentz learned a lot about metal roofing and envisioned more metal roofing being used on residential buildings.

Metal roofs are known for their longevity and energy efficiency. They’re often used on commercial buildings but more frequently are seen on high quality private homes in the area.

Although Bentz looked to bring the metal roof to the home market, he also continued to install quality shingled roofs to homes in the lower Wisconsin and upper Illinois area. On some homes, they have also used a combination of metal roofing



above: Not all homes have a single type of roof, such as the home pictured, which features metal roofing as well the more traditional architectural shingles. **at right:** A green metal roof is an ideal look on this modern log home. Metal roofs can last up to 50 years, compared to a 20- to 30-year lifespan of traditional shingles.

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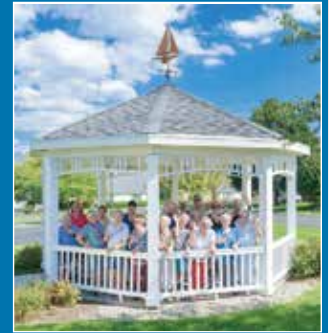
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in some areas of the roof and architectural shingles on others giving the home a stunning roof design.

Bentz still runs the business, which features family members holding prominent positions in the company and follows his philosophy of providing quality roofing to both residential homes and commercial buildings.

“The top three producers of shingles are Owens Corning, Certain Teed and GAF,” Niemi said. “Any of these will give you a quality roof that will last many years if they are properly installed. So, it’s important not only to pick a quality shingle but a reputable roofing company to install the roof.”

While they produce two different lines of shingles – higher-end designer shingles and architectural shingles, the architectural line is the most popular, largely because of cost as it’s less expensive than the designer line.

It’s currently not easy to get designer line items as they are not readily available. Since Covid, the special lines were shut down to concentrate on the popular architectural line due to limited production.

“Certain Teed seems to be the only one who has the designer shingles at this time, and they only have limited supplies,” Niemi

explained.

Shingles last for a long time. Many are considered to be 30-year shingles, but Niemi suggests counting on less time than that to have the roof checked for wear and possibly replacement.

“Your roof needs to be inspected before selling the house, and there is a charge for that, as it’s a thorough inspection to assure that it is a safe roof,” Niemi said. “If you are just wondering if you need to replace the roof we will come out and check the roof, let you know how soon you should consider replacing the roof, and give you a free estimate on the cost of replacing the roof.”

Options to consider

Roof shingles come in a variety of colors to compliment the color and style of any home. The most popular colors have been driftwood which has a grayish look, and black sable with gray remaining popular the past few years. This current color of the year is Williamsburg Gray, according to Niemi.

For those wondering what happens to the old shingles once they’ve been removed from a home or building, they will not end up in a landfill if using AMB to replace the

roof.

Building materials account for 5% of landfills so in an effort reduce that percentage, AMB continues to recycle all the shingles they remove. They’re picked up by Direct Source and taken to Rooftop Recycling in Elkhorn, where it’s absorbed, ground down and recycled into pavement for local roads.

Metal roofs are a favorite choice of AMB staff, in part because they feature many advantages. Metal roofs last for up to 50 years, so most homeowners will never have to replace it. Metal roofs are energy efficient, too, saving homeowners up to 40% on energy costs in the summer as the metal deflects heat instead of absorbing it as shingles do.

The metal roofs give a home an entirely different, yet very attractive look. Some homes – usually larger ones – have a combination of shingles and metal roof, the latter of which adds a sleek, modern, and aesthetic look to a home.

The metal roofs are always a good fit, according to Niemi, as the Berridge portable forming machine allows the roofing company to run standing seam panels to precise measurements. The metal roof is secured with screws so it won’t blow

(Right) Jason Niemi of AMB Roofing and Sheet Metal, and Mike McNish of Anchor Solutions, often work together on roofing installation and repair services for customers.

off in high winds.

“The one disadvantage of the metal roof is that it is much more expensive, about three times that of a traditional shingles roof. And of course, the larger the home, the more the roof will cost. On the other hand, it also lasts much longer – up to 50 years, as compared to 20 or 30 years for a shingle roof. And it presents an exquisite architectural style to the home,” added Niemi.

For homeowners, now is a good time to purchase energy efficiency improvements for their homes. Since 2023, homeowners can receive up to 30% back through tax credits for making energy efficiency improvements to their home – generally up to a maximum of \$1,200 per year – through the Inflation Reduction Act.

Homeowners are advised to take the time now to have the roof and insulation inspected to be certain it's ready to withstand whatever the weather brings.

AMB Roofing and Sheetmetal is at 2516 Hiller Ridge, Johnsburg, Ill. They can be reached by calling 815-385-2621 or visiting the website at www.ambroofing.com. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is closed Saturday and Sunday.

Setting up an appointment with AMB staff to examine a roof will include them determining how soon it will likely need to be replaced. They will also share the latest information to consider when replacing the roof is recommended.

For information on replacing or adding to the insulation in your home, contact Anchor Building Solutions Inc at 815-388-5155 or visit the website at www.absfoam.com.



Shingles are available in many colors to complement the colors of a home's exterior, which can be seen in the bricks and roof on this home.

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W5361 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 full shared bedroom and full shared bath, laundry and small rec area with slider to lakeside deck, that leads to freight 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**



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**



W4910 Oakwood Dr, Elkhorn - Rare opportunity to own a private 1.5 acres with 99' 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**



W42 N West St, Elkhorn - Updated zero lot line 3 BD, 1.5 bath on the West side of Elkhorn with semiprivate location overlooking a wet-land with abundance of wildlife. Features of this two story include kitchen with island/ breakfast bar, pantry, quartz counter tops and stainless steel appliances that is open to the living room with gas fireplace and sliding glass door that leads to cement patio. You'll also find a powder room on the main level. Upstairs offer primary BD with double closet, 2nd and 3rd Bd plus a full bath. Full basement with ample storage and laundry hook-up. 1.5 detached garage with oversized two car garage makes this an exceptional value. **\$289,900**



38 N West St, Elkhorn - Zero lot line 3 Bedroom, 1.5 bath, two story on the west side of town, located in a semi-private location with a backyard that abuts to a wet land that offers all kinds of wildlife viewing. Inside on the main level you'll find an eat-in kitchen with dinette that opens to living room with gas fireplace and sliding glass that leads to cement patio and a powder room completes the main level. Upstairs offer a primary with double closet, 2nd and 3rd bedrooms plus full bath. Abundant storage in the full basement plus laundry area. Oversize two car garage completes this outstanding value. **\$239,900**

How to prepare soil for **spring planting**

Spring is a season of rejuvenation, and perhaps nowhere is that rebirth more noticeable than in the yard. Each spring, grass begins to grow again as inviting landscapes beckon people outdoors.

Extra sunlight and rising temperatures make spring a great time to plant flowers, grasses and trees. To ensure successful planting, homeowners must take steps to prepare the soil. Healthy soil can provide the ideal conditions for roots to take hold, helping plants establish themselves before potentially harsh summer conditions arrive. Preparing soil might seem like an extensive job, but a simple approach may be all that's necessary to create conditions that promote plant growth this spring.

- Clean up the previous months' mess. Whether homeowners live in regions marked by year-round warmth or places where winter typically features heavy snowfall, it's a good idea to clean up an area prior to spring planting. Fallen leaves, rocks, grass clippings, and other debris can contribute to compacted soil that makes it hard for plants to establish strong, healthy root systems. Clear away any debris prior to planting before taking the next step in your soil preparation routine.

- Loosen the soil. Once debris has been cleared away, loosen the soil. Depending on the size of the area where you'll be planting, you may need to invest in tools like a

shovel, spade, spading fork, and/or a lawn edger. If you're planting in a small area, such as a deck planter box that still has soil from last year's planting inside it, you can either clean the box and replace the soil entirely or dig around with a handheld trowel, cultivator and/or weeder. It's important to loosen all of the soil around where you will ultimately plant prior to planting to ensure water can reach the roots and help them establish themselves once planting is completed.

- Test and, if necessary, amend the soil. A simple pH test can help determine the acidity or alkalinity of the soil. This is an important step as soil that is too acidic or alkaline can decrease the availability of nutrients the plants will need to thrive. In addition to conducting a pH test, which can be purchased at little cost at a local home improvement store, homeowners can contact their local Cooperative Extension Service to test their soil quality. These tests will reveal soil pH, but also can shed light on the texture of the soil and other components. Once the test is conducted, the local Co-op Extension Service may recommend amendments to improve the nutritional quality of the soil so new plants can thrive.

Soil conditions go a long way toward determining if new plants will thrive. Preparing the soil prior to spring planting can ensure a successful season.

(METRO CREATIVE)



Preparing soil might seem like an extensive job, but a simple approach may be all that's necessary to create conditions that promote plant growth this spring.

FILE PHOTO Spirit of Geneva Lakes

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Irish celebrations around every corner

From food and drink to live music, area offers plenty of options

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Each year as St. Patrick's Day draws near, many people join in celebrating the Irish heritage, at least for a day. They may pull out a green shirt or hat and take part in a variety of events including food, music and a green beer or Irish whiskey, regardless of where their family lineage began.

The tradition of celebrating St. Patrick's Day in the United States began with the influx of Irish immigrants to the country, who continued to honor St. Patrick as their patron saint even while they began to assimilate into the culture of their new home.

St. Patrick of Ireland was believed to have been born in 387 A.D. in either Ireland or England. His father, according to legend, was one of the rulers of the Holy Roman Empire who ruled England and Ireland. Converting Ireland from the Druids and Pagans who ruled it became one of the jobs of the Holy Roman Empire.

The supposed raiding property of the Druids and Pagans led to the kidnapping of the 14-year-old Patrick from the family's

estate in England. They returned to Ireland with the captured teen and forced him to live among them as a slave until he escaped when he was about 20 years old and was reunited with his family in England.

St. Patrick returned to his studies to become a priest and his plan was to return to Ireland and convert residents there to Christianity. After his ordination as a bishop, he was able to begin his journey back to Ireland, which he traveled with other members of the clergy who would work with him to begin the conversion.

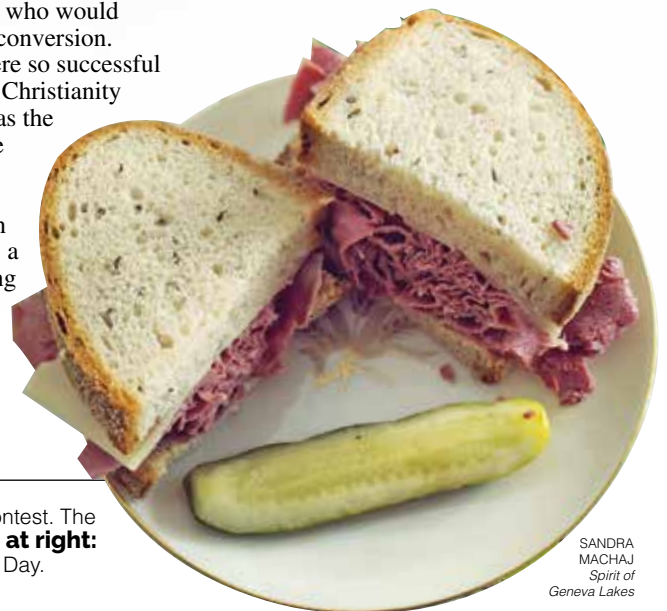
Patrick and his priests were so successful in converting the country to Christianity that Ireland became known as the most Catholic country of the time. But that's not what St. Patrick became best known for. He is said to have driven all the snakes out of Ireland, a country not known for having many snakes. Perhaps it was a euphemism for the removal of the pagans who denied the importance of Christianity, but statues and pictures of St. Patrick show

him with snakes.

After the death of St. Patrick on March 17, presumably around the year 460 A.D., the date was celebrated as a religious feast in his honor but eventually evolved into a day for honoring Irish heritage in general.

Traditions travel well

As the Irish immigrated to the United States, they continued to celebrate March 17 as the day to honor their heritage and



above: The Girls in Green anxiously await the start of a past Trivial Blarney contest. The event, which is held at Matheson Memorial Library, supports the Elkhorn Fund. **at right:** The traditional corned beef sandwich is enjoyed by many on St. Patrick's Day.

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top: This group of contestants is ready to play Trivial Blarney after enjoying their Irish meal and beer at a previous year's event.

COURTESY ELKHORN CHAMBER/ELKHORN FUND

above: Some might say a St. Patrick's Day celebration is only complete with a leprechaun, including this man volunteering at a dinner sponsored by the Delavan Lions Club.

COURTESY DELAVAN LIONS CLUB *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

would wear green, march in parades, perform Irish dances and eat traditional Irish foods along with others from their life in the United States.

In Ireland, boiled cabbage and potatoes was a typical meal since many could not afford meat. With their arrival in New York, the Irish were introduced to corned beef, an inexpensive cut of beef that was enjoyed by their Jewish neighbors. They discovered the corned beef went well with the potatoes and cabbage and so it became the most popular Irish meal to enjoy, especially on St. Patrick's Day.

Another popular Irish dish is Shepherd's Pie – which can be made with lamb or beef or a combination of both as well as carrots, onions and peas and then covered with mashed potatoes. And then there's Irish stew, and bangers and mash, which are sausages served with mashed potatoes.

Of course, good Irish beer is often enjoyed with a meal or perhaps an Irish whiskey or Irish Cream. On St. Patrick's Day, many places offer green beer – a fun twist for those enjoying spirits that day.

Regardless of the drink of choice, it's a day to raise a glass and share in the Irish toast "Slainte" which means to your health.

There will be many celebrations taking place in the area in honor of St. Patrick's Day this year including the following.

St. Patrick's Day dinner

This will be the 61st annual St. Patrick's Day dinner sponsored by the Delavan Lion's Club. The first of these dinners, which were first held at the Delavan Hotel

in the 1960s brought in about 100 guests.

"After the hotel burned down, the event was moved to the Village Supper Club in Delavan, where the numbers grew each year, reaching close to 1,200 attendees," according to Marilyn Carlson, longtime member of the Delavan Lions Club. "Three years ago, after the closing of the Village Supper Club, we moved the event to Lake Lawn Resort where it's held in the Geneva Ballroom."

This year the dinner will be held on St. Patrick's Day, which is Sunday, March 17. The event is held from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., giving visitors plenty of time to partake in the corned beef and cabbage and baked chicken meal. It's served with all the trimmings, and since it's buffet style, is an "all you care to eat" event.

Bring your appetite and Irish spirit and join in the fun while supporting the Delavan Lions Club.

Remember to wear green so you don't stand out in the crowd and bring extra money to take part in raffles happening during the event.

"There will be a raffle of a St. Patrick's Day basket filled with items related to the celebration of St. Patrick's Day. There is usually a 50-50 raffle that also helps bring in money for the volunteer work that the Lions club supports," Carlson said.

Among the programs that benefit from the event is the Lion's Camp in northern Wisconsin, which supports blind, vision- and hearing-impaired children as well as those with other disabilities. The Lions pay for all expenses for the children to attend

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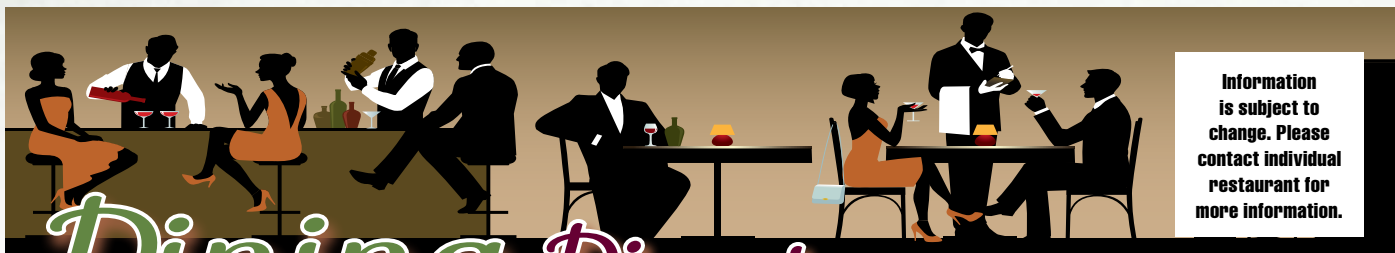
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The mini Reubens are one of the popular options available to participants in the annual Trivial Blarney contest in Elkhorn.

COURTESY ELKHORN CHAMBER/ELKHORN FUND *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*



Information is subject to change. Please contact individual restaurant for more information.

Dining Directory

Call for Carry Out & Delivery Options

1903 WEST BAR & GRILL • 121 S. Lake Ave., Twin Lakes, WI. 847-902-2817. A cozy fireplace for those cold nights. Comfortable gathering place with friends! Dine in or take out. Best burger in Twin Lakes. Excellent food. Fish fry Friday. Specialty drinks. L, D, \$\$ †

THE GREEN GROCER AND DELI • 24 W. Geneva St., Williams Bay. 262-245-9077. www.greengrocergenevalake.com Organic grocery store with a deli. Serving sandwiches made with Boars Head meat and cheese, homemade soups, salads and pizzas, wine, beer and cocktails. Dine in, Carryout or delivery. Open 7 days a week. L, D, \$-\$ † ☎ ☺

SPORTSMAN'S PUB & GRUB • 25313 W. Loomis Rd., Wind Lake, WI 53185. 262-895-1055. Join us Friday and Sunday FOR THE BEST PRIME RIB IN TOWN! \$2.00 OFF Any prime rib dinner. L, D, FF, ☺ \$\$\$

INFINITY COFFEE & BEYOND • 133 E. Chestnut St., Burlington, WI. 262-716-0015. We are a cozy little cafe tucked in the loop in Burlington. We pride ourselves on serving Colectivo coffee along with the local Burlington Coffee Company. We also serve handmade pastries and scratch made lunches. L, B, C,

MICHAEL'S ON THE LAKE • 3101 Eagle Road, Kansasville, WI 53139. (262) 878-3313. A Wisconsin supper club on the shore of Eagle Lake. Known for our steaks, prime rib on Saturday night, fish fry on Wednesday and Friday, baby back ribs and our famous carrot cake. Visit www.michaelsonthelakeWI.com for our full menu. Open Wed. & Thurs. @ 3; Fri. & Sat. @ 11; Noon on Sunday. L, D, \$\$\$, GF, FF, ☺ SR † ☎

LOCAL FOLKS RESTAURANT & PUB • 39601 60th St. (Slades Corners), Burlington. 262-539-3200. Open 6am every morning! B, L, D, \$, FF, ☺

PINE STREET CAFE • 141 N. Pine St., Burlington, WI 53105. 262-763-9800. Homestyle food made from scratch daily using only the finest, freshest ingredients. Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner. Fish Fry Every Friday. Sunday 6am - 3pm. Monday - Saturday 6am - 8pm. \$\$, B, L, D, FF, ☺

GINO'S EAST OF CHICAGO • 300 Wrigley Dr., Lake Geneva. 262-248-2525. www.ginoseastlakegeneva.com. Chicago's original deep dish pizza, Italian sandwiches, salads and entrees. L, D, \$-\$ †

B&D'S VILLAGE INN • 34414 Geneva Rd., New Munster, WI. 262-537-4719. Open daily at 11 A.M. Serving Friday fish fry!

LUISA'S • Just off Hwy. 50, 12 mi. east of Lake Geneva. 262-537-4795. Superb Italian & American cuisine. Dine in, carry out, delivery, catering avail., call ahead & will have it hot ready to go. D, \$\$ †

Key B: Breakfast L: Lunch D: Dinner NC: No credit cards accepted \$: Mostly under \$10 \$\$: Mostly under \$20 GF: Gluten free \$\$\$: Mostly under \$30 FF: Fish Fry ☎: Reservations requested †: Alcohol served ☺: Kids menu SR: Senior menu

451040



at left: Trivia teams enjoy the friendly competition while also celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

COURTESY ELKHORN CHAMBER/ELKHORN FUND
Spirit of Geneva Lakes

below: Members of the Delavan Lions Club sponsor the annual St. Patrick's Day dinner to raise money for causes the club supports including Lions Camp.

COURTESY DELAVAN LIONS CLUB *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

camp for a week.

Tickets for the dinner can be purchased in advance from Delavan Lions Club members as well as at Piggly Wiggly, Lake Lawn Resort, and the Chamber office – all in Delavan. The presale price for adult tickets (purchased by March 14) is \$20; at the door the price is \$25. Children 4 to 10 years of age are \$12 per ticket while children 3 and younger can eat for free.

Trivial Blarney

Looking for a fun but challenging way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day? Register for the Trivial Blarney event to be held at Matheson Memorial Library in Elkhorn on March 16, which will benefit the Elkhorn Fund.

The trivia contest will include up to 15 teams, each consisting of a table of eight who will share their cocktail knowledge competing against the other teams. The event will be a friendly competition, complete with green beer and traditional St. Patrick's themed foods including mini Reuben sandwiches and other appetizers.

While it's friendly and fun, each team will do their best to win the coveted Trivial Blarney Trophy, which will be awarded at the end of the evening to the team that provides the most correct answers.

"The Elkhorn Fund is an endowment that was originally funded in 2007 by Peoples Bank. Now it's funded by donations and fundraisers such as the St. Patrick's Day Trivia Event," said Chris Clapper, who co-chairs the Elkhorn Fund with John Anzalone.

"They offer endowments to local organizations such as schools, scouts, and clinics that offer free care to those in need. Open Arms Free Clinic has been a recipient of one of their endowments as has Sleep

in Heavenly Peace, which provides beds to assure that no child has to sleep on the floor," Clapper added.

She explained that the grants are reimbursable, which assures the money is used as it is intended. The organizations apply for the grants and then must account for how the money was spent.

The Trivial Blarney event will be held in the Community room at the library, 101 N. Wisconsin St., Elkhorn. Each team is limited to eight members and due to space limitations, there is a limit of 15 teams. Registration for each team – which includes participation in the competition as well as food and refreshments – is \$250.

The event will begin at 6 p.m., March 16 and last about three hours. Registration needs to be done in advance and it often

sells out. For more information, or to register a team, visit The Elkhorn Fund page on Facebook or call Chris Clapper at 262-723-5788.

Clapper, director of the Elkhorn Chamber of Commerce said the chamber is happy to help promote Trivial Blarney.

"It provides needed help to the community."

Party at Evergreen

There might not be a place more appropriately named to host a St. Patrick's Day Party than Evergreen.

On March 16, beginning at noon, stop by Evergreen Golf Club, N6246 US Highway 12, Elkhorn, dressed in Irish green and join the fun.

Corned beef and cabbage dinners will be available along with homemade Reuben rolls and a baked potato bar. Guests can also enjoy their choice of Guinness beer on tap as well as pitchers of green beer. If beer is not your drink of choice, there will be a variety of cocktail specials that day.

At 2 p.m., an optional Irish Whiskey tasting will be held. Tickets are available online at evrgreengolf.com or may be purchased in the Pro Shop.

Pier 290 - Brothers Quinn

Pier 290, at 1 Liechty Dr., Williams Bay, is known for good food and music. On Saturday, March 16, in the boat showroom, there will be a St. Patrick's Day celebration



from 6 to 10 p.m.

Enjoy an Irish themed plated dinner that will include appetizers of boxty with sour cream and trout caviar. Boxty is basically an Irish style potato pancake. They will be served with smoked salmon toast dressed with mustard butter and shamrock veggie skewers. It continues with Howth head seafood chowder, and Irish stew made with Guinness, carrots and potatoes followed by chocolate whiskey cake for dessert.

During the evening, enjoy the music of the Brothers Quinn who play Irish music but also old country, hip hop, modern acoustic rock, classic rock, and western swing, along with other styles.

Tickets are \$75 per person. To make a reservation, call 262-245-2100.

Topsy Turvy Brewery

Located in downtown Lake Geneva, Topsy Turvy Brewery will welcome the Big Al Wentzel Band on Saturday March 16, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

If the weather allows, the party will be out in the beer garden. If not, it will be in the taproom. There will be a variety of festive beers to enjoy.

Join the party at Topsy Turvy, 727 Geneva St., Lake Geneva.

Waterfront Pub and Grill

The Waterfront Pub and Grill, 408 Highway 50, Delavan Lake, is a family-owned restaurant that offers a variety of



The goal of the teams that participate in the Trivial Blarney competition is to be awarded the coveted trophy.

COURTESY ELKHORN CHAMBER/ELKHORN FUND *Spirit of Geneva Lakes*

freshly made foods daily. But there will be special Irish options available in honor of St. Patrick.

“We will have the traditional corned beef and cabbage dinner along with traditional Reubens and corned beef sandwiches,” said Carter Torkellson, manager at the Waterfront.

“We will also serve green beer and have Guinness for St. Patrick’s weekend,” he said.

Mars Resort

Mars Resort is a supper club on Lake Como at W4098 S. Shore Dr., Lake Geneva.

“On St. Patrick’s weekend, along with our regular menu will have corned beef and cabbage dinners,” Tina Ziegler, hostess at Mars said. “In addition, there will be specials on our Reuben sandwiches and our corned beef sandwiches.”

In addition to Irish food options, there will be Miller Lite green beer, Irish whiskey and a variety of mixed drinks – all with an Irish twist – will be available.

The Getaway

New to the Lake Geneva area is the Getaway Restaurant, which is in the French Country Inn at W4190 West End Rd., Lake Geneva.

According to restaurant manager Kevin Dwyer, they were still fine tuning the St. Patrick’s Day menu at the time of this interview.

“For sure we will have a special meal of corned beef brisket with all the trimmings on our menu,” Dwyer said. “But there will be other specials which can be viewed on our website.”

Whether looking for a simple corned beef sandwich, a full meal that includes cabbage or stew, a green beer or other drink, or an opportunity to hear live music, there are plenty of choices in the area for the Irish as well as those who will be Irish for the day.

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