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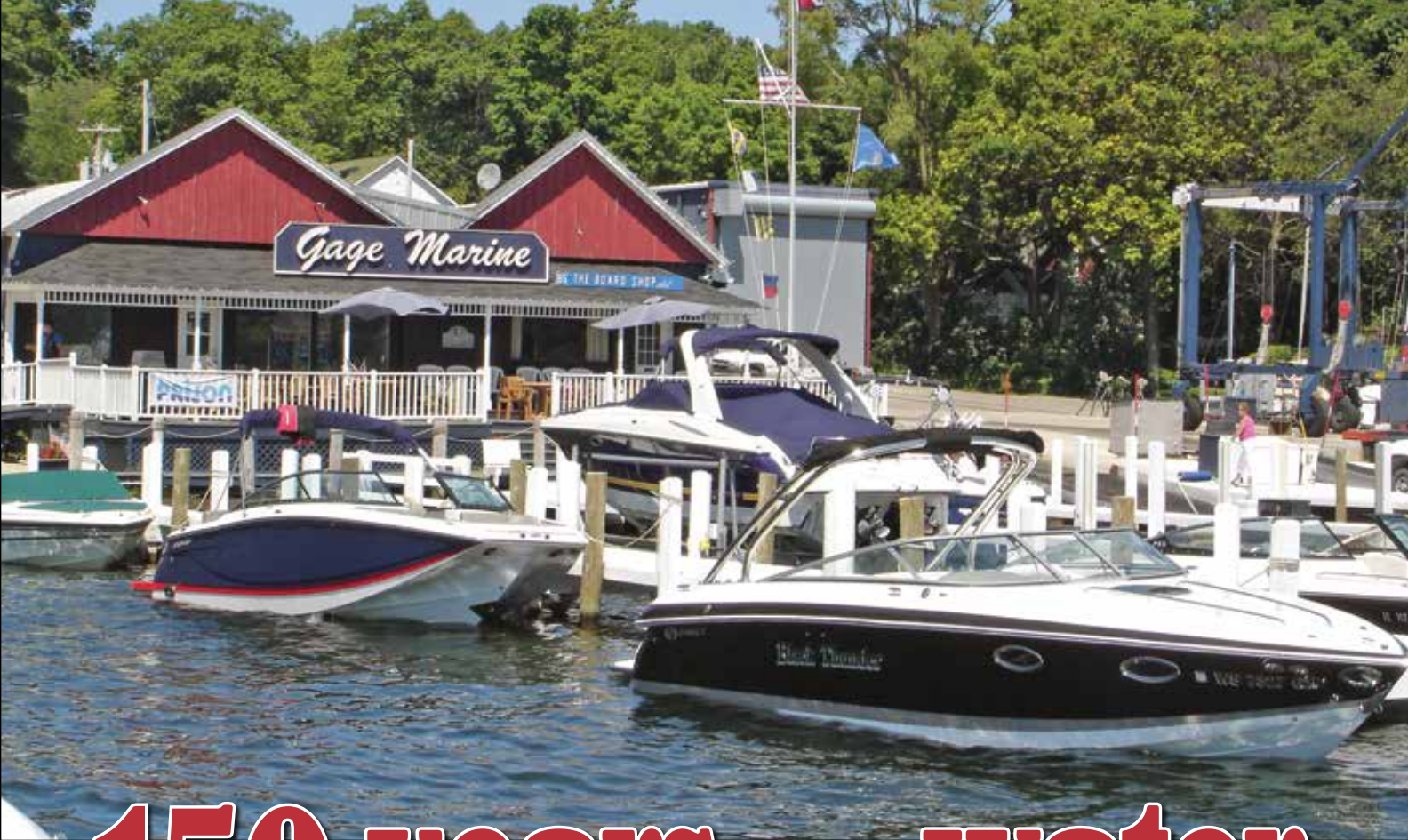
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150 years *on the* water

Gage Marine continues tradition on Geneva Lake

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Lake Geneva's clear water has been an attraction for visitors as far back as the early 1870s.

There are few of those visitors that have not taken a ride on a Lake Geneva Cruise Lines boat.

Gage Marine and Lake Geneva Cruise Lines celebrated 150 years of boating on Geneva Lake last year. Their story goes back to 1873, when the lake became the favorite summer vacation spot for Chicagoans, especially after the Chicago Fire of 1871.

With travel to the area aboard the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad taking less than a day, many wealthy Chicagoans began to build summer homes along Geneva Lake's shores.

Transportation to the actual property was more difficult, as there were no roads around the lake. As a result, small private excursion yachts were hired for transport.

As the community grew, there were not enough boats to provide these services. In 1873, Ed Quigley launched the original Lady of the Lake as the first commercial excursion business on Geneva Lake to transport passengers and supplies as needed.

The Lucius Newberry, an elegant and opulent steamer, was launched in 1875. The Newberry was able to carry 700 passengers, the largest boat launched on Geneva Lake.

"John A. Wilson purchased both large steamers in 1879 and formed the Anchor Line, the predecessor to the Lake Geneva Cruise Line," shared Bill Gage, the third generation of the Gage family to run the company. "Today, the Lake Geneva Cruise Line consists of eight boats which provide

a variety of tours on the lake.

The oldest of the boats is the Polaris, built in 1898. The newest is the Duchess, acquired in 2006. Each of the boats in the line have a varied history, as some are still the original boats while others had to be replaced as they succumbed to wear, disrepair, fires, or other catastrophes. The original Polaris and the Steam Yacht Louise are still part of the fleet.

The Steam Yacht Louise was a favorite of my Dad, Bill Gage, Sr.," Bill said. "The boat had been converted from steam power to gas. But in 1975 to 1978 it underwent a complete restoration."

Bill Gage Sr. made a trip to Europe to purchase a 1926 Plenty and Sons steam engine, which was placed on the Louise. Now it is the lake's only steam yacht.

In the mail

By 1916, George Goodman won the government contract to deliver mail to lakeshore residents by boat. Today, the mail is still delivered by boat to residents who choose the service. The Walworth is the U.S. mailboat and visitors to Geneva Lake can go on a cruise as it delivers the mail.

Gage Marine offers service, storage and sales of boats along Geneva Lake.

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Mail is delivered by “mail jumpers,” who leap from the boat as it passes a pier, place the mail in the mailbox and then sprint back to the boat to leap aboard before it moves away. The boat does not stop so speed and accuracy of the jumper is necessary and they occasionally end up in the water.

Also in 1916, the company purchased the property in Williams Bay where it built a service and winter storage facility for its boats. The property underwent a complete three-year overhaul under the direction of Bill Gage Jr., in 2012. The Pier 290 restaurant was also added.

Russell Gage purchased the fleet in 1958 and was known for giving new life to the fleet by painting the boats vibrant colors. He also began rebuilding the large vessels.

By the 1960s, Gage Marine was also involved in selling boats. At that time, many recreational boats changed from wooden to fiberglass. Bill Gage, Sr., was known for producing the Gage-Hacker, a unique wooden boat designed to cut through the choppy waters of Geneva Lake, while still giving a smooth ride. They were produced in the 1960s and are now collectibles.

New on the water

The new Lady of the Lake was introduced to the fleet in 1963. Since then, it has been the flagship of the fleet. She represents the steamboat era, although she actually is powered by twin diesel engines. She is used for both tours of Geneva Lake and for special charters.

There are a variety of cruises available. The one-hour or two-hour cruise around the lake is a relaxing and interesting way



above: The Louise, the only steam powered yacht running on the lake has been a member of the fleet since 1930. **top:** This ship replaced the original Lady of the Lake in 1963 and is the flagship of the fleet. She captures the majesty of the Steamboat era but is driven by twin Caterpillar engines.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Catch all the Action*



to learn more about the history of Geneva Lake, some of the lakefront mansions and surrounding communities.

A visit to the summer home of Chicago Beer Baron Conrad Seipp is the only home on the lake where visitors can go inside. Visitors arrive just as the Seipp Family did, by boat, and climb the more than 100 steps up to the house. It was donated to the State of Wisconsin by the Seipp family.

Other tours include an ice cream social tour, a cocktail cruise, luncheon cruise, Sunday Brunch Cruise, Supper Club Cruise and the Jazz Dinner Cruise. Boats are also available for private cruises, weddings, wedding transfers and rehearsal dinners. Food is provided by Lake Life Catering, which was added to Gage Marine in 2020.

Each December, the Santa Cruise – founded in 2018 – brings smiles of delight to children as they see lighted displays and hear Santa announce their name – if they are on the “nice” list. In conjunction, the Charities of Christmas Trees Festival is held and to date has raised more than \$500,000 for local charities.

At the Williams Bay Property, Bill Gage Jr. – who currently manages the company – opened a unique waterfront restaurant, the only one on the shore of Geneva Lake. Pier 290 offers a variety of foods and indoor and deck seating and features lake views throughout.

Serving the community

Gage Marine and its subsidiaries have always been involved in service to the community and in providing for those in need.

He said they continue to add new services that share the history of the area with both visitors and residents of the area.

“Our goal is to continue to provide activities that allow people to enjoy their free time and to learn more about the history of the community,” Gage said.

There are numerous artifacts that can be viewed at the Liechty Drive location as visitors enter Pier 290.

Gage Marine continues to be a family business. Not only have three generations of Gages – Russell, Bill Sr. and Bill Jr. – led the company since 1958, but many other family members have spent time working there. Among the employees are many other families that have been employed there for two or three

above: Pier 290 has beautiful views of the lake and can be enjoyed in any type of weather. **top:** Enjoy sitting around the firepit and enjoying a glass of wine outside at Pier 290. **top left:** Lake Geneva Cruise Line’s summer offices are on the Riviera piers where most of the tours depart.

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generations.

“We started as a small group but have continued to grow as a large family. In the summer, we have as many as 500 employees to provide all the services that visitors enjoy,” Gage said. “Throughout the years in spite of our growth we continue to focus on exceptional service.”

Lake Geneva Cruise Line is in Lake Geneva and Williams Bay. The summer harbor office is on the Riviera Docks, 812 Wrigley Dr., Lake Geneva. The winter harbor docks, Gage Marina and Pier 290 Restaurant are located at 1 Liechty Dr., Williams Bay. For more information, call 262-248-6206 or visit cruiselakegeneva.com.



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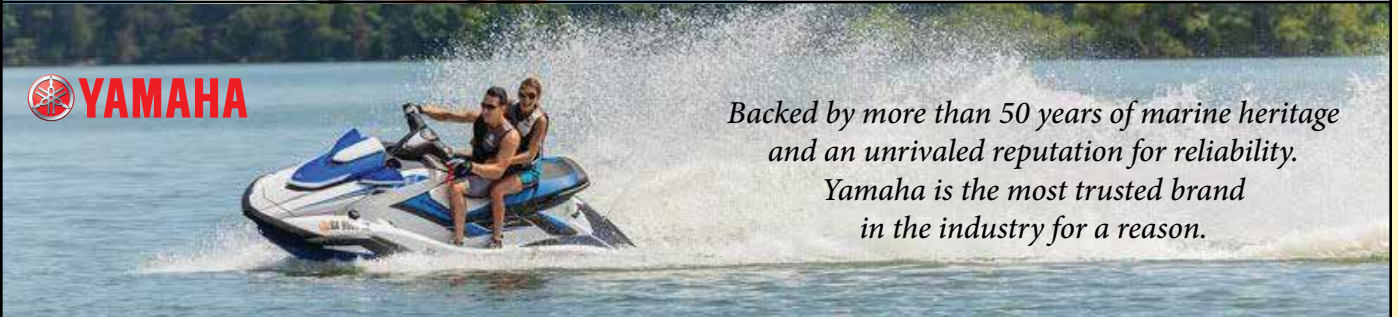
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Wizards Weekend Day

Double the magic in 2024

6th annual event will feature spells, potion, contests and more

If you are a magical being or even a Muggle ... make your way to Wizards Weekend Day on June 15 in Antioch, Illinois.

To start the day, adults and children will gather in downtown Antioch dressed as their favorite character. Armed with their wand (or perhaps their smart wand – also known as a cell phone) they will be ready to participate in special wizards' fun activities throughout the day.

The day will begin with a visit to downtown Antioch, where a search will be made for the Ministry of Magic Information Booth. It is here that the Marauders Map can be obtained with the purchase of the magical band that will allow visitors to enjoy the many magical moments fun activities. The map will identify the magical village shops with their Wizards Weekend Day special identifying names. It will also contain the hours that the various events will take place.

"Grab your broom, portkey or car and travel to Antioch for magical day filled with spells, potion, activities, climbing to Azkaban, photo ops, invisibility, magical moments, wizard swag, magical creatures, contests and so much more," according to Antioch Chamber of Commerce staff.

"Pick among our Magical Events or enjoy them all," they said,



at right: Hagrid, the fictional character, is said to be half giant and half man and is known as the gamekeeper and keeper of the keys and grounds at Hogwarts, along with the care of magical creatures. He is always a favorite of students. **below:** Young wizards take part in a variety of classes and experiences during the Kids Hogwarts School of Magic last year.

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adding that guests are required to have a Magical Band to experience Wizards Weekend Day (more details included below.)

Visitors that day may be surprised to see that downtown Antioch has a very different look than normally found on a weekend day. It is not the Antioch of old, as the town has been magically transformed into a special world, the world of wizards, witches, and even muggles.

Even local businesses, which may have been familiar to some from other outings in Antioch, will be pleasantly surprised to see how many change things up that day to celebrate the wonderful world of wizardry.

Once again, magical folk, and those who wish to become them, will gather in downtown Antioch, for a Harry Potter themed event – Wizards Weekend Day. This most magical of all events will once again be the home of many experiences to be enjoyed by wizards, witches and muggles.

Here’s a breakdown of some of what will be happening.

KIDS SCHOOL OF MAGIC

There will be double the classes at this year’s Kids School of Magic, where those ages 7-13 start off the day of fun in “school” from 8:30 to 11 a.m., held at the Antioch Public Library.

All registered students receive a wand, Magic Band, Keepsake Gift and a Map to enjoy Antioch’s Wizard Town as well as an opportunity to be part of the Great Hall Finale.

The cost is \$27.50 per person, tickets are limited, and registration will close when sold out. Preregister to save gold (\$35 cash at the library, if tickets remain available).

Students will experience twice the



number of magical classes: Care of Magical Creatures, Defense against the Dark Arts, Herbology, Broomstick 101, Divination, Magical Knowledge, Catapulting and “I will not tell Lies” followed by an in-School Finale against the Dark Arts.

All students registering by May 30 will receive a School Acceptance Letter mailed to them “Under the Stairs.”

Check-in begins at 8 a.m. outside the Antioch Library (parents should park elsewhere and walk their student to the library as there is no room for drop off in the parking lot).

Students will graduate and leave school at 11 a.m. and parents again should walk to the library due to space restrictions in the parking lot.

MAGICAL BANDS

Purchase your Magical Band to enjoy dozens of Magical Moments in Antioch’s Wizard Town (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and join the Great Hall Finale and receive wizard swag from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

A Magical Moment might be encountering a bogart, becoming invisible, learning magic and so much more.

“We ask that all ages 2-672 purchase a Magic Band to help support this Magical Event,” chamber staff said.

Magical Bands are available online in advance for \$15 per person or \$45 for a family of four. The day of event Magical Bands will be \$20 cash per person or \$60 cash for a family of four.

Magical Bands include: a Wizard Murauders Map to hunt out all your Magical Moments; photo ops with roaming Professors and Deathaters (between 1 and 3 p.m.): admission to the Great Hall Finale where you will receive wizard swag.

Pick up your Magical Band at the mini park (at the Ministry of Magic booth across from 891 Main St.)

“Experience Invisibility, Bogarts, Climbing to Azkaban, Magic Ink, Quidditch, Potion Cauldron, Find the Snitch, Magical Meet-Ups, Horcrux Hunt for a chance to win a prize and so many more magical experiences,” chamber staff said.

above: Young wizards take part in a variety of classes and experiences during the Kids Hogwarts School of Magic last year. **at left:** Many of the professors from the Kids Hogwarts School of Magic can be found wandering through downtown Antioch as they meet and greet visitors.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS *Catch all the Action*





above: A variety of professors will meet with the visitors during Wizards Weekend Day in downtown Antioch, which is June 15 this year. **at left:** With a large snake wrapped around her neck this Witch is a very formidable creature, one that will scare some while others will be intrigued. **top left:** Two of the professors from the School of Magic take a short break after the completion of classes.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS *Catch all the Action*

GREAT HALL FINALE

From 3 to 4:30 p.m. – will feature wizard swag. Note that you must have a Magical Band to enter Great Hall (which you can find by using your Wizard Map) and to experience all things magical.

MAGICAL CRAFTERS

Browse through the Mini Magical Craft Pop Up Faire, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., which will be located in the mini park in downtown Antioch.

“We are stirring up magical potions in our cauldron to come up with the right mix of magical wonder! We are seeking (not to be confused with Seekers) crafters from the Wizard Community,” organizers said.

Reserve a booth to sell your magical products – to other Wizards, Witches, and non-magical people.

“There is so much magical creativity... take out your wand and begin to create! There will be muggles walking around – they are easy to spot, and only 10 booths will be available,” according to organizers.

Spaces are 10’ x 10’ and if the registration is received by June 1, the cost

is \$88; if received after June 1, it will increase to \$111.

Magical vendors must agree to the following:

- Booth must be open all day of the Wizard Faire (from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.;
- You must wear Wizard or Witch attire, or dress as your favorite Magical Character;
- You can only accept Money or Magical Plastic (no gold);
- You must sell only magical items to qualify as a Magical Vendor;
- You are provided a 10’ x 10’ space and you must provide a tent, tables, etc. (no electric);
- You must have all product/displays within your booth (none outside of it);
- No wands may be sold (wands can only be sold by festival organizers);
- A Certificate of Insurance listing the Village of Antioch and Antioch Chamber must be submitted with application to guarantee your space.

See the chamber website for details on language that must be included on the certificate as well as the timeline and other important notes for vendors.

MORE INFORMATION

“Wizards, Witches and Muggles alike will gather in downtown Antioch for the 6th annual Wizards Weekend Day on Saturday, June 15.

“We are doubling the magical fun. Join us to celebrate all things of a magical nature, bring your owl (just kidding), your wand (or smartwand), and dress as the character you most closely relate to. Be ready for Magical fun all day long,” chamber staff said.

For more information, including to purchase Magical Bands, register for events and learn more or register as a magical vendor, visit antiochchamber.org, wizardsweekend.com or Wizards Weekend on Facebook, or call the Antioch Chamber of Commerce office at 847-395-2233.

Wizards Weekend Day is a community event hosted by the Antioch Chamber and sponsored by Raymond Chevrolet Kia and is not associated in any way with J. K. Rowling or Warner Bros Entertainment.

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Getting kids interested in golf

Modern children face no shortage of things to do, and many kids are involved in competitive sports. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that the proportion of boys and girls playing on sports teams has increased in recent years.

The lasting appeal of athletics and recreation is undeniable, and kids as young as preschool age can participate in a wide range of sports, including baseball and soccer.

And though it might require a little more patience on the part of players and parents, golf is another great sport to introduce to children.

Kids unfamiliar with golf may be hesitant to give it a shot, but the following are some strategies parents can try to get their youngsters more interested in the game.

- Start with miniature golf. Though mini golf and the real thing are two entirely different activities, many an avid golfer first picked up a club on a miniature golf course. Mini golf is all about having fun, and the joy kids have on a miniature golf course might spark an interest in playing

traditional golf.

- Play with kids. Young children typically are excited to engage in any activity if it involves playing alongside their parents. Parents who play golf can take their kids along to the course, first taking them to the range and practice green so they can teach them some of the fundamentals of the game.

As kids' skills develop, parents can play nine holes with their youngsters. The time spent bonding on the course will be unforgettable for parents and children. Older children might want to bring a friend along when playing with parents, and this, too, can be a great way to foster a love of the game in kids.

- Make it about fun, not the final score. It's up to parents if they even want to keep score, but the primary focus when golfing with young children should be fun. Try to take lessons on the range or putting green out to the course, but don't overemphasize technique or score. If kids are having a frustrating round, note that every golfer has such rounds and divert their attention by pointing out the surrounding beauty. And

keep in mind that it never hurts to leave time for some post-round ice cream.

- Set a positive example. Golf can be a frustrating game for novices and veterans alike. Parents can set a good example by remaining positive even if their own score is nothing to write home about. Resist any inclination to lash out after a shank or slice, and stay patient even when struggling with your short game. Kids are always watching their parents for cues, so it's best to ensure any frustration does not manifest itself outwardly.

- Avoid forcing the issue. Parents who are avid golfers understandably want to share their passion for the game with their children. But forcing the issue when kids are young might compel them to avoid the game at all costs. Let kids' love of the game develop organically, even if that means putting their clubs away until they're ready to try again.

Golf is a great game that can teach kids invaluable lessons. Certain strategies may foster a lifelong love of the game in youngsters.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Strategies parents can try to get youngsters more interested in the game of golf include setting a positive example, beginning with miniature golf and focusing on the enjoyment of playing rather than the score.

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safety tips for water sports enthusiasts

Bodies of water including lakes and rivers, often elicit fond memories of fun times spent under the sun. Safety should always be a priority when spending time on the water, especially when participating in water sports, including swimming and water skiing.

Though drowning incidents are not as prevalent in the United States and Canada as they are elsewhere in the world, the popularity of water sports in both countries underscores the importance of revisiting the various ways to stay safe when out on the water.

TAKE LESSONS

The carefree nature of spring and summer can make it easy for water sports enthusiasts to forgo lessons before trying their hands at water skiing and wakeboarding. But such lessons can teach people techniques that can keep them safe on the water.

Courses teach everything from how to get up and out of the water to how to properly handle a tow rope. They also can teach boaters how to navigate waters while towing skiers, tubers and wakeboarders.

LEARN THE SIGNALS

Learn hand signals and go over them before getting in the water. The National Safety Council emphasizes the importance of basic hand signals, which can be used to help boaters communicate with the people they're towing.

Hand signals are vital because water sports tend to be noisy, so nonverbal communication may be the only way boaters can communicate with the people they're towing. Signals can be used to communicate anything from directions of turns to speed requests to the condition of the person being towed.

INSPECT TOW LINES

The NSC advises inspecting tow lines prior to beginning. Such inspections can confirm that tow lines are not caught in the propeller or wrapped around anyone before the activity begins.

TAKE YOUR TIME

Wait for the propeller to stop before getting back on the boat. People being towed should always wait for propellers to stop before climbing back into the boat. It doesn't take long for propellers to stop, and those extra few seconds can dramatically reduce risks for accidents or injuries.

ONLY DURING THE DAY

Visibility is compromised once the sun goes down. That can make it hard for boaters to see any obstacles that might appear in the water, and it also makes it very difficult for them to communicate with the people they're towing. As a result of such difficulties, water sports enthusiasts are advised to only engage in such activities during daylight hours.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Did you know?

Recent statistics from the U.S. Coast Guard indicate that more than 85 percent of drowning victims in recreational boating accidents where cause of death was known were not wearing life jackets.

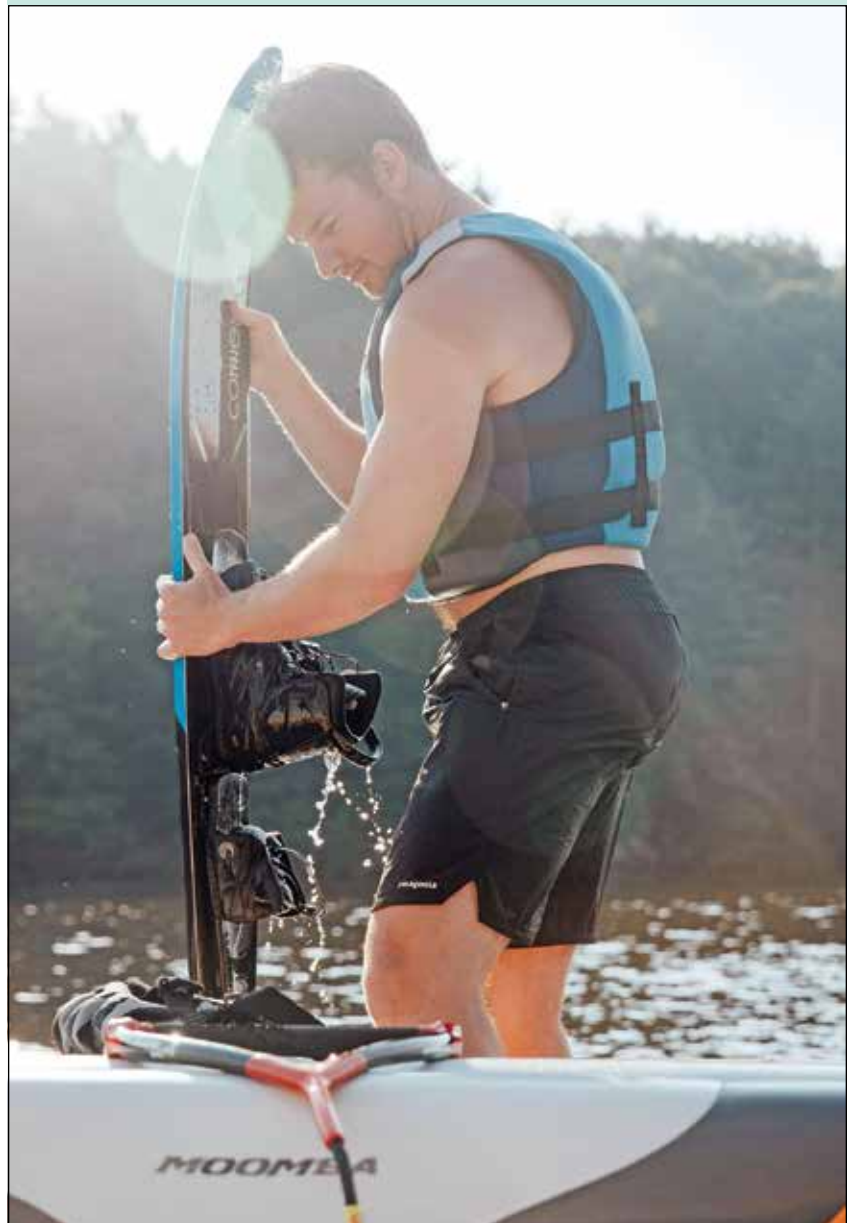
The National Park Service reports that drowning is the top cause of visitor deaths in national parks and that nearly all those deaths are preventable.

One of the simplest ways to prevent drowning is to wear a life jacket at all times when near or in the water.

There are three types of life jackets, but only two come in child and infant sizes. Inherently buoyant (primarily foam) life jackets and hybrid (foam and inflation) life jackets are available in child and infant sizes.

Officials recommends both types of life jackets for swimmers and non-swimmers. People who intend to engage in water sports should know that some hybrid life jackets are designed specifically for such activities.

The third type of life jacket is inflatable life jackets, which are only available in adult sizes and should never be worn by poor or non-swimmers.



Water sports can make summer loads of fun. Safety should always be the utmost priority for anyone involved in activities on the water.

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There's no shortage of hobbies to explore

Eating well, exercising and reducing stress are part of a healthy regimen, but those are not the only components of a healthy lifestyle. Spring is an ideal time to consider taking up a new hobby, if not two or three – especially because there are many hobbies that involve the outdoors.

Whether a hobby calls for time outside or in, they can have a positive effect on overall health, physical as well as mental health.

While hobbies can seem like a way to simply pass the time or alleviate boredom, the benefits can be so great that carving out time for them is essential for most people.

According to a study published in *Aging Clinical and Experimental Research*, participation in leisure activities positively influences self-perceived well-being and depressive symptoms.

“The blue zone” refers to the areas of the world that have the longest-living people on the planet, which include Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; and Ikaria, Greece, among others. Studies in those areas have shown that participation in activities which bring out a creative side leads to an increased sense of well-being that is good for long-term health. Those activities also can reduce cortisol levels. Cortisol is known as the stress hormone, and it can negatively affect energy, mood and sleep.

While most leisure activities regularly engaged in can have positive effects on health, those that focus on a combination of physical and mental stimulation are most beneficial.

Those looking to change their daily routines may want to consider these health-boosting hobbies.

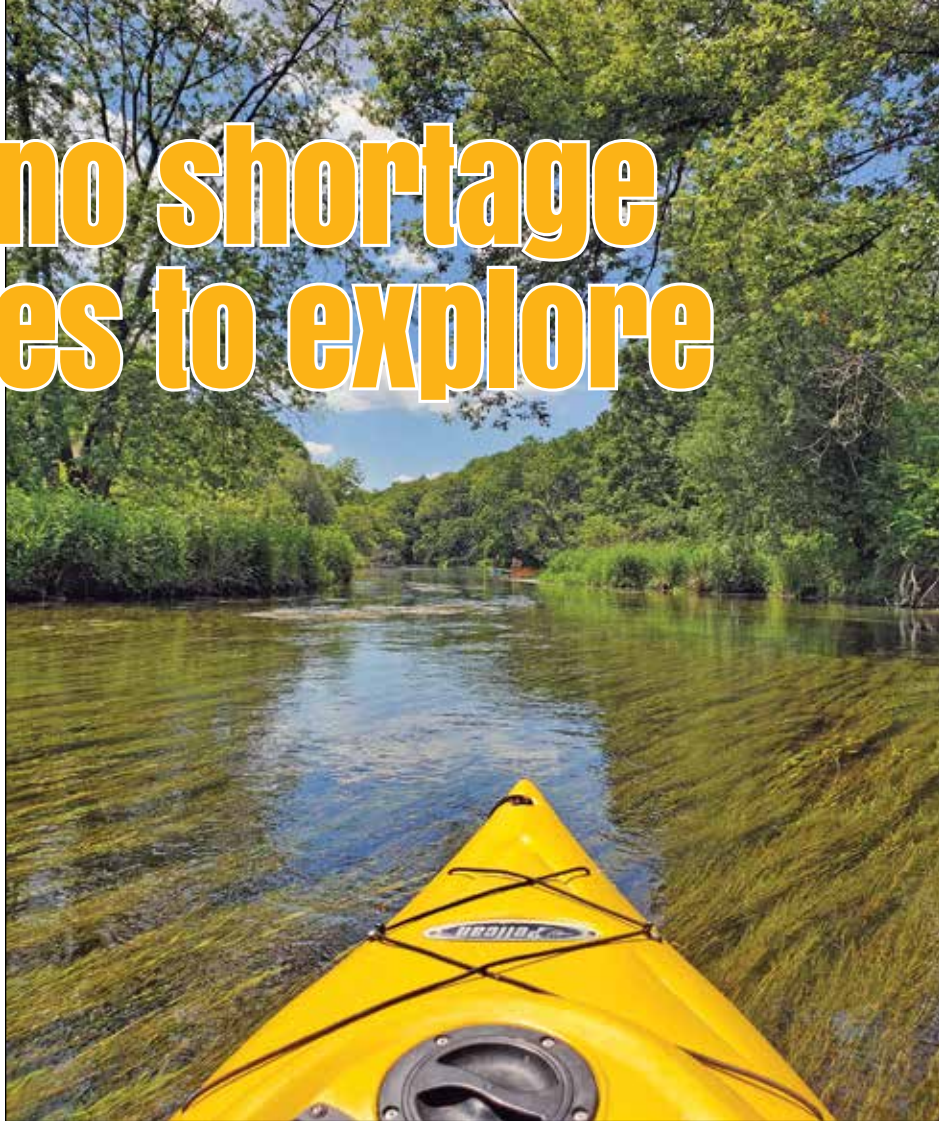
KAYAKING

There's something serene about being on the water away from the hustle of life on land. Kayaking strengthens the body, but the calm of being on the water and taking in the scenery nourishes the mind.

Experts agree that outdoor hobbies add another benefit since sunlight helps the body release neurotransmitters that trigger more positive thoughts.

HIKING

It's no secret that a walk out in the fresh air is good for us physically as well



While hobbies can seem like a way to simply pass the time or alleviate boredom, the benefits can be so beneficial that carving out time for them is essential. Spring and summer are an ideal time to try something new, such as kayaking (above), fostering animals, volunteering and hiking.

HEIDI SCHULZ *Catch all the Action*

as mentally. For some, regular walks are part of their routine, and for those ready to take it to a new level – and reap even more benefits – hiking is the next logical step.

Hiking is generally defined as being longer than a walk, often on trails, from level terrain to more challenging hills. But taking up the sport of hiking can be gradual and for many, develops into a hobby.

DANCING

Laugh, sweat and learn some footwork in a dance class. It can make exercise fun for those who find traditional exercise does not keep their attention.

VOLUNTEERING

Being a presence in your community can foster social engagement and boost emotional health. It also can keep you physically active, whether it involves working with kids or seniors, stocking shelves at a food pantry or being part of a group that cleans up a neighborhood. An added bonus is the socialization it offers and

for those seeking a new hobby, volunteering might be the perfect answer.

The bottom line is that hobbies, from those listed here to a myriad of others, bring many benefits and great time to try something new, which fits right in with the sense of renewal many feel in the spring.

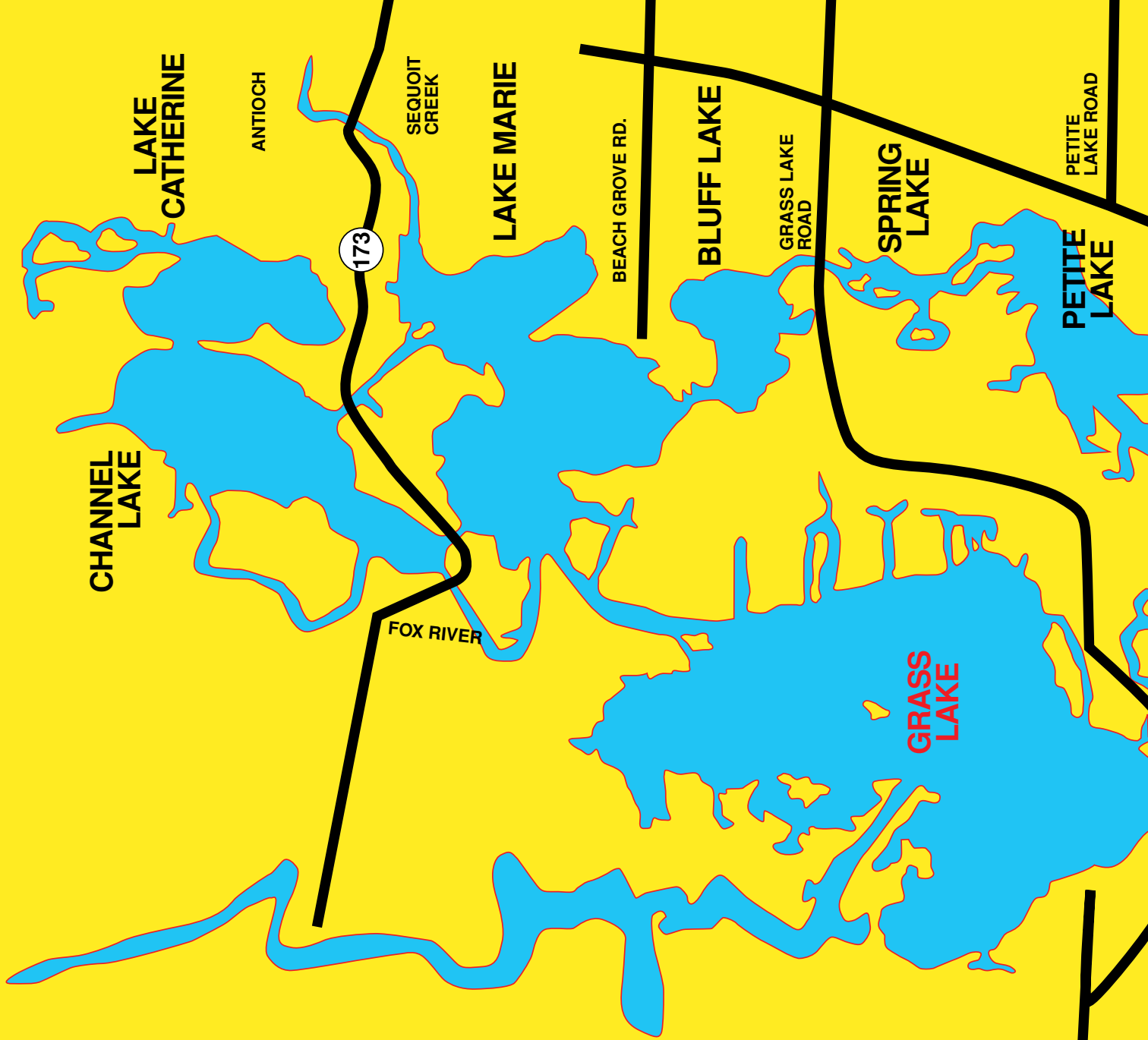
GARDENING

Gardening is physical, requires planning, involves spending time outdoors, and yields tangible results through thriving plants and flowers while beautifying our space.

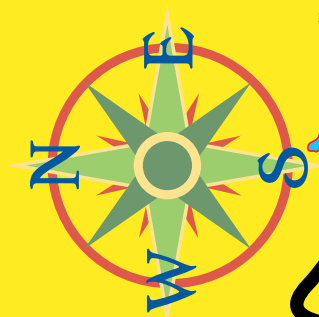
FOSTERING ANIMALS

Fostering animals offers them an opportunity to spend time in domestic settings before being adopted by permanent owners. For the foster person or family, having a dog involves going out on walks and play sessions in the backyard. A sense of purpose comes from helping out needy animals, and this hobby also taps into physical wellness.

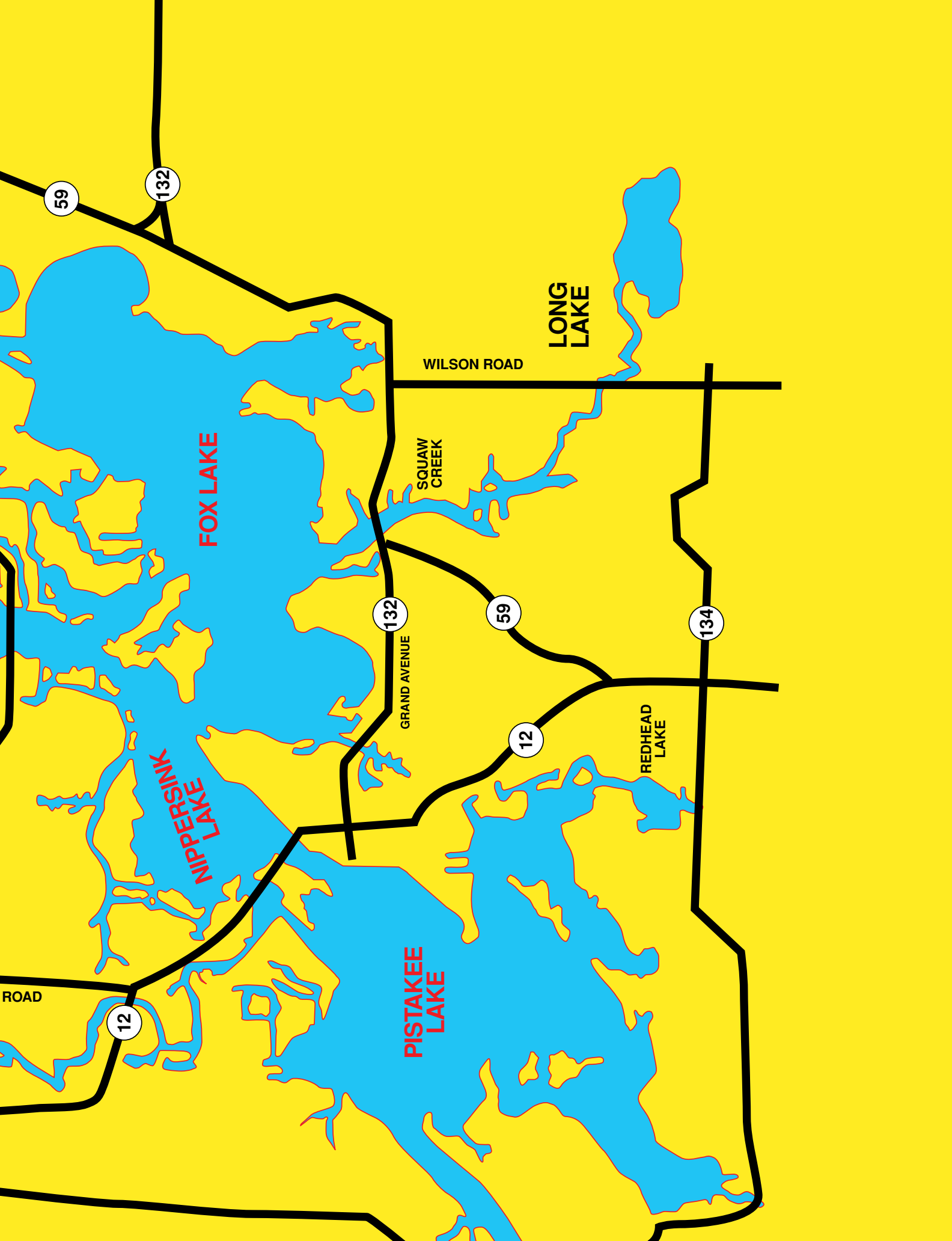
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Make fishing a fun outing for the family



There may be nothing sweeter in this big, wide world than gazing upon photos and videos of kids, nieces and nephews, and grandkids – with smiles a mile wide – holding up what they think is a huge “monster” fish (even if it’s just a small sunfish or bluegill), or photos of the family all together enjoying a day of fishing and having fun on the water.

If you love fishing and you want to share it with your family, it’s important to put a little planning in up front to help the experience go as smooth as it can to create those lasting memories and those stories that will be told for years of the monsters that were caught, and the big ones that got away.

To help you introduce the ones you love to a lifetime of fishing fun, the folks at Rapala, the legendary lure maker, offer these tips:

CHERISH THE LITTLE WINS

If you have smaller kids or beginners in the family, it’s likely they’ll be pulling up smaller catches. Though their sunfish might look measly to you, they might think it’s a monster! Hint, hint: So should you. Snap a picture to remember the beaming look on their faces and use this opportunity to show them how to conserve fish for future generations.

LET THEM GUIDE YOU

When and where it’s safe, let the kids “co-pilot” with you by operating your boat’s

trolling motor and guiding you to the perfect spot. Kids want to experience what the adults do.

Operating a trolling motor will give them experience in positioning the boat and learning how to properly and safely approach a spot.

EXPAND THE CIRCLE

Families come in all shapes and sizes nowadays. Use fishing as an opportunity to gather in the great outdoors and share some precious time together.

Involve your partner or spouse, uncles and aunts, grandparents and close friends who feel like family. A day on or near the water can be a great way for a family to get away from our always-on digital world.

SAFETY FIRST

Being in or around water means safety comes first. Make sure everyone has lifejackets, stays hydrated, and that you brief the kids on hook and water safety before handing over the rod.

Remember to check the weather ahead of time so you can bundle up if it’s a crisp morning, and bring sunscreen and hats if the sun is blazing.

BRING A SCALE

Practice catch-weigh-photo-release to get the family in the swing of things. You can even have a competition to see who had the heaviest catch!

Weigh the fish caught with a Rapala scale, perfect for taking photos that display just how hefty your catch is.

USE QUALITY GEAR

Don’t skimp on cheap fishing gear. If your low-quality fishing gear breaks or malfunctions, it could ruin the moment. Good gear doesn’t cost a fortune.

Choose gear with a lot of positive reviews and fishing lures, like Rapala lures, which are well-known for catching fish.

Similarly, be prepared for accidents that happen and practice patience if a rod tip gets broken, a fishing rod falls into the water, or a fishing lure gets stuck high up in a tree. Remember, stuff happens.

DON’T FORGET THE SNACKS!

Make everyone’s day and keep spirits high by bringing special treats along for the ride. Ask each family member their favorite snack beforehand to make sure everyone is included. The only ‘hangry’ ones on your fishing trip should be the fish!

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

A little planning goes a long way in making a family fishing trip fun for everyone. Stock up on snacks, get the gear ready and don’t forget to take some photos and videos out on the water to capture the special moments.

STOCK PHOTO *Catch all the Action*

Lake county photo contest ends June 20

The phrase, “take a picture it’ll last longer,” takes new meaning as you take your impressive imagery of Lake County.

The land of lakes invites you to submit your phenomenal pictures in the third installment of the #LetsSnapLakeCounty Photo Contest.

There is an abundance of beautiful, scenic, historical, adventurous, heritage, character and just downright #InstaGood shots of Lake County.

Visit Lake County would like to showcase where you live, work, eat, play or shop by sharing your best pictures of the county.

Organizers will accept all submissions but are looking to fulfill the following six categories:

- Outdoor Photos
- Family/People Imagery
- Dining/Libations
- Lake County Events
- Video

• Other Travel Culture (i.e. architecture, downtown areas, photo manipulation, shopping, drone, etc.)

There will be a grand prize winner as well as six other category winners. Individuals may submit up to five photos.

Winners of the #LetsSnapLakeCounty Photo Contest will win an exclusive prize and photo credit in future tourism marketing materials. The contest will reveal winners in multiple categories. Participants can submit entries this spring.

“Alright Mr. or Mrs. Shutterbug, the land of lakes is ready for its close-up,” organizers said.

By submitting an entry into this contest, the user agrees to join the Lake County newsletter list. The contents of your email is confidential and intended for the recipient specified in the message only. It is strictly forbidden to share any information with any third party without written consent of the participant.

The deadline to submit photos in June 20. For more information, or to submit photos, go to visitlakecounty.org and under the Menu tab, select #LetsSnapLakeCounty Photo Contest.



The land of lakes invites people to submit their phenomenal pictures in the third installment of the #LetsSnapLakeCounty Photo Contest. There is an abundance of beautiful, scenic, historical, adventurous, heritage, character and just downright #InstaGood shots of Lake County to be captured and shared.

STOCK PHOTO *Catch all the Action*

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453819

2024-25 fishing seasons

Opening day for Wisconsin fishing is traditionally the first Saturday in May. Season dates are often specific to the species of fish as well as the water body.

General inland trout
May 4 (5 a.m.) to Oct. 15

General inland fishing
May 4 to March 2, 2025

**Largemouth Bass
Northern Zone harvest**
May 4 to March 2, 2025

**Smallmouth Bass Northern Zone
Harvest**
June 15 to March 2, 2025

**Large and Smallmouth Bass
Southern Zone Harvest**
May 4 to March 2, 2025

**Large and Smallmouth Bass
Catch and Release**
At all other times of the year

Musky Northern Zone Harvest
May 25 to Dec. 31

Musky Southern Zone Harvest
May 4 to Dec. 31

Northern Pike
May 4 to March 2, 2025

Walleye
May 4 to March 2, 2025

Lake Sturgeon
Sept. 2 to Sept. 30 (hook-and-line)

Free fishing weekends
June 1 and 2
Jan. 18-19, 2025

For future reference, free fishing weekends are the first Saturday and Sunday in June and the third Saturday and Sunday in January.

Regarding fishing seasons, note that temporary or emergency rules may be enacted, which could change the season dates for a species or waterbody. If that happens, the DNR advises anglers to look for signs posted at boat landings.

Not all Wisconsin waters follow the general dates for the hook and line or trout season. Anglers must still consult the current regulations' particular county or boundary waters tables to determine if any special season dates exist for the specific waters they plan to fish with hook and line. For more information, visit drn.wi.gov.



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Business incubator program a community project

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

Tucked along the south end of Riverside Drive in McHenry sits a small group of white huts that offer a special shopping experience. As one meanders along, the 10 structures are revealed to be small businesses offering a variety of products that are unique, most created by hand.

Although all the huts are small, once inside it becomes clear they offer a distinctly different shopping experience from special decorations to the products.

Most of the businesses carry handmade items not normally found in traditional stores. There is quite the variety of products in The Riverwalk Shoppes – a new addition to the McHenry business community.

“The idea for the Riverwalk shopping district originally came from Carl Vallinatos,” said Molly Ostap, president of the McHenry Area Chamber of Commerce. “Vallinatos, assistant superintendent of the McHenry High School District – and a chamber board member – saw a similar program while visiting in Batavia.”



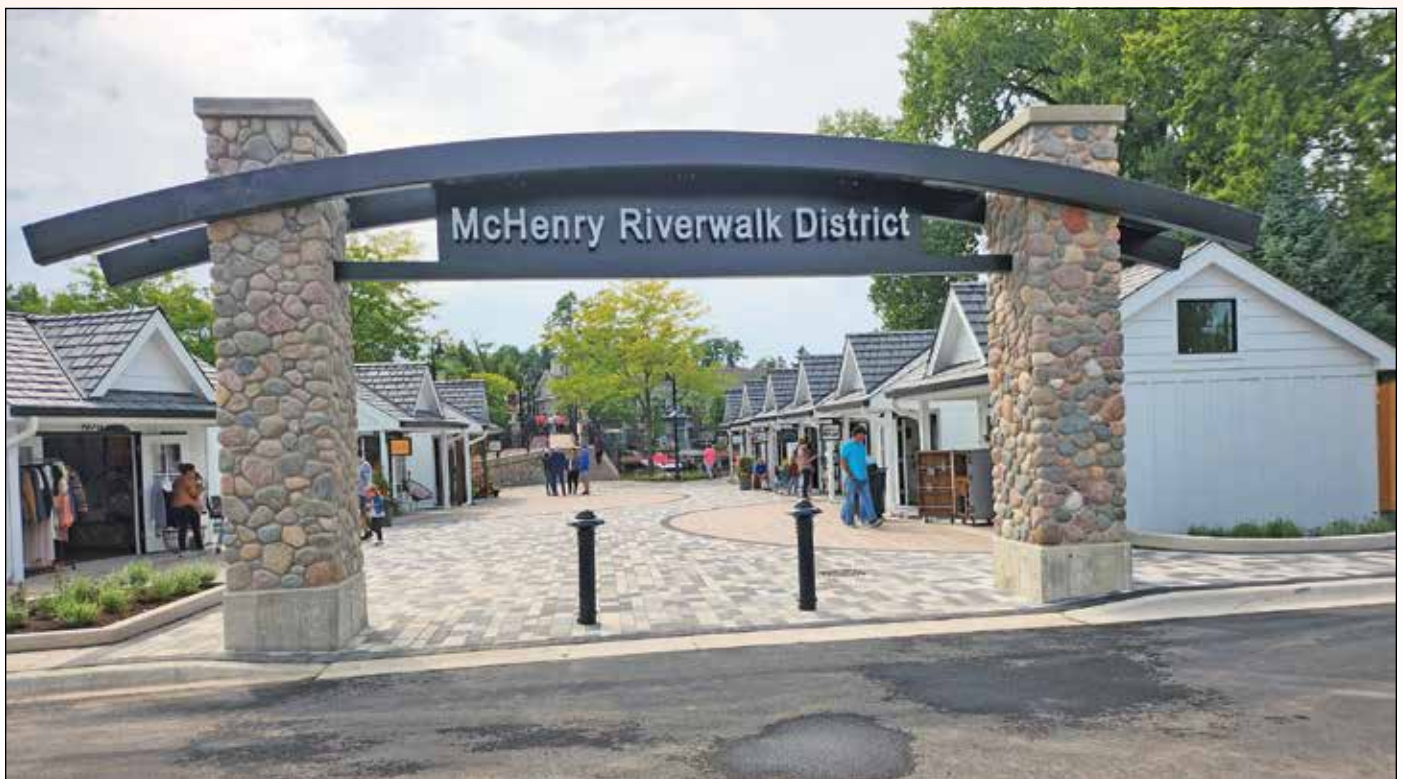
The idea of a retail incubator program in McHenry seemed as if it would be a good fit for the community. Vallinatos presented the idea of a collaborative project with the City of McHenry, the chamber and the high school. While these types of projects don't always move quickly, this one did. Within a month, by May 2021, a joint committee was formed to develop the McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes.

A site was subsequently chosen, located at the end of Riverside Drive, along the Miller Point Park area. It's a picturesque

location, along Boone Creek just before it empties into the Fox River.

By spring 2022, a logo had been created by two McHenry High School students and a design for the buildings that would be used as small retail outlets was completed.

“There were two different sizes of buildings that would be available to the businesses who wished to be part of the program. A 12x12 foot building and a slightly larger one of 12x16 feet,” Amy Humbracht, manager of the McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes, said. She explained



above: The McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes are at Miller Point where Boone Creek enters the Fox River. The 10 units offer small business owners an opportunity to establish their shops in the community. **top:** The Bumble Bread Company is known for specialty breads, cinnamon rolls and cookies, offering visitors a snack while shopping or to take home. **opposite:** Each business in the incubator has its own small hut in one of two sizes. The 2024 grand opening was May 3 and the tiny shoppes will be open Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Dec. 29.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Catch all the Action*

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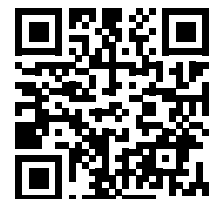
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that the larger huts would be charged \$4,750 for the entire May through December season, while the smaller ones would rent for \$4,000.

COMMUNITY PROJECT

It was decided to build 10 shoppes in all, five of each size. The creation of the Riverwalk Shoppes would truly become a community project.

High school shop students began to build the walls and ceiling joists, which were later taken to the construction site and incorporated into the buildings.

More of the community became involved with volunteers working to build the shops and local businesses and individuals donating materials and money. Professional contractors and architects also donated their time to the project.

By spring of 2023 the buildings were complete, with heat and air conditioning in each unit. In all, more than 36 professional contractors and 900 volunteers took part in the creation of this project.

All that was left to do was to choose the 10 prospective businesses that would make these huts their first brick and mortar business homes.

SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS

According to Humbracht, the purpose of the project was to give new businesses a chance to see if they were a good fit for McHenry and if they were ready to manage a business.

The businesses had to apply to the committee to be considered for the project. Most had never had a brick-and-mortar store but were involved in creating new and unique products which they had been successfully selling at venues such as craft fairs and online. Others had stores in another community and were looking to see if expanding to this area was a smart business move.

Providing a home for the business was not the only benefit for being in the program according to Humbracht. They were also provided a wealth of information necessary to be successful in business.

“There are retail workshops that mentor the owners, teaching them skills such as tax laws, marketing strategies and merchandising,” Humbracht said. “All skills that are needed for success in business.”

She said the shop owners also meet



at left: Kest Jewelry specializes in pieces made with 14k gold filled and sterling silver, along with collections of semi-precious stone jewelry sets and Pearl jewelry sets. They also offer personalized jewelry. **top:** AteaCo Coffee and Tea is crafted with passion. Discover flavor, community, and the perfect brew at this business, part of McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes.

MCHENRY RIVERWALK FACEBOOK PHOTOS *Catch all the Action*

regularly to discuss challenges as well as the positives of their business experiences.

There were many applications submitted by vendors, beginning in August 2022, hoping to receive a space in the “first class” of the business incubator program. By the end of that year, the 10 vendors had been chosen for 2023, the opening year.

Those programs began in May 2023 with support classes and the businesses opened their doors in July, slightly later than expected. The businesses remained open through December and support classes continued throughout the program.

SPECIAL GIFTS GALORE

Those looking for a friendly and interesting place to shop for a unique gift, special accent for a home, a new toy or piece of jewelry, or fresh homemade bread, should consider stopping at McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes.

The 10 businesses chosen by the committee for 2024 are: The Pieceful Project, The Bumble Bread Company, KEST Jewelry, AteaCo Coffee and Tea, Preserved Peculiarities, Bright Nest, Vintage Mercantile, Marvin’s Toy Store, Edge Designs, and Patina Wine Shop.

Most people love freshly baked bread, cinnamon rolls and cookies so it isn’t surprising that tucked in one of the Riverwalk huts is The Bumble Bread Company, which was selected for a second year as one of the McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes’ businesses.

It’s owned by Danny Springer of McHenry who creates his products in a professional kitchen in McHenry.

Known for his specialty breads, cinnamon rolls and cinnamon roll cookies, it’s difficult to leave his shop without making a purchase.

“We will be serving delicious fresh breads, snacks and more every weekend through the end of the year. We are extremely excited to be back for another round and we’ll be doing more of everything, with lots of new stuff in store,” the website states.

At Marvin’s Toy Store, you will find toys that “spark children’s imaginations and fun that fosters their creativity. We strive to offer every customer a superb shopping experience by helping them find a unique toy or gift with awesome customer service from our knowledgeable staff,” the website states.

The toys at Marvin’s “are safe, unique, developmentally sound, environmentally friendly and of course tons of fun,” according to the website.

“We encourage kids of all ages to think and explore while playing and to experience wonder with engaging, open-ended toys. Marvin’s Toy Store has the toys, games, and books that will soon become cherished objects in your home. We love to play here at Marvin’s so come play with us,” it states.

Bright Nest, another shop selected to return from the 2023 group, provides handmade and seasonal products including

a variety of hand painted glassware.

Owner Shelby Fairweather is a graphic designer who creates painted glasses in addition to other hand created items, which can be bought for special occasions including the holidays or given as gifts. She also carries handmade items from other craftspeople in her shop.

Those are just a few of the unique businesses involved, but all of them offer many items that likely won’t be found at other stores.

STILL IN EARLY STAGES

Whether or not this community incubator program is a success won’t be known for a couple of years until the retail classes are completed.

According to the National Association of Business Incubators, 87% of incubated companies are still in business after five years and 84% of the businesses remain in the same area where they started their operation.

For more information, contact the McHenry Chamber of Commerce, 1257 N. Green St., McHenry, call 815-385-4300 or visit the website at www.mchenrychamber.com.

The McHenry Riverwalk Shoppes are at 1202 Riverside Dr., McHenry, just south of Highway 120. There is parking available.

All shops are open Friday and Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. though some shops may be open additional hours.

FISHING • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

THINK BEYOND FISHING

Tell stories, take pictures, and bring coloring books for the little ones if they need a break. And remember, it’s okay if not everyone wants to fish.

Some members of your family may not be too keen on fishing. Make sure they feel welcome and invite them to read a book or do another activity while others in your family are fishing. They will surely want to be there when the others are showing their catches off.

FISHING IS ABOUT LEARNING

Fishing can be fun, but it’s also an opportunity to be part of nature and experience other precious moments, such as watching other wildlife (turtles, frogs, ducks, squirrels), identifying plants and trees, learning how a boat works, and trying different types of presentations to see which one is most effective in catching fish.

If some members of your family really turn on to fishing, feed that passion with videos about fishing. Rapala has more than

600 informative videos on its YouTube channel alone.

MAKE A VIDEO

Take lots of photos and videos of your fishing trips with the family, then create a short movie with iMovie to help them relive the memories of fishing when it’s cold and wet outside.

It’ll be fun to make, and the final product will be a memento your family will cherish forever.

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Lake County upcoming events

Note that this is just a small portion of the many events slated to take place in Lake County communities. For more happenings, go the visitlakecounty.org.

THUNDER ON THE CHAIN

Drag boat races at Blarney Island will be held 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Thursdays, May 30 through Aug. 29.

Welcome to the unique world of Blarney Island Drag Boat Racing, which is now entering its 37th season. Blarney Island is on Grass Lake Antioch.

This is bare-knuckles, heads-up, 'race-what-you-brung' drag racing. The racecourse length is approximately 800-feet and is located on an open lake. The notoriously choppy waters have given Blarney Island racers a reputation for being both fast and fearless, organizers said.

Want to watch the Races? Take the Blarney Island Shuttle Boat Service from the Port Of Blarney. If you have your own boat, there is an expanded section of free parking on Blarney Island during race nights, now including the brat bar row.

The front row to the racecourse (Blarney Island pier parking) is reserved or pay by race night spots. The pit area is race boat parking only! These are reserved from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. (or when the racing ends). Once the races are over, all slips are once again open to free parking.

All Thursday night racing is run by the Northern Illinois Drag Boat Association. All race participants are members of the Northern Illinois Drag boat Association, which manages the weekly race events. Blarney Island is the sponsor and race promoter.

Want to race on Thursday nights? The NIDBA is happy to be a resource in assisting you with becoming a member, learning the racing rules and other boating regulations. Contact NIDBA if you have

any questions or are interested in being a part of. For more information, call 847-395-3804.

Blarney Island is at 27843 W. Grass Lake Rd., Antioch.dsxcs

FOX LAKE FARMERS MARKET

Beginning Tuesday, June 4, Fox Lake Farmers Market is ready to kick off a new season of delectable goods locally made.

The market, which will run through Aug. 27, is constantly growing and making this a fun shopping experience for the families in the Fox Lake Area.

The wide variety of food and craft vendors makes this a fun shopping experience for its customers.

Fox Lake Farmers Market is at 17 E. School Ct., Fox Lake.

B4 SUMMER FESTIVAL

B4 Summer Festival at Richardson Adventure Farm, Saturday, June 8, from noon to 10:30 p.m.

The Chain O' Lakes Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce the B4 Summer Festival! Bands, bacon, bourbon and beer will be the theme with a goal to raise money for five local nonprofit organizations.

What makes this festival special is that the festival grounds will be the Richardson Adventure Farm in Spring Grove creating a unique opportunity to be a sponsor for a highly anticipated event. They will be opening some of their family-friendly activities just for the fest, such as their 700ft zip line, a 50ft observation tower, massive jumping pillow, pedal cars, playground, and giant slide to enhance the experience.

Entertainment includes live music. Scheduled to perform at the Chain O' Lakes Chamber of Commerce event that day are Pino Farina Band and then Modern Day Romeos and Wedding

Banned performing alternating sets for over four hours of non-stop live music.

Many of the beer selections will be represented by local breweries. Nine local food trucks will be placed throughout the property with a wide assortment of both bacon, and non-bacon, themed food options.

A separate private bourbon tasting will provide novice and developed palates a great experience.

For more information, call 815-675-9729.

Richardson Adventure Farm & Corn Maze, LLC, is at 909 English Prairie Rd., Spring Grove.

PRIDEFEST

Lake County Pridefest will be Saturday, June 8, from 2 to 10 p.m.

Join for the 4th annual community celebration & fundraiser! Lake County PrideFest is one of the most highly anticipated events of the summer in Lake County, drawing thousands, according to organizers. This free, family-friendly outdoor festival will feature: music and performances, food trucks, a beer and beverage tent, craft and artisan vendors, a resource fair, games and entertainment for children, multiple drag shows, dancing and more!

A \$5 donation at the door is suggested but not required.

Join in celebrating LGBTQ+ life and culture & show your support for Lake County's LGBTQ+ community.

Lake County Pridefest will be held at Cultural & Civic Center of Round Lake Beach, 2007 Civic Center Way, Round Lake Beach.

FOX LAKE TRIATHLON

Sunday, June 9 at 7 a.m. Back on the shores of Nippersink Lake in Fox Lake. The 1/2-mile swim includes the



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world famous ‘inflatable ducks’ sure to bring a smile as you head back into shore.

The bike course (12.5 miles) is a loop with some rollers that might challenge you.

The 3.1-mile run is a flat out and back along the multi-use asphalt path within town.

The event is USAT sanctioned for all those gathering points throughout the season.

For more information, call 847-587-2151.

Lakefront Park is at 71 Nippersink Blvd., Fox Lake.

FATHER'S DAY FISHING FRENZY

Saturday, June 15, from at 9 a.m. to noon, Lakefront Park, 71 Nippersink Blvd., Fox Lake.

Bring your family and friends for a family fishing event.

Free to attend, no registration or fishing license required. Bring your own fishing pole!

For more information, call 224-225-1404,

JAZZ IN JUNE

Battle of the Big Bands with Kurt Elling on Sunday, June 16, at 7 p.m. at Ravinia Festival.

Adonis Rose and his New Orleans Jazz Orchestra take the stage alongside Orrin Evans leading the Captain Black Big Band for Jazz In June: Battle of the Big Bands, hosted by and featuring the vocals of Ravinia Jazz Advisor Kurt Elling, and the standard-setting bassist Rufus Reid, a co-Artistic Director of the Ravinia Steans Music Institute Jazz Program, also guests across the evening.

Each Grammy Award-winning ensemble hails from a community vital to Black music, New Orleans and Philadelphia, and will provide an evening of unmatched jazz. The New Orleans Jazz Orchestra exists with the belief that jazz can be the catalyst for positive and permanent change in the community, running the city's acclaimed Jazz Market. Evans's Captain Black Big Band moves with versatility between big band and small ensemble playing, a flexible and tightrope-walking unit whose daring approach lends their music an exhilarating edge. The two groups face off in Ravinia's Pavilion.

Before the big bands take the stage, the young professional musicians from this summer's RSMI Jazz Program play a set in the Pavilion—a prelude to their



annual Jazz Grandstand concert of all original works—and the phenomenal Chicago Public High School musicians of the Ravinia Jazz Scholars take the Carousel Stage soon after the park opens. Students of Ravinia's Reach Teach Play, the Scholars work throughout the year with eight of Chicago's top performing and teaching artists – the Ravinia Jazz Mentors – and play shows around the Chicago area and at Ravinia each year on their way to beginning professional careers.

Tickets range between \$46 and \$80.

For more information, call 847-266-5100 or email tickets@ravinia.org. Ravinia Festival is at 200 Ravinia Park Rd., Highland Park.

ANTIOCH FARMERS MARKET

The market will be held 4 to 7 p.m., Thursdays, June 20 – Thursday, Sept. 12.

Local farmers, crafters and other artisans gather to offer goods.

Free admission.

For more information, call 847-395-2160.

Antioch Farmers Market is held at the corner of Main and Orchard streets in Antioch.

LAKE COUNTY FAIR

Wednesday, July 24 - Sunday, July 28 – Celebrating its 95th year, the Lake County Fair offers excitement for the whole herd.

From Ferris wheels to funnel cakes, there's something for everyone at the Lake County Fair.

Enjoy motocross, monster trucks, demolition derby, pig races, livestock competitions, and more. All grandstand and arena events are free with admission!

Don't miss the PIGgest event of the year, organizers said.

Admission is \$5 a person. For more information, call 847-680-7200.

Lake County Fairgrounds is at 1060 E. Peterson Rd., Grayslake.

LONG GROVE VINTAGE DAYS

Saturday, July 27 - Sunday, July 28, Long Grove Vintage Days is a two-day street market for all things vintage, antique, reclaimed, repurposed, upcycled and handmade.

Located in the heart of downtown Long Grove, this year's festivities will be located all around the downtown area.

Using GPS to get here? Enter the Visitors Center address, 308 Old McHenry Road, Long Grove, 60047 to find us.

This is a free event open to the public. There will be live music, unique vintage vendors and more – all within a quaint village setting. So much to see and do during your visit!

What to expect:

- Long Grove Hometown Event, hosted by the Historic Downtown Long Grove Business Association
- Antique, handmade, vintage, upcycled and reclaimed dealers
- Outdoor, open-air street market
- Free admission and parking
- Shop the market or one of the independently-owned shops around town

• Sip, dine and relax in one of the many establishments in town.

Free admission.

For more information, call 847-634-0888.

The Vintage Market will be held in historic downtown at 308 Old McHenry Rd., Long Grove.



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