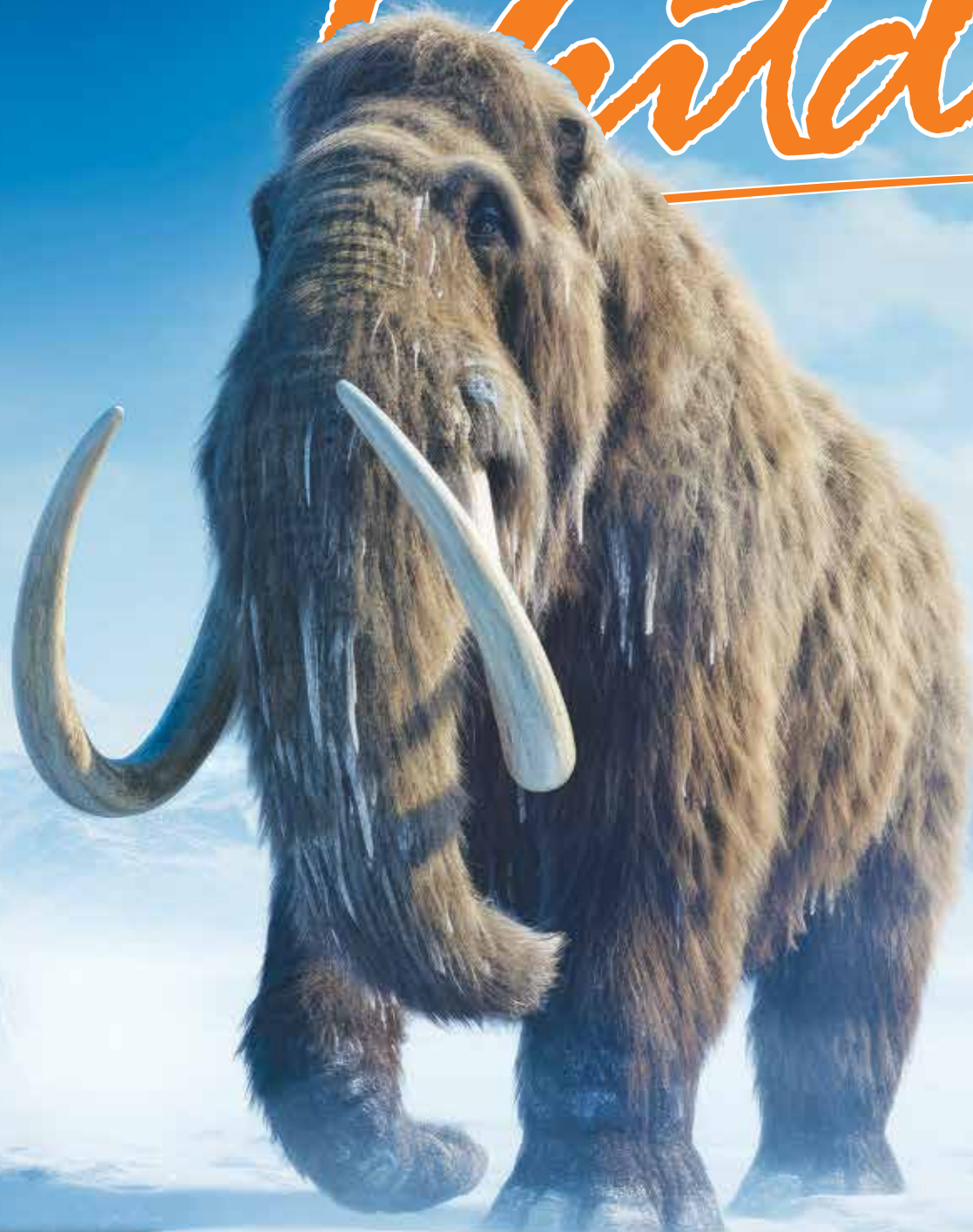


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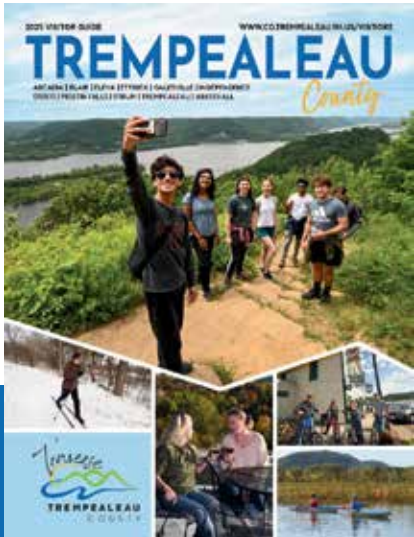


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Explore Wisconsin

SPOTLIGHT | TREMPEALEAU COUNTY



Traverse Trempealeau County

We welcome you to traverse Trempealeau County. Experience beautiful natural landscapes and endless opportunities for fun! Discover rolling hills, towering bluffs, valleys, and waterways that make our area the perfect place to enjoy

outdoor recreation, while remaining close to the comforts of civilization. Whether your idea of fun is bicycling, hiking, or canoeing, when you're done, head into the heart of one of our welcoming communities to experience historic architecture, independent shops, and locally owned dining establishments.

Trempealeau County's allure resides not only in our picturesque landscapes, squarely in the unglaciated "driftless area", but also in our people—the backbone of our strength and resilience. Visitors and newcomers alike are welcomed with open arms, finding comfort in the genuine friendliness of our residents.

Waterways figure prominently in our county with four major rivers. The "mighty" Mississippi, Buffalo, Trempealeau and Black Rivers all provide excellent recreational opportunities. You can also get off the beaten path and explore many of our creeks and streams, several of which provide public trout fishing opportunities.

You'll experience an abundance of beauty on one of our many scenic drives. Come visit as the land springs back to life in the spring. Enjoy one of our many summer festivals. Take a drive on the Great River Road (Hwy 35). Hike in one of our many parks or bike the 382 miles of paved and marked backroads. Hillsides, valleys and fields come alive with vibrant colors in the fall. In the winter, enjoy snowmobiling on our acclaimed trail system. The area is also great for snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and ice fishing.

There are so many attractions (including golf, apple orchards, charming downtowns, hunting, fishing, golf museums and more), you probably won't be able to experience everything in one visit. That's ok. You're always welcome.

For more information, visit <https://co.trempealeau.wi.us/visitors/index.php> or call us at 715-538-1923. You can also follow Trempealeau County Tourism on Instagram and Facebook.



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DENNY MURAWSKA

The Study of Phenology

Rhythms of nature's clock

I have long been in the habit of heralding each tick of Nature's clock by the arrival of living things. Who hasn't felt the hour of spring chime as the first skunk cabbage emerges in low, swampy areas, accompanied by a chorus of spring peepers? Since ancient times, humans have clocked the coming and going of time by keenly observing their environments. Certain food sources ebb and flow with these tides of time, and it has always been crucial to listen to their beating.

Spring for me first appears along a wooded path I walk regularly. Dainty white bloodroot flowers seem to be the first to poke out. Soon the trillium boldly flag their woodland haunts. Wild lupine displays its royal purple flower spikes and becomes food for the rare Karner Blue butterfly caterpillars. Time to collect delicious fern fiddleheads, and stalk the wary brook trout in a nearby stream.

Next, the return of colorful birds like the orioles, grosbeaks, and goldfinches adorn my feeders. With flowers come the hummingbirds seeking nectar around mid-May. Lush summer foliage fills the voids of winter. Mayfly nymphs that have spent their lives underwater now emerge in plumes that soon fall back to the water they came from, feeding the hungry trout, and the appetites of anglers. The colors and abundance of life reaches its peak as birds settle into their instinctive nesting habits.

All too soon, the first signs of change appear as the clock ticks. A brilliant scarlet begins to tip sumac trees. Acorns begin to drop. Bee balm and spiderwort line roadsides and grassy areas. Wildflowers of every shade of yellow begin to fill the landscape. Sneezing begins for many of us. Finally, purple asters signal the last wildflowers of autumn. One day, bean fields turn from green to a glowing golden hue from the cold sweeping breath of frost that visited in the night. Pumpkins and squash stand out from shriveled vines that nourished them. Winter is not too far behind.

One founder of modern phenology is Robert Marsham who took notes on the comings and goings of plants and birds on his estate in England, 1736.

Wisconsin's own Aldo Leopold took many field notes in the area of around Baraboo, where they were often cited in his famous Sand County Almanac. An iconic must read. 🌿



Another mysterious sign that spring is approaching. A Polyphemus Moth whose emergence is governed by some unknown clock. They have no mouthparts and live only a week simply to breed.

BILL THORNLEY

The Backyard Feeder

Helping nature through Winter

This has so far not been a tough winter. But then again, winter is winter, and that means cold and stress for wildlife. For many creatures the center of activity becomes the home bird feeder where life is fueled by birdseed, bread, and suet.

The scene at a typical feeder is pretty much the same everywhere. Chickadees flit about, greedily munching on life-sustaining seeds and dried berries. They seem almost joyful as they discover a new suet cake has been hung out for them.

Other birds follow. One can sit for hours watching comical nuthatches hang upside down for a bit of suet. Regal cardinals arrive and quickly snap up a few seeds, departing in a red blur. A noisy red-headed woodpecker and small downy woodpecker make an appearance.

Bluejays are beautiful blue, black and white bullies that seem to demand to be fed. Gentle cooing mourning doves settle in for a meal. What are those big, three-toed tracks in the snow? A small flock of wild turkeys has paid a visit to the feeder. One even dropped a feather like a calling card.

Birds, of course, are not the only backyard feeder visitors. As morning arrives, and the chickadees break into a happy chirping song, I become aware of little furry shapes about the size of a football racing here and there as I deliver some seeds and bread.

Bunnies!

Usually there are two, but occasionally as many as four. I put a little food on the



A little bit of bird seed spread out on the ground attracted this brilliant red cardinal. Photo by Bill Thornley.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

On The Cover

Wisconsin was a very different place as Ice Age glaciers began to subside. Vast tundras with pine woods, swamps, and small waterways laid before sheets of ice that covered much of the of state.

In the Kenosha area, Paleo-Indians hunted huge wooly mammoths and other large mammals, like giant beavers and mastodons.

Read about the giant residents that changed history in this edition

with Editor Stuart Wilke's "A Mammoth Discovery." Learn more about the mammoth in the Kenosha Spotlight inside, and plan your visit to see actual the skeletal remains of the Schaefer Mammoth at the Kenosha Public Museum. Tools found at the Town of Paris excavation site in the early 1990s are among the oldest evidence of human existence in the Western Hemisphere.



On Wisconsin
Outdoors
With the Dick Ellis Experts

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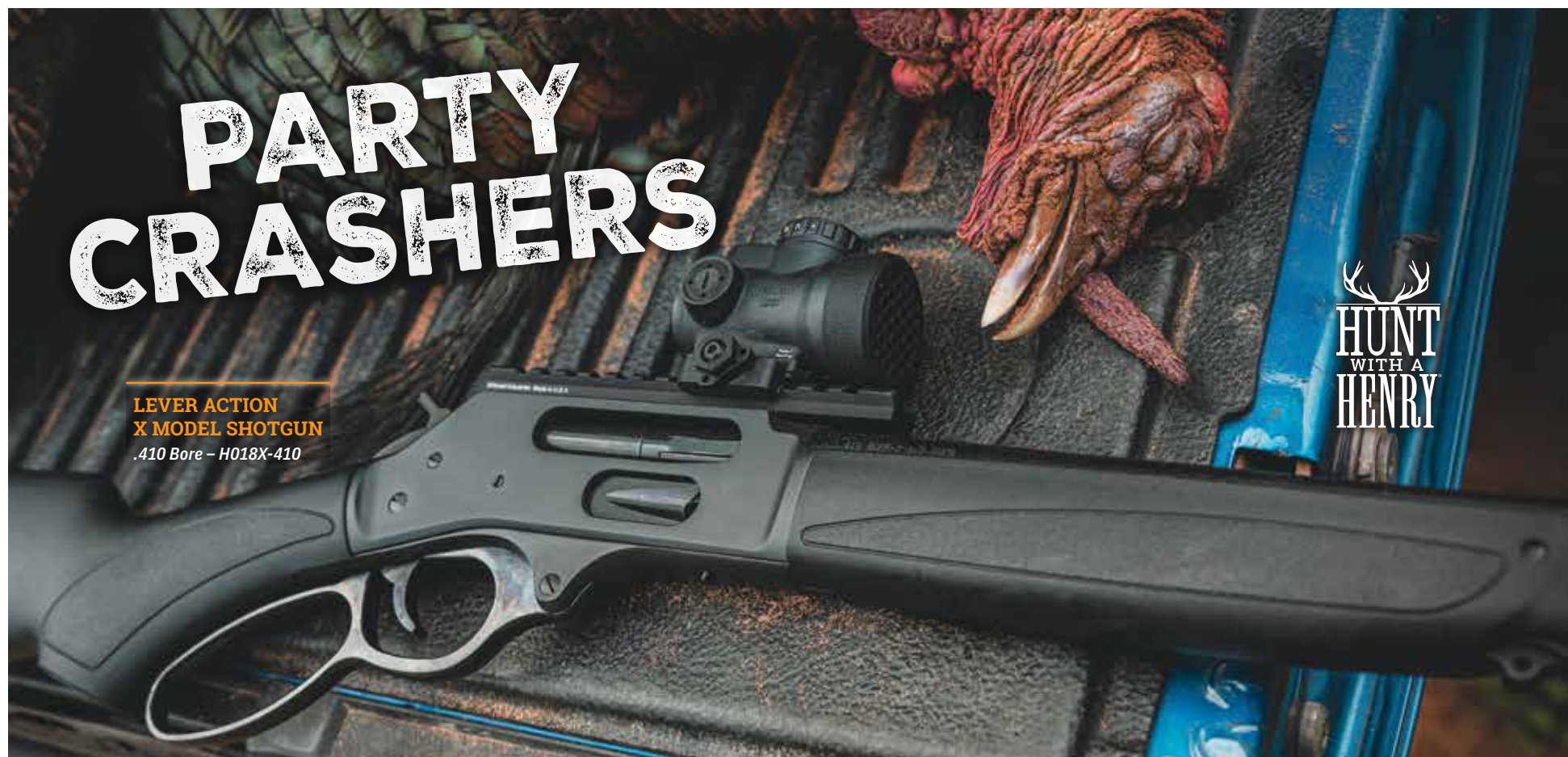
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CAPTAIN LEE HAASCH

Springtime in Algoma

Lake Michigan awakes after mild winter

This winter has been anything but normal. December left us with cold temps and very little snow. January saw near record highs and sub-zero temps, but no precipitation. February roared in and filled our trails with a beautiful snow base that brought 2025 back to near normal. Ice fishing is going strong with the Ahnapee River giving up feisty steelhead and some giant pike. Snowmobilers are finally enjoying the groomed trails and the cross-country skiers have dusted off their skis and hit the trails. But spring is just around the corner!

March and April tip off with tail-dancing steelhead fishing in the streams. It is common for seasoned anglers to catch and release a limit of fish on a regular basis. Did you ever have a steelhead smack your bait, bend your pole in half and scream out drag on your reel as it dances downstream in the rapids? If you haven't, this should be near the top of your bucket list. There is nothing more exhilarating than doing battle, one on one, with a 12-pound steelhead on light tackle.

The Lake Michigan shoreline is also a hot area for fishing in March and April. Giant brown and lake trout cruise the shoreline, feeding on gobies, and providing anglers trolling in small boats and wading off shore or on piers opportunities to cash in on some very tasty trout. Anglers

trolling with light tackle with stick baits in 12 to 25 feet of water find this time of the year has some of the best shoreline harboring huge fish. Shore fishermen learn that access areas to Lake Michigan near creek mouths offer spectacular places to cast with light spinning rods and small spoons.

For the hiking and biking enthusiasts, the Ahnapee Trail, part of Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail system, offers some of the best early season hiking and biking opportunities, showcasing our abundant wildlife and bird sightings galore. This trail system offers spectacular views of wildlife and then leads you right into beautiful downtown Algoma for lunch, dinner, wine or craft brews; all locally created.

Algoma is open for business and fishing is only part of we have to offer. We are looking forward to a wide-open 2025. Our summer line up of fishing tournaments, festivals, car shows and musical events are booked and we look forward to you visiting us.

Experience the great fishing Lake Michigan has to offer. And if you want BIG fish, check out Algoma! For charter information or fishing reports, visit our facebook page at: Algoma, Wisc. Fishing. For a calendar of events and activities, visit our website: VisitAlgomaWi.org



The stocky features of the brown trout are how they earned the nickname "Footballs." Capt. Trevor Haasch hefts a 15-pound Brown Trout, caught off Algoma in early spring.

The spring outdoors is yours in Algoma!



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**PHIL SCHWEIK**

Early Spring Trolling

Narrowing down dead water to find high fish numbers

When it comes to spring fishing, most guys are casting crankbaits, or they are jigging for fish. They hit specific locations and work them thoroughly looking for active fish. This is a proven spring technique and can be very productive, especially on pressured fish or fish that are in extremely shallow water.

An often-overlooked technique for spring fishing is long line trolling. I like to implement this technique when I am in search mode or when I am targeting a large area that may hold some fish. This technique allows you to cover water rapidly and effectively and at times with a variety of lures.

My presentation is simple. I run the boat at about one to two miles an hour and use a very simple pinning presentation. I use either a spinning rod and reel combo or a bait casting rod and reel combo, basically whatever is convenient. I use 10-pound test

line, and clip on a medium to deep diving crankbait. That's it. I let out enough line so the lure ticks the bottom as I go along and if it is hitting too much, I reel some line in and if it is not hitting the bottom at all, I let more line out. It is a very basic technique, but it works.

Time after time I have used this method to find fish. Once located, I will make multiple passes over the area and if I continue to get strikes or catch fish in the same area, it is of course a good indication I'm over high population water. Once I determine the area that is holding the most fish, I can stop trolling and concentrate on that specific area by casting. This is a great way to eliminate what I like to call "dead water" and allow you to concentrate on locations that are holding fish.

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Ron Hall had great success troll fishing.

CAPT. DAVE DUWE

Primetime For Bluegills And Crappies

Panfish in the shallows as water warms

As the days grow longer and the water begins to warm, it's the perfect time for bluegills and crappies to return to the shallows. These fish seek the warmest water, typically found in depths of less than five feet. Start by targeting the north shore, which warms up faster due to the sun's direct heat. Focus on areas like the backs of bays or channels and look for soft, muddy bottoms, as they retain warmth and provide vegetation, offering both food and shelter for bluegills and crappies.

Prime locations don't change much from year to year, so if you had success in a location last year, try it again, the chance of success is high. This time of year, both shore and boat anglers have an equal shot at success. However, with a cold front the fish will move from the fast-cooling shallows and out to the mid-depth weeds in eight to 12 feet of water, making it a challenge for shore anglers.

Early spring panfishing can be some of the best of the year. The fish are in pre-

spawn mode and quite hungry. For both bluegills and crappies, I recommend using a small, fixed, spring bobber paired with an ice jig. These can be found in designs for both vertical and horizontal presentations, allowing you to cover more angles and increase your chances of success.

Choose the smallest bobber that can keep your bait just off the bottom. Position the bobber about six to 12 inches above any emerging weed growth. In very shallow water, the bobber may rarely go under - any slight movement or twitch could indicate a bite, so be ready to set the hook. For bait, leaf worms or wax worms work best for bluegills, while minnows on a small hook are ideal for crappies. The simpler the presentation the greater the success I find.

I recommend using a longer pole - at least six feet, six inches - paired with an ultralight spinning reel spooled with four-pound test monofilament. The light weight of the bobber rig will help you cast farther, which is important in the ultra-clear waters

of early spring, as fish can spook easily.

Once you've caught your fish, it's time for a fish fry! Keep in mind that panfish are concentrated in the shallows at this time, so be mindful not to over-harvest. Selectively keep only what you need, and remember that these fish are pre-spawn and will be helping to repopulate the lakes soon.



Nathan Duwe with an early spring bluegill on Lake Geneva

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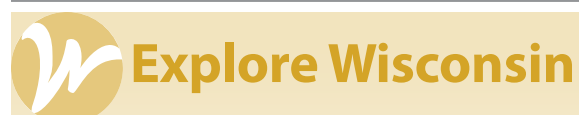
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SPOTLIGHT | ELKHORN



Swing Into Spring

The snow is melting and we're getting ready for SPRING! Swing through

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Outdoor fun can work up an appetite and leave you parched. Nothing beats a flight of locally crafted beer along with a giant pretzel baked to share. Stop by Duesterbeck's Brewing Company and check out the newly built barn brewery to enjoy live music, trivia nights, boutique shopping and amazing flavors on tap.

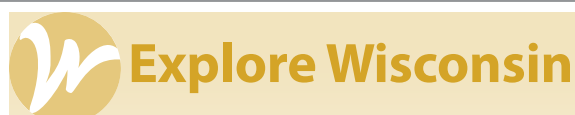
Whether you choose to navigate on four wheels or two, there's always great shopping and eating to celebrate in Elkhorn. No matter what time of year, there is always something unique and fun to enjoy with friends and family. Come see for yourself at #53121FORFUN. 📍



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Whether you're soaring on a zip line, exploring horseback riding trails, or enjoying fishing and hunting, there's something for every adventurer.

A highlight of our region is the Governor's Fishing Opener, an annual tradition for outdoor enthusiasts. This year's 2025 event is sponsored by the Northwest Wisconsin Tourism Committee and hosted by Barron County. You are invited to the free family fishing day event in Rice Lake on Saturday, May 3. 📍

Learn more at www.northwestwisconsin.com.

TOM LUBA

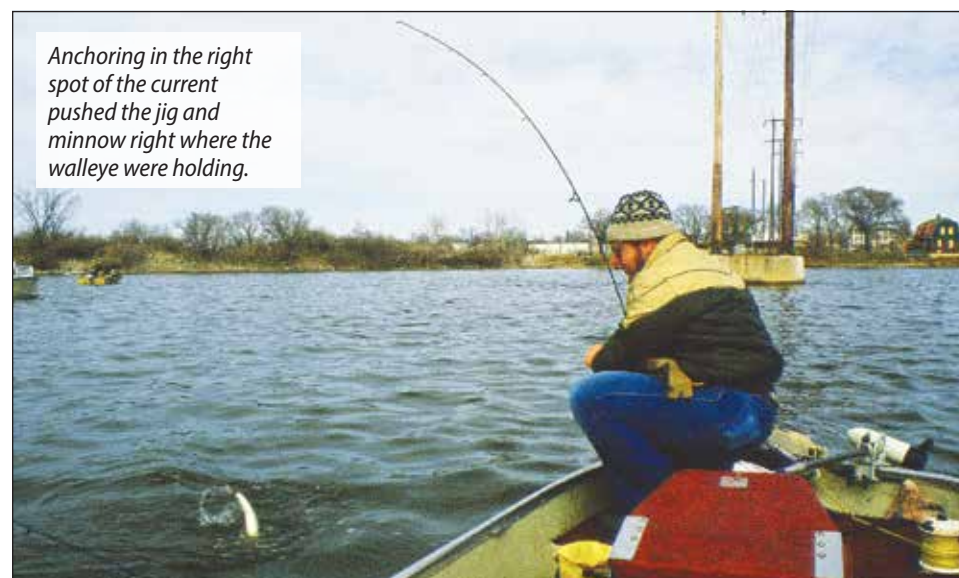
Spring Angling 101

Targeting early walleye and bass

When March roars in like the proverbial lion, river walleye are already tailing toward upriver dams to await 45-degree spawning temperature. The Wolf River, however, is different. No dams are on the river, but the fish spawn in marshes off the river which are inaccessible. Anglers fish the main river to target fish on the way upriver and back down.

Jigs and minnows are the standard for all rivers. Determine jig weight by current strength, anywhere from one-eighth to one-half ounce. Using the trolling motor to drift and vertical jig is a good search tactic; anchor once you find fish. With fish moving, though, you may need to be mobile. Work the slack current spots early, rock piles, wood and behind sand or rock points; any place they can rest. Rivers are off-colored so try bright colors,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21



Anchoring in the right spot of the current pushed the jig and minnow right where the walleye were holding.

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DAN MOERICKE

An 'Up Nort' Report Winter in The Northwoods - Mixing it up

So it has been another winter where the folks itching to get on their snowmobiles and ride 100 miles a day are disappointed. I get that. And I get that all of the businesses that thrive on the snowmobile traffic are hurting. I get it.

But, for those of us who first and foremost enjoy ice fishing, this has been a banner winter. Lots of cold weather early meant lots of clear, strong ice. That was just the ticket for the folks building the Eagle River ice castle after two years of no-go. The castle this year is magnificent and, if it's still up when you read this, a trip to Eagle River might be in order.

And, as much as I like catching perch and crappies through the ice, it was a conversation the other night during pool league that got my attention. My teammates Luke and Josh said that they'd be heading out in the morning to chase trout and, more importantly, that the trout had been biting.

Now, I hadn't caught a trout through the ice for a couple of years and so invited myself along. The boys were gracious enough to welcome me or at least endure the extra

company.

There are a handful of lakes in the Northwoods with the depths necessary to harbor a cold-water fishery and the next morning I showed up sociably late to meet the boys on one of them. They were fully equipped with homemade "jaw jackers" and had already put a couple trout on the ice by the time I arrived.

I drilled a handful of holes a respectable distance from their spread and started diligently jigging with a small spoon tipped with wax worms. After half an hour of watching them run constantly to flags on their sets, I relented and sheepishly borrowed a half dozen crappie minnows from them. That turned out to be a good move on my part.

Now, while catching perch and crappies through the ice is fun, there is something about having a big brown trout peeling drag off the reel that is a little extra special. While the action was not fast and furious, the fact that I was regularly marking fish on the locator kept me invested long enough to eventually entice a couple to hit. Fresh trout in the fry pan in the dead of winter is quite a treat.



A great change of pace from catching crappies.

This is a public thank you to Luke and Josh for getting an old guy out chasing trout in the dead of winter. I had a great time and look forward to doing it again. The trout are waiting. And, oh yeah, they're delicious. Just sayin'.



SPOTLIGHT | NORTHERN OCONTO COUNTY

Your Spring Adventure Hub (Mud or Shine!)

Northern Oconto County, just a short drive from Green Bay, is the perfect place to kick off your spring adventures, no matter what the weather brings! From lingering snow to the first signs of green, this region offers a unique blend of experiences for outdoor enthusiasts.

Hiking Trails & Early Blooms (or Lingering Snow)

Explore the trails of Northern Oconto County as they transition from winter to spring. Whether you're navigating the last snow patches with snowshoes or enjoying the emerging wildflowers on a muddy path, the scenery is breathtaking. Hike to scenic overlooks like Quartz Hill, Hagar Mountain, or Butler Rock for panoramic views of the changing landscape. The Nicolet National Forest offers a variety of trails for all skill levels, from gentle strolls to more challenging climbs. Keep an eye out for early signs of

spring – the first robin, the budding trees – and capture the beauty of this transitional season.

Exceptional Fishing Opportunities (Even if the Ground is Still Cool)

As the ice recedes, spring fishing in Northern Oconto County comes alive. This area boasts an impressive number of lakes and rivers, offering diverse angling experiences. Anglers can find excellent opportunities for walleye, northern pike, bass, and panfish in numerous bodies of water. The Oconto River and its flowages are popular destinations, known for producing quality fish. For those seeking a more secluded experience, the countless smaller lakes and streams scattered throughout the region offer a chance to connect with nature and enjoy a peaceful day on the water.

Trout fishing enthusiasts will find numerous streams

teeming with brook, brown, and rainbow trout. These pristine waterways, many of which are naturally reproducing fisheries, provide exceptional opportunities for fly fishing and other trout angling techniques. Whether you prefer casting in a larger river or exploring smaller, more intimate streams, you'll find plenty of options to pursue these spirited fish.

Warm Hospitality and Cozy Comfort

After a day of exploring, relax and recharge at one of Northern Oconto County's many welcoming establishments. From cozy cabins with fireplaces to comfortable hotels, you'll find the perfect place to warm up and unwind. Enjoy delicious local cuisine at our restaurants and supper clubs, savoring the flavors of the season.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



STUART WILKE

A Mammoth Discovery

And one more reason to visit Kenosha

Mammoths and some of the first Americans once inhabited the vast tundras of Wisconsin. When they did, the state was a very different place as the Ice Age waned and finally disappeared seven thousand years ago. Woolly mammoths arrived here from North Asia after traveling across the Bering Straits land bridge to what is now known as Alaska. From there, they migrated south to North America where some ventured east to Wisconsin. Saber tooth cats, dire wolves and cave hyenas pursued.

In the mammoths' wake were Paleo Indians, the mammoths most accomplished and deadly predators. Armed with thrusting spears and handheld atlatls (spear launchers that increased the velocity, distance and power of arrow-like darts), the Paleo Indians trailed herds of mammoths and other large animals that were so necessary for their survival.

Early Americans are often depicted in large groups surrounding large game and dispatching them with long spears on an open plain. In reality, they more than likely made use of natural traps and drove the mammoths to sandy river bottoms, the muddy edges of lakes, and soggy marshes where the mammoths would have difficulty moving and maneuvering in the soft and unstable terrain. Mammoths, giant sloths, bison and other large game would be easier to dispatch as they floundered in the mucky soil.

In 1964, a tiling machine operator was hired by farmer Frank Schaefer in the town of Paris in Kenosha County to cut a drain tile ditch in a marshy field. The machine was powerful enough that it could toss aside good-sized rocks, but was stopped in its tracks and its operator thrown from his seat when he hit something very hard. It turned out to be a large bone. Upon its discovery, Schaefer contacted local amateur archeologist Phil Sander to examine the bone which proved to be a mammoth femur. Schaefer gave the bone to Sander who presented it to the Kenosha Public Museum where it was part of a display for years. The majority of the mammoth's bones were covered up as part of the tiling project and were left undisturbed for nearly 30 years.

In 1990, amateur archeologist Dave Wasion was viewing mammoth bones on display at the Kenosha History Center. During his examination, he noticed what appeared to be cut marks that he suspected could have been made by humans while butchering the animal. He came to the Kenosha Public Museum and told director and archeologist Dave Joyce of his finding. This prompted Joyce to examine the Schaefer farm mammoth bone. Soon it became clear that it also displayed evidence of butchering.

This discovery resulted in the museum sponsoring a team headed by Joyce to the Schaefer site to locate and remove for



examination the remains of the mammoth. The first step was to make it known in the area that the museum was looking for the remains nearly 30 years after its initial discovery. Incredibly, they learned that a map had been drawn of the site by Sander

Joyce and his team found the mammoth's remains with Sander's map. They excavated the site and found cutting tools obviously made by humans. Joyce along with a host of other archeologists spent years analyzing the remains.

After two decades of scientific investigation, Joyce and his colleagues proved that the Kenosha mammoth kill site is 14,500 years old and is one of the oldest in North America. Those in the Western United States are about 1500 years younger and the Kenosha Mammoth kill site is one of the three oldest archaeological sites in the Western Hemisphere.



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DESTINATION




VISIT
OCONTO
COUNTY

OCONTO, FROM PAGE 11

Family Fun (Mud or Shine!)

Northern Oconto County is a fantastic destination for families in the spring. Embrace the mud with some good old-fashioned puddle jumping, or if snow lingers, enjoy a final round of sledding or building snow forts. Create lasting memories with your loved ones in this beautiful natural setting.

Plan Your Northern Oconto County Spring Getaway

Escape to Northern Oconto County this spring and experience the magic of this unique season. With its diverse outdoor activities, warm hospitality, and stunning scenery, it's the perfect place for your next adventure – mud or shine! 





SPOTLIGHT | KENOSHA



Walk Like a Mammoth in Kenosha

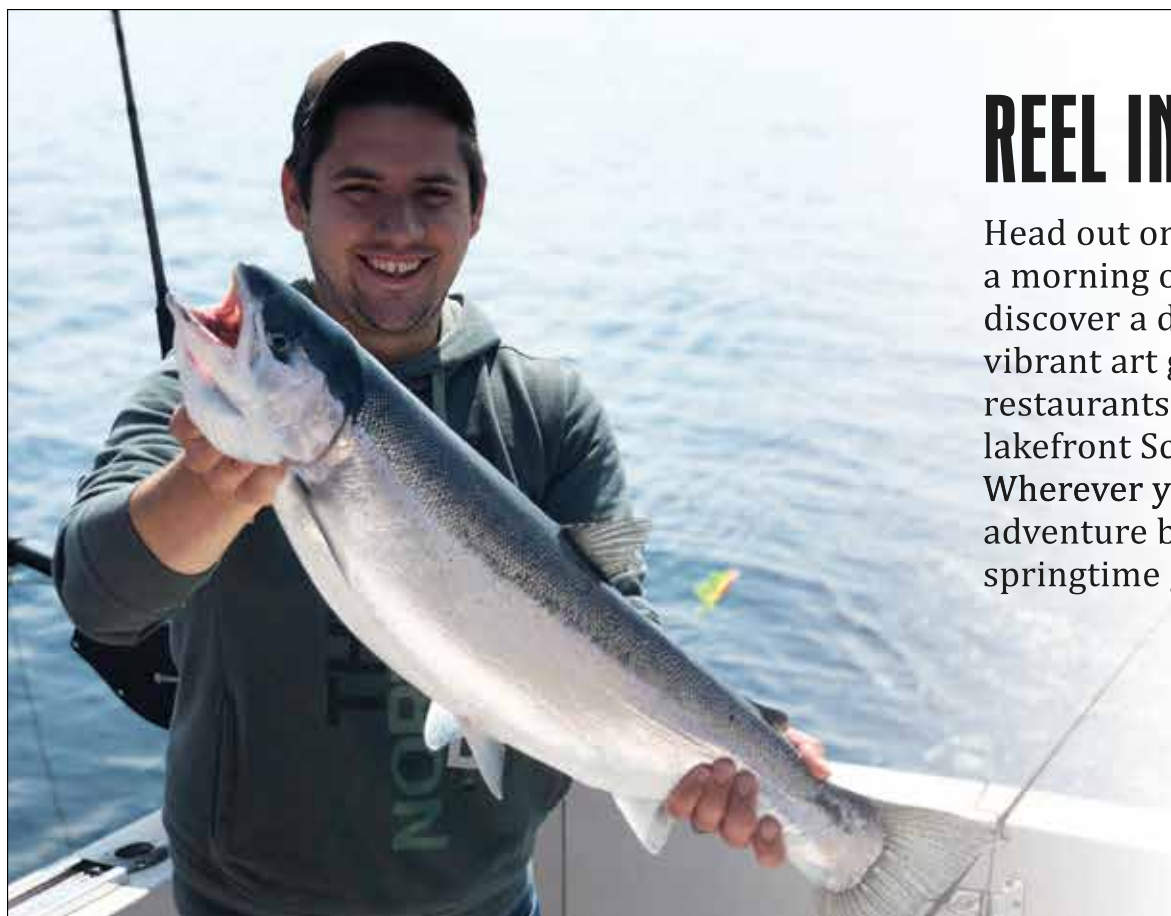
Fresh air is good any time of year, but especially as the cold months of winter ease and give way to the changing of the seasons. While the ground may not be ready for golfing and the lake may not be ready for fishing, we can still get out and enjoy the great outdoors. One way to explore the Kenosha Area during any season is on foot – especially when armed with self-guided walking tours and routes to reach your 10,000 daily steps.

Trends show that 10,000 steps is a good target for daily movement. Grab your pedometer and get ready to traverse lakefront paths, nature preserves, parks spaces, and even a quaint downtown district and outlet mall plaza. In addition to these guides for logging miles, there are self-guided tours available to explore some of Kenosha's history. With two lighthouses, four historic districts, and five museums, there is no shortage of opportunity to learn while getting your workout in.

As you roam, you'll learn about the celebrities and historic figures who walked in Kenosha,

including inventors, state politicians, famous actors, and more. Mammoths even roamed this land once – though perhaps they were less concerned with their daily step goal. The mammoth skeletons that were excavated in the Kenosha Area had tool markings on them that were able to be dated back to the very earliest humans in North America. These bones can be seen on display at the Kenosha Public Museum. When you walk up to this museum, take note of the building's design – the lobby is constructed to look like ice cutting through the rest of the building. This is a deliberate choice, as it mimics the story told in the museum's main exhibit, "The Wisconsin Story," which showcases the timeline of how Wisconsin's ecosystem and people have been shaped since glaciers shaped the continents.

So, get out there and walk like a mammoth! There are big and beautiful things to see in the Kenosha Area. Find these guides, information about area museums, and more when you start planning your getaway at VisitKenosha.com. 🐾



REEL IN THE MEMORIES.

Head out on the open waters of Lake Michigan for a morning of fishing and fun. Return to shore to discover a downtown filled with eclectic shops, vibrant art galleries, unique museums, and inviting restaurants. Ride an authentic streetcar, explore the lakefront Sculpture Walk, or even climb a lighthouse. Wherever your family's interests lie, Kenosha offers adventure beyond the expected. Start planning your springtime getaway now.

Scan to explore Outdoor Recreation in Kenosha!



VISITKENOSHA.COM





Prairie du Chien
Wisconsin

EVENTS
February 21-22
Bald Eagle Appreciation Days
March 15
Annual St. Patrick's Day
Parade/Shamrock Shuffle
April 12
Spring Fling Indoor Craft Fair
& Flea Market

prairieduchien.org
PDC Tourism: 800-752-1673 • WI Travel Center/PDC: 608-326-2241



SPOTLIGHT | PRAIRIE DU CHIEN



A Unique Blend of Seasonal Charm

March and April in Prairie du Chien offer a unique blend of seasonal charm, with plenty of activities to enjoy as winter fades and spring emerges. Start your adventure by exploring the scenic landscapes along the Mississippi River. Early spring offers peaceful views of the riverbanks, perfect for a leisurely walk along the majestic Mississippi River.

Kick your St. Patrick's Day vibes into high gear with the annual Shamrock Shuffle on Saturday, March 15, in Prairie du Chien. This 5k, 3.1-mile fun run/walk is held at Hoffman Hall, 1600 South Wacouta Avenue. Registration begins at 7 am and the race begins at 7:45 am.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



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-Gregg Borneman



Our 36th Year Serving Southeast Wisconsin

THORNLEY, FROM PAGE 4

ground for them, and they quickly start eating. It is a fun sight, and a good feeling. Maybe that little bit of food can help them make it to spring.

A bluejay puffs itself up against the morning cold, while a noisy red squirrel chatters and scolds, its tail bobbing as it chews on a small sunflower seed from the feeder.

A coal black raven sits high atop a tall oak, giving him a commanding view of all that passes below. He is hungry, and on rare occasions will even set his wings and drop to the seeds.

Grey squirrels are, of course, frequent back yard feeder visitors. They are in great shape, plump and full of energy. A couple of small deer wander in. Energy is life in winter, and the deer are looking for a bit of food. Later, they bed down nearby.

As winter progresses the days are often heavy and dark. As the end of the day brings the first hint of darkness, I put out more birdseed and bread at the feeder for whatever might arrive.

Twilight settles across the landscape and the haunting call of a barred owl breaks the silence. It is a lonely sound, and it feels cold. The final streak of orange disappears from the horizon. It is night.

When I walk to the house I take a last look back into the woods at the feeder. Two more little rabbits have appeared, and I spot a third racing out from under the cover of low pine branches. It brings a smile to my face.

Such scenes are likely taking place all over the Northland, and while the little bit of food we provide may not make a big impact, maybe it makes a difference in the survival of one, two or three animals or birds. And that, it seems, makes it all worthwhile. 🐾



BOB SPIERINGS

Bob's Bear Bait

The hunter's source for bait, and information

With the Wisconsin DNR increasing bear permits for 2025 by nearly 1600 over last year, more hunters taking to the woods this season will mean more competition. Don't wait to stock up on bait, especially if you want a variety to choose from. Stay ahead of the game and be prepared this season. Here are a few of our favorite tips for you to start thinking about while we wait for the fun to begin!

As many seasoned bear hunters know, in a matter of just two weeks prior to the opener, everything can change in an instant. You can go from multiple bears arriving daily to, if you're lucky, a couple of cubs. At this time bears start to prepare for hibernation by seeking their natural foods that are high in fat and proteins. Plan ahead for this by placing a bait site near oaks, corn fields, berry patches, clover and other habitats that are bountiful in natural foods. This will keep bears close to your bait site even when the natural forage ripens. Similar to deer hunting, bears use travel corridors like logging roads, creeks, and ridges to get from one location to the next. Learn their patterns: it may be your ticket to bagging a big one that likes to sit back and wait for nightfall.

Do you have a location for your bait site that checks all the boxes we listed above, but have found that the bears won't hit until dark? Wary bears, typically the big ones, have wised up after living through many seasons and if something isn't just right about a bait site, they know enough to wait until night before popping in. Finding a spot that is more secluded with minimal hunting pressure can make a bear feel more comfortable, hopefully resulting in bears switching to daylight hours. Even moving 100 yards towards some thicker brush might make all the difference.



Knowing which direction the bears are coming into the site from can help you know where to place your stand. Thanks to advanced technology these days, the "I wonder" game doesn't have to be played anymore. Consider using the video mode on your trail camera - you'll know which directions the bears are coming and going, giving you an idea as to where your stand should be placed without disrupting the

bears natural movement. This is a great tool to use to not only know how the bears are traveling through your site, but they also provide a three-dimensional view that offers better accuracy as to their real size. However, don't be afraid to have a back-up for when technology does fail. By raking the soil to create a soft top layer, tracks will be easily visible, giving you the chance to make a reasonable guess of the size and directions of travel.

We have locations in Appleton, Birnamwood, Tomahawk, Phelps and Ishpeming, and also stock bait at Superior Sport & Feed in Crystal Falls, Michigan. Stay up to date with our latest news, products and sales at bobsbearbait.com, or on Facebook at Bob's Bear Bait. If you wish to speak to Bob directly, email him at sales@bobsbearbait.com or call (920)419-1238. 🐾

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Explore Wisconsin

SPOTLIGHT | ASHLAND COUNTY



The Place to Be

Ashland County, located on the very northern tip of Wisconsin and southern tip of Lake Superior, is home to the following communities from north to south: Madeline Island or LaPointe, Ashland, Marengo, Mellen, Glidden, Butternut and Bad River or Odanah.

Ashland County boasts both silent sports and motorized trails, Copper Falls State Park and Big Bay State Park, many smaller town and municipal parks, the Chequamegon Bay, and several inland lakes.

If you like outdoor recreation, then Ashland County is the place to be. Lodging can be found in Ashland, LaPointe, and Mellen. Check us out at www.travelashlandcounty.com



PRAIRIE DU CHEIN, FROM PAGE 14

After the race, reward yourself and head downtown to Blackhawk Avenue where more Irish festivities will be underway at the Prairie du Chien's Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. On Saturday, March 15, join us for the annual St. Patrick's Day festivities, featuring parades, live music, and traditional Irish fare. Local pubs and eateries will embrace the lively spirit, providing a cozy spot to warm up and enjoy the festivities after a day of celebration.

March in the Prairie du Chien area offers an excellent opportunity for birding, as migrating species begin to return to the region. The area's diverse habitats, including wetlands, riverbanks, and forests, attract a variety of birds, making it a prime destination for birdwatchers. Early in the month, you might spot waterfowl such as Canada geese, mallards, and canvasbacks along the Mississippi River, as well as flocks of sandhill cranes making their way north.

Effigy Mounds National Monument and the nearby wildlife areas provide ideal settings for spotting woodpeckers, sparrows, and raptors, while the warmer temperatures encourage songbirds to start migrating back. With the landscape

beginning to thaw, March offers a quiet, peaceful time for birding, as early spring migrants settle into the area before the crowds of summer arrive. Whether you're an experienced birder or a casual observer, Prairie du Chien's birding opportunities in March and April are a beautiful way to welcome the season.










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SPOTLIGHT | LANGLADE COUNTY

An Outdoor Paradise

As the snow melts away and the landscapes burst into color, Antigo and Langlade County transform into the ultimate spring and summer destination. Whether you're craving outdoor adventure, local charm, or a peaceful retreat, there's no better place to explore and stay than Langlade County, the County of Trails.

Langlade County is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts that like to hike, mountain bike, ATV/UTV, paddle, and fish. Blaze the scenic 60-plus miles of the Langlade County Ice Age National Scenic Trail, cycle or walk the beautiful Antigo Springbrook Trail, or ride the thrilling ATV/UTV routes weaving through Wisconsin's Northwoods.

The area's 842 lakes, rivers, and trout streams offer endless opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and canoeing. Fly fish the crystal-clear waters of the Wolf River or take a leisurely paddle on many charming

quiet lakes. There are so many Go-To Spots to explore!

Step back in time and uncover the rich history of Langlade County at the Langlade County Historical Society Museum, located in the heart of Antigo. Housed in a historic 1905 Carnegie Library building, the museum showcases fascinating exhibits. Within the museum, the Antigo · Langlade County Welcome Center offers a warm introduction to the region, providing Langlade County maps, travel guides, and expert recommendations to help you make the most of your visit. Whether you're a history buff or an explorer, these two must-visit locations will connect you to the past while inspiring your next Northwoods adventure!

Don't miss the 34th Annual Pickerel-Pearson St. Patrick's Day Parade, a cherished local tradition that brings together visitors, families, and friends,



The 1905 Carnegie Library now houses the Langlade County Historical Society Museum and Antigo-Langlade County Welcome Center located at 404 Superior Street in Antigo.

to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in true Northwoods style on March 15, 2025. St. Patrick's Day-themed floats, local performers, and community spirit are on full display. After the noon parade, stick around for live music, face painting, and festive green gear. Local bars and restaurants will continue the celebration with bands and entertainment throughout the day. For more information, go to <https://bit.ly/PickerelStPatricksParade>.

Spend your days exploring the "County

of Trails" and your nights relaxing under the starry Northwoods sky. Whether you prefer a modern hotel, a cozy cabin, or a lakeside campsite, Antigo and Langlade County offers accommodations for every traveler.

Let the County of Trails be your home away from home. Plan your getaway today at www.langladecounty.org! Come participate in the noon Pickerel-Pearson St. Patrick's Day Parade. Come early to reserve your spot. 🍀



Come for the Trails, Stay the Night



www.CountyOfTrails.org

SPOTLIGHT | **HURLEY**

Planning Your Memorial Weekend ATV Rally

Once again, it is time to start thinking about your Memorial Weekend plans. Why not join us in Hurley for our Memorial Weekend ATV Rally? The festivities kick off on Thursday, May 22, and go through Sunday, May 25. You can enjoy over 200 miles of scenic trails while participating in our county-wide poker run.

Our parade, which hosted over 300 ATVs in 2024, kicks off at 7 pm on Friday, May 23, with a procession down Silver Street. Local establishments offer plenty of food and beverages along the route.

In the evening, check out live music at select locations. You can then wrap the weekend up with the fan's favorite Mud Pit on Sunday, May 25. If an ATV Rally isn't your activity of choice, we have plenty of waterfalls, hiking trails, and nearby lakes to explore. 📍

For further information, please email us at hurley@hurleywi.com, call 715-561-4334, or visit our website at www.hurleywi.com.

SPOTLIGHT | **PLATTEVILLE**

Explore More, From Mines And Museums to Outdoor Fun And Dining

Platteville, home of the World's Largest 'M', pairs a rich mining history with bountiful recreation. We welcome you to explore our museums, trails, streams, parks, art and more.

Ascend the 290 stairs at the World's Largest 'M' and you'll "dig" the tri-state view. Blaze trails by ATV, bike or foot and tap into the Driftless Area beauty of Southwest Wisconsin.

Dig a little deeper with a tour of a lead-zinc mine at The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums. Find authentic details in a tour of the Mitchell-Rountree Stone Cottage, once home to prominent Platteville families. Both of these historic venues are available to view May through October each year.

Uncover a wealth of dining and shopping prospects in Platteville's historic downtown and explore mining-themed artwork that tells the community's story.

For details, visit www.platteville.com or stop by the Wisconsin Welcome Center at 275 W. Bus. Hwy. 151, Platteville. 📍

Memorial Weekend Rally May 22nd - May 26th

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or hurley@hurleywi.com
for more information

STUART WILKE

Edge of Town's Waterfall Inn

From angling to the arts, the perfect place to start a Sister Bay, Door County Adventure

Recently remodeled, the Edge of Town's Waterfall Inn is more than a motel, it's an experience that won't soon be forgotten. Located directly off of Highway 42, just one mile north of downtown Sister Bay, the motel provides an affordable, tranquil, relaxing atmosphere near all of the area's many attractions.

Mention you read this article and ask for the Fisherman's Special Rate good March, April and May 2025. Get a room for just \$99 per night.

Each of the Edge of Town's 10, one-story, rooms includes two full-sized beds, a new walk-in shower, wifi, cable TV, heat, air conditioning, front door parking, and updated bathroom. They also have a kitchenette with a picnic area and charcoal grill. Rooms have a microwave, refrigerator, dining table, regular and Keurig coffee makers, hair dryer, linens, towels, and soap. Rooms are priced at \$125 per night. (The average rate for a motel room in Door County is \$248 per night.)

Unlike most of the area's motels and public docking lots, Edge of Town's Waterfall Inn provides a safe and secure place to park trailers and boats. In addition, each trailer spot has an electrical outlet to charge trolling motors and other items.

When not exploring Door County's many attractions, guests can find plenty to do at the Inn, including picnicking facilitated by charcoal grills and free firewood and 20-plus games including horse shoes and bocce courts, volleyball and croquet, said owner Kim Erzinger. "There's lots of things for the kids to play while mom and dad are getting ready for the family to enjoy their time in Door County," Kim said

Sister Bay and Door County have many attractions to keep guests busy. They include guided tours and sightseeing, biking and hiking, snowmobiling, camping, bird watching, skating and skiing, fishing and much more, according to Kim.

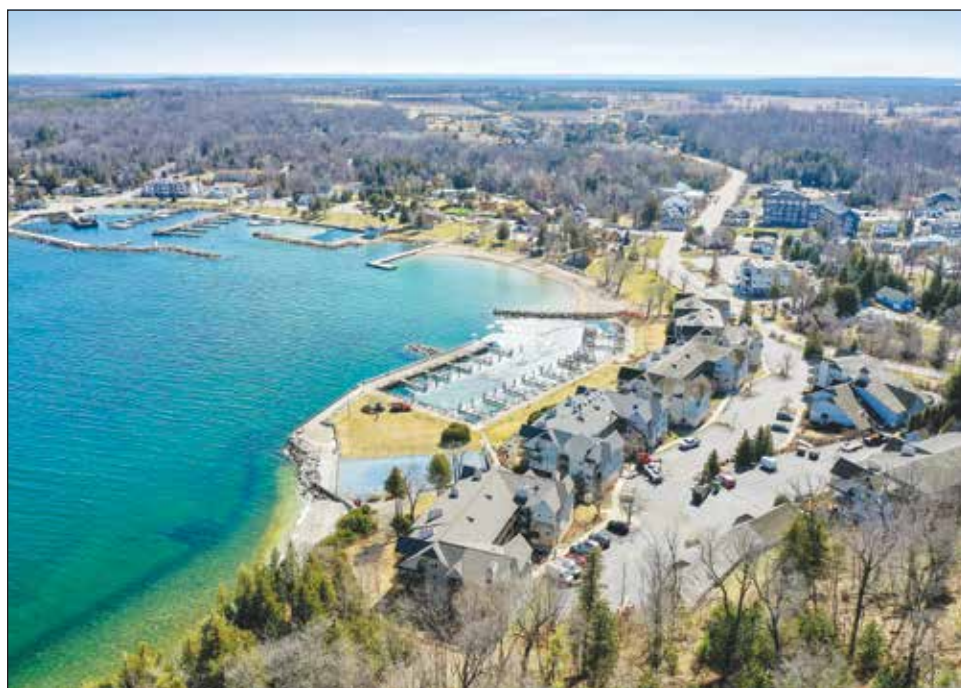
Perhaps more intriguing, and not as well known, is that Door County is Northern Wisconsin's cultural center dating back to



the Chicago Fire when wealthy Chicago residents relocated their families there while the city was rebuilt, Kim said. Soon summer homes and resorts were being constructed. Artists and performers followed and in no time so did numerous theaters, amphitheaters, museums and other cultural centers. Their legacy lives on

with the performing arts groups, theaters and museums found in most of the area's communities, Kim said.

Whether you're visiting Door County for the arts or the angling, Edge of Town's Waterfall Inn is the perfect place to start your adventure. 🍷



Sister Bay Door County

Welcome to our cozy motel set in the rural beauty of Door County! Our motel has been thoughtfully remodeled, with each room featuring two beds, comfortably accommodating up to four guests. Start your day with our complimentary breakfast items and enjoy a fresh start.

Edge of Town's Waterfall inn served as host of the 2024 Chicago Bass Master's Club Tourney with rave reviews! Easy highway access to the top fishing and boat launches including Sister Bay, Bailey's Harbor, Rowley's Bay, Ellison Bay, Ephraim, Fish Creek, and the Ferry Dock to Washington Island.

Open year-round with convenient access to explore the charming attractions of Door County and the Washington Island. Whether you're here to relax, fish, or seek another adventure, we look forward to providing you with an unforgettable countryside experience!

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Edge of Town's Waterfall Inn

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Two Wisconsin Staples Equal.... The Cheesiest Bait Shop in the Nation

Grab some bait and leave with cheese. You can buy both at Scottie's Bait and Tackle and its immediate neighbor, Scottie's Three Lakes Cheese Haus in Three Lakes. Both are owned by Scottie Brandenburg, a former farmer who spent much of his previous career in the corporate world.

And now "I'm the cheesiest bait shop in the nation!" he exclaimed. What makes it the cheesiest bait shop in the country? According to Scottie, the Three Lakes Cheese Haus has "over 50 different flavors of Wisconsin cheeses, 25 flavors of Pine River Cheese Spreads, local honey, maple syrup and wild rice blends. Plus, a full-service live bait and tackle shop on the largest chain of lakes in the world." After you're done buying night crawlers at the Bait and Tackle store, you can load up on curds at the Cheese Haus.

After many years living and working in metropolitan areas, Scottie began wanting to return to rural Marion, where he was born, attended school and once worked. He returned 14 years ago and began tapping the many years of experience his family

and business connections had in the cheese and sausage business. In a short time, he was selling cheese from a mobile trailer at local retailers and flea markets. Three Lakes Cheese Haus was born.

Soon, demand for his cheese was far exceeding his trailer's capacity and Scottie decided to expand his business. He found just the place to do so inside Jokim' Joe's Bait and Tackle Shop located at 1674 Superior Street in Three Lakes. He called his new business Scottie's Bait and Tackle. There he could provide the North Woods' general public with many of his hometown's traditional recipes and locally sourced specialty products.

Long time family relationships in the Wisconsin food industry made it possible for him to bring these products to market in the Three Lakes area. Among those products are those from Dupont Cheese, long recognized as one of Wisconsin's premiere cheesemakers. The Cheese Haus also provides "specialty items such as local homemade syrups, sausages, honey,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

Explore Wisconsin SPOTLIGHT | PORT WASHINGTON



An Exquisite Harbor Town Visit Never to be Forgotten

Port Washington offers up serious outdoor adventures centered around a walkable downtown. Just north of Milwaukee this charming harbor town offers up speakeasies, gastropubs, and fine dining alongside waterfront parks. Treat yourself to an adventure packed weekend of hiking, biking, fishing, and surfing paired with the culinary delights in one of the best harbor towns on Lake Michigan.

Start at the 73-acre Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve on your way into town. Take in the scenic beauty of the Bluff trail which features a 100-foot high lookout with panoramic views of Lake Michigan. Other outdoor recreational opportunities abound, and there is something for everyone. Boaters love the certified Clean Marina. Bike, bird, run, or hike on nearby trails. Paddle sport enthusiasts, even surfers, love launching from South Beach. Stand up paddleboard rentals are available.

Port offers unique dining destinations – many housed in historic storefronts (Port Washington can boast that it has more pre-Civil War buildings than any other city in the State of Wisconsin). There are numerous pubs, including a winery and brewpub. The restaurants are all 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. Relax and enjoy: inside, outside, lakeside, or streetside.


Explore the picturesque Rotary and Coal Dock parks; sister waterfront parks with opportunities for both boat and bird watching. Before heading to lunch, make sure to check out the Breakwater Light, the guardian of one of Lake Michigan's best marinas.

A must-do for any Port Washington adventure is charter fishing for Coho salmon. Expect to come home with both fish and a deeper knowledge of the town and Lake Michigan.


Schooner Pub is a fisherman favorite; sip a refreshing cider and take in the incredible waterfront views. If you've got some more walking in you, explore downtown Port Washington and seek out its collection of pre-Civil War buildings.

Port doesn't have just the typical, touristy shops. Numerous specialty food shops feature everything from fish, to popcorn, to chocolate to a farm market. 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. There are two popular outdoor gear stores in town, along with unique shops and boutiques.

STAY IN THE HEART OF IT ALL: PORT WASHINGTON



visitportwashington.com





LUBA, FROM PAGE 8

as well as unpainted heads tipped with minnows, especially if fish are tentative. With a lot of boat activity churning the surface, they may go deep, so keep options open.

After the spawn, fish use current to guide them back home. Walleye hold on available cover, feeding as they head downstream.

April still has walleye action. But warmer weather calls smallmouth bass to eddies and current seams where live bait on jigs, PowerBait grubs, and tube jigs can produce. Smallies are moving as the walleye run fades.

For largemouth bass, look for small lakes that warm quickly. Emerging weeds, laydowns and rock areas draw early baitfish and bass.

Go with silicone skirt bass jigs tipped with a number 11 Uncle Josh pork frog or a plastic chunk on the back. Berkley has a Power Chunk in its MaxScent line that exudes scent, which early-season bass like. Black and blue shades work, as does Green Pumpkin.

It's also worth tossing a square-bill shallow crank bait in crawfish or baitfish shades and bounce it off the wood or rock. Do the same with a spinnerbait with a nickel color blade. A bladed jig (generically called "chatter baits") provides a little different action, so take one along. Even twitch baits, like a regular floating Raplala, can get noticed. Hollow body, floating frogs can also make the menu.

April keeps warming. If so, and you want to begin teaching the kids, pick up a few of Creme Lure's two hook weedless worm harness rigs. They have a spinner in the front so the only action needed is a slow retrieve. It may get you a permanent boat buddy. It worked for me at that age.



Check the Wisconsin fishing regulations and get ready. The season's before you.

CHEESIEST BAIT SHOP, FROM PAGE 20

mushrooms, and the best fresh cheeses from all over the state every week to our Three Lakes location and a few select retailers," Scottie said

Not long after opening the Cheese Haus, Scottie bought Jokin' Joe's, since renamed Scottie's Bait and Tackle, a full-service bait and tackle shop that provides minnows, worms, night crawlers, lures, tackle, rods and reels, as well as advice and more.

For the best in cheese and fishing equipment in one convenient location, stop at Scottie's Three Lakes Cheese Haus and Scottie's Bait and Tackle.



SPOTLIGHT | CITY OF MARINETTE

The One That Got Away and... The One That Didn't

Every angler has "their" story about the one that got away, but I'm here to share the exhilarating tale of the one that didn't! Spring is a season I anticipate—longer, warmer days brimming with life! This year, I chose to embark on my spring fishing adventure in the City of Marinette, where the legendary Spring Walleye run calls to every serious angler. I was determined to land a trophy lunger!

As I planned my trip, I uncovered a treasure trove of attractions in Marinette: an award-winning brewery and winery, bars that promise unforgettable experiences, and the famed Mickey-Lu-Bar-B-Q, hailed by USA Today as the best burger joint in Wisconsin! With burgers and craft beer on the horizon, Marinette was shaping up to be the perfect fishing getaway. But let's get back to the real action.

Upon my arrival in Marinette, I made a beeline for A & K Bait Shop, the local bait and tackle haven. They equipped me with everything I needed—insider tips on where and when to fish, along with the best gear. It felt like I had a personal fishing guide by my side! They directed me to fish off the Hattie Street Bridge, on Stephenson Island, and set up by the Marinette Welcome Center.

I kicked off my adventure at the Hattie Street Bridge. I caught a few fish, but none that would ignite a true fisherman's passion. So, I moved on to the Welcome Center, and that's when the magic happened!

On my second cast, my line was absolutely smashed! The thrill of that hit

was unlike anything I'd ever experienced. The frantic squeal of my reel, the bending pole, and the line screaming—all of it signaled that this was the big one! I could feel the eyes of the onlookers on me as I battled what felt like the catch of a lifetime. But then, in an agonizing instant...SNAP. The collective gasp from the shoreline echoed in my ears! I felt frozen, as if time stood still for what felt like an eternity. An "old timer" nearby chimed in, "Son, that's why they call it fishing: reel in your line, rebait, and start casting." With those words, I realized it was time to regroup and not linger on my loss.

Though disappointment weighed heavily on me, I refused to let it ruin my day. I dug deep into my tackle box and retrieved a jig

the clerk at A & K had recommended. As I cast my line once more, a wave of peace washed over me, and I felt perfectly in tune with my surroundings. Then, without warning, I felt another STRIKE! Could it be? A second colossal hit?

As that familiar sound of line racing from my reel filled the air, memories of my earlier battle raced through my mind. I couldn't afford to let history repeat itself. As my pole bent like a bow and the line tightened, I focused on keeping my composure. Finally, as the magnificent creature came into view, my heart raced—it was a stunning 34-inch Walleye! My hands shook with excitement as I pulled it from the water, knowing that this time, it did NOT get away!

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Visit the North Dakota Game and Fish website for detailed maps, fishing reports and regulations. Non-resident licenses are available online with flexible options including three-day, ten-day or annual permits. Lakes and access points are well-maintained and clearly marked, ensuring a smooth start to your fishing adventure.



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Brad Schimel: Stop the Madness. Restore the Court.

Right now, Justices in the leftist majority on Wisconsin's Supreme Court predetermine cases and implement partisan agendas in plain sight. Our state and your community are in grave danger, and I refuse to sit back and watch it crumble. I'm running for Wisconsin's Supreme Court to stop the madness.

Throughout my career as a front-line prosecutor, state Attorney General, and judge, I have confronted every form of crime, from elder and child abuse to human trafficking, homicide, sexual assault, and public corruption. I have always prioritized the needs of victims. Working closely with law enforcement and victims' families, I have fought for justice from the crime scene to the courtroom. As Attorney General, I revamped outdated and ineffective government procedures, implementing meaningful reforms to enhance public safety. This is why I have earned the bipartisan support of over 80 active and retired Wisconsin Sheriffs.

While I dedicated my career to protecting the people of Wisconsin, my opponent focused on suing our state, defending radical interest groups, and shielding violent criminals and sex offenders. Susan Crawford is not only out of touch with the people, but she also has a dangerously liberal agenda that will lead to harmful real-world consequences.

As an attorney, Susan Crawford led the attempt to strike down Act 10. If she were to have been successful, it would have had catastrophic financial repercussions for



Wisconsin families. She also led the effort to abolish Wisconsin's voter ID law. As a radical leftist visionary, she called the basic Wisconsin election integrity measure "draconian" and compared it to a "poll tax."

With a career full of fighting for the most radical special interests, it comes as no surprise that she has received millions of dollars from dangerous radicals like George Soros, JB Pritzker, and groups that support

men in women's sports, providers of child puberty blockers, and fanatical opponents of Act 10. Their support for her is transactional – they fully expect her to legislate from the bench.

The question for Wisconsinites is, who would you rather have on the Wisconsin Supreme Court? Would you rather have a Justice who is bought and paid for by George Soros and radical special interest groups

or a Justice who has the backing of the vast majority of Wisconsin's sheriffs, who live and know your community best?

Are any of the rights you treasure or the policies that protect you and your loved ones safe if my opponent joins the other liberals on the Supreme Court? I will always stand up for and defend your rights as I have for 35 years in public service. 🇺🇸



DICK ELLIS

A Very Good Fit

Boot Connection delivers customer comfort first

From day one, Scott Campbell and his ultimate goal of delivering the highest quality footwear possible to the customer was a very good fit. Campbell's professional journey that began with night classes in the early eighties today combines a 4000-square "foot" showroom, extraordinary online service at www.bootconnection.com, and on-the-road delivery with a 53-foot semi-trailer truck literally bringing the goods directly to the buyers' workplace. For the Wisconsin consumer, Boot Connection defines quality and service.

Campbell enrolled in a two-year program at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) in 1980/81 with a focus on shoe repair under the instruction of Steve Strigens, a master shoemaker and immigrant from Germany. In the old country, Campbell said, reaching the pinnacle of any trade required first earning a degree. "Shoe repair is an art," he said. "You have to be good with your hands. At



In addition to Boot Connection's 4000 square-foot Greenfield showroom with 10,000 pairs of boots and shoes stocked and fabulous website selection and service, the company's 53-foot 'Toe Truck' delivers 1500 pairs of quality work boots and shoes to businesses throughout Wisconsin.

MATC, they taught you how to run every aspect of a business, including the books."

MATC was the last institution within the American education system to teach

shoe repair, he said. Strigens retains great interest and no doubt great pride in what his classroom student from four decades ago has accomplished within the

profession, and in the real world. Campbell and Strigens remain close friends. The master cobbler in fact, now in his nineties had visited Boot Connection just prior to Campbell's February interview with OWO at their Greenfield location in the suburbs of Milwaukee.

Following his education at MATC, Campbell first opened for business at a Cudahy location in 1980, initially selling safety shoes and boots to Ladish Company employees, referred by his father who also worked at the longtime Cudahy establishment. Campbell relocated to Greenfield in 1998, where today Boot Connection includes a large showroom with approximately 10,000 pairs of shoes and boots stocked, the largest selection in one location in Wisconsin.

Scott Campbell has spent a lifetime learning, refining, and ultimately delivering what is most important to customers. Simply stated, comfort tops the list

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

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BOGS



RED WING



STORY BY: KEN DAMVELD (BASED ON TRUE EVENTS) • WRITTEN BY: HOLLY WEATHERWAX (DAUGHTER)
EDITED BY: STACIE ROBBINS (DAUGHTER)

Trappers Beware

Injured in wolf encounter, Wisconsin trapper questions population numbers

I'm a longtime hunter and trapper but first-time bobcat hunter. A few years back, my daughter had a bobcat tag. She didn't have any luck during her season but was able to call a bobcat in coyote hunting with her husband. I was able to get permission to trap bobcat on that same land. My son-in-law and I went to set traps and the landowner confirmed he was still getting pictures of bobcats on the property. We set Ridger 4 coil #3s with outside lamination and used Caven's Hiawatha Valley Predator Bait. I was confident in my chances.

A cold crisp November day checking traps on my own farm started great with a red fox taken before I headed to check the bobcat traps I had set on the property where I had been given permission. Approaching the first set of traps with .22

rifle in hand, I saw a tail flip in the tall grass and thought I must have caught a coyote. I cautiously approached the canine with my gun pointed at him.

With a closer view, I was not certain if I had caught a coyote or wolf.

The moment the animal let out a bone-chilling, hair raising howl I knew it was in fact a wolf. In an instant, the wolf lunged, slipped out of the trap and grabbed my forearm. He shook my arm, then let go and ran away. My arm was on fire! There was no tear in my Carhart jacket but blood was running down my arm. Without my phone, I quickly walked back to the truck and drove 20 minutes home.

At the house and still in shock from the encounter, I went to pull my arm out of my jacket sleeve and blood came rolling

out. The injury was severe and worse than I thought. I wrapped my arm with a towel and drove to the ER. The wolf's upper jaw had ripped my forearm muscle in half, exposing the tendons. The lower jaw had ripped open the bottom of my arm, but not nearly as bad as the top of my forearm. The doctor said I was lucky and it could have been much worse. They stitched me up and started a series of rabies shots.

I then had to schedule an appointment with a specialist to see if reconstructive surgery was needed to repair the tendons. At that appointment, they informed me there was no way to stitch the muscle back together and I would have to just let it heal. I was lucky that the tendons were not damaged and no surgery was necessary. After almost 2 months, it has healed up pretty well but it is going to leave a nasty



Trapper Ken Damveld received severe arm wounds through a heavy coat when a trapped wolf he approached while targeting Bobcat escaped.

scar.

Never in my life did I think something like this could have happened to me. I am thankful everything is healing, and the wolf wasn't able to knock me down and do more damage.

I would warn trappers to be on extreme alert when checking traps. You never know what you will run into. I believe there are more wolves out there than we realize. 🐾

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DICK ELLIS

Safety First, Safety Always

Wisconsin youth shooting sports leagues teach the priorities

Without ever firing a live round, Ethyn Turowski, Jordan Wilder, Oliver Bannon, Wyatt Behrndt and Jordy Hiller quietly go about the very serious business of becoming safe, proficient trap shooters at the Ozaukee County Fish and Game Club. Poised in front of the \$5000 DryFire Target Simulator donated by Pheasants Forever and Ozaukee Scholastic Shooting Sports (OSSS), the young participants utilize the computerized system and learn in front of the watchful eyes of their coaches.

According to longtime instructor and coach Steve Betts, DryFire is a shotgun simulator training system designed for training in each of the shooting sports, including trap, skeet and sporting clays. Ozaukee Scholastic Shooting Sports team members, both young men and women, come from all schools in Ozaukee County including Mequon, Cedarburg, Grafton, Port Washington and Ozaukee High and middle Schools.

"We also take home-school children in these districts," Betts said. "We are not affiliated with the WIAA in any way, but some of the schools do declare trap as a Letter Sport. Shooters may join the team as soon as they successfully pass Wisconsin DNR Hunter's Safety Program and continue to shoot through their senior year of high school."

There are two main trap leagues in Wisconsin, he said. Ozaukee Scholastic Shooting Sports belongs to the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) and has over 2000 participants. The USA Clay Target League includes more than 100 Wisconsin high schools and features over 1,900 student athletes expected for the 2025 Wisconsin Trap Shooting State Tournament.

American Trap, Betts said, is a shooting sport where squads of up to five people stand on stations from 16 yards to 27 yards from an underground house that oscillates from side to side and throws an orange clay target at approximately 43 miles per hour in any direction on a set field. A 12-gauge shotgun is most commonly used in trap, but other gauges may be used.

Each person takes a turn at shooting a single clay until all have shot five times. The shooters then all move to the next



Jordy Hiller (foreground) Wyatt Behrndt, Oliver Bannon, Jordan Wilder, and Squad Leader Ethyn Turowski of the Ozaukee Scholastic Shooting Sports team practice on the laser target screen at the Ozaukee County Fish and Game Club in February.

station until all five stations have been shot. There are 25 targets in each round of American trap.

"All the youth shooters stay at the 16-yard line in this league," Betts said. "In competition, two rounds of 25 are shot and the highest five scores are used for the team score and whichever team has the highest score is declared the winner."

With the emphasis on safety starting with these winter practices, everyone goes home a winner. New shooters in OSSS are required to shoot two indoor laser sessions. They



Oliver Bannon takes aim on the computerized laser system dryfire target screen donated by Pheasants Forever and Ozaukee Scholastic Shooting Sports.

are taught safety, trap, etiquette, basic form and basic rules of the game. In Ozaukee County, these kids can thank head coach Brian Verheyen and assistant coaches Mark Didier, Doug Klinski (club liaison), Daniel O'Connor and Brian Sikora as well as Betts for strict curriculum everyone can appreciate.

On a national basis, and over many years, accidents during youth shooting sports are virtually non-existent. In Wisconsin, coaches, parents and students expect to keep it that way. Safe and sound, in fact, defines the Wisconsin Youth Shooting sports programs quite accurately.

"I get a lot of feedback from adult league scorers about the youth that are coached," Betts said. "The common theme is that kids are safer than most adults because we have zero tolerance for safety infractions. Barrel locations, open actions and safe handling is our number one priority and we pride ourselves on zero incidents. This includes safety in the building, walking out to the field, and while shooting. They are also taught to be respectful, thank the scorers, clean up empty hulls left behind on the ground even if they're not from them. There are no accidents with firearms, only negligence." 🎯

BOOT CONNECTION, FROM PAGE 25

regardless of whether the buyer needs work boots or shoes, a hunter's field boot, or any specific footwear that fits the individual's need or passion.

"Our service and being genuine is so important," Campbell said. "Every boot and shoe fits differently. After learning so much, we know how to fit our customers. We're measuring people all day long. The customer needs to be properly fitted. If possible, we recommend coming in to our store."

No worries, though, if you live or work far from the Milwaukee suburbs where Boot Connection is anchored.

Boot Connection's website selection and service is fabulous, and the company's heated and airconditioned 53-foot semi-trailer, "The Toe Truck" carries a cargo of 1500 pairs of work boots and shoes packed in bins and takes the product to company accounts across Wisconsin. Employees select the footwear best suited to them and of course, are fitted properly on location with the employer receiving one invoice for each stop and shop.

"The Toe Truck" carries the message across the 53-foot trailer, "Here to Save Your Sole". Beneath the script, the company takes a bit of lyric liberty from a hit Nancy Sinatra song born in 1966. "One of these days these boots are going

to roll right up to you."

On-site, online, or on the road, Boot Connection is one place you'll want to be "fit to be tied" when you begin shopping. And, one satisfied customer when you settle in to your new footwear.

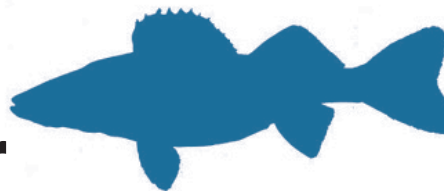
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"Our boot check offer for \$45 off your purchase," Campbell said, "is the best deal you're ever going to see." 🎯

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JOHN ELLIS

Walleyes in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory-Part Four



On Wisconsin Outdoors (OWO) is running a continuing series on the damage being done by Chippewa tribal spearing, to the walleye population in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory. The damage is directly tied to the poor leadership of **Chippewa Tribal Leaders and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**; the two groups entrusted with managing the walleyes.

For 40 years, the Chippewa Tribal Leaders have ignored proven management practices and encouraged tribal members to spear spawning walleyes. At the same time, the DNR has portrayed the Chippewa Tribal Leaders as good stewards of the resource, while subsidizing the destruction of the walleyes themselves. The result of the poor leadership from both groups is that the walleye population in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory has been decimated.

But what poor leadership has destroyed, good leadership can restore. This series is intended to provide new leaders, **both tribal and nontribal**, with the information they need to properly manage Wisconsin's Ceded Territory walleyes moving forward.

"Walleyes in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory-Part One; The real reason they're disappearing" was published in our March/April, 2023 issue. It used math and biology to expose the Wisconsin DNR and Chippewa Tribal Leaders as being responsible for the removal of a calculated 13,418,237 **"keeper walleyes"** (fish weighing between 1 ¾ and 2 pounds) from Ceded Territory lakes since 1985. The removal of the fish averaged 40,538 walleyes per lake.

"Walleyes in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory-Part Two" was published in our May/June, 2023 issue. It exposed that while only Chippewa tribal members (about 1% of the Wisconsin population) have participated in spearing Ceded Territory walleyes, all Wisconsin residents have subsidized their destruction by paying the tribes to restock them. It also explained that the restocking is an exercise in futility because there is no substitute for the lost natural reproduction of the speared fish.

"Walleyes in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory-Part Three" was published in our March/April, 2024 issue. It exposed the damage done to the walleye population in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory by the 2023 Tribal Spearing Season.

All three articles can be viewed in archived issues at onwisconsinoutdoors.com.

Part Four-The impact of 2024 spearing.

It takes roughly 1,000,000 walleye eggs to produce 125 **"keeper walleyes"**; fish that weigh between 1 ¾ and 2 pounds. The average egg drop per walleye during spawning is 85,000 eggs. This means that it takes 12 female walleyes to produce 125 keeper walleyes. * The math rounded to the nearest number is:

$$1,000,000 \div 85,000 = 12 \text{ female walleyes.}$$

According to the Wisconsin DNR the number of walleyes speared in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory in 2024 was 38,893. Conservatively, ten percent of those were females or 3,889. ** The math is:

$$38,893 \times .10 = 3,889 \text{ female walleyes speared.}$$

Because of the 3,889 female walleyes speared, 40,510 keeper walleyes will never hatch. The math is:

$$3,889 \div 12 \times 125 = 40,510 \text{ keeper walleyes that will never hatch.}$$

Because a 50/50 male to female ratio is the norm in nature, if half of the 40,510 keeper walleyes that will never hatch were females that only spawn once, we have an additional 210,990 keeper walleyes that will never hatch. The math is:

$$40,510 \div 2 \div 12 \times 125 = 210,990 \text{ keeper walleyes that will never hatch.}$$

Because it takes a female walleye 4 to 5 years to reach maturity, and the average age of walleyes in Wisconsin is 7 years, we can conservatively assume 2 spawning years or an additional 210,990 keeper walleyes that will never hatch.

The total impact of the 2024 Tribal Spearing Season.

1. 38,893 walleyes were directly removed from the lakes as they tried to reproduce. 3,889 were females.

2. 40,510 keeper walleyes will never hatch because of the females speared.

3. 210,990 keeper walleyes will never hatch because of the loss of one spawning year.

4. 210,990 keeper walleyes will never hatch because of the loss of a second spawning year.

Added in total, 501,383 keeper walleyes (1 ¾ to 2 pounds) were removed from the Ceded Territory by the 2024 Tribal Spearing Season.

*Walleye Tactics, Tips and Tales. Mark Strand. North American Fishing Club. Published in 1990.

According to the DNR, only 26,057 of the 38,893 walleyes speared were examined for sex. Of those, 9.9% were females. But in an article in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel published on 12-13-2024, Frank Vaisvilas wrote **"the DNR reports that male walleyes constitute about 76% of the walleyes speared each year." If Vaisvilas' reporting is accurate, it means that **24% of the walleyes speared each year are females** and the damage being done to Ceded Territory walleyes is much worse than OWO has been reporting. OWO conservatively used 10% for our calculations. 🐟

JOHN ELLIS

Important Notes on the Average Egg Drop of Spawning Walleyes

According to the book **Walleye Tactics, Tips and Tales** by Mark Strand, a spawning female walleye will drop between 60,000 and 250,000 eggs, depending on her size, with larger walleyes dropping more eggs than smaller walleyes. Published in 1990, Strand wrote that the average egg drop per walleye was 85,000 eggs. This is the number *On Wisconsin Outdoors (OWO)* has used in our continuing series, **Walleyes in Wisconsin's Ceded Territory**.

But in 2008, the *Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)* was reporting that the average egg drop of a spawning walleye was 50,000 eggs. If the DNR number is correct it means that the damage done to Ceded Territory walleyes is much worse than OWO has been reporting, because it would actually take 20 female walleyes, not 12, to produce 125 keeper walleyes.

The math is:

$$1,000,000 \div 50,000 = 20 \text{ female walleyes}$$

Additionally, because the spearing of spawning walleyes in the Ceded Territory has been going on for 40 years, it's certain that the average size of the female spawning walleyes there has gotten smaller. Because smaller walleyes drop fewer eggs than larger walleyes, the natural reproductive potential of the fish has continued to diminish over time. 🐟

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Presents Firearms Info from Ron Stresing

RON STRESING

I See You. I Hear You.

Protective gear for shooting helps keep it that way

April marks the start of summer trap, skeet and sporting clays leagues. Along with your gun, shells and other basics, you need gear to protect your vision and hearing. It's no secret gunfire will degrade your hearing, and your vision is at risk from things like flying target fragments, gas blowback, unburned grains of powder, or even a stray pellet. Every shooting range I have ever been to requires eye and ear protection, and that's a *good* thing!

Eye protection: Safety glasses can run from inexpensive clear or amber industrial type to fancy prescription tinted shooting glasses. Basic industrial type safety glasses with polycarbonate lenses that meet Federal Standard ANSI-2871-2020 can be purchased for as little as \$2.00. That includes models with amber or gray tinted



Ear and eye protection is essential and part of the safe curriculum taught with the shooting sports.

lenses. For that price, I advise getting a few pair and keeping them in your vehicle or range bag. If you wear prescription lenses, it pays to buy higher-end shooting glasses with custom tinted lenses. My prescription shooting glasses are a light amber tint with polycarbonate lenses certified to stop a # 7

½ pellet at 1200 fps. Hopefully, I will never have to test out that standard.

I have been showered with clay target fragments when shooting sporting clays from targets thrown towards me or overhead. I've also had unburned grains of powder blown back from semi-auto guns. Your safety glasses will also protect you when shooting a handgun or rifle. I wear my clear prescription lenses when hunting as well. At age 70, they are a big help in identifying the species of duck or trying to distinguish hens from drakes. They also provide protection from branches, other eye pokers, and errant pellets.

Hearing protection: Again, you can go low bid with industrial foam or plastic ear plugs. My advice is to buy the very best

hearing protection you can reasonably afford. If you only shoot a few times a year, electronic earmuff type protection that cost \$50 or more might not be practical. As an option, the industrial hearing protection selection at a hardware or "big box" store might be a good place to start. I suggest buying the foam or plastic plugs as well as muff type hearing protection. If you shoot magnum or short barreled handguns, or high-powered rifles (especially with a muzzle brake) using both ear plugs and muffs is a good way to go. Several people I know have electronic earmuffs that allow you to hear normal conversation, yet block out gunfire.

Protect your eyes and ears. You were only given one pair of each! 🎧

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JOHN ELLIS

Election Integrity in Wisconsin-Part Ten

Only verifiability will make Wisconsin's elections trustworthy

J.B. Van Hollen is a former Republican Wisconsin Attorney General, and **Mandela Barnes** is a former Democrat Wisconsin Lt. Governor. Together, they wrote an op-ed that appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on January 26th titled, *Two Things Wisconsin Must do to Boost Trust in our Elections*. According to Van Hollen and Barnes, those "two things" are pre-processing absentee ballots and uniform drop box rules.

But Van Hollen and Barnes failed to provide the reader with the following crucial information:

State lawmakers allow the Wisconsin Elections Commission to maintain a voter registration list that includes more than 4 million ineligible voter names. The millions of ineligible names are the source of unverifiable fraudulent ballots created, and counted, in Wisconsin's elections.

State lawmakers have allowed 250,000 people who are in Wisconsin legally but ineligible to vote, to have driver's

licenses that are identical to those of people who are eligible to vote. Because a driver's license is all you need to register, the ineligible voters with the licenses can easily vote.

Wisconsin's elections are unverifiable and easily stolen because the state lawmakers have not required every vote counted to be tied to a verifiable eligible voter.

It's not the responsibility of Wisconsin's citizens to prove an election was stolen after it's over.

It's the responsibility of Wisconsin's state lawmakers to put in place elections that can't be stolen.

By withholding this information, Van Hollen and Barnes have proven that *they* can't be trusted. They tried to convince people that minor changes to Wisconsin's fundamentally flawed elections would make them trustworthy. Their goal was to protect state lawmakers from both parties who are responsible for allowing those elections to continue.

The lawmakers are Democrat Governor Tony Evers (608-266-1212), Republican Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (608-237-9163), Republican Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu (608-266-2056), and all of Wisconsin's rank-and-file legislative members. To find out how to contact your state legislator go to legis.wi.gov.

Wisconsin's elections will only be trustworthy after the state lawmakers require them to be verifiable, with every vote counted tied to an eligible voter. Only verifiability will make Wisconsin's elections trustworthy, because it will make them impossible to steal.

The state lawmaker's willful negligence has once again set the stage for a Wisconsin election to be stolen. The same thieves who stole the U.S. Senate seat from **Eric Hovde** on November 5th, will be trying to steal the state Supreme Court seat from **Brad Schimel** on April 1st. If the thieves are successful, it will be the Wisconsin state lawmakers who facilitated the theft. 🎭

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