

2025 SUMMER ACTIVITY GUIDE

A photograph of two young girls playing in a sandbox at a park. The girl on the left has blonde hair with a white bow and is wearing a pink dress, sitting and smiling. The girl on the right has dark hair in a bun and is wearing a blue denim shirt and white pants, sitting and looking down. In the background, there is a green metal playground structure and a blue water bottle on a table.

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Visit the East Troy Electric Railroad to experience what these trolleys and trains were like in a simpler time. The railroad's historic interurban railroad cars and trolleys take a scenic 14-mile round trip through southeastern Wisconsin.

Meander through the museum in the depot, where kids can be trolley motormen, discover the joy of model railroads, and learn about electricity. The gift shop features a unique selection of railroad souvenirs for all ages.

Tickets can be purchased in advance on the website and walk-up tickets are usually available. Advanced purchase is recommended for special event trains (see related sidebar) and if specific departure times are sought for regular train rides.

Boarding is at the Depot in East Troy or at the Depot behind The Elegant Farmer in Mukwonago. Train schedules, ticket prices, and equipment are subject to change without notice.

The amenities

- Parking is free at the museum.
- Smoke-free trains run rain or shine.
- Discover, Visa and MasterCard accepted.
- Public washrooms are available in the Depot.

Railroad Museum 2025 SCHEDULE

Fridays • June 6 to Aug. 29

Eastbound, departs East Troy Depot
10 a.m., noon, 2 p.m.

Westbound, departs Elegant Farmer Depot
11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m. (not a round-trip)

Saturdays • May 3 to Oct. 25

Eastbound, departs East Troy Depot
10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m.

Westbound, departs Elegant Farmer Depot
11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m.,
(3 p.m. and 4 p.m. departures
are not round trips)

Sundays • June 1 to Oct. 26

Eastbound, departs East Troy Depot
Noon, 2 p.m.

Westbound, departs Elegant Farmer Depot
1 p.m., 3 p.m. (not a round-trip)

All trains go to Indianhead Park between May 3 and August 26.



Car 26 is the oldest car in the East Troy Railroad fleet, a 1908 Sheboygan Interurban car.

EAST TROY RAILROAD MUSEUM PHOTO Summer Fun Guide

Fares

Adults \$17

Seniors (65+) \$14.50

Children (3-14 years of age) \$11 (all fares are plus tax). Children 2 and younger ride for free.

Train schedules and reservations can be done online at easttroyrr.org.

Become a volunteer

For people who volunteer at the East Troy Railroad Museum, it feels like you become part of a second family... only this family runs a railroad.

"We need every member of the family to do his or her part to make it a smooth-running operation. It is challenging, it is fun, it is educational, and you know your work is appreciated," representatives said.

Some volunteers can only give a couple of days a month and others may put in 100 days a year. Some want to work in areas where they bring experience and are comfortable with the tasks. Others want to be challenged by learning new skills and look forward to doing something completely different than what they do in their "day jobs."

The variety of tasks needed to operate a railroad and museum give people plenty of options. A few of the ways to contribute include selling merchandise in the gift shop, being a motorman (or woman) on the trains, maintaining the historic equipment and helping put together the railroad's annual newspaper.

"What we all have in common, though, is the desire to see things happen and to

preserve this historic railroad. Together we deliver the Museum's Mission: To engage visitors in the heritage of electric interurban railways and trolley systems through restoration, preservation and operation of historic equipment," representatives said.

"We invite you to stop by to talk with one of the volunteers about what it's like to volunteer here. Interesting, involving, and rewarding tasks await you," they said.

For more information visit easttroyrr.org/

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2025 SUMMER Fun Guide

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For advertising opportunities in our Fun Guides, weekly newspapers or other special publications, please call

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2025 lineup of events

Milwaukee Day • June 28

Celebrate Milwaukee's electric railroading history with a chance to see and ride on a historic Milwaukee Streetcar or a newly restored Chicago North Shore and Milwaukee Silverliner car.

Work cars from The Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Company (TMER&L) will be on display too, along with historic tickets and timetables.

Chicago Day • July 12

Celebrate Chicago's railway history with a centennial celebration of the railroad's three CTA cars. They also will have the Chicago, South Shore & South Bend railroad six operating South Shore cars, originally built in the late 1920s.

National Park Rangers from Indiana Dunes National Park will be on hand to explain the history of the South Shore Line.

The Picnic in the Park • July 20

This kid friendly Family Picnic Train will run on Sunday July 20 and this year will feature train cars #9 and #13 traveling to Jim Byrnes Memorial Park in East Troy for a picnic.

Everyone will receive a voucher for a free meal from Frank's Lunchbox Food Cart while at the park. Kids can play on the new playground equipment before and after eating.

A coupon for ice cream at a local shop will also be provided at the end of the train trip back to the East Troy Depot.

Reservations are available at www.easttroyrr.org.

Railfan Day • Aug. 23

On Railfan Day, railroad volunteers take all the equipment out of the barn and put it on display. Guests can ride a different rail car on each trip of the day.

Once again, there will be a variety of fun family activities like scavenger hunt, miniature train rides, and operating model railroads.

Beer Tasting Train • Aug. 30

Join a fun and educational beer tasting train! Enjoy five different beers while traveling the route of the East Troy Electric Railroad.

The train is a joint event with Black Point Estate. A historian and beer aficionado from Black Point serves as the host, and Toothpicks, the railroad's

caterer, provides the hors d'oeuvres.

This 2-1/2-hour event starts and finishes at the East Troy Depot. Book your seats online under the Dinner Train heading at: easttroyrr.org.

Harvest Fest Trains • Sept. 7 – Oct. 26

The regular season ends on Sept. 7 this year and the railroad will then offer round-trip rides to the Elegant Farmer, where you can enjoy apple picking, a corn maze, and hayrides.

It's suggested that you visit our website to see the schedule and purchase your tickets online in advance. Trains will not travel to Indianhead Park in Mukwonago during this time. You may still buy tickets on a walk-up basis, subject to availability.

Sunday Brunch Train • Sept. 28

On the railroad's Sunday Brunch Train, the three-course meal starts with a breakfast charcuterie board, followed by a crustless cheese and spinach quiche, finishing with a braided maple and pecan Danish. Coffee and juice are included.

Enjoy a two-hour round trip on the dining cars with views of the Kettle Moraine countryside outside your picture windows.

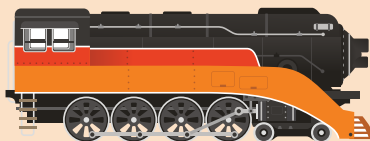
Please visit the East Troy Railroad Museum website for more information and to book your reservations. The dress code is casual, and restrooms are on board.

Trick or Treat trains • Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24

Bring the kids or grandkids in costume and take a train from the Depot in East Troy to Jim Brynes Memorial Park, where kids can go "Trick-or-Treating," play games, and enjoy the playground equipment before the trip back to East Troy.

Dinner Trains

Numerous special dinner trains are offered through the East Troy Electric Railroad each year. More information about these themed events, including menus – as well as making reservations, which is required for these trains – can be done through the website or by calling 262-642-3263.



The railroad relies on a crew of volunteers who help in many ways, from maintenance and working in the gift shop to operating the trains. Volunteers Matt Wrzeszcz, Rich Burger and Kevin Jensen are shown ready to depart from the railroad museum.

EAST TROY RAILROAD MUSEUM PHOTO *Summer Fun Guide*

RAILROAD

• CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

volunteer-with-us or call 262-642-3263.

Become a member

More than 300 people support the East Troy Electric Railroad through annual memberships.

Membership provides unique benefits including free rides. By being a member, you also help preserve this last remaining portion of Wisconsin's once vast interurban system and support work on historic electric railroad cars that ran on interurban systems in Wisconsin, Illinois or Minnesota.

Membership levels available include:

- Individual at \$50/year
- Couples at \$75/year
- Family of four at \$120/year
- Conductor's Club at \$250/year
- Motorman's Club at \$2,500/year.

All memberships include free rides for the member or member family for the year, plus reduced fares and presale access for special events.

Members also receive 10% off gift shop purchases. Conductor's Club and Motorman's Club members receive general admission passes for friends and special members-only train events.

At the Family Membership level and higher, you are automatically a member of the National Association of Reciprocal Museums. This means you can go to more than 1,100 museums, zoos and botanical gardens for free or at a significantly reduced rate. You just need to show your East Troy Railroad Museum membership card when you visit a NARM location. Visit narmassociation.org to see all the member locations.

For more information or to join, ask for a membership form in the East Troy Depot or visit the website at easttroyrr.org/membership.

Other ways to support the railroad include donations, matching gifts, sponsorship, endowment and legacy giving. For details send an email to fundcomm@easttroyrr.org or call 262-642-3263.

STILL *riding* THE waves

Twin Lakes Aquanuts have kicked off 53rd season; ready to again 'wow' crowds from Lake Mary

For many, sitting along the shore to watch the local, award-winning waterski team perform is a favorite activity throughout the summer.

The Aquanuts Water Ski Show team is in its 53rd season, once again impressing guests with performances on Lake Mary.

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**
CORRESPONDENT
by **Jason Arndt**
STAFF WRITER



The team, which is based in Twin Lakes, has a trio of team members who were chosen by Team USA to represent the U.S. in the 2025 World Championships: Kailey Koehler, Maggie Kelly and Ethan Schulda. Team USA won followed by Australia, Belgium and Canada.

Also competing for a world title in individuals was the Aquanuts' strap doubles team of Zeke Tiet and Makayla Bazeley. They finished third at the competition.

Last year was a successful one for the team on many levels including the following finishes at the Wisconsin State Show Ski Championships: Aquanuts Team, third place overall; Kailey Koehler and Gabbie Taschwer, first place, swivel pairs; Maggie Kelly, second place, swivel; Zeke Tiet and Makayla Bazeley, second place in doubles; Amy Laughlin, special outstanding award in the singer/announcer category.

Other honors the team earned at the 2024 state championships included third place in pyramid, ballet, barefoot, tow boat driving and pick-up boat crew.

The Aquanuts perform twice weekly at Lance Park Beach on the shores of Lake Mary in the Village of Twin Lakes.

Note that there is a time change this year. Senior shows will be at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday and Saturday from Memorial Day through Labor Day. There will be some junior shows as well.

History of the Aquanuts

Fifty-one years ago, a group of water

skiers gathered and formed the Aquanuts. Little did they know that this tightly knit group would band together and become a premier waterskiing group, participating in a variety of competitions and winning hundreds of awards over the years.

In 2021, the team won the Wisconsin state title for the first time in 35 years and finished second in national competition. In 2022, the Aquanuts finished off its 50th anniversary season by winning the 47th annual Indmar Marine Ski Show National Championship in Loves Park, Illinois. The past two years, in 2023 and 2024, the team earned third place overall at the state championships.

The Aquanuts are known for their daring stunts, ballet lines and innovative show themes. Each year more difficult and daring stunts are added to their routines. The clowns were introduced in the early days and have remained a symbol of the Aquanuts, highlighted prominently on their logo.

Weekly shows

While the skiers are the showpiece, they alone are not responsible for the longstanding success of the team. The boat drivers, spotters, equipment managers, marketing managers and the local businesses, especially the marinas, which help support them are as necessary as the skiers for success.

The Aquanuts have a strong partnership with the Village of Twin Lakes, which allows Lance Park to serve as the team's

home.

Practice each year begins long before the skiers are ready to hit the water. Members of the team work on the three-, four- and even five-high pyramids – and numerous other formations – on dry ground first.

The Aquanuts have two teams – a junior team and a senior team – but at times they overlap.

The younger skiers, who range in age from 8 to 14 years old, make up the junior team. They train to learn the more intricate moves and formations and sometimes a younger skier will advance to the senior team if they have the skills required. Members of the senior team are 15 years old to skiers in their 50s.

The weekly programs, which are open to the public, begin on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, and are presented Saturdays and Wednesdays each week through Labor Day, other than weekends when they're at competitions.

Admission and parking are free and while there are some seats, there is room to accommodate attendees who bring lawn chairs and blankets.

There is a snack shop on site that opens about an hour before the show starts and has a variety of items available for purchase.

Along with providing shows for the public, each year the team supports an adaptive skiing program to bring the sport to those with disabilities.

For more information visit aquanutswatershows.com.

The Aquanuts Water Ski Show Team is in its 53rd season, which began Memorial Day weekend. There is a time change with home shows now beginning at 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays. The local shows take place on Lake Mary in Twin Lakes and take place other than weeks when the team is competing in a tournament out of town.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AQUANUTS Summer Fun Guide



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JUNE 29 ELKHORN ANTIQUE FLEA MARKET

JULY 4-5 PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDING

**JULY 9
TO JULY 13 ELKHORN RIBFEST**

JULY 16 STEAK COOKOUT

AUG. 1-2 NEON NIGHTS MUSIC FESTIVAL

AUG. 10 ELKHORN ANTIQUE FLEA MARKET

**AUG. 27
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MUSIC, PLAYS AND MORE AT Geneva Stage

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

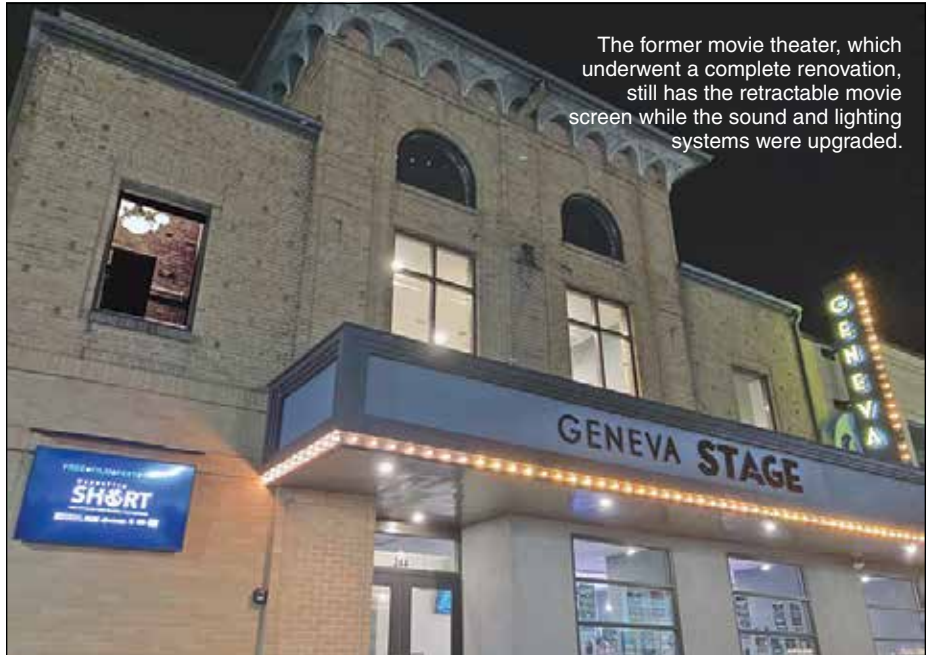
In the early 1900s, before the days of television and in-home theaters, movie theaters were found throughout the country – in large cities and smaller communities, the foundation of entertainment in their areas.

In 1928, Lake Geneva became home to a theater, and through the years, it has evolved from a small local movie screen to what is now a live stage theater.

Now known as Geneva Stage, the venue at 244 Broad St., Lake Geneva, offers a variety of different live shows. Owner Shad Branen made the decision to revamp the space following the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We decided to return to the original roots of the venue and restore and reopen as the Geneva Stage,” Branen said.

The history of the space, though, offers a look back in time.



The former movie theater, which underwent a complete renovation, still has the retractable movie screen while the sound and lighting systems were upgraded.

GENEVA STAGE FACEBOOK PHOTO Summer Fun Guide

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ANTIQUE FLEA MARKETS
June 29, Aug 10, Sept 28

SATURDAYS ON THE SQUARE
May 24 - Aug 30, 2025

BACONFEST
June 6 - 8, 2025

PORK CHOP COOK-OUT
June 18, 2025

ELKHORN RIBFEST
July 9 - 13, 2025

STEAK COOK-OUT
July 16, 2025

NEON NIGHTS
August 1 - 2, 2025

WALWORTH COUNTY FAIR
Aug 27 - Sept 1, 2025

ELKHORN OKTOBERFEST
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2025 EVENTS



The Big Screen

When the theater opened in 1928, it was founded by local businessmen of the area – William Wrigley Jr., local cartoonist Sidney Smith (known for Andy Gump) and Robert N. Lee and Walter Alford of Nash Motors, along with William F. Pabst.

The theater was a large auditorium with comfortable seats for its time, said to hold 300 people, including the balcony space. A stage in front of the screen allowed for live entertainment.

A large pipe organ was installed, as was often the case in many of the early theaters, most of which were made by Wurlitzer.

The theater was known for the silent movies, along with live vaudeville acts. On the day the theater opened – June 6, 1928 – it offered a massive program with a variety of acts and presented visitors with a special program.

The opening acts included music by the Geneva Theatre Orchestra, an Andy Gump cartoon and a solo on the theater's organ. Introductions of important visitors followed, then news events, a comedy and a special vaudeville presentation, along with several musical events before the movie began.

This actually became the way that early theaters worked. A cartoon or two, the news of the day and then the main feature. They later moved on to having a double feature, two movies for only one admission fee.

Over the early years a variety of well-known vaudeville acts appeared in Lake Geneva at the Geneva Theatre. Among them were the Marx Brothers, Will Rogers and Bella Lugosi.

The changing times

With the introduction of movies known as “talkies,” vaudeville acts were phased out and organs used less.

To play a movie in the early days, a projectionist was required to stay in the projection booth to change the reels of film in a timely manner for a smooth running film. Ray Mellien was the projectionist at Geneva Theater for 37 years.

The work of a projectionist was always changing, based on the manner that the film was created. Nitrate films were replaced by the safer safety films. Competing against television in the 1950s, 20th Century Fox developed Cinemascope, a new widescreen concept and stereophonic sound. The Geneva Theater adopted this format.

Not as successful were the 3-D movies. They were difficult to present as two projectors were used. There were two

Shows

The current listing of shows for Geneva Stage includes:

• **Saturday, June 7, 8 p.m.** – A tribute to NSYNC, Backstreet Boys, One D and more with Boy Band Review

• **Saturday, June 21, 7 p.m.** – Shake It Off, a Taylor Swift tribute show

• **Friday, June 27, 7 p.m.** – Def Leppard tribute with Hersteria

• **Saturday, June 28, 7:30 p.m.** – A rock n’ roll tribute from Elvis to The Beatles with The Neverly Brothers

• **Saturday, July 5, 7 p.m.** – A rocking tribute to Springsteen & Seger by Sons of Chicago

• **Saturday, July 12, 8 p.m.** – Frank Sinatra tribute show, “...To Old Blue Eyes”

• **Friday, Aug. 15, 7 p.m.** – A tribute to Franki Valli & The Four Seasons with The Four C Notes

• **Saturday, Sept. 6, 7 p.m.** – John Mellencamp tribute with Ain’t That America

• **Friday, Sept. 19, 7 p.m.** – a tribute to Johnny Cash with Church of Cash

• **Friday, Oct. 24, 7 p.m.** – A John Denver tribute with Ted Vigil

• **Saturday, Nov. 8, 7 p.m.** – A tribute to Electric Light Orchestra with Turn to Stone.

For more information, visit genevastage.com, follow the Facebook page, or email info@genevastage.com.

projectionists to keep the films running at the same speed and at the same time.

Jim Butts was a local teenager in the 1940s, in love with the idea of being a projectionist.

In his work, “Some Memories of the Geneva Theater and Ray Mellien,” he stated, “I used to go up to the projection room and help Ray in anyway I could. I would carry the film cans up to the projection room and then back down when the program play date was completed.”

“In college, I worked at the Park and Pix Theaters in Waukesha, part of Standard Theaters management as was the Geneva,” he added. “But it was in the summer when I was back in Lake Geneva

working with Ray at the Geneva Theater in the projection room that was the most exciting.”

By the early 1980s, changes were in store for the Geneva Theater as it acquired the building next door. The space was used for a second screen. Later, two additional screens were added.

The current space

The theater closed unexpectedly in 2010, much to the dismay of patrons. It remained empty for many years, amid rumors of everything from it being torn down to being turned into a mall.

By the time Branen purchased the building in 2016, “it was in “deplorable condition,” he said.

“There was a strong desire in the community to restore the building and reopen the downtown movie theater. I even fondly recall watching movies there in my younger years,” he explained.

Branen became the candidate for the job as he operated a similar type of theater, the Plaza Theater, in Burlington. He purchased the property and invested \$2 million in renovations and restoration before reopening as Geneva Theatre in 2017.

It operated as a four-screen theater with a choice of different films, but closed again in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and changes to the film industry.

When Branen chose to repurpose the space, there were numerous changes.

He reopened the second-floor balcony, and the venue now allows for seating more than 300 guests in high-back, leather seating.

The sound and lighting systems were also completely upgraded.

“We maintained the huge retractable movie screen and also installed a new laser projector, so we still have the capability of video and movie presentations,” Branen said.

“The new lobby includes a bar for beverage and light food service, and the second floor offers space for private groups and hospitality. It is truly a phenomenal venue,” he added.

The Dairyland Theatre Organ Society is also working to restore the pipe organ still located in the building.

“The Wurlitzer Opus 1224 is one of the very few theater pipe organs that remains a totally unaltered example of the builder’s work and DTOS intends to keep it that way by meticulously restoring it to pristine playing condition,” Branen explained.

The Geneva Stage will be presenting a broad range of live music genres, stand up comedy, theatrical play, classic and indie plays. It’s also available for private events.

WHERE THE *Wild* THINGS ARE

Safari Lake
Geneva offers up-
close experience
with animals

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**
CORRESPONDENT

While many think of the Southern Lakes area as a place to spend time on a lake, hike or bike on a trail, enjoy meals at one of numerous restaurants and spend time shopping for a variety of items in area stores, there is another experience residents and visitors alike should consider.

Safari Lake Geneva is about 5 miles south of downtown, easily accessible by automobile, which is needed to travel through this local safari and its inhabitants. While it has been called such, it is not a zoo, or even a theme park, but rather a true and unique wildlife preserve.

Here a variety of special animals from throughout the world are found, living in harmony with each other in open fields, just as they would in their homelands.

Jay Christie came up with the idea of a wildlife sanctuary for the world's

diminishing breeds so he began looking for property that would be suitable.

He searched various areas but knew it had to be close enough proximity to an area whose population would be robust enough to support it through visits and large enough to give the animals the room they needed to roam.

"After looking at a variety of places that did not work out for various reasons – including size, cost, location, or the amount of work needed to turn the area into a safari park – we were fortunate to find this location on Litchfield Road just south of downtown Lake Geneva," Christie explained.

"The area was an old farm with much of the ground being an alfalfa field. We found we didn't have to take out many trees ... which are so beneficial to the environment," he added.

The land had been like most of the areas in Wisconsin, a farm. The original house was built in the 1850s and the barn, which is now used for hay for the animal's feed, was built in 1918.



A dream come true

Christie – also known as "Jungle" Jay because of his love of jungle animals – was the ideal person to develop the site as his past experience included being CEO of the Racine Zoo along with his interest in and passion for endangered animals.

Once the land was purchased and prepared, it was time to gather animals.

"We started with about 60 animals that were either loaned by acquaintances or purchased," Christie said.

While at the time of the opening, there were only 60 animals (still a large number) today there are about 200 animals on site, from various countries.

Most of the animals on site are owned by Christie and Safari Lake Geneva but a few are still loaned by acquaintances. Most of the animals remain on site year-round even though the park is only open to visitors from May to October.

"When we do purchase animals, we only do so through any legal means," Christie said.

The park opened in 2016, and Christie said they are pleased with the progress they have made in the first 10 years.

There are two different ways to travel through the park. For the majority of visitors, they travel with their family or a few friends in their own vehicle. The other option is through a group tour in which a wagon that holds about 40 visitors make its way through the park.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

from top: With the sun shining on the fields, these animals sleep, nibble on grass and enjoy some time in the sun; They are viewed as they would be seen in the wild, co-existing with others. Here an emu (back) is seen sharing this space with an oryx, the rarest animal residing at the park.

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Once inside, the park is open land that appears much as it might where many of these animals originally made their homes. Here they live with each other, often traveling in herds – although the herds are much smaller here than they would be in the wild as a result of the number of animals present.

Seeing the animals

It is recommended that you make reservations through the website ahead of time – especially on weekends when they tend to sell out in advance.

Visitors are also able to purchase bowls of feed for \$5 to feed the animals that approach their vehicle while going through the park. The food is a grain much the same as the food they are fed daily.

While traveling through the safari park, visitors will see a variety of animals roaming about, some recognizable and others many people have never seen due to their rarity.

Some of the animals will quickly approach the vehicles, knowing they may be offered some of the food from the bowls that have been purchased by their guests. The visitors quickly learn to hold tightly to the bowls so that they aren't grabbed by the animal.

Fair warning: According to many visitors, the animals are not the neatest when eating the food and much of it ends up inside various areas of the vehicle.

Animals that will likely be known include camels, horses, bison, alpacas and Llamas. Today, the emu is also recognized thanks to a series of television commercials featuring them.

As for some of the rarer wildlife on site, the Watasi cattle from Eurasia are known for having the biggest horns of all. Not only are the horns long but they are also thicker than the other animals' horns.

The endangered Addax that makes North Africa its home is another animal not seen in many places. It is believed there are fewer than 100 of these antelopes left in the wild as they are severely endangered.

What might come as a surprise is that the water buffalo at Safari Lake Geneva came from California while the giraffes on site are from northern Wisconsin.

It's okay to feed any of the animals that approach except for the zebras and the giraffes because they receive special food. There are times of the days when it is possible to feed the giraffes but not with the food purchased for the general population of animals. Special food is purchased to feed the giraffes, it also costs \$5, and the money is used to help giraffes in the wild.

The animals at the park that are sensitive to the cold are the monkeys and the giraffe. Both species have a space where they can go indoors for heat. While they usually will go indoors for a short period to warm up, they generally then return to the outdoors.

There is no limit to the number of times



above: The question for many when it comes to zebras are whether they're white with stripes or have white stripes.

COURTESY SAFARI LAKE GENEVA *Summer Fun Guide*

right: "Jungle" Jay hangs out with one of the camels at the safari park, who politely ignores him as it nibbles on food.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ *Summer Fun Guide*



an automobile can ride through the park so there is ample opportunity to view as many animals as possible. Most vehicles make at least two circuits through the park and spend about 1 1/2 to 2 hours on site.

Different than a zoo

"Here at Safari Park, it is very different from attending a zoo. At the zoo the animals are caged, and the visitors walk freely through the zoo," Christie said. "Here it's the visitors who are caged (in their vehicles) while the animals roam freely."

Group tours – including guided safari tours and educational field trips for kids – can be arranged to accommodate up to 40 participants. The groups are taken out on the property in a wagon, a good option for business outings, family reunion, scout troops, camping groups, classes and more. Advanced scheduling is required for group tours.

Christie and his wife, Maggie, work together to keep Safari Lake Geneva growing.

"It isn't the first time we have worked together," Christie explained. "We met while we both worked at the Racine Zoo. Maggie was the Curator of Education while I was the CEO."

At Safari Lake Geneva, Maggie is the Director of Conservation. Other family connections found at the park include the names of Jay and Maggie's oldest children, Audrey and Tucker, used at different features on site.

Audrey's Amazon Adventure is a place to meet some of the animals on an up-close and personal level. There are monkeys that are

loose in the area and eager to interact with visitors.

Across from Audrey's Amazon Adventure is Tracker Tucker's Trading Post. Here one can find a plethora of memorabilia. Among the items sold are stuffed animals, a favorite among children, especially because they are replicas of some of the animals found in the park.

There are also two Capybara in the pond. These semi-aquatic animals are from South America and are known as the world's largest rodents, weighing up to 150 pounds according to Christie. The two living here are named Barbara and Cathy, and special time with them can be booked as well.

They are still in need of a place to be named after their third child, Lorelei, but given the success of "Jungle" Jay's dream, that will likely happen sooner rather than later as Lake Geneva Safari continues to grow.

Tickets, which should be purchased in advance, are \$23.95 for adults (16 and older) weekdays and \$25.95 on the weekends. Children 3 to 15 years of age are \$16.95 weekdays and \$18.95 on the weekends. Children 2 years and younger are admitted free.

Safari Lake Geneva is at W1612 Litchfield Rd., Lake Geneva. For more information, call 262-475-8089 or visit safilakegeneva.com. The website contains details about preparing for a visit and the animals that are on site.

The park is open from May 1 to Oct. 31 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. with the last group admitted at 5 p.m. though it's advised to arrive by 4 p.m. at the latest to ensure a full experience.



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Take in some *history* at Black Point Estate

Black Point Estate and Gardens, a Wisconsin Historical Society site, offers a variety of happenings each year

The special events include a new “Nooks and Crannies Tour” and an intriguing “Institute for Victorian Living” series that invites guests to step into the Gilded Age to master the hallmarks and social traditions of a lost era.

Perched along the shore of historic Geneva Lake, the Queen Anne style retreat and surrounding gardens offer visitors a glimpse back in time to a period when beer barons reigned, and life moved at a slower pace, according to the Wisconsin Historical Society.

“Whether you are a first-time visitor or a returning guest, every visit to the site is an opportunity to learn something new and enjoy the little details that set the property apart from modern life,” said Dave Desimone, director of Black Point Estate and Gardens.

“We’re excited to bring back annual favorite events along with new experiences to connect our guests with our gilded-age roots,” he added.

Black Point Estate and Gardens’ summer season kicked off in late May and runs through Aug. 31 with a morning tour offered Monday through Thursday and both a morning and afternoon tour offered Friday through Sunday.

The cost for the boat tour with Black Point Estate and Gardens experience is \$53 for adults, \$37 for teens (13 to 17), \$51 for seniors (65+), \$33 for children (four to 12) and \$2 for children younger than 4.

Tickets for the general admission experience are available through Lake Geneva Cruise Line found at cruiselakegeneva.com/public-tours/black-point-estate/

Wisconsin Historical Society members receive a \$17 discount and 10% off select special experiences. Members are encouraged to pick up a Pastport for the 2025 season to start earning stamps towards special prizes for every Wisconsin Historical Society site visited.

Upcoming events

**Nooks and Crannies Tour – Thursdays,
June 5 – Aug. 28, 12:30 to 4 p.m.**

Guests will go behind the scenes and uncover the mysterious secrets of this 1800s summer manor during a rare all-access tour.

“Explore all three sprawling floors of the historic mansion Chicago beer baron



The 2025 season is underway for Black Point Estate and Gardens, which is perched along the shore of Geneva Lake.

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY PHOTO Summer Fun Guide

Conrad Seipp once called home, traversing seldom seen rooms, forgotten nooks and quiet crannies full of long-forgotten history,” officials wrote.

The cost is \$58 for adults, \$42 for teens (13-17), \$56 for seniors (65 and older), \$38 for children (4-12) and \$2 for children under four.

**Beer Barons of Lake Geneva – June 14,
July 19 & Aug. 16, 12:30 to 4 p.m.**

Guests will embark on a narrated cruise that dives into the stories and secrets of legendary beer barons who once called the shores of Geneva Lake home, the Historical Society states.

Additional features include sampling regional brews as guests tour the 1888 Queen Anne-style mansion and learn about beer barons who created getaways on the shores of Geneva Lake.

The cost is \$70 for adults and seniors.

**An Evening with Agatha Christie –
June 21, 6 to 7:30 p.m.**

People will experience an intimate tour of the first floor of Black Point Estate as well as a twilight conversation on the veranda with the most successful mystery writer of the 20th century, brought to life by local historian and actress Chris Brookes.

Brookes will discuss Christie’s literary career, including her most famous novel, “Murder on the Orient Express,” and her wildly successful play, “Mousetrap.”

Enjoy talks over a complimentary glass of wine as you immerse yourself in the allure of a timeless author in a timeless location. The cost is \$35 for adults, seniors and teens (13-17).

**The Institute for Victorian Living
Series – July 12, Aug. 9 &
Sept. 13, 5 to 7 p.m.**

Black Point Estate is unveiling a new series of events inviting guests to step into the Gilded Age as they learn to master the Victorians’ most formidable social code.

Victorian society placed great importance on maintaining a high standard.

People can immerse themselves in the customs of the age at this special series exploring three intriguing topics – the Language of Flowers on July 12, the Art of Politeness and Grace on Aug. 9, and Weddings of Geneva Lake in the Gilded Age on Sept. 13.

The cost of each session is \$75 per person.

**She Sips and Sails: A Ladies’ Brew
Adventure – Aug. 2, 12:30 to 4 p.m.**

People can step aboard and embark upon an exclusive cruise where they’ll sip regional craft beverages as they uncover the history of the beer barons who helped shape the scenic Geneva Lake area.

“As you glide across the sparkling waters, our expert guide will share the captivating stories of these influential figures whose legacies still echo throughout the Greater Milwaukee and Chicago areas.

Upon docking at Black Point Estate, the summer home of noted Chicago beer baron Conrad Seipp, you’ll be treated to a curated tasting experience perfectly paired with delicious snacks,” the Historical Society wrote in a news release.

The cost is \$70 per person.

For more information call 262-248-1888 or visit blackpointestate.org.

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