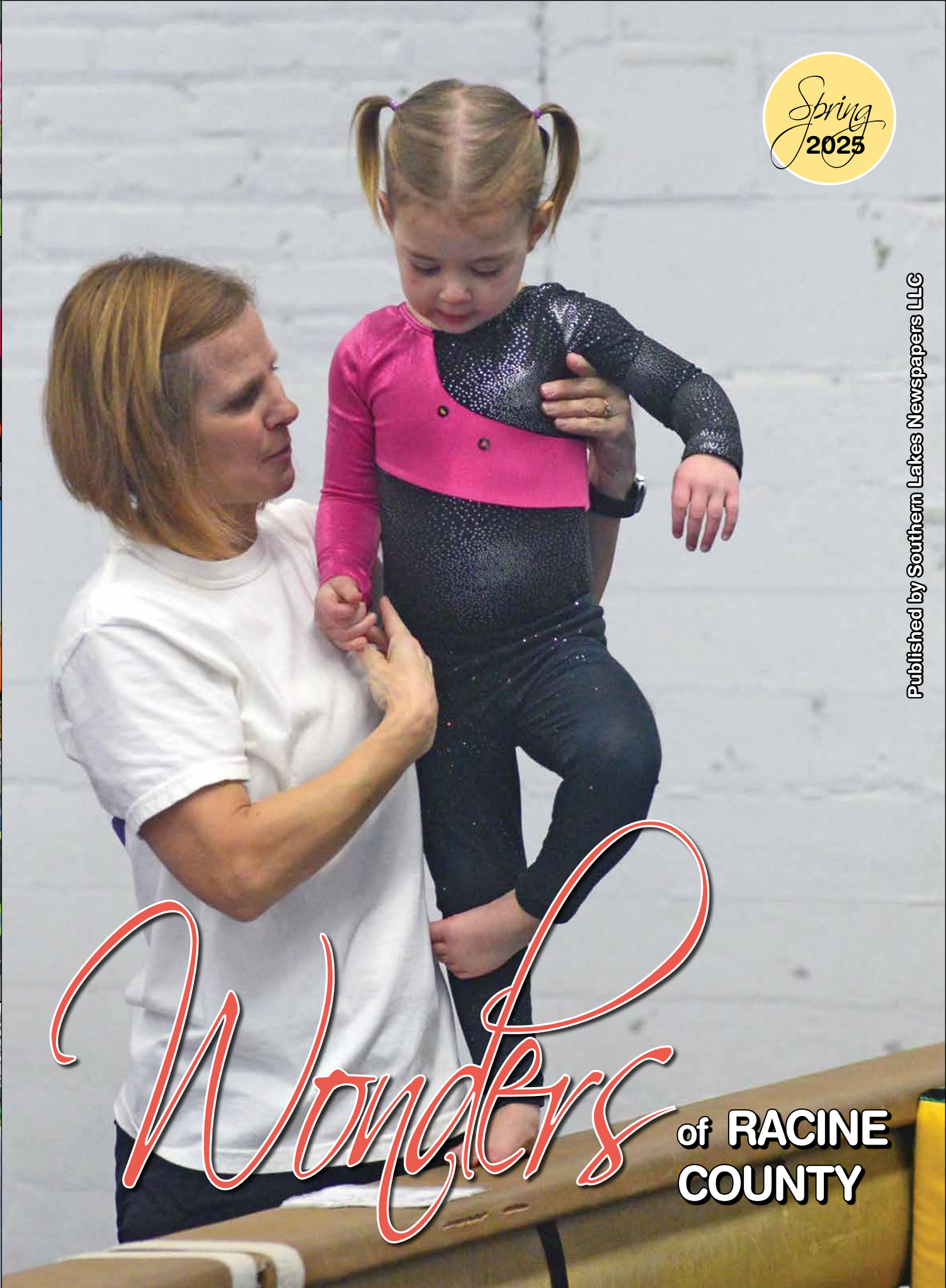


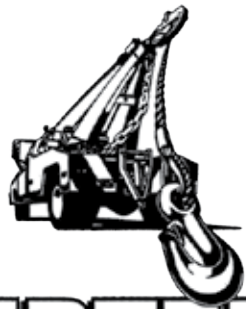
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Wonders of RACINE COUNTY





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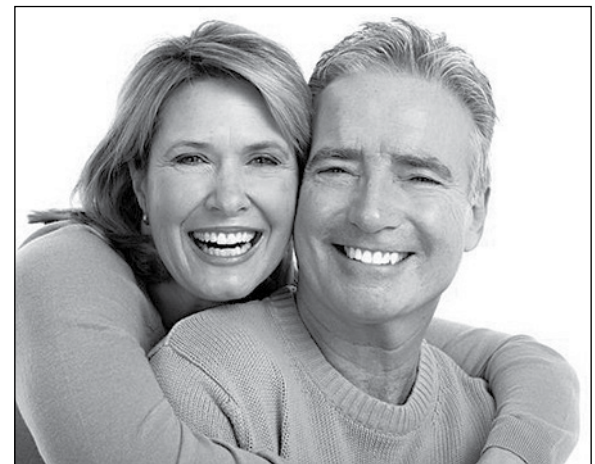
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Bridging the gap for patients

Time to Thrive Wellness offers variety of remedies, treatments

By Jason Arndt
STAFF WRITER

Time to Thrive Wellness, of Burlington, offers a holistic approach to healthcare through services provided at the downtown storefront while also offering some in-home care for patients in need.

Owned by Kristina Mingus, a nurse practitioner with 22 years experience, she began the business two years ago on a mobile basis providing infusions and vitamin injections tailored to meet a patient's needs.

Last October, after spending some time on the road, Mingus opened a brick-and-mortar at 532 N. Pine St.

Mingus always looked at Burlington as an ideal place to establish a permanent location as she was born and raised in the area.

"I always wanted to stay local," she said. "I like being in the heart of downtown and the foot traffic is nice with people walking by and inquiring about my services."

She said the services she offers aims to combine two disciplines into one.

"I try to merge Western medicine with holistic healthcare combining preventative treatment and prophylactic treatment to help people be well and feel their best," Mingus explained. "I do sick visits and wellness as well."

Licensed through the state as a nurse practitioner, Mingus graduated from Gateway Technical College and began a nursing career in 2003.

According to the website, Mingus launched Time to Thrive to bridge the gap between large healthcare organizations and holistic options, recognizing patients often need more unrestricted time to receive treatment.

"I just don't think people should be

treated like numbers," said Mingus. "I focus on their concerns and what they want out of their healthcare journey."

Since launching two years ago, culminating in the brick-and-mortar opening, Mingus said patients have favored more personalized treatment options she's able to offer.

"I think most patients that come really enjoy the one-on-one service," said Mingus, who typically sees between 20 to 30 patients weekly.

Time to Thrive Wellness offers a range of services, including remedies for anti-aging, weight loss, headaches, nausea, and fatigue.

Time to Thrive ingredients include, but are not limited to, a variety of B vitamins, zinc, magnesium, vitamin D3, vitamin C and others.

She said treatments vary based on what the patient is seeking.

"I think we are also vitamin-deprived and don't even know what a healthy body feels like anymore," Mingus explained. "Our food doesn't have the nutrients they used to have. (People) don't how good they can feel on a normal day."

In addition to treatments, Time to Thrive offers some retail skin products for sale, including brands such as DefenAge and Lightning Bolt.

DefenAge products tout skin rejuvenation and anti-aging formula, according to its website.

Lightning Bolt – which uses an oil-based formula – helps cleanse, moisturize, repair and regenerate skin cells.

Customers can also take home a treat for their pets with Doggo Bits available for purchase.

For more information about Time to Thrive Wellness, visit timetothrive2023.com, like the page on Facebook or call 262-290-3236.



from top: Kristina Mingus, owner of Time to Thrive Wellness, prepares to serve patients at her downtown Burlington storefront. Her business aims to offer a comfortable setting for patients during treatment sessions.

JASON ARNDT Wonders of Racine County

Liars Club has been around for decades

About 70 entries received for annual contest

By Jason Arndt
STAFF WRITER

Persistence paid off for a Wisconsin Rapids resident who became the biggest fibber of the year in the annual Burlington Liars Club contest.

Jerry Worzella, who last submitted an entry in 2017, sent a similar tall tale to the world-renowned Burlington Liars Club in early 2024. He was recently named the winner with his simple folly about sleeping.

"My doctor says that it is perfectly normal to toss and turn in your sleep. It's called sleeping in the futile position," Worzella wrote in his entry.

The Burlington Liars Club began as a joke from a Burlington newspaper



Jerry Worzella

reporter who wrote a tale about how "old timers" got together each New Year's Day at the police stations and lied for the championship of the city.

Since then, the group has seen thousands of submissions, including the recent contest, which brought in about 70 entries.

"We get them from around the country and a lot of them are Midwest and local stuff, so it works out pretty good," said Burlington Liars Club President Dennis Tully.

Worzella, who couldn't initially recall the last time he submitted an entry until the Liars Club found a contact from 2017, said he decided to try again to garner national fame.

He said he submitted it and would "see what it would do. I have been following the Liars Club for years. I read a lot of the past winners and there were some really good ones."

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Wonders of Racine County

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On the cover: Coach Jenny Barry works with Emerly Hingtgen, 3, on the balance beam at Lakes Area Gymnastics, Inc. in Burlington, which offers a variety of programs are for girls and boys of all ages.

JASON ARNDT Wonders of Racine County

Laying foundational gymnastics skills

Lakes Area facility in Burlington touts fun and safety

By Jason Arndt
STAFF WRITER

Lakes Area Gymnastics, Inc. has served the Burlington community and beyond for more than a half-century.

Founded in 1973, the facility at 432 S. Pine Street touts a positive, fun, and safe learning environment for all children, according to owner Diane Biedrzycki.

Biedrzycki, who served two stints as coach of Burlington High School's gymnastics, took ownership of Lakes Area Gymnastics when she was only 19 years old.

"This is really a hometown family-oriented business," she said. "There are bigger gyms than us 15, 20, 30 miles away. But over and over, we hear from people when they come in and tell us how this place feels. The gym feels welcome and safe. The parents feel that their kids are safe here and learning skills."

Lakes Area Gymnastics has about 550 total students ranging from preschool to school-aged enrolled in different classes at the facility.

A professional member of USA Gymnastics, US Elite Coaches Association who excelled competitively in the sport, Biedrzycki said her facility focuses on the recreational side of gymnastics, placing an emphasis on building a foundation for youngsters looking to transfer skills to

other sports and activities.

"When they go out of the gym, they feel more confident in (school) gym classes or at the park," she said. "They are using the skills that they are doing here once a week to feel stronger and more confident, which carries over to athletics."

Oftentimes, track and wrestling coaches recommend gymnastics to their athletes, Biedrzycki said.

"The one thing we hear and over and over again from other sports coaches is they want their kids in gymnastics," she explained. "The wrestling coaches want their kids doing gymnastics just because of the overall strength, flexibility and body awareness that they get here."

Sometimes, Biedrzycki and other coaches at Lakes Area find some of the students enrolled in programs exhibit talent suitable for competitive gymnastics.

Strong coaches

At Lakes Area Gymnastics, the facility employs a team of coaches, including long-time instructor Jennifer Barry, Ninja and Tumbling/Trampoline Director Jared Weber, and Biedrzycki's daughter, Alyssa Renfrew.

Barry, the recreational program director, began teaching at Lakes Area Gymnastics in 1994 and brings experience as a competitive gymnast for Lakes Area and Burlington High School.

Biedrzycki said Barry has been instrumental in helping them achieve success in the preschool program.

"We knew our strength, for one, was our preschool program," Biedrzycki said. "She is one of the reasons why we are so



from top: Diane Biedrzycki, owner of Lakes Area Gymnastics, Inc., said they see about 550 students enrolled in a variety of programs. Riley Buchner, 2, hangs on the rings at the facility, which is in Burlington.

JASON ARNDT PHOTOS Wonders of Racine County

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successful in that program, for sure."

Renfrew, formerly Alyssa Biedrzycki, has also played a key role in Lakes Area's family-oriented approach.

"Alyssa has worked for me for 20 years now and is also a large part of our success and a big part of our programs for ages 6 and up," Biedrzycki said.

Weber typically holds Ninja classes, which has been appealing for boys enrolled at Lakes Area, Biedrzycki said.

Broad interest

Lakes Area Gymnastics doesn't only serve girls, with boys coming in and using the facility as well, according to Biedrzycki.

"Almost all boys gymnasts wanted to do Ninja, so that has kind of become a priority

for us," she said. "That was really what the demand was for."

Ninja combines several disciplines, including martial arts, climbing, jumping, swinging and rolling. A comparison would be to the NBC television show American Ninja Warrior, but on a much smaller scale, Biedrzycki explained.

"It is more of an obstacle course-based movement," she said, adding girls have also joined the class, making it a co-ed program.

Ninja classes are typically held on Friday nights.

Lakes Area Gymnastics also offers open gyms and parties for groups.

For more information, including further details on classes, call 262-763-2933 or visit the website at lakesareagymnastics.com.

Salon and lounge offers numerous services



Rosebud Beauty opens in downtown Burlington

By Jason Arndt
STAFF WRITER

Rosebud Beauty, a salon and bridal lounge, opened its doors in the Burlington community. It specializes in all services related to weddings as well as other special occasions.

Co-owned by Krystal Rose Hopkins, a Burlington native, and Jessie Swanson originally from Bristol, the business officially launched in December and a grand opening celebration took place earlier this year.

According to Experience Burlington, which held a ribbon cutting ceremony, the duo carries years of experience in the industry and plans to eventually host events for women-owned businesses focused on “mompreneurs” and mother’s mental health.

The salon and bridal lounge, located at Chestnut Street and Milwaukee Avenue, offers haircuts, color, and styling, professional makeup applications, custom spray tans, lash extensions, and more.

A 2012 Burlington High School graduate, Hopkins moved to Milwaukee and worked in the healthcare industry while performing professional make-up services.

Hopkins also has experience with lash extensions, lifts and tints, hair extensions, custom spray tans, and brow lamination.

“She’s built a fulfilling career in the beauty industry and has such a passion for making others feel beautiful,” Experience Burlington wrote about Hopkins on its Facebook page.

She decided to return to the Burlington area about two years ago and saw a revitalized downtown.

“It feels like a different town, honestly,”



Hopkins said. “It feels like new life has been breathed into Burlington since I graduated.”

Now married with two children, she found returning to her roots intriguing, considering the positive changes she sees in the community.

“We spent a lot of time at events and things. It feels very young and vibrant,” Hopkins said.

Swanson began a career in the beauty industry after graduating from Westosha Central in 2009.

Carrying 16 years of experience, Swanson has worked for a handful of salons, specializing in numerous bridal services and she is certified with Bumble and Bumble as a razor cutting specialist and educator.

Swanson, who met Hopkins at a Lake

from top left: Rosebud Beauty owners Jessie Swanson (left) and Krystal Rose Hopkins opened their business in December and a grand opening celebration took place earlier this year. Swanson and Hopkins meet with Experience Burlington Executive Director M.T. Boyle. In addition to a variety of services, Rosebud Beauty has numerous retail items for sale at its salon and bridal lounge in downtown Burlington.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS Wonders of Racine County

Geneva salon several years ago, said Burlington was where she had set her sights on.

“I have always loved Burlington,” Swanson said. “When I was working in Union Grove for a couple of years, my goal was to land in Burlington.”

Positive synergy

Hopkins received hair services from Swanson several years ago in Lake Geneva and the two have since become friends.

At times, Hopkins floated the concept of opening a business to Swanson, who was receptive to the idea.

“We had a brief conversation where Krystal was like, ‘I don’t know, I think I want to open my own space’ and if I would be open to renting or like to do it with her,” Swanson recalled. “I didn’t really anticipate it happening as quickly as it did.”

Hopkins signed the lease for the newly renovated establishment last October and invited Swanson to tour the facility.

“I came with her and looked at the space and I was open to the partnership,” Swanson said.

Like most partnerships, Hopkins was initially tentative but soon realized she and Swanson presented a positive synergy, including a shared vision with similar objectives.

“She continued to prove over and over that she is so trustworthy and has such great ideas about this just as much as I do,” Hopkins said. “It has really been heart-

warming to see that she and I are in such alignment with the goals that we have and how we show up in the community.”

Swanson went on to say the partnership brought her new freedom, considering stylists rent chairs from salon owners.

“When you are in someone else’s salon, there are limitations of how you can run your business,” Swanson said. “You don’t have the freedom to branch out into the community and that was more of what I wanted.”

A safe space

Hopkins said Rosebud Beauty is more than just a salon.

It offers a comfortable space for bridal parties to receive all necessary services in a comfortable setting before the special occasion.

“The space for us, in general, is to be able to offer a safe place where (clients) can show up as their authentic (selves),” Swanson added.

The space also has retail items for sale, including Kevin Murphy hair products, and items exclusively from women-owned businesses.

According to Experience Burlington, Rosebud Beauty offers more rooms for people to rent out to an esthetician, nail technician, massage therapist, and even for event planning.

Rosebud Beauty is at 100 W. Chestnut St., Burlington. For more information, visit rosebudbeauty.co or like the business on Facebook.

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LIARS CLUB

• CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Worzella submitted a caricature, instead of a photo, in honor of his late brother Chet who took the time to create the masterpiece.

According to Worzella, he and his brothers, including Chet, spent time sharing tall tales and called Chet the alpha liar of the family.

“We would all get together and tell stories, but my brother Chet always seemed to come up with some pretty outlandish stuff,” Worzella explained.

Chet, a professional photographer, passed away in 2012.

Worzella beat out some former champions who earned honorable mention, including last year’s winner, Beth Schuster from Burlington.

Schuster, one of the few women to win the contest, described her grandson’s demeanor in her recent entry that earned honorable mention.

“My grandson has the most infectious smile. Every time he visits, I need a round of antibiotics,” she wrote.

Others who received honorable mention included 2018 champion Chuck Goldstein, of Janesville, and 2012 winner Richard Schaaf from Devils Lake, North Dakota.

“I recently suffered a bad fall – I hit my funny bone and almost laughed to death!” Goldstein’s entry stated.

Schaaf’s submission stated: “I filled out the questioner on the website for an older people dating service. The only response back was from a mortician.”

Frank Garner, of Lake in the Hills, Illinois, was the fourth liar to achieve honorable mention accolades.

“I have a super duper memory! I was born in June 1937 and I have a recollection from September 1936! I remember going on a picnic IN my daddy, and coming home IN my mommy!” Garner wrote for his lie.

Short and sweet

Tully said the committee tasked with selecting the biggest lie received responses from around the country, including Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota, for the 2024 contest.

“But we do get an awful lot of Wisconsin stuff,” he said.

According to Tully, the committee typically reviews each submission, whittling down the entries to a select few through a scoring system and then choosing the winner.

The key to earning acclaim consists of brevity and avoiding topics like politics and other controversial items, Tully said.

“We try to keep it short,” Tully said.

“Some of these entries go on and on – two or three paragraphs.”

Decades of winners

Aside from Wisconsin, champion lies have come from 27 total states as well as Sweden and Canada since the Burlington Liars Club began the contest in 1929.

Burlington Police Department Captain Anton Delano was the 1929 winner.

“Captain Delano, who sailed salt water and then skippered sailing vessels on the Great Lakes for years, related a story about a voyage around Cape Horn, when they sighted what they thought to be land – a bleak, barren island, just protruding above the ocean – an uncharted island. Apparently, said the Captain, it was a huge island, for they sailed along its shore for three days before they discovered it was not an island at all – only a whale, asleep on the surface,” Delano’s submission stated.



Kids consignment store under new ownership

Ellie Bean Boutique, Burlington, offers affordable prices

By **Jason Arndt**

STAFF WRITER

Previously known as grayson grape & co, 265 Milwaukee Ave., first-time mother Sydney Huisinga and fiancé Caleb Kresken bought the establishment from owner Dana Erickson and transformed the business into “Ellie Bean Boutique” in honor of their daughter.

Huisinga, a 2020 Burlington High School graduate, reopened the business in January after she spent time working with Erickson.

“I was already working here and had already been doing a lot of it for a while,” she said. “We did change a little bit in the shop to make it more of our own. But other than that, it is pretty much the same.”

Ellie Bean Boutique, like its predecessor, features new and gently worn clothing, toys, baby items, books, and many other products from hundreds of consigners.

“Our consigners that were with grayson grape got transferred to us, so we kept building up what we already had.”

Finding a purpose

Around the time she gave birth to Ellie, who is now 2, Huisinga discovered grayson grape and immediately fell in love with it.

“It was perfect because I had a place to go for all of my baby stuff and I saved money,” Huisinga said. “It was really nice to have.”

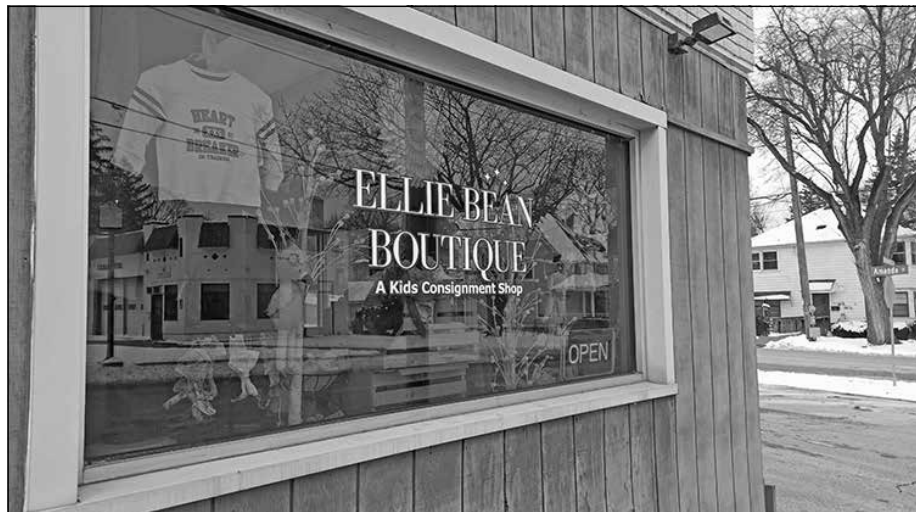
As a stay-at-home mother, Huisinga said she wanted to reconnect with the community and began helping Erickson at grayson grape.

An advocate for small businesses, she said the opportunity ignited her already existing passion for thrifting, taking photographs, and shopping, among other pursuits.

“I love to take pictures. I love to put outfits together and get cute little new toys for babies,” she said. “I just realized that it made perfect sense for me to do this.”

When Erickson decided to sell the business, Huisinga jumped at the opportunity.

“It wasn’t long before I realized that my heart truly belonged to the consignment and



from top: Sydney Huisinga, owner of Ellie Bean Boutique, stands near a few of the numerous items available at her store in Burlington. Ellie Bean Boutique, 265 Milwaukee Ave., Burlington features a wide selection of items from children’s consigners.

JASON ARNDT PHOTOS Wonders of Racine County

thrifting world. The connections I made with other families who also loved thrifting and supporting small businesses inspired me to take the leap and start my own venture,” she said, adding that grayson grape served a vital niche to the community.

“Honestly, I was going to be so sad if I wasn’t going to be able to shop here anymore and I knew a lot of our consigners would feel that way, too,” Huisinga said. “We don’t really have a kids store in Burlington or a store that just accommodates little babies.”

At Ellie Bean Boutique, most of the items she receives have a shelf life of approximately 120 days.

If an item doesn’t sell within the allotted amount of time, Huisinga donates it to local organizations, such as Love, Inc. and the Transitional Living Center.

In retrospect, Huisinga never envisioned having her own store, especially since she was undecided on her future after graduating from high school in 2020.

“I never expected myself to have a brick-and-mortar store,” she said. “I always liked thrifting, and I always liked reselling my clothes online. I thought that was fun.”

Young entrepreneurship

Huisinga, 22, follows a recent business trend in the Burlington area with several people younger than 25 years old taking ownership of brick-and-mortar stores.

In addition to Huisinga, Morgan Cole, 19, owns Morgan’s She Shed and Noah Brague is the proprietor of KenoKicks262.

Huisinga said she believes the trend serves as inspiration.

“I really think a lot of us younger people are saying this is something we can do,” Huisinga said.

Ellie Bean Boutique is typically open Wednesdays through Sundays.

For more information, including hours of operations and items available for sale, visit the Ellie Bean Boutique Facebook page.

Offering the best of both worlds

Combined shop in Waterford features products for men, women



Vana Lyon, owner of two stores that are connected – Main Street Mercantile and Rusty’s Dry Goods – in Waterford, said customers are often greeted by her rescued boxer dogs Lulu (left) and Rusty.

JASON ARNDT Wonders of Racine County

By Jason Arrndt
STAFF WRITER

Vana Lyon never envisioned opening a unique gift shop for men in downtown Waterford.

However, after opening Main Street Mercantile – which specialized in women’s products – in September 2020, Lyon often received feedback from customers seeking more products tailored to men.

So, she decided to create two separate businesses. Main Street Mercantile, 307 E. Main St., and Rusty’s Dry Goods, look separate from the outside.

But once inside, customers have access to both and often receive a greeting from Lyon’s rescued boxer dogs named Lulu and Rusty.

Main Street Mercantile, a gift shop for women featuring items sourced entirely from small American businesses, started across the street.

“That was intended to be just a women’s stop carrying candles, bath products, jewelry, home goods and things like that,” Lyons said. “We were open for two years, including during the pandemic, and things were going great.”

But customers inquired about men’s products. In response, Lyon purchased a property that formerly housed a dentist’s office and repurposed it into Rusty’s Dry Goods in honor of her oldest dog.

Another opportunity arose when the tenant next to Rusty’s decided to move to another location. “It was fine, but it wasn’t ideal,” she said of previously having the two shops across the street from each other. “Now everything is all under one roof.”

Main Street Mercantile has a variety of bath products, cosmetics, jewelry, candles, eco-friendly home products, children’s apparel and accessories

made by small businesses in the U.S.

Rusty’s Dry Goods offers grooming supplies, apparel, accessories and jewelry – all for men, as well as items suitable for the man cave.

“My husband is a 21-year Air Force vet, so we focus on veteran vendors as much as we can,” Lyon explained.

Additionally, she has secured a Class A beer license allowing the sale of canned beer by different craft breweries based in Wisconsin.

“Our canned beer is one of our top sellers that we carry,” Lyon said, adding that among the offerings are individual cans made by local brewery Low Daily, which is in Burlington.

Seeking happiness

Lyon began pursuing ownership of a small business after her father passed away as it resulted in her gaining a new perspective on priorities.

“I didn’t want to keep going into a job that I wasn’t happy with,” Lyon said. “I just decided to do something that makes me happy.”

Even during the pandemic, customers showed overwhelming support for Lyon’s new adventure.

“During the pandemic, people were focused on shopping local,” said Lyon.

In addition to a supportive community, she also credits the strong bonds created working with representatives of the brands she sells.

“I work directly with a lot of the brands,” she said. “We have really great relationships.”

Main Street Mercantile, 307 E. Main St., Waterford, and Rusty’s Dry Goods, are accessible online at mainstreetmercantilewi.com. Store hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

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