

FREE

On Wisconsin Outdoors

with the
Dick Ellis Experts

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TOM LUBA

Balancing Bobbers

Rigging floats for more fish

When I started fishing for panfish, my standard float was a round, plastic red and white bobber.

It was heavy and hit loud. When breezy, it was prone to drift. There are a lot more effective choices nowadays, but I only depend on a few.

One is the standard slip bobber set up, where the line goes through the center of the float so it will slip to a set depth. Most riggings have a pre-tied knot with a heavier line wrapped around a piece of plastic tubing. Slide the line through that, pull the line tight, then slide the plastic tube off the main line. Snip the ends of the line tight to the knot. Next item is a small bead. Put your line through that. It will slide freely up to the knot when the hook, sinker and bait pull the line through the float. Most slip bobber floats are more pencil shaped for less water resistance. The float, bead and knot should all meet at the depth setting. The weight should balance the rig so it can be pulled under easily by a bite. Reel the line up through the float to cast.



A traditional slip bobber, rigged with a Slo-Poke jig head to tip with either plastic or live bait.

A well-balanced TG Wagglers. Clear water here makes it easier to see the weight, right above and below the eye at the bottom of the float. All that is actually above water is the stem, banded with colors to track the float location. Balanced, this float offers virtually no resistance when a fish takes it. It also holds its position in the wind exceptionally well.


My favorite float was created by the late Mick Thill. His TG Wagglers is 7-1/2 inches long, has a narrow stem and a wider shaped bulb close to its bottom. There is also a line guide on the bottom of the stem. Put a bobber stop at the desired depth and weight below to create a slip float. To make this a fixed float, use a small weight on

both sides of the eye the line goes through.

One of the keys to the Wagglers is to use enough weight to pull the bulb-part of the float under water so all that shows is the narrow stem. There are a few bright colors on the stem so you can track it. With the bulb submerged, it takes almost nothing to pull the float under. Other floats offer resistance while getting pulled down. Not so with the Wagglers; the fish feels almost nothing and virtually never drops the bait.

Another reason the Wagglers shines and why I highly recommend it, is that by having the bulb under water with only the stem showing it does not quickly drift if you are trying to keep the bait in a specific place when the breeze blows. The float excels at sensitivity and position when it is rigged correctly. There is also a bigger version of this float, with a larger bulb on it. The small one works great in calmer water and lighter winds (which is mostly where I fish), while the Bodied version (which comes in variable lengths), is made for bigger baits and rougher conditions and takes more weight to balance it.

I use the Wagglers and basic slip bobbers and don't complicate matters. Using pencil-shaped floats, resistance is the key, especially on tough days.

If you fish a lot with floats, there are a bunch on the market. Take a look at what's available. You just might find some other possibilities. 

Tom Luba is an open-water fisherman, primarily for smallmouth and largemouth bass. In a pinch, every other fish that swims is fair game, too.



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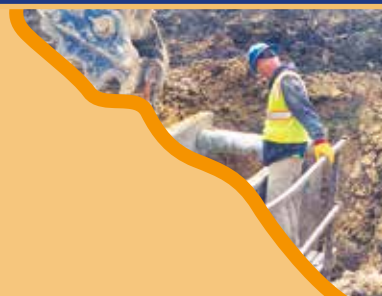
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TOM CARPENTER

Listening to the Heart

When the trout streams call

It happens to me sometime in May, when the oak leaves have mostly unfurled, the new-green grass is maybe a foot high, and the spring creeks of Wisconsin's driftless run clear again after the roils of spring.

My heart aches. Time to go. Trout time.

Sliding into light hip boots amid the sweet smell of rubber. Slipping into a trout vest carefully packed and arranged last evening. Putting a box of nightcrawlers into a pocket. Selecting a little spinning rod from two rigged and ready.

I toss the tethered net over my shoulder and am off, walking down a gravel road to get downstream a half mile or so. Cutting crosslots over a meadow: forested bluffs above and the morning sun just raking in over the coulee's shoulder.

Stalking along like the hunter I am at heart, looking for the lays and holds and eddies and hideouts of trout watching the current for forage and prey.

The grass and wildflower stalks are not yet tall enough to hide an angler's approach. Therefore much time is spent sneaking, stooping, standing back, studying.

There. A classic riffle and rapids tumbles into a bend, forming a nice little pool.

I approach on knees, as if praying in some kind of springtime cathedral, which I guess I am, and flip a once-impaled front half of a nightcrawler on a little gold hook into the "rough" water and let the current carry the offering into what must be a hip-deep pool.

Whomp - tug-tug-tug. A magical, perfect couple seconds until I set the hook and feel the pulls and runs of a nice-sized trout. I work the flashing fish toward the net in a careful juggle-match of trying to enjoy the fight while hoping the commotion doesn't scare any other trout too much.

In the net. A brook trout of substantial proportions, which for this creek means maybe a foot long. Flanks of salmony-orange, sides of green-silver, spots of raspberry and sky blue, wandering worm-patterns of cream yellow. My heart skips beats. A quick



picture. Maybe a little kiss (don't tell anybody) and off my fish swims.

One more brookie comes to net and wetted hand before the pool spooks out and I continue upstream. The air is cool. The springwater smells sweet and damp and fresh and pure all at once. Warblers . . . yellow-rumpeds and full-yellows and redstarts alike – flit and sing.

A long, deep run. My bait, tumbling along after a long cast upstream, suddenly stops. Reel up the slack. *Tug-tug-tug* . . . set the hook . . . a good one! I slide into the water to land the substantial and brightly-colored German brown.

His flanks, which must be the color of the bar of gold I have never seen, fairly glow in the new day. Black and red spots fill his sides. I slide him into my vest: supper for me, and a gift – one less hungry mouth to feed – for the creek's easily-bullied native brook trout.

By the time I am done another brownie has joined the first one in my vest. Fried up, I will even eat their crispy tailfins, a sort of piscatorial potato chip. A half-dozen brookies, each admired in my net, have swum home.

Morning's cool wanes. Springwater gurgles and swishes along. Springtime has taken me in. Both tried to whisper me their secrets – which I can't understand but will draw me back – which may just be the secret anyway. 🐟

JERRY KIESOW

Fly-Fishing in Wisconsin

Defining the wet fly

Whatever happened to the wet fly? I mean those patterns that are called by names like McGinty, Parmachene Belle, and Black Gnat. They are all wet flies and they all catch fish. I consider any fly that a fish will take below the surface of the water a wet fly – streamers, San Juan Worms, nymphs, to name a few. I also believe that anything that floats is a dry fly – including poppers, terrestrials, foam, and hair flies. If it makes a splash on the water's surface and/or floats, it is a dry.

The classic wet fly is generally tied with black, unwaxed, and 6/0 thread. The thread is wrapped along the shank of a heavy hook from the eye to the bend. Then the tail, which is optional, can be hackle fibers or hair and tied sparingly. Be sure the wings and hackle point toward the tail.



The author contends that any fly that takes a fish below the surface of the water is a wet fly.

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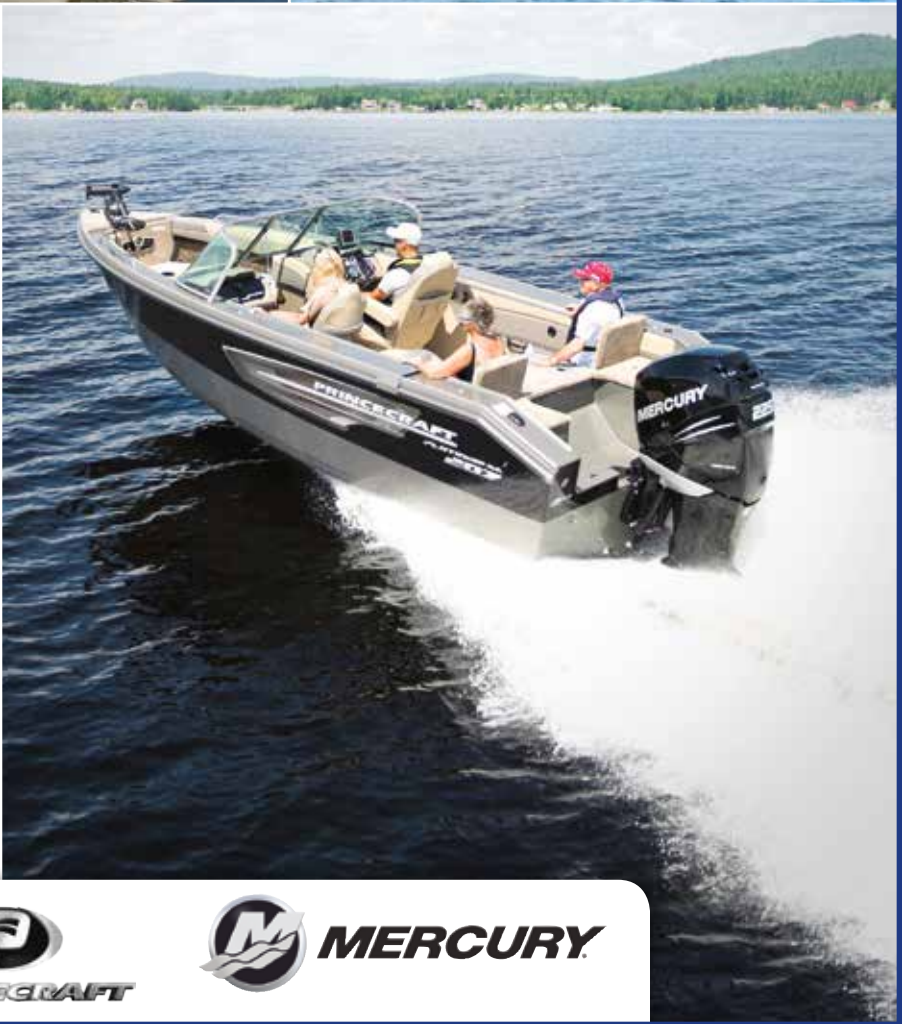


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Post Spawn Walleyes

Expect some of the best action of the year

Every year thousands of anglers, like me, anxiously await the spring walleye-run in Wisconsin. After being cooped up all winter, we're ready to go out and wet a line.

After the run is over, where do these fish go? I have spent over 50 years fishing the Wisconsin River system and have developed a method to track and catch post-spawn walleyes as they move from their spawning to post-spawning locations. Post-spawning areas can produce better results than the much-anticipated spring walleye run.

Once spawning is complete, walleyes need to rest. They will move to quieter, shallower, and much warmer locations off the main river system. Examples are below dams and fast water sections of rivers. Finding these locations is key to success.

Generally I look for post-spawn walleyes in areas well off the main river system and in backwater locations. Walleyes will travel miles in search of a secure habitat with



Tom Westphal scores another post spawn walleye with Schweik.

plenty of food. Most of these will be in very shallow water, three- to five-feet or less with a muck bottom and no current.

I usually run one of two set-ups when fishing for post-spawn walleye. The first is

a simple jig and minnow combination with a 1/16th or 1/18th ounce lead head jig and a fat head minnow. The second option is to run shallow diving crankbaits like Rapalas or Flicker Shads. I generally run my boat about a cast-length off the shoreline and work parallel with the shore. While doing so, I cast ahead of the boat and towards shore, slowly retrieving my presentation.

When fishing this way, don't be surprised if you get quite a few hits just as the bait hits the water. Walleyes will tend to be very close to shore and in mere inches of water. Sometimes I will see my locator reading two- to three-feet of water below the boat as I am picking up walleyes in much shallower water.

A major key to this type of fishing is stealth. Be aware of your surroundings and where you are headed. If you run your trolling motor the wrong way or move in too close to shore, you can blow the fish right out of the area. The nice thing about these shallow water walleyes is that if you



Alice Westphal with a beautiful post-spawn walleye.

find one, you are generally going to find an entire school. Walleye are typically packed up pretty tight at this time of the year.

This post-spawn walleye pattern will generally last throughout May and well into June, depending on water temperature and available food sources. Do a little homework and scout out your water properly, and you can easily have some of the best walleye fishing of the season.

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TOM CARPENTER

Cubs Corner

Bluegills on the Beds

June is the perfect time to take a young angler out on the water to experience great sunfishing action.

With the sun at its zenith for the year, water temperatures warm up to that magical 70-degree range that really pulls bluegills into the shallows to make their dinnerplate-sized spawning nests in sand or gravel. The fish - especially pole-bending slab sunnies that generate whoops and hollers from anglers of all ages - will never be as accessible as they are now.

Cruise the shallows, looking for spawning beds. By the time you spot them, the fish will have fled to deeper water. Just anchor up and wait; the bluegills will be back soon.

If you're shore fishing, poke along and look for spawning beds; the nests are easy to spot.

It's funny, but boat anglers are always trying to get their baits as close to shore as possible, while shorebound anglers want to cast out as far as they can!

While you're waiting for the fish to return, rig up. Use light spin-cast tackle for your youngest anglers. But don't burden the littlest kids with a cheap cartoon-character outfit. Instead, get something decent and reliable. Spool up with good-quality eight-pound test monofilament.

Use light, thin, pencil-style floats that offer little resistance to fish. Tie on a light-

wire, size 6 or 8 hook; light wire is good because it will easily straighten out and you won't lose your entire rig if your young angler gets tangled up in a lily pad stalk, brush or other snag. Long-shanked models make hook removal much easier.

A garden worm, threaded lightly on the hook, works great. So does a piece of nightcrawler. Waxworms attract June bluegills too (use a smaller hook or a tiny teardrop ice-fishing jig). My favorite June bluegill baits are small crappie minnows. Minnows seem to discourage smaller sunfish from biting, while attracting the real slabs.

Let the young angler cast out, and set his or her own hook. If you miss a few fish, no



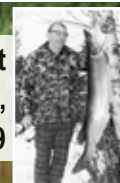
big deal: there will be more to come. Take fish off the hook yourself, though: You don't want a bluegill spine cutting your trip short and souring the experience.

Take some time to study all the beautiful fish you catch. Differentiate orange-bellied

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MIKE YURK

Deep Thoughts Spring into bass fishing

Early season spring bass can be unpredictable with more than its share of challenges. The weather can be inconsistent and turbulent. Water temperatures are just above freezing. In some cases, ice is coming off the lakes only a couple weeks earlier.

One of the biggest questions for early season bass anglers is "Where are the fish?" With cold water, the shallow water close to the banks would be a couple degrees warmer. I've heard for years that warmer waters will bring bass into shallow water early in the season. I dispute that theory.

DEEPER WATER

I have been finding early season bass further from the bank in deeper water. Bass won't be coming into the shallows to spawn until late May at the earliest or early June once water temperatures consistently reach the sixties.

These pre-spawn bass are staging in deeper water waiting for the right combination of events that compel them to start making their spawning beds. I believe the deeper water is also more consistent for bass. The temperatures are probably a bit warmer than surface temperatures without being churned up with early season winds.

Move away from the bank to water at a depth of 10 to 15 feet. If bass are hitting close to the boat, then I move another boat length or two further out since they are

obviously sitting in deeper water.

The second most important question for bass anglers is "What will these early season bass be hitting on?" My preferred baits in spring are crankbaits. Although plastic baits have their place in bass fishing even in spring, crankbaits are by far the most productive for early season bass. Minnows and small fish have formed much of the forage base for bass throughout the winter months, so they will respond in spring to baits which replicate minnows.

USING CRANKBAITS

Although any number of crankbaits will work well in spring, two of my favorites are the Sad Rap and Jointed Shad Rap by Rapala. They both have an enticing action bass are attracted to throughout the fishing season, but especially in spring.

Color can make a difference. My favorite color is the blue silver shad in the Jointed Shad Rap and either the silver blue or silver in the Shad Rap. Although I have other colors in my tackle box, those are the ones I go to most often in spring when throwing crankbaits. Silver in one form or another looks the closest to minnows and that is what they are after.

LIPLESS CRANKBAITS

In spring and again fall, another great choice is lipless




Lipless crankbait in silver and blue is a good combination on early season bass.

crankbaits. There is a tighter wobble to these baits that bass like especially in cold water found in the beginning and end of the fishing season. Among many effective lipless crankbaits to choose from consider the Bill Lewis' Rat-L-Trap (my favorite) and the Super Spot by Cotton Cordell.

Again, color seems to make a difference in spring regardless of what brand of lipless crankbait you choose. Silver and blue and silver have been the most productive. The flash from the silver replicating minnows triggers strikes.

Larger size baits in cold water will make a difference. Bass are still sluggish in cold water. They will only waste their energy on larger forage, which means larger baits. In both the Sad Raps, Jointed Shad Raps and Rattlin' Rapala, I use the number seven size.

Despite the challenges of spring, it is a good time to be bass fishing. Moving into deeper water and using larger crankbaits will put more early season bass in the boat. 

Mike Yurk is a retired Army officer and has been writing about Wisconsin outdoors for over 50 years. Find his books on Amazon. Contact him at bassinmajor@yahoo.com

CARPENTER, FROM PAGE 6


males from yellow-chested females. Note the beautiful blue markings on the jaws and lower gills (hence the name bluegill), the handsome black ear flap, the purples and yellows flecked on the fishes' sides.

Take some breaks. Go chase frogs on shore together. Take a hike. Watch birds. Play in the shallows and investigate bugs, crayfish and other natural wonders you find.

Most kids love to save just a few fish -- to show off at home, to prove their skills, to commemorate the trip, to eat.

Filleting bluegills can be challenging. A good cleaning plan is to scale the fish (get the young angler to help with this step), lop off the head and tail, pull out the innards, then make cuts along both sides of the dorsal and anal fins, and pull those fins out with a pliers.

Roll the fish in cornmeal, cracker crumbs or a commercial mix - Fry Magic is my personal favorite - and cook in hot oil. The sides will curl up. "Fillet" the fish with a butter knife right on the plate and prepare for mass consumption.

For bluegills, June is the best month of all! 



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PUBLISHER | EDITOR:

Dick Ellis
ellis@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

EDITOR:

Stuart Wilke
submissions@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

DESIGN | PRODUCTION:

Ali Garrigan
ali@onwisconsinoutdoors.com

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CAPTAIN DAVE DUWE

Weed Flat Walleyes

Early shallow water success

Since the beginning of time, fish have been reliant upon weeds for food and security. In early summer as the newly emerging weeds start to show, they become a magnet for the small bait fish. Following them are the actively-feeding game fish. Weed flats are the best early summer location in most bodies of water. You can catch every gamefish that swims in them. This includes walleye and catfish and everything in between.

Recently I had a discussion with Tony Puccio, owner of Serious Walleye Guide Service. Tony guides on the Madison chain of lakes as well as Lake Wisconsin and has been a fishing professional for over 25 years. Trolling weed flats for walleyes has been his specialty for decades.

As a rule, wind-driven shores with a water temperature of 50 degrees or higher is the go-to location. Concentrate on green weeds, the greener the better, in six to eight feet of water. Green weeds mean more oxygen, which means more bait fish. With a large expanse of weeds, the most effective way to cover water is by trolling. The trolling bite on the weed flats will last the first two to three weeks of May.

With the use of planer boards, Tony can put a large spread of baits in the water. Rapalas #12, Husky Jerks in Fire Tiger and perch patterns and Psycho Minnows by Bait Rigs are his lures of choice. Due to the relative shallow

water, the Husky Jerks are 20 to 25-feet behind the boards. The Psycho minnows are typically fished on a flatline that is fished 75-feet behind the boat which only allows it to dive three feet deep.

Weed flats change from year to year for reasons that are beyond my knowledge. The good spot last year might not be the good one this year. With that in mind, continuous movement will put your baits in front of more fish.

As May turns to June, the fish will slowly move slightly deeper as the water warms and the weeds grow. It makes trolling stickbaits impossible due to the thick tall weeds in the water column. When this happens, the technique will change from trolling to slip-bobbers and jig fishing. Anchor or slow drift for best results.

Tony likes to position the boat in 10-feet of water while watching for the turns and points of the weeds and always looking for the hard bottoms that typically hold more fish. In the "old days," Tony had to find the hard bottom locations using an anchor. Today we have electronics!

When anchored on a desired spot, slip bobbering a 3/64 Slo-Poke with a nightcrawler is a preferred presentation. When slip bobbering, you want to position the bait about one foot above the emerging weeds. In hard bottom areas

Tony Puccio with a Lake
Mendota Weed Flat
Walleye Windfall



with less weeds, a Slo-Poke one-quarter ounce jig, tipped with half a nightcrawler, is the presentation. When casting the Slo-Poke jigs, you want to cast to the open pockets in the weeds which are indicative of a hard bottom. These open weed pockets are ambush points for gamefish.

One helpful hint about your catch on the weedlines in late May or early June is that if you start catching catfish, you probably won't find the game fish you're looking for in that spot. If you find rock bass, however, you will find game fish.

Early summer weedlines are some of the most productive locations to catch fish. Typically, as the water warms and weeds grow, the deeper you must fish. Cover water and catch fish! 🐟

Captain Dave Duwe is the owner and operator of Dave Duwe's Guide Service, featuring the lakes of Walworth County (262)728-8063.

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SPOTLIGHT: ALGOMA**Algoma - King of Kings!***Lake Michigan's salmon and trout capital*

The sun is peaking over the orange horizon, a wisp of clouds makes the morning sky seem like a Terry Redlin print with the fiery orange sky and calm aqua-blue water. My fishing partner and nephew, Capt. Trevor, is adjusting a port slide diver line and the captain, well, I'm enjoying my first morning cup of coffee when suddenly Trevor shouted out, "Fish On!"

Aaah, the sounds of spring. It's all music to my ears. I just love early spring fishing. And the most exciting is hearing that drag scream out as a huge King Salmon decides that the opposite direction is where he wants to go.

As if battling a giant King isn't hard enough, Trevor hollers out again! Now the fun really begins with two big Kings and the lines screaming. It's the start of an enjoyable kind of chaos. Trevor is no longer a rookie and his command of the back deck shows as he directs the customers to their appropriate spots and we begin to move rods up and out of the way to make room to fight and land the King Salmon. Seconds later, Trevor slid the Frabill under a 20-pound King Salmon to the cheers of the anglers aboard.

My nephew sure has gained a good sense for what is going on back deck. It reminds me of when I started in the early 70s, and over the years I have watched this fishery grow beyond belief. Algoma has always been right in the middle of the rise of the salmon and trout fishery, hosting some of Wisconsin's early rearing ponds to hold the fingerlings a few weeks longer prior to releasing into Lake Michigan. The Algoma area has also held or continues to hold many of the state records for Wisconsin's Lake Michigan salmon and trout species. We also host one of Wisconsin's largest and most productive charter fishing fleets.

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Capt. Lee Haasch is a charter captain out of Algoma. He has over 40 years of Great Lakes angling experience and has been instructing anglers for over 30 years with education seminars and timely freelance articles in outdoor publications.



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Great fishing for sure...and so much more

Port Washington, with its touch of New England charm, is nestled on the shore of Lake Michigan, just north of Milwaukee. Whether this is your first visit, or you are returning to a favorite place, you are invited to take some time to see all this harbor town has to offer.

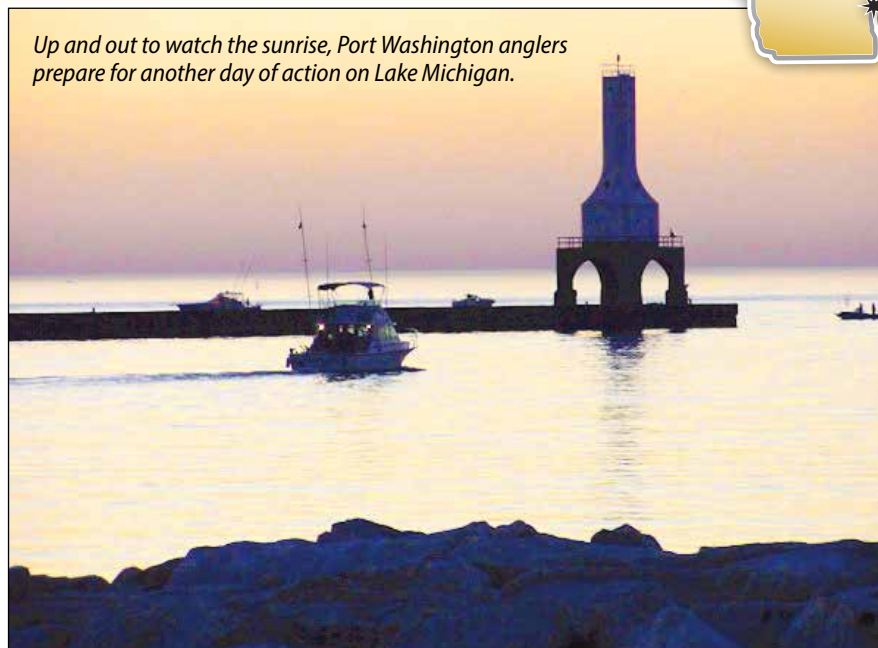
One of the first things you'll see, coming down the hill to the lake, is the art deco lighthouse. Whether you are boating, fishing, walking on the beach or in any of the lakeside parks, this iconic symbol of the community has kept watch at the end of a half-mile long pier for almost 85 years.

The downtown is lakeside, and walking

distance from the marina, which is appreciated by boaters and fishermen. It offers unique dining destinations – many housed in historic storefronts. All are locally owned, and very different in their offerings. Whether you are in the mood for a brewpub, barbeque, Mexican, Italian, deli, supper club fare, or even fresh farm-to-table, you'll find all of these options. Saturdays, in summer and fall, feature a very popular lakeside beer garden, with food and music. Plus, if you are here on a Saturday, you can pick up some fresh food at the downtown farmers' market.

Port doesn't have just the typical, touristy shops. There is a fish market


Up and out to watch the sunrise, Port Washington anglers prepare for another day of action on Lake Michigan.



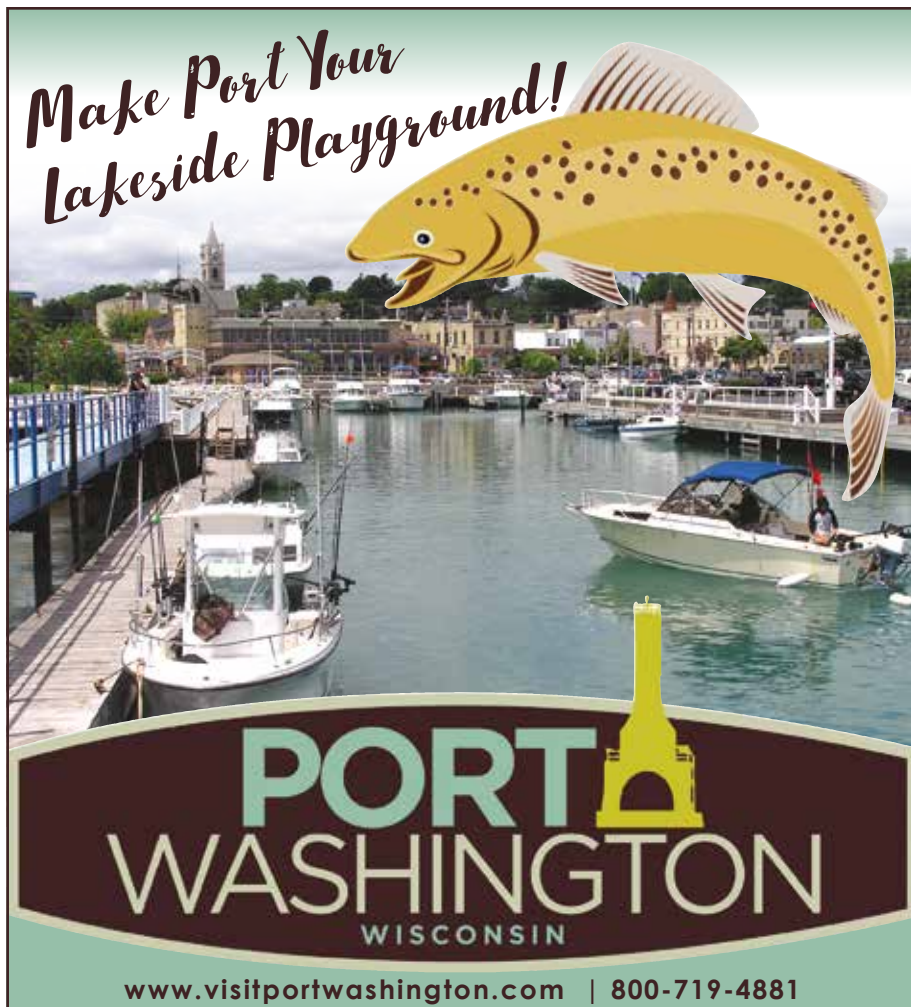
that can smoke, and even ship, your catch for you. Include a stop into the old fashioned meat market. Even if you don't buy anything, it's worth it for the smell of it. The winery not only makes and sells wine, but can help you make your own! A number of stores offer outdoor gear options, whether it be for fishing, biking, or paddling. There are also galleries and boutiques, each offering something unique and different.

The outdoor recreational opportunities are exceptional. Bike, bird, run, or hike

on nearby trails. One of the trails is a free, paved recreational trail called the Interurban.

Plan your Lake Michigan vacation with our visitor's resource guide for hotels, bed and breakfasts, shopping, events, farmers markets, lakefront festivals, and more. Make sure to stop by the historic Pebble House Visitor Center for more information. And don't forget your camera; there are breath-taking views everywhere you look. 

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MIKE FOSS

Early Bear Baiting

Spring, summer adventure imperative to fall success

Spring has finally arrived. For lucky permit holders, it's never too early to start baiting bears. April 15th, the opening of the new bear baiting season has always been a special day for me. Whether you drew that precious Wisconsin bear tag or are just assisting a friend preparing to hunt, there is no better way to scout potential areas.

Becoming familiar with terrain, preparing bait stations and even placing your tree stand early before thick foliage arrives are priceless factors helping to sway the odds toward a successful fall hunt. Baiting has distinct advantages. Hunters, often first-time hunters, learn bear habits and behaviors. This is also the bear breeding season. Eventually, every resident bear for miles will most definitely visit your bait station throughout the spring and summer baiting season. They will know where it is when the season begins. Most important, pre-season they will eventually become accustomed to your scent and will grow that much more at ease by September game time.

Ease in to bear baiting. Baiting three to four days per



A huge boar eats at the first-time placed bait station in early June. With baiting season also coinciding with the start of the breeding season, this boar and sow frequented the area and the hunter's bait stations for about a week before moving on.

week particularly if you are traveling greater distances to bear country becomes costly with bait and gas. Unless your

emotional involvement to the sport like me means cost is no factor and you're diving right in, early in the season I recommend baiting once every two weeks. These "teaser baits", as I refer to them, and a good reliable trail camera or two at each bait station guarantees excitement during the months preceding the season. The anticipation what might show up on camera will make baiting even more exciting and no chore.

You may wonder how baiting once every two weeks can keep bears coming to your stations. Use a quality scent attractant on the sites. Since 1986 I have heavily smeared a bacon or anis gel on many trees near the bait stations. Once the bait is gone, the bear scents will still be attracting bears for months to come. Good luck and happy hunting.

Mike Foss was born and raised in Washburn, Wisconsin (Bayfield County) and spent years as a professional bear and deer guide. He now assists Robert Haas Northern and Northern Wisconsin Outfitters. Connect with NWO at 715.373.0127 or northwiout@att.net.

BOB SPIERINGS

Bear Baiting 101

As summer is fast approaching, we find ourselves doing so much running around that we forget to stop and appreciate everything that we have and are able to do that others cannot. One of those is to bear hunt. Unfortunately, not everyone is able to participate in bear hunting every season. For those with disabilities or young kids, this could be a once in a lifetime experience. Here at Bob's Bear Bait we've been lucky enough to assist those that graciously donate their precious tags to the youth and individuals with disabilities. We encourage those who will not use their tag or simply wish to put a smile on someone's face to donate their tag today.

We've been very grateful to have a strong BBB family of hunters and baiters for over 12 years. Baiting can be a great time to get the whole family involved. Kids can feel

like a personal chef as they mix their own concoctions of granola, frosting, sprinkles and other goodies available at our shop. The best part is you won't have a dirty kitchen afterwards!

It's these simple activities that kids will remember, and there is nothing better than getting kids involved in the great outdoors. Our hunting heritage depends on it. We encourage you to involve your family by bringing them to one of our three shops and have them help you pick out the best goodies this season. We will have plenty of lightweight bait on hand that are great for drawing bears in and packing for long distances. Light weight bait also works well for younger ones who insist that "they've got it"...as they leave a bait crumb trail behind while dragging the bait bucket to the site.

For more great tips, stop in and chat with us. We have multiple staff on hand with over 20-plus years of combined experience bear hunting and 12 years in the bear bait business. We carry the largest variety of bear bait in Wisconsin, with multiple locations in Wisconsin and Michigan. We pride ourselves in being your one-stop shop for all your baiting needs including scents, bulk bait, fruit toppings, dry bait, and the list goes on. Remember, once the season hits, bait sells out fast!

Stay up to date with our latest news and sales by following us on Facebook and Instagram at Bob's Bear Bait. To see our bait selection or locations, check us out at bobsbearbait.com. If you don't see a product listed, call us. We always have more products in our shops than what is listed on our site. As always, happy baiting and good luck to all the hunters.

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MARCUS MALLETTE & JAKE QUIGLEY

Kayaking Wisconsin

Spring awakening on the Wisconsin River

With the sights and sounds of spring slowly emerging here in the Badger State, another beautiful Wisconsin waterway did not need to call us twice. We heard the Lower Dells area of the Wisconsin River loud and clear, almost as if the running current was babbling its message right next to us as we loaded our gear April 4th in Waukesha County.

Lower Dells? You might wonder what that exactly means. Here in downtown Wisconsin Dells, the Kilbourn Dam creates what we now refer to as the “Upper and Lower” parts of the Wisconsin River. In 1909 the dam’s construction was complete, and it not only permanently altered the flow of this ancient river, but truly helped shape and evolve much of the surrounding area. Infrastructure, transportation, work force, industry, company additions, even tourism, all emerged from the simple production of hydroelectricity.

But now wait. What about that term “Dells?” A Dell is actually a French term, “dalles.” Dells are the actual sandstone rock formations we see so prevalent here, and which draw so many paddlers and other sightseers, as best described as “slab-like” rocks. **Check out [Americaslibrary.gov](https://americaslibrary.gov) for more fun facts about these Dells.**

On this early April morning, we got out of the car at our parking area in downtown Dells and scratched our heads at how to approach the Wisconsin. The water was roaring over the dam, carrying trees and debris and creating foam so thick you’d think it was a Loch Ness Monster’s bubble bath; all churning about in a colossal whirlpool heading downstream (Caution: This area is not recommended for beginners, particularly with high water levels).

Some fishermen were kind enough to let us drop in our kayaks where they were working the water in the slightly calmer corner of the river. We popped in and the foam came spilling over in a chilling greeting, unlike anything we’d ever experienced.

Shortly after the initial roller coaster ride, we hit smooth sailing with a steady current. Despite the global pandemic we’re all so caught up in right now, it was so refreshing to get out in nature and let all of that fade away. The sun was shining so nicely, warming us each hour as it rose higher in the sky. We were blown away with the views of the sandstone structures that were hidden around the bends of the river. When you explore these structures up close, you will also find accessible caverns for your kayaks.

There are three tall sandstone islands downstream from the parking area, and all have unique openings to them. When coming to the last island along our route, you will notice four openings on each end. Approaching the island from the north end will enable you to glide right into an opening that reveals some of the hidden beauty that most visitors never get to experience.

To our surprise, down river there were many others partaking in fishing and boating activities all along the way. With the Sandstone Dells towering over us on all sides, it made for some breathtaking views and photographs. The river stays generally a minimum of 50 feet across, so plan carefully with your position on the water in anticipation of some heavier traffic.

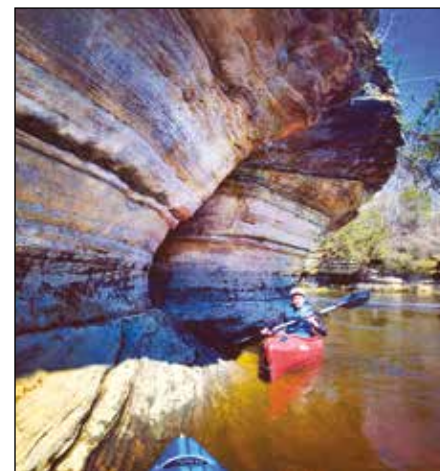
The Wisconsin River stretches 420 miles and is fed by surrounding swamps in the Lac Vieux Desert. The river travels in a southerly direction where it then turns westward in Portage towards Prairie du Chein to dump into the Mississippi.

With kayaking season underway, after an always too-long winter, we will definitely be returning to cover part of the remaining unexplored 410 miles of adventure. Hope to see you out there. 🐾

In loving memory of James Mallette 4/4/1936-6/21/2017



Paddlers and boaters can expect fabulous scenery and a memorable day when traveling the Lower Dells area of the Wisconsin River.



Kayak Showcase

In 2020, good friends and experienced Kayakers Marcus Mallette and Jake Quigley are showcasing some of the best paddling routes and waterways across the state for *On Wisconsin Outdoors*. Delafield native Mallette and Hartland native Quigley know these state waters well, including the Wisconsin River. We hope you follow their journeys on these pages or our website, and literally on the water of Wisconsin’s most appealing waterways.

On April 4th, Mallette and Quigley placed the spotlight on the Lower Dells area of the Wisconsin River. This was a special day not only because of an early opportunity to welcome spring, but the Wisconsin Dells area offered Mallette a chance to return to his childhood roots on his late Grandpa Mallette’s birthday. Grandpa had lived in the area, providing a special place and memory-maker for Marcus to visit as a kid.

Funny how a meandering, hard running current allow two Wisconsin outdoorsmen (or any of us) to remain kids at heart. 🐾

DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report

Social distancing and the far, far away concept

The old Chinese curse about living in interesting times has certainly come to fruition. Six months ago, who would have predicted that a global pandemic would have the American economy in a chokehold? Not to mention having all of the bars in the great Northwoods locked up tighter than a dancehall in Utah. Nobody, that's who.

Yet, here we are with the phrase 'social distancing' cinched around our necks like a borrowed tie on prom night. Stay at home, wash your hands, don't touch anything, sneeze in your elbow, cough in a corner, spit in your sock, wipe your nose, keep your hugs to yourself, sanitize this, cauterize that, and praise the Lord that the 'rona' hasn't taken you yet!

Which got me to thinking about how I live my life. And, to be quite honest, it seems like I've been social distancing forever. Trout fishing, for example. Now there's a way to get not only six feet away from people, but here in the Northwoods, if you're standing knee-deep in a trout stream, you're probably at least a half mile from the nearest oxygen breathing homo sapiens. Just try hacking a Covid-19 micro-organism that far!

Ice fishing is another social distancing mechanism that is prevalent here. Just take a gander across any frozen body

of water and watch how ice fishermen 'hole-hop' with their fish finders looking for actively feeding fish. They *never* get within six feet of each other!

Probably my favorite thing to do in the outdoors is bow hunting from my climbing tree stand. Now, by definition, a climbing tree stand is a one-person affair. So, with 100% confidence I can say that there has NEVER been anybody within six feet of me while I was in my climber. I might as well be Tom Hanks in the movie Cast Away.

The deer gun season is pretty much the same deal except when it comes to deer camps. There, to be honest, people *do* get within six feet of each other. However, the smells that they emanate and the lies that they profess usually keep such encounters very, very brief. And, in those environs, their blood alcohol level is usually sufficient to kill any virus that might try to jump on board.

All of which brings me back to the upcoming open water fishing season. You see, I'm one of a group of guys who have gotten together annually for **35 years** to meet at a fish camp that we affectionately refer to as the "Great Walleye Assault" (GWA for short). If the authorities happen to read this, well, we're still going to do it. This will be the 36th year. But, if it makes them feel better, we're making some concessions.

Moericke social distancing – This is how we get away from each other in the Northwoods.



First, we won't be gathering in a public campground where others might be exposed to our general lack of socially acceptable conduct or hygiene-deficient practices. We will be well distanced from the public eye, ear, nose, or throat.

Second, and for the first time ever, we're going to exclude guests. This one really, really hurts because most of our guests are our sons and their friends. Second generation GWA, if you will. All I can tell them is that next year, we'll be back to normal and it'll be HUGE.

Third, we've been lugging around this massive jug of hand sanitizer the past six or seven years that has barely been used. Until now. I'm pretty confident that we'll put a serious dent in that bad boy this year.

So, to all the folks living in the urban jungle...good luck to you. You socially distance your way and we will socially distance our way. Just sayin.' 🍷

Dan Moericke lives, fishes, and hunts in the Northwoods, occasionally actually catching a fish and tagging a buck. He is fortunate to have an understanding wife and a great group of buddies to share his days afield. On most days, he is able to remember where he parked his vehicle.

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TOM MUELLER

Training Retrievers to Mark

Multiple success, one bird at a time

When instructing puppy and obedience training sessions for the Fox Valley Retriever Club, I often encounter owners with big visions of what they want their retrievers to be able to learn and do. One common vision is that their of puppies and young dogs have the ability to do double and triple retrieves, where two or three dummies or birds are thrown or shot and the dog retrieves each one in succession.

This is a concept that all retrievers are capable of learning and should learn. It is a big accomplishment for any retriever owner that takes the time to train their dog to have this ability. Often though, novice retriever owners get ahead of themselves and want to move onto training for multiple marks before their dog really has had

enough experience doing single retrieves. Introducing the concept of a double retrieve at an early age is important, but more importantly it's necessary to focus your dog's training on single retrieves.

My point is that whether the retrieve is a double or a triple, a retriever can only pick up one bird at a time. In doing a double where two dummies or birds are thrown, it first picks up one. After returning with that one to its handler, it's sent for the second. The sequence continues with a triple retrieve. In order to accomplish this a retriever needs to become a good "marker", meaning he needs to be very adept at looking out and watching and remembering where the bird or dummy falls. They have their nose for finding the bird or dummy when they get to the area where it fell, but

it's their eyes that get them to that spot.

With enough training, some retrievers become so proficient that they learn to judge distance. They learn to run very straight lines over changing terrain and cover, and then slow up when they get to their area of the fall. Once there, they let their nose take over to finish the job of finding the dummy or bird. To have this ability requires doing many single retrieves at varying distances, over and through different cover and terrain changes.

At some point a young pup becomes old enough to return hand thrown retrieves. Ideally, that's started on a mowed lawn, and then gradually moves into short cover, and eventually onto deeper, thicker cover. That escalation requires access to a field or fields with varying cover and terrain.

You will also need to teach your dog to retrieve at longer distances. For that you need to have someone throw the dummies or birds for you. There are a couple of marking drills that you can do yourself to accomplish this, and dummy launchers can only do so much. Joining a retriever training club gives you access to their training grounds, which enables you to train in different cover and terrain and, just as important, water. You will also connect with other retriever owners and trainers who will work with you to help you develop your retriever's marking ability, including coordinating several drills that will significantly improve your dog's ability



Locked on and ready to go this yellow Lab is focused on the fall.



A retriever with good marking ability means many happy returns

to mark and remember the fall and make the retrieve over any distance.

Once your dog becomes skilled at marking singles at all distances in any cover or terrain it can advance to learning to remember multiple marks and make double and triple retrieves. In his "Duck Dog Trainer" blog, Brian Johnson, a pro trainer from Winnie, Texas, states, "a dog that marks great will not have to run as many blind retrieves."

Enough said. 🐾

Tom has been avidly training retrievers since the early 1980s. His passion has evolved into helping others train their retrievers through the Fox Valley Retriever Club so they can achieve the satisfaction that he has had. For questions or information regarding retriever training or the Fox Valley Retriever Club contact Tom at winddancer.trtrvs@hotmail.com



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-Gregg Borneman

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SUZETTE CURTIS

Recipes with Suzette

Foil packet recipe ideas



The spread of Covid-19 has undeniably changed all of our lives. My husband and I are adapting to our "new normal" while our children have their hands full working from home and trying to educate and entertain their kids at the same time. Since restaurants are closed for dining in and we are trying to stay "safer at home," most of us are regularly preparing meals at home now more than ever. As we get closer to grilling weather, I thought it would be fun to share some foil packet recipes. The whole family can get involved in the preparation, and serving them outside on the picnic table feels almost like a night out. Enjoy!

Fish Foil Packets

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 4 T Butter, divided | Salt & Pepper |
| 2 Cups Mushrooms, sliced | 2 Pounds Fish fillets (walleye, bass, catfish) |
| 1 8 Ounce container Sour Cream | ½ Lemon |
| ½ Cup Mayonnaise | Paprika for garnish |

Melt 2 T butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add mushrooms and saute until softened. Remove from heat.

Combine remaining 2 T butter (melted), sour cream, mayonnaise, salt & pepper in a bowl; fold in mushrooms.

Prepare foil squares by placing each fillet in center; squeeze lemon juice over fillets and top with a spoonful of sour cream mixture. Fold edges and seal well.

Cook over hot coals for 10 minutes one side then turn and cook an additional 10 minutes on the other side. Let sit for 1 to 2 minutes before opening. Sprinkle with Paprika for serving.

Venison Burger Foil Packets

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Pound ground Venison | 4 T Butter, melted |
| 1 Teaspoon Garlic salt | 4 Carrots, thinly sliced |
| ½ Teaspoon Salt | 3 Potatoes, thinly sliced |
| ½ Teaspoon Pepper | 1 Onion, sliced in thin rings |

Combine seasonings with ground Venison and mix well. Form into four patties.

Prepare foil packets by lightly brushing melted butter over each piece and placing one burger in the center. Top with vegetables. Pour any remaining melted butter over burger/vegetables and lightly season with salt & pepper. Fold edges and seal well.

Grill over hot coals for 10 minutes on one side then turn over and cook an additional 5 to 10 minutes on the other side. Serve immediately. 🍴

Suzette Curtis, of Oshkosh, cooks for a family of hunters and fishermen and tries to fill their menu with recipes for meals made with venison, upland birds, and fish. She does just that with great expertise. Contact her at recipesbysuzette@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

On The Cover

Wisconsin paddle sport enthusiasts and OWO traveling columnists Marcus Mallette and Jake Quigley temporarily abandon their kayaks to take a few more great photos while spotlighting the Lower Dells area of the Wisconsin River April 4th.



onwisconsinoutdoors.com

DICK ELLIS

Wisconsin's Pier of d'Nort

"World's Greatest Pier" award-winner answers consumer needs

Like anyone who owns or maintains a pier, Carl Surges faced problems when putting in and taking out his parents' pier in St. Germain twice each year. Damaged framing and deteriorating decking, rusted hardware from outdoor storage, and the time-consuming transportation of pier sections and accessories to and from over-winter storage and the lake were all too familiar companions. In Wisconsin, ice often magnifies the aggravations or flat out wreaks havoc on permanent structures.

It is often said that necessity is the mother of invention. When professional skills and personal passion include product design and development, perhaps Mother calls a bit louder and with a bit more urgency.

"After putting in and taking out my parent's pier for years and watching people with their own piers, I thought there had to be a way to carry the sections upside down from a position in the middle of the frame like a nicely balanced pair of water buckets,"



Inventor/owner Carl Surges demonstrates the one-man ease of putting in a Pier of d'Nort pier. At right, Surges is shown at work in his St. Germain plant.

Surges said. "The legs would be folded next to the frame when carrying. It's all just logical."

Each section would be tilted down by the installer with swiveling hooks meeting and coupling with the previous section already in the water, then simply flipped over to take its place in line. He also wanted to develop a way to drag each section from the water that would ultimately prove even easier than installation and to make "T" or "L" extensions to the pier as easy as the rest for the purchaser.

"I had questions during the design



process," he said. "Had these things been tried? Could I ask the opinion of anyone? I was investing time not knowing if any of these ideas could be patented or were they already patented."

The fundamental design was completed and incorporated in a miniature working model by the summer of 2002. "The patent report came back free and clear," said Surges. "Everything in our design is so logical. Why wasn't it done before? They (patent office) said we had to break our design down into five or six different patents. They ultimately issued one patent

Publisher note: Read this entire Wisconsin success story at www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com under Outdoor News or Inland Fishing.

that gave us everything we wanted."

Pier of d'Nort was officially born. Surges launched his company in a garage in Conover in the summer of 2003. The pier offers standard welded aluminum frame sections with dual-braced folding legs on one end and swiveling hooks on the other. There is no bolting or unbolting between seasons. Each frame is topped with two or three easy to manage separately installed deck panels of optional color and material. Simple one person installation and removal is guaranteed.

Height adjustment is also simple and reliable. If the consumer wants to raise the pier, he lifts the pier and steps down on the footpad designed by Surges. "The secret is a one-way cam," he said. "The leg can slip one way but not the other. We mount the cam so that it holds the pier up rather than the other way around. When you lower the pier, all it takes is a quarter turn of the wrench to loosen the cam mechanism. When you let

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

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1



2



3



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DENNY MURAWSKA

Growing Your Own Nature's Edible Mushrooms

While I love to roam the woods in search of edible mushrooms, the pickings are often slim. A few buckets of wood chips can make your foraging much easier and more productive. If you do a few simple things between now and early summer, you will be able to "forage" on your own property and easily locate shopping bags full of delicious wild-type mushrooms.

The common name for *Stropharia rugosoannulata* is wine cap. These large, handsome mushrooms are native to Europe and North America, and the tasty giants are very simple to establish. They are as easy to grow as beans, perhaps easier, and the bonanza harvest is something to behold. Preparations are unlimited. Of course, sautéed in butter is always great. They dry well, and can even be pickled. Here is how to satisfy the hunter-gatherer spirit within, without having to walk all that far.

Find a spot or spots on your property that I like to call "sun dappled." Not full shade or full sun, but a bit of each. It can be in an established garden, on the edge of the woods, just about anywhere. Once you have found a sweet spot or two, a flattened cardboard box can be placed on the ground to suppress any weed growth in your bed of mulch. Cover the cardboard with a few inches of hardwood mulch. It can be anything from wood chips to sawdust and even straw. Bagged mulch is fine so long as it is natural hardwood with no added coloring agents. Sawdust spawn is then spread over the mulch and covered with a bit more. Give it a bit of water, and nature will do the rest.

Mushroom spawn is some agent, in this case sawdust that has been inoculated with spores from the wine cap. It has to be purchased and is widely available. The fuzzy white substance growing on the spawn is the part of the fungi that spreads through the mulch and absorbs nutrients while decomposing the wood or straw. Near the end of summer, the fruiting bodies pop up and look much like commercial mushrooms except for their striking deep reddish caps. This process will be repeated year after year until all the nutrients are used up.

You will no longer have to depend on the serendipity of nature to have a productive year. Every year will be productive. You may get this so much that you try other species like oyster and shiitake mushrooms. The woods around my house are full of piles of decomposing logs and mulch that surprise me at various times of the year with a cornucopia of tasty, healthy treats from nature.

A great source for spawn and a catalog that is beautifully illustrated is Field and Forest Products based in Peshtigo Wisconsin. 800-792-6220. www.fieldforest.net

Denny Murawska has been publishing his works since high school. His church is the pine cathedral gracing our unique Driftless Area he calls home. Owner and operator of Angler's Art Fish Taxidermy at www.aa-taxidermy.com



Looking a little bit scruffy following the long winter, a small whitetail deer herd wanders across a field.

BILL THORNLEY

In Difficult Times Nature heals us

Complete silence. Not a "man sound" at all. No voices, no cars or motor sounds. It was a dark and silent morning in April, with a slight chill in the sweet-smelling air.

Then I heard them. Somewhere that was not too distant, a pair of foxes barked. They sounded as if they were at play and it went on for a couple of hours.

No worries about the COVID-19 pandemic for them, I thought. Nature is just nature, and the demons humans fight seldom impact the deer, chipmunks or coyotes.

It has been kind of a sad and scary spring, with concerns for health and employment by many. We have been told to "shelter in place" as the virus spreads, and much of our world has been canceled and postponed.

The foxes continued to bark, and I could envision them rolling and playing, not a care about the virus that has so many scared and depressed.

For the past few weeks, I too have retreated, doing what I need to do, then getting the heck out of the office to the safety of home. Weekends have become retreats where I can stay put and escape the real world for awhile.

But outside on a brisk April morning there is a different feel. You realize things are bad, but they just don't feel "as bad." It is soothing and almost healing as the morning unfolds around you.



Can any creature really represent springtime and the happy feeling of a new season as well as a furry, cottontail bunny with beautiful big, brown eyes? This little lady was out and about, searching for a few seeds to eat on a sunny weekend morning.

For the first time in a very long while, sunlight dances across the top of cobalt blue water on the Yellow River as it flows through Spooner. A Canada goose floats on gentle waves as multi-colored diamonds silhouette him.



A trip to the store – those still open – brings visions of scared people in face masks and looks of distrust from those who think you shouldn't be there, but they should. I'm more than happy to get a few necessities and leave them quickly.

But walking through the woods, the squirrels don't shoot you nasty stares. The Canada geese overhead don't seem uneasy, and the scruffy deer seem more intent on shedding their winter coats than anything else.

Out in the fields, tom turkeys break the silence as they gobble and strut. Woodpeckers tap-tap-tap on trees, and an excited chipmunk squeaks and scurries for cover.

I've never seen anything like COVID-19. Nobody has. I hate all the changes, the suffering, and uncertainty it brings.

Until it passes, maybe we can take a little comfort in the beauty all around us in this area. We can go outside. We can enjoy the first buds on the trees and the new green leaves and grass. We can watch the first fawns being born and listen to a morning concert of song birds. We can take a deep breath of fresh air and not worry.

This COVID-19 pandemic is madness – Mother Nature offers us a little bit of sanity.

Bill Thornley has been a writer and photographer at the Spooner Advocate since 1976. An avid hunter, he enjoys spending time in the outdoors whenever possible.



The waters are opening up on ponds, lakes, and swamplands throughout the North, and for this plump beaver that means there is a lot of work to be done on his lodge.

– PHOTOS BY BILL THORNLEY





SPOTLIGHT | ASHLAND
Ready for the Wisconsin break-out!

Even during the toughest and most trying times, there is a silver lining in Ashland. The Ashland Chamber wants to put a smile on your face, and share a few outdoor activities that you can look forward to experiencing when these challenging days are filed to yesterday.

Early summer in Ashland has the smell of nature and blooming flowers; trees budding out and filled with birds chirping every morning. We are open in Ashland County, where fishing the inland lakes and Lake Superior, the greatest of the Great Lakes, never closes. Kids and kids at heart love to fish off the docks and beautiful shorelines.

Warm fresh air and a stirring in the great outdoors means that summer is coming! Hike our trails, have a beach day, head to the inland lakes to fish, waterski, simply boat and soak in the sun. When another day is over too soon, be camera ready for the most beautiful sunsets over the glistening water of Lake Superior.

Golfers keep the faith just a while longer and keep envisioning that perfect drive or the sound of the ball dropping into the cup on that 20 foot put; Ashland’s 18-hole course is open to the public.

Find camping in Ashland at Prentice Park and Kreher Park. Discover artesian wells and natural spring water at both Prentice Park and Maslowski Beach. Ashland of-fers 20 hand painted murals depicting our storied history. We love to tout them as beautiful “public art.” All of the murals were painted by the same two artists and have earned Ashland the title of “The Historic Mural Capital of Wisconsin.”

Southern Ashland County is home to spectacular, scenic waterfalls at Copper Falls State Park and Morgan Falls. Plan your hike and enjoy the magnificent waterfalls as your reward.

Summer is a time we all need to look forward to. Ashland Wisconsin is getting “summer ready.” We cordially invite you to make Ashland the family getaway where you can lodge in comfort; play everywhere, shop the historic downtown; and dine in the locally owned restaurants with an array of menu choices including fresh fish. 🐟

The Ashland Chamber continues to say: Be Safe, Be Healthy! Ashland, the Heart of Chequamegon Bay! Where You'll Find Yourself Next to the Water! www.visitashland.com (715) 682-2500. info@visitashland.com



Hand Painted Mural of the Historic Ore Dock in Ashland

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SPOTLIGHT | FERRYVILLE

Good times coming again

Kids, fishing and grandparents just go together like peanut butter and jelly. In these times of “social distancing” for everyone’s safety, we need to be thinking ahead to the fun in the sun times. The fishing gear needs to be ready and the cooler clean and available.

Boating on the Mississippi River with the “just about six” year old twin granddaughters is the best time in life. “Papa baits the hook” and also puts on the worm. 🐛

Make the Ferryville Boat Launch and Mississippi River your destination for great family times in the summer of 2020. You will love it. We do.



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JULY-AUGUST 2020

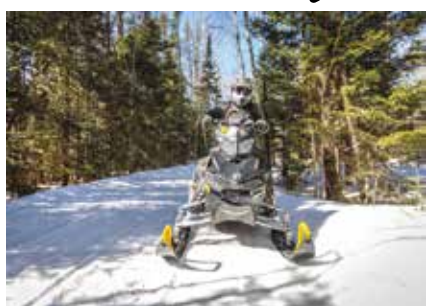
July 25th - Huge Market in the Park,
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Pull at 12 pm, kid's games.
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KIESOW, FROM PAGE 4

The optional rib can be wire or tinsel and is tied over the body, which can be dubbed, chenille, floss, or colored thread. It is sometimes wound heavy in front and small at the tail. A few strands of hackle is then tied sparsely on the underside of the hook, facing back towards the tail and leaving room on the top to tie in the wings which, traditionally, are made with matching duck or goose wing feathers, shiny sides out, curve up (some tie them curve down), or the wing can be made of hair.

It is best to tie the same pattern several times, in many sizes. Size can make the difference between an empty creel and supper.

I use wet flies for trout and panfish. When fishing for panfish in still water, I cast out, let the fly sink a bit, then retrieve - sometimes in long steady pulls, sometimes short jerky motions.

When using wets for trout, I cast upstream, if possible, then follow the fly down with my rod tip, mending as required. I let the fly swing below me, then retrieve with a variety of strips or jerks making the fly appear as if it is injured or an escaping or emerging critter. Sometimes



Your basic wet fly, tied on a heavy hook with unwaxed thread, water-absorbing materials, and tied sparingly so it will sink fast. Note that the wings and hackle point toward the tail.

I will let the fly fall back after a short retrieve and retrieve it in a different way. Many times I have to use all methods before I provoke a strike.

That's it. Nymphs are next.

See you in the river.

Keep a good thought! 🐛

Jerry shares his love of the outdoors through photos, words, and workshops. He is the author of “Tales of the Peshtigo Putzer” and “Photos, Poems, and a Little Bit of Prose,” available at Orange Hat Publishing, Amazon, and his website: www.jerrykiesowoc.com.

Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | HAYWARD

A true "Northern" accomplishment

The Lake Chippewa Flowage Resort Association (LCFRA), and special mention of Barb Czarnecki, has won the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources External Partner of the Year Award for the Pike Improvement Project.

"I am pleased that our program will be recognizing the great cooperative effort and all the fine work put in by the LCFRA for the project. It was really impressive," said Max Wolter, Fisheries Biologist of the DNR.

The award recognizes external partners to the DNR who go above and beyond in their commitment to environmental stewardship.

The Big Chip Pike Improvement Project asked anglers to keep and eat northern pike 24 inches and smaller they caught on the Big Chip throughout the season, or to

give them away. The goal is to cull enough northern pike to reduce the population and improve the size of the remaining northern pike in the Chippewa Flowage.

To aid in the effort, the Chippewa Flowage resort owners and property owners' associations offered drawings for cash and gift certificates to anglers for registering the fish they caught. The resorts also provided laminated instructions and an online video on how to clean northern pike and recipes for cooking and pickling.

Wolter said, "The average size was under 20 inches, which is what we were hoping for, and 87 percent were under 24 inches." He added that 1,801 different anglers participated in this effort, and they were from 634 different cities in 29 states. "It's really cool to see all the people that come and enjoy this lake."

The Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe also supported the effort, Wolter added. "We will take a step back, evaluate this and see how the fishery changes, see if this was enough to make bigger pike, and see how the musky stocking goes this fall. Then we will decide if we will do it again in future years."

Wolter said that the plan is to stock 5,000 extended-growth musky fingerlings on the Chippewa Flowage this fall. The Hayward Lakes Chapter of Muskies, Inc., "donated a lot of money to buy extra food for those fish at the hatcheries, so we will keep them there longer and grow them bigger."

A grand prize drawing of \$1,000 was donated by the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame to anglers entering pike in the improvement project.

The Pike Improvement Project aimed to

Northern Pike smaller than this beauty were destined for the frying pan during the Pike Improvement Project on the Big Chip.



remove 10,000 northern pike from the Big Chip fishery in one year. In an impressive effort, anglers kept and ate a grand total of 7,486 pike. 🐟

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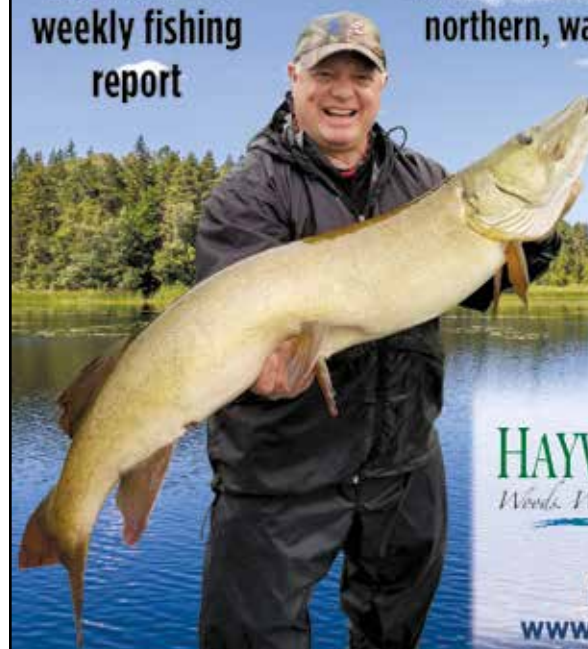
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SPOTLIGHT MARINETTE COUNTY

From the shores of Green Bay to inland waters, Marinette County has something for every outdoor enthusiast.

Marinette County Parks and Campgrounds provide restful, scenic surroundings to spend your leisure time and explore the outdoors. Endless trails provide recreation for adventurers who desire to ATV/UTV, hike or bike. Over 230,000 acres of county forestland are available to view wildlife or just to explore.

Whether you are looking for a campground with ATV/UTV access, a group campsite or a campground with all the amenities, Marinette County has what you are looking for.

Marinette County is the Waterfall Capital of Wisconsin with many stunning waterfalls. Several Marinette County campgrounds feature waterfalls. Whether you want an easy stroll or a challenging hike, a day exploring is a great way to add to a camping trip. Our self-guided waterfall tour provides a fun, family-friendly way to get back to nature.

Are you looking for that perfect fishing spot? Marinette County has it. Whatever type of fishing you enjoy, Marinette County is the place to go! Exceptional inland waters include over 200 lakes and 900 river miles for anglers and paddlers.

Reference a map and start exploring! With extensive recreational facilities and vacation adventures, Marinette County is truly an outdoor paradise! 🍷



Long Slide Falls in Marinette County

the real north



www.therealnorth.com



Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | HURLEY

Plan now, travel later

Plan a trip to Hurley and experience the scenic waterfalls that are filled from the Spring thaw.

There are 19 waterfalls in and around the Hurley area. Most are located in remote, wild areas unspoiled by crowds. Some can be driven to while others require walking and a little bit of orienteering. All are worth the trip. To request a guide, call our office 715-561-4334.

Iron County has over 170,000 acres of county land, much that is accessible through back roads and old logging trails. Adventurers can explore the land and camp anywhere along the lands for free, up to two weeks.

The Gile Flowage is home to walleye, smallmouth bass, muskie, crappie, northern pike, blue gill and perch. On this 3,300 acre body of water, there are

four public launches for boats, pontoons, kayaks and paddle boards. If the flowage is too busy, check out one of the 154 lakes that have public access. And there are approximately 136 miles of trout streams waiting for you. Call our office for a newly updated Iron County Sportsmans Map.

After a day of adventure, be sure to stop at any of the local establishments. A variety of cuisine is available from fresh homemade pastas and pizzas to prime rib or a fresh hand-packed burger. The locally owned bars and restaurants specialize in fantastic food and friendly service.

PLAN A GETAWAY AND ENJOY OUR LOCAL HERITAGE

Iron County Historical Museum

The former courthouse is home to three floors of iconic history of our mining and logging heritage. Open Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from

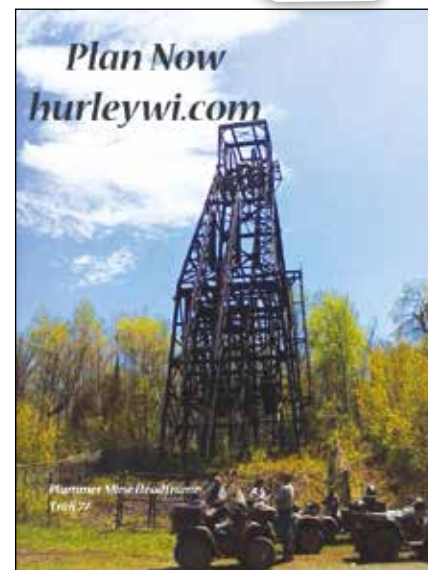
10 am to 2 pm, volunteers are always available to provide a tour or explore on your own.

Heritage Days, Saturday, July 25 through Sunday, August 9.

Iron County spotlights their rich heritage of mining and logging with two weeks of events throughout the county. Kicking off the festivities with the Heritage Days Parade, the festival includes the Iron County Fair, Paavo Nurmi Marathon and many other events.

Festival Italiano, Saturday, September 5

A trip to Hurley for the last hoorah of summer won't disappoint! The day is filled with food vendors lining Silver Street, games, craft vendors, and music throughout the day. An afternoon performance by Marty's Goldenaires gets the crowd ready for the evening street



dance featuring IV Play from Mankato Minnesota. 🎵

Join us soon in Hurley! www.hurleywi.com

Explore Wisconsin



SPOTLIGHT | SPOONER

Enjoy our water... and so much more

How do you like to enjoy the water? Do you jump in feet first, cast a line, float with friends, or start your motor? Lucky for you, you can do all of this and more in the Spooner Area's many waterways.

Located just outside of the city, Spooner Lake boasts beautiful water in a huge setting. With two public landings, the possibilities for fun are endless! Back in your pontoon and have a relaxing ride around the lake, take your fishing boat out and cast away, or just take a dip! Located across the road from one of the public landings is The Spooner Golf Club, home to a phenomenal 18 hole course and a delicious bar and restaurant featuring many specialty dishes. Spooner Lake is also home to a beautiful resort to bring the whole family! Pine Harbor Resort has all the amenities to make your vacation truly top of the line.

Speaking of line, have you checked out the many fishing experiences around Spooner? For beginner and experienced fishermen alike, Spooner is the ultimate fishing excursion experience. Book a Gill Getter with AAA Sport, rent a kayak from Saw This, pick up some new supplies from Spooner Outlet, or pack your own gear and head to the water. There's plenty to choose from - we have almost 1,000 lakes county-wide!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

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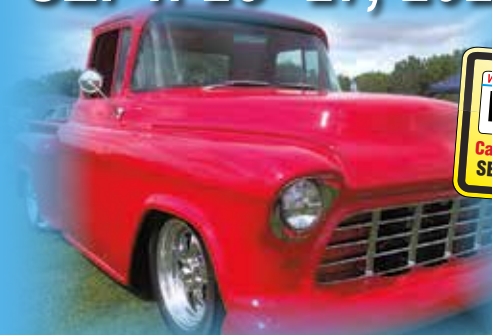
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STUART WILKE

K-9 Unit West Allis

On his second day on the job, Chaz, the newest addition to the West Allis Police Department K-9 Unit, was already demonstrating a promising future. Early in March and still technically in training, Chaz, a Belgian Malinois dog, under the direction of partner Corporal Ryan Schultz, responded to a bank robbery. Upon arriving on the scene, Chaz put his nose to work tracking a suspect through city streets until the trail went cold. At that point, video cameras would later show that the suspect fled in a waiting car. Later examination of surveillance videos would prove that Chaz followed the suspect's exact trail. The suspect was later apprehended and awaits trial.

"That was an exciting event," Corporal Schultz said. "This is real life, this isn't training; I was thinking during the chase. Chaz showed that he could do the job."

Chaz was born on November 8 of 2018 in Hungary and responds to Dutch language commands. He joins two other members of the K-9 unit, KC, who is partnered

with Cpl. Doug Sayeg, and Gizmo, who is assigned to Cpl. Ryan McNally.

All of the K-9 dogs are trained in narcotics detection, evidence recovery, area and building searches, tracking and handler protection. K-9 handlers are intensively trained by Southern Police Canine, Inc., along with their K-9 partners, in North Carolina. According to Cpl. Schultz, the K-9 unit responds to at least 500 to 700 calls annually.

K-9 officers are assigned to the Patrol Division. Handlers are "straight-up cops with dogs to assist them. They are another tool in the tool box," Cpl. Schultz said. "The dogs can do things that humans can't. Their sense of smell is phenomenal, for instance. Their noses will detect objects that a human never could. They're also fast and have a lot of stamina."

Members of the K-9 Unit have been instrumental in apprehending bank robbers, burglars, and finding weapons used in crimes, in addition to stopping

crimes in progress. "Suspects are often more compliant when confronted by a dog," Cpl. Schultz noted. (Author's note: I can only imagine what would be going through the mind of a suspect faced by a K-9 on a mission, and, yes, the dogs will bite, if need be.)

West Allis Police Department dogs mean business when confronting suspects, but they are comfortable among citizens in a variety of settings, which make them valuable community relations tools. "Everybody loves a dog," Cpl. Schultz said. "They make a positive statement about the police department wherever they go. We take them to school presentations, like High Interest Days, community events, and the West Allis Citizen Police Academy, among others. They're a hit everywhere."

The City of West Allis budget does not include funding for the K-9 Unit. Each dog costs approximately \$14,000 to train. Additional costs are associated with equipping the unit with squad cars, supplies, and materials among other needs, add thousands of dollars in support of the unit. These costs are financed solely through donations and fund raisers, such as the Annual K-9 Unit Golf Outing. This year will be the 10th anniversary of the event, which will take place on September 18.

Many local businesses support the K-9 Unit, including Shorty's Shooting Sports in West Allis. Owner Mike "Shorty" Govas has



been a sponsor for the past five years. "The K-9 Unit is a valuable and important part of the police force, which is why we support them through donations," he explained. He's also highly impressed with the unit.

Shorty has seen the K-9 Unit put through its paces at a community event. "They are really cool. It was incredible. A number of cones were placed around a room and a tiny bit of a narcotic was placed under one. The dog was let loose, and in seconds it identified which cone the drug was hidden under."

If you would like to make a monetary donation to the K-9 Unit, contact Lt. Michael Kempinski of the West Allis Police Department or bring your check to Shorty's Shooting Sports and he will take it to the department. 🐾

Stuart Wilke is a long-time contributor to *On Wisconsin Outdoors*. Contact him with your story ideas at submissions@onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

ellis, from page 19
go of the wrench, the pier stays."

Surges also said that storing and caring for the pier is just as easy. Frames are stored upside down with folded legs without leg-caps removed and can be stacked as high as the owner likes. Panels are stacked vertically allowing for minimal storage space in your shed or shore.

"We've weight-tested our pier," Surges said. "The more weight you put on our pier the more secure it is. Each 4 by 8-foot section will hold over 7,000 pounds. That's about 40 people."

The company has sold thousands of piers all over the USA, including Alaska, and in Canada and Europe. Several Pier of d' Nort piers are on the Great Lakes, and several on Lake Winnebago. Persons interested in the product work directly with pier experts to create a pier just right for the customer. When the pier

is received, most consumers find the instructions so informative that a seven-section pier installation is likely to take less than two hours the first time and considerably less time with experience.

"Nothing on our website is exaggerated or untrue," Surges said. "People with piers are sophisticated; they live on lakes, they're doing well, they're smart. We understate the quality of our piers. To have customers discover that it's even better than they expected leads to more referrals than the other way around."

Pier of d' Nort was recently chosen as the World's Greatest pier by How 2 Media's television show, "World's Greatest". See the piers in person at the St. Germain showroom and manufacturing facility, or connect with Pier of d' Nort at www.pierofd'nort.com or 715-477-3232. 🐾

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Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing

RON STRESING

Seeking the Hit Parade *Selecting a perfect sporting clays gun*

Sporting clays started out in England around 1900 as a way to simulate shooting during waterfowl hunts and driven pheasant shoots. It became so popular that by 1925 the English held their first National Championship. Sporties were first introduced to the American shooting public by gun writer Bob Brister in July 1980. They were an instant hit! By 1985, there was a national shooting organization and championship shoots were being held. Sporting clays soon phased out skeet shooting, as more gun clubs made room for sporting clays courses. With having to walk along a course, and the variety of shots taken, sporting clays earned the nickname “golf with a shotgun.”

Targets are thrown in pairs. Either a “true pair” with both thrown at once, or a “report pair” with the second thrown after the first target is fired upon. Because of this, single shot or bolt action shotguns are not practical. Many trap shooters, who were used to running 25 straight with a beloved trap single (myself included), found themselves looking for a new shotgun for this game.

There are three main considerations when picking out a shotgun for sporting clays: the fit of the gun, the action, and available chokes. With starting from the “ready” position, instead of with the gun mounted as in trap or skeet, sporties shooters must learn to move, mount and shoot in one fluid motion. Gun fit is critical. Adjustable stocks or custom fitting isn’t a bad option.

The first choice of most shooters are 12 gauge over/under shotguns. Using a shotgun with two barrels allows for fast follow up shots and more than one choke. An open choke for the closer, first target and a tighter choke for the second, longer shot. SKB makes several over/unders with fully adjustable stocks, including the 90TSS, a dedicated sporting clays model. One of the best sporties shooters I know simply puts two light modified Carlson’s choke tubes in his over/under. He contends light modified will cover 90% of the targets on most courses, and I agree. Yes, you can use a side by side shotgun, like the SKB model 200 Target as well. Many traditional, tweed-wearing shooters in the UK insist on shooting their courses with the same classic English side by sides they hunt with.

Semi-auto shotguns offer a BIG advantage in recoil reduction. Fifty rounds of shotgun ammunition is the minimum for a round of sporties. Even with the lighter loads used for clays, that can be a lot of shoulder pounding. Semi-autos like the SKB competition model RS300 or RS400 offer an adjustable stock to allow the shooter to fine tune gun fit. The shooter can carry extra extended choke tubes to swap out, if he encounters an odd station that needs more or less choke constriction.

Yes, you can use your hunting semi-auto, double gun, or even pump for the occasional round of sporties. You can also use a 20 gauge shotgun. I’ve shot clays with the 20 gauge over/under that I use for bunnies and doves. I don’t think my score was affected by more than a target or two. Time spent breaking clays on the sporties course is fun, builds confidence, and hones shooting skills! 🎯

Ron Stresing has been an outdoor writer since 1996 and has had articles published in Midwest Outdoors, Fur-Fish-Game and Badger Sportsman magazines. He lives in South Milwaukee with his wife Donna.



SKB Shotguns make several models the writer evaluates as excellent for sporting clays.

DICK ELLIS

Memorial Day *Trading it all....*

Memorial Day, May 25th in 2020, annually honors and mourns the military personnel who have died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Approximately 1 million have fallen in service to their country since the War for Independence. They traded it all, for everyone else. American and Wisconsin families know the pain of the losses.

Visit www.onwisconsinoutdoors.com and Ellis Blogs to read OWO Publisher Dick Ellis’ letter to his daughter making sure she is better introduced to several men either taken early by war, or who were willing to trade it all for her own family.

Read an eye-witness account recently discovered online of a gunner in a tank platoon during a bloody battle near Kleinhou, Belgium in November, 1944 just prior to the Battle of the Bulge. The account includes the graphic description of the deaths of three soldiers including Lt. Charles Ellis, one of 6 brothers from Wisconsin Rapids serving.



Lt. Charles Ellis rests under a white cross in the Henri-Chappelle American Cemetery, killed in a tank battle in November, 1944, near Kleinhou, Belgium.




Lt. Charles Ellis, purple heart, bronze star.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29



Four Ellis brothers return home to Wisconsin Rapids after WWII but the family will forever be missing the eldest brother, Charles.

ELLIS, FROM PAGE 28

Read Warrant Officer and LOH Scout pilot Steve Ellis's eulogy for Louis Rochat prior to Rochat's burial in Arlington National Cemetery. Shot down, severely wounded in Vietnam and under intense ground attack, Ellis and two door gunners were saved by warrant officers and cobra pilots Dan Rager and Rochat. Learn what the heroic and unselfish actions of the two 21-year olds in 1970 meant for Ellis, of Wausau, and his family over the next five decades. 



Warrant Officer
Dan Rager




Warrant Officer
Lou Rochat



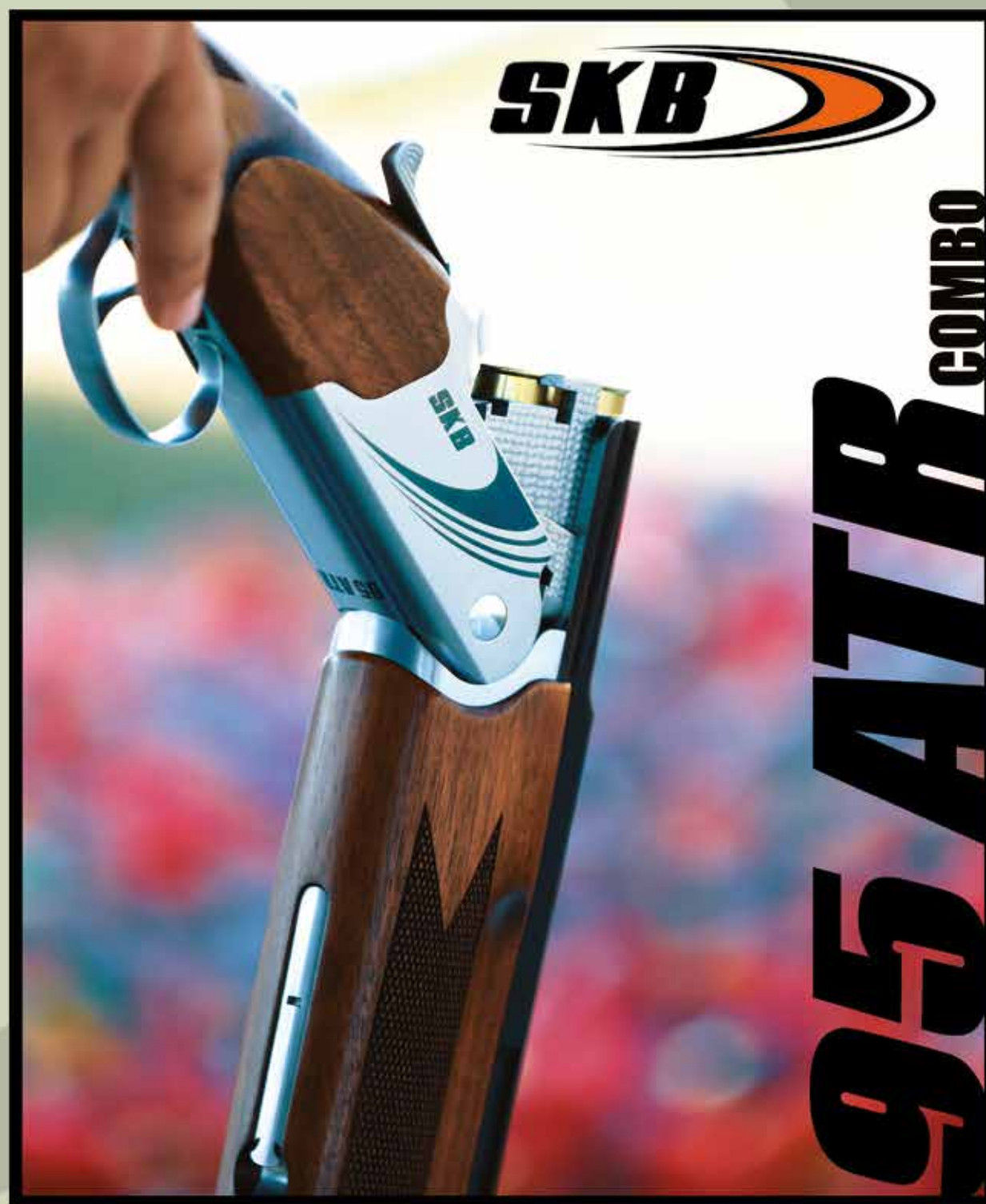
Warrant Officer Steve Ellis

SPOONER, FROM PAGE 25

Just minutes from Spooner find "Wisconsin's Moving National Park" - the Namekagon River. Interested in a true social-distancing experience? Put in your canoe, kayak, or tube at one of the drop sites and float on! Check out the DNR website to make sure the river is safe before you plan your trip.

After your day on the water, don't forget about the many restaurants we have in Spooner. From family style, bar and grill, to upscale, we definitely have whatever you are craving. Want to stay at the cabin? Make sure you stop at Schmitz's Economart or North Crossing Foods to get everything your designated "Grill Master" needs. 

Plan your summer on the water at spoonerchamber.org! Addie Erdmann
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SCOTT VACHAVAKE

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Otterbox LT-30 Cooler

One of the coolest new products this spring! 30-quart capacity with a food-grade liner. Quickly converts from shoulder- to backpack-carry. Opens wide for easy access. Leakproof seal secures contents. Water-resistant exterior pockets. Premium grade thermal insulation. Most impressively, this cooler can keep ice from melting for up to three days! (\$299.99)

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Crazy Creek Hammock Pod

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rei.com



TOM CARPENTER

Badger Birds Northern Oriole

Orioles just love summer. These flashy and bright songbirds return to Wisconsin in late spring from tropical wintering grounds in Central and South America.

A male oriole creates a spectacular sight in his feathered finery of fiery-orange and jet-black. Females aren't as bright – more of an olive-washed orange – but offer a demure beauty all their own.

Now that the landscape has warmed and greened up, insects and fruit are the culinary attractions. May and June are the perfect months to observe orioles whether you're fishing along a stream, camping in a glade in the forest, hiking prairie and woods, or just out working in the yard. Orioles do fine in rural, suburban and even urban settings, as long as there are some mature trees around.

Look for a stunning bird with blaze-orange chest, belly and back, and black head and wings. That's the male. Females are a drabber blend of washed-orange and olive-yellow, and their heads and wings are gray.

Listen for the oriole's beautiful, flute-like *hoo-li* song of four to eight notes, usually made from high up in a tree.

Search with binoculars for an oriole nest – a woven basket of plant fibers and bark strands suspended from the tip of a branch high in a tree. Leave out pieces of string and yarn (under eight inches long, so they don't tangle the birds) for the orioles to use in their basket-building endeavors.

Attract orioles with orange halves impaled fruit-side-up on a deck rail or tree trunk. Or set out a tray of grape jelly. You can also feed sugar water in an oriole feeder.

Did you know that the Baltimore oriole (East) and Bullock's oriole (West) were once considered distinct species? But they readily interbreed where their ranges overlap along prairie river corridors and the bird is now known simply as the northern oriole. 🐦

Native son Tom Carpenter writes about the outdoor world for a variety of national and regional publications.

Scott runs an online sporting goods company from his home in Appleton, thenortherntundra.com, and is an avid traveler, photographer, and outdoorsman.

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JOHN LUTHENS

Warblers in Wisconsin

A colorful way to welcome in the summer season

Come May and early June, warblers began dancing through Wisconsin like a band of colorful gypsies, and outdoor enthusiasts across the state began staking out their spots with cameras and binoculars to enjoy the festive parade.

Even if one is not a bird watcher in other seasons, it's hard to not get caught up in one of the surest signs that summer is on the way. Leaves are budding, flowers are blooming, and, with a few watchful tips, warblers can turn the simplest walk or drive into an even more vivid adventure.

Professional outdoor photographer John Heino currently makes his home in Duluth Minnesota. Although he has ranged far from home in pursuit of his trade, including South Africa, Iceland and Cuba, he says that nothing compares to the rewards found in our midwestern region when it comes to warbler hunting.

"I think I've photographed over 20 different species of warblers in Wisconsin alone," says Heino. "There is such a diversity of habitat, and you never know on any given day which bird you are going to find."

Many of Wisconsin's warblers migrate from winter grounds in Central and South America, and although the spring migration can vary year to year, Heino says that the third week in May is historically the peak time for the



A yellow warbler captured on the banks of the Milwaukee River near Grafton, Wisconsin

biggest variety to be on the move. He also says that doing a bit of research and scouting is key.

"Depending on which warblers you are after, read and check some websites in advance for local sightings," says Heino. "There are fantastic bird refuges scattered throughout the state that attract certain species every year. Flowing water always seems to draw them in. Especially don't overlook the smaller creeks and tributaries. If you see that there are bugs or insects hatching, it can be a green light for hungry warblers."

Like many outdoor pursuits in Wisconsin, half of the fun in searching for warblers is the chance to explore backroads and side lanes that others pass by unaware. Heino submits that a meandering drive can lead to some of the best

A bay-breasted warbler seen in the Kettle Moraine Forest near West Bend, Wisconsin



encounters.

"Honestly, I've taken some my best photos right out the car window," he says. "Warblers seem to love ditches and tree lines, and I've discovered seldom-travelled roads within a short distance of home that I never dreamed would hold such a variety of birds. My vehicle becomes the perfect wildlife blind."

Wisconsin is indeed on the move with the colors and sounds of coming summer. Adding a few warblers into the mix will help you welcome the changing of the outdoor seasons in a fluttering blaze of style. 🌿

John Luthens is a freelance writer from Grafton, Wisconsin. To view a sampling of John Heino's outdoor images, including some of his warblers, follow his Facebook page at John Heino Photography.

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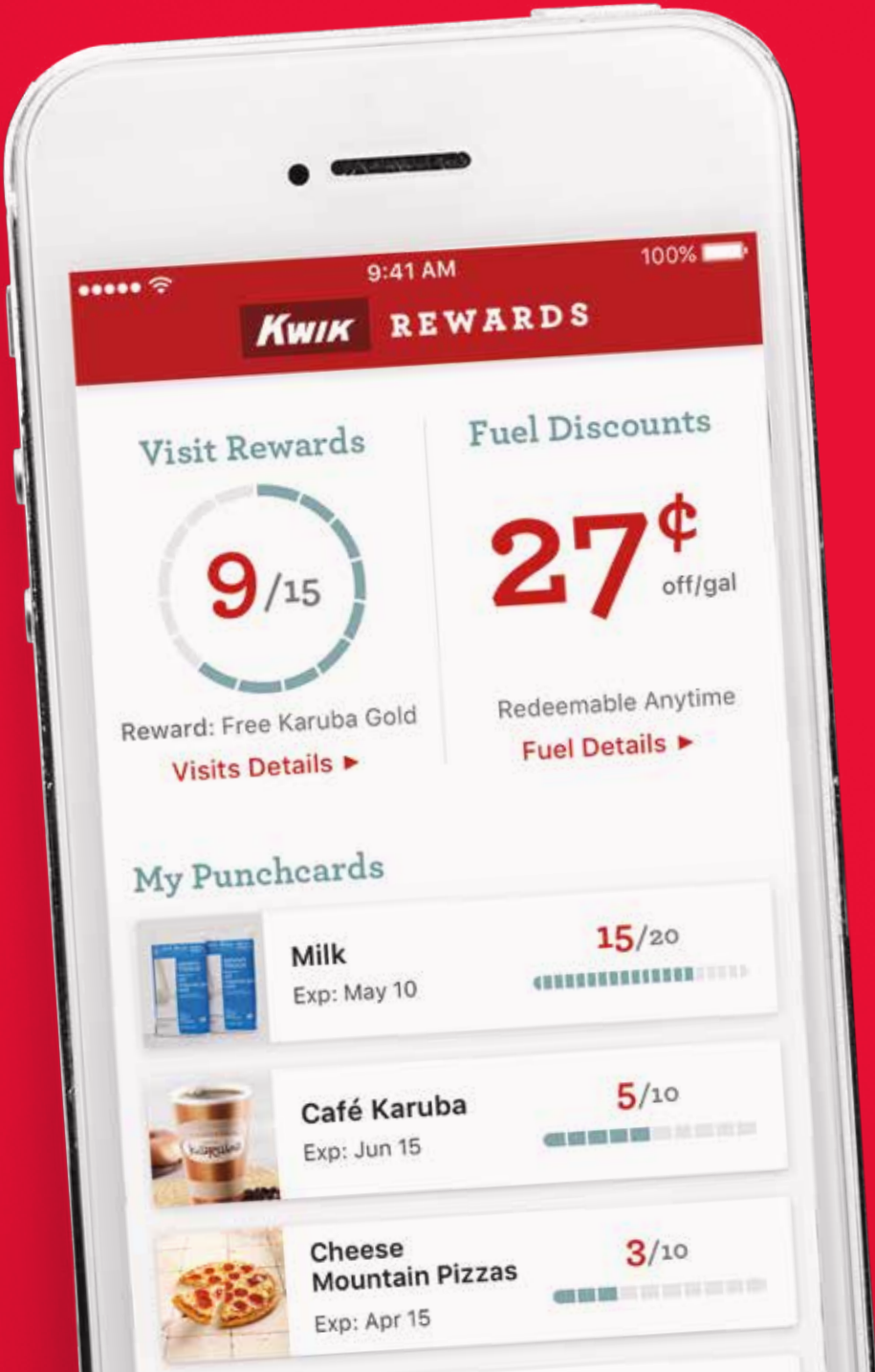
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