

BRAVA

women + style + substance

Creating FAMILY

The many shapes of modern broods

Pets and
the families
they rescue

When a
family
member
comes
out

INSIDE |

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stretches

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Cocktails
to go

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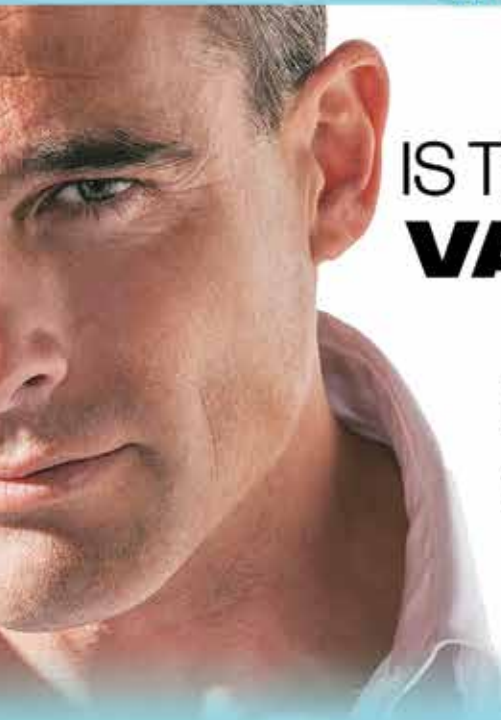
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ON THE COVER

Erin Elliott and her twins Elyse, left, and Blake play on the grass with Elliott's best friend Kelli Massey and her son Theo. Read the story of their journey from fertility treatments to motherhood on P. 33. Photographed by Hillary Schave.



ASK THE EXPERT



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: DR. DAVID ALLEN, DR. STEPHEN SCHASKER, DR. AUDRA LONG

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Q What is the difference between a dentist and an orthodontist?

An orthodontist is a dentist who has completed a two-to-three year residency program in orthodontics after dental school. Orthodontists specialize in improving the bite and alignment of the teeth.

Q When/how do I know if my child (or myself) needs orthodontics?

The need for orthodontic treatment may or may not be obvious to you. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends children see an orthodontist by 7 years old to screen for certain problems that should be treated early. Most kids do not need treatment this early but screening them at a young age helps us identify problems that can benefit from early correction.

Q What can I expect at the first appointment?

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Q What are some of the typical options?

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Q How long will treatment last?

The length of your treatment depends on the complexity of the problem. Simple cases of very minor tooth movement may take only a few months while a complete bite correction can take a couple of years to treat.

Q Does orthodontics hurt?

Having braces or other orthodontic appliances put on your teeth does not hurt. You may feel some soreness in the first few days as your teeth begin to move and straighten. Eating softer foods and taking over-the-counter pain medication can help with the initial discomfort.

Q Do I need a referral from my dentist to see an orthodontist?

We don't require a referral from your dentist, but it is important that your teeth and gums are in healthy condition before starting any orthodontic treatment. If it has been over six months since you've seen a dentist, we recommend you schedule a cleaning and exam before we see you.

Q Will you work with my insurance?

We work with all insurances to help patients get the most out of their orthodontic benefits. We will work with you to help determine your benefits before beginning treatment. You may also want to contact your insurance company or your employer's HR department to get the details of the coverage available to you. For any portion not covered by insurance, we offer no-interest financing plans based on a credit approval.

Dr. David Allen practices at the Old Sauk Road and Chapel Valley Road clinics. He enjoys seeing patients of all types but has a special concentration of working with cleft lip and palate patients and serves as an orthodontist for the UW Hospital Cleft Palate-Craniofacial team.

Dr. Stephen Schasker practices at the AmCenter Drive and North Walbridge Avenue clinics. He loves being an Orthodontist because he gets to work with his hands all day. In his free time he likes to tinker with old cars and watches.

Dr. Audra Long practices at the Old Sauk Road clinic. She knows that orthodontics is her true calling. She finds immense value in being able to deliver care that she knows will benefit her patients long into the future.



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*- Helen Johnson-Leipold
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LPGA Amateur Golf Association – Madison Chapter Charity Golf Outing



Join area women and men for a fabulous fun day of golf—and support Children's Theater of Madison! The LPGA Amateur Golf Association – Madison Chapter has selected CTM as this year's recipient for their charity golf outing.

Funds from this event support access for all youth to experience the theater arts. Support includes programs and special sensory-friendly performances for youth with autism, ASL performances for youth who are deaf or hard of hearing, and scholarships for classes for youth with financial need.



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BRAVA Night Out

SSM Health and BRAVA invite you to a free women's night out to learn everything you need to know about women's health. At SSM Health, we're here for you at every age and every stage of your life.

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5:30 – 7 pm**

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MODERN FAMILIES

THE EVOLUTION OF THE

AMERICAN FAMILY is a fascinating trend to explore. Generally, two-parent households are on the decline and families are smaller now than they were in years past, according to a 2016 study by the Pew Research Center.

Today, more than 4 in 10 births occur to single women or those living with a non-marital partner. With more moms entering the workforce, more moms are also becoming the primary breadwinners in their families. Blended families are on the rise.

So, the study reports, there is no longer one dominant family type in the U.S. "Parents today are raising their children against a backdrop of increasingly diverse and, for many, constantly evolving family forms."

We have the pleasure, in this edition, to explore just a sliver of modern family forms. Our look, written by longtime BRAVA contributor Emily McCluhan, is at families created by what might once have been considered non-traditional methods.

These parents just figured, as they say, that they had so much love to give they had to share it. And, one mom, Roxanne Karls, who with her husband Joe created a family of eight through adoption, says she realized she "didn't need to be the bus" and bear a child to have the big family they always wanted.

We also take a look, in stories by Hywania Thompson, at some local families who made pets a key part of their lives. In the case of Elizabeth Seeliger and her daughter Sylviah, one yellow dog named Appa made all the difference in the world to Sylviah's health and happiness.

And, in a story by Katy Macek, we offer some compelling and useful advice to families with members who have come out. Helping embrace someone in your family can be as simple as listening, or coming to a support meeting for those with similar situations, says Lee Young, a transgender man who shared his story.

Throughout the magazine we feature the stellar photography of veteran BRAVA contributors Hillary Schave and Shanna Wolf, along with Kaia Calhoun (whose children served as models for the baby stretching piece in WELLBEING on P. 20), Sunny Frantz, Valerie Tobias and illustrator Holly Tyler.

We hope the edition prompts fond memories of your own family and reminds you to give your constant pet companion, if you have one, a kiss on the head. That'll be pretty fun if it happens to be a lizard.

Marni

Marni McEntee
Editor-in-Chief



DON'T MISS | BRAVA's first-ever reader's choice pet photo contest! Be sure to follow us on Facebook between June 24 and July 12 to post an image of your pet, and to vote for fave animals. Owners of pets receiving the most votes will be recognized on BRAVA social media on July 12.



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WRITERS

LAURA ANNE BIRD "KID STUFF," P. 16

Mom, fundraiser, blogger and ardent reader, Laura is also a reviewer for Readers Lane. She loves nothing more than helping people find their perfect book. Follow her on Instagram: [laura_at_the_library](#)

AMY CARLSON "A PROMISE KEPT," P. 63

Amy Carlson has been reporting the weather for the past 30 years at NBC-15. She is particularly inspired by the subjects of her BRAVA Catalyst articles.

KATY MACEK "CIRCLE OF SUPPORT," P. 42

Katy is a freelance writer who specializes in arts and culture, especially if it relates to her college home, Eau Claire.

LISA MEIDL "EYES WIDE OPEN," P. 22

Lisa is an award-winning journalist, a communication strategist and owner of 7 Hills Real Estate, and in her free time a hobby equestrian, gardener and cook.

EMILY MCCLUHAN "HAPPILY EVER AFTER," P. 33; "FAMILY IS FAMILY," P. 35

Emily doesn't let her full-time job get in the way of writing, paddleboarding, dog-loving, running and exploring everything Madison—and the world—has to offer.

HEATHER OWENS

"LEADING A MUSEUM," P. 14

Heather incorporates marketing and her love of the arts, in any form, at UW-Madison Arts Institute. She enjoys creating, reading and travelling.

MEGAN ROESSLER

"TOOTH FAIRY WISDOM," P. 20

Megan studied Art History at the University of Wisconsin—Madison. She is interested in environmental history, and she makes comics in her spare time.

HYWANIA THOMPSON "A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY," P. 39

Hywania is a copywriter and native of Chicago. She moved to Madison in 2005. She enjoys volunteering, traveling and listening to live music.

CANDICE WAGENER

"COCKTAILS IN A CAN," P. 53

Candice loves writing about great food, unique places and inspiring people. A graduate of the UW J-School, she came to Wisconsin from the Chicago area. Follow her on Instagram at [candicewagener](#).

ARTISTS

KAIA CALHOUN "LEADING A MUSEUM," P. 14; "KID STUFF," P. 16; "BABY BENDS," P. 19

Kaia is a photographer that sees the beauty in life all around her all the time. Her goal is to capture her client's authentic beauty.

SUNNY FRANTZ "BOTANICAL BOUNTY," P. 25; "COCKTAILS IN A CAN," P. 53

A former BRAVA gal Sunny uses her marketing, graphic design and styled photography skills to connect small businesses with their ideal audience. Follow on Instagram [@sunny.frantz](#).

HILLARY SCHAVE "HAPPILY EVER AFTER," P. 33; "FAMILY IS FAMILY," P. 35

Hillary is a fun pro photographer who puts her left shoe on first and adores shooting weddings, portraits and boudoir for her studio, Azena Photography. [azenaphoto.com](#)

VALERIE TOBIAS "CIRCLE OF SUPPORT," P. 42

Valerie's interests include cheese, live comedy, bicycling, adventures, talking to strangers and photojournalism. She lives in Madison with her husband and daredevil son.

HOLLY TYLER "TOOTH FAIRY WISDOM," P. 20

Holly is an illustrator and designer specializing in watercolor and digital art. She loves Wisconsin winters, biking, running and pretending to be a mountain woman.

SHANNA WOLF

"COME TOGETHER," P. 27; "A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY," P. 39; "A PROMISE KEPT," P. 63

Shanna is a freelance photographer specializing in portrait, documentary and interior photography. Her style is simple and bright, and she loves storytelling through still photography. [sphotographyandstyling.com](#)

To read more about our contributors, visit [BRVAmagazine.com](#)

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CONNECT



TEXTURED TEXT | The multidisciplinary exhibit “Jeffrey Gibson: Like a Hammer” features around 65 objects, including beaded punching bags, text-based wall hangings, paintings and video. Gibson’s contemporary works reflect his Native American heritage. Runs through Sept. 15 at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art.

(Above): “American History (JB),” 2015 by Jeffrey Gibson. Mixed material tapestry; 89 x 66 x 5 in. Image courtesy Jeffrey Gibson Studio and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California.

BRAVA-SPONSORED EVENTS



7/17 | 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.

BRAVA Night Out at SSM Health

Take control of your wellbeing with this healthful and educational BRAVA Night Out sponsored by SSM Health. You'll learn about the services that SSM Health provides at every stage of a woman's life and can ask any questions you may have about maternity services, pelvic health, breast health and more. Plus, you can enjoy hors d'oeuvres, mocktails, skin therapy treatments and a raffle featuring a wide variety of prizes. *Details at BRAVAmagazine.com.*

MOXIE



Zonta Club of Madison has honored six organizations with its 2019 Community Award. **Congratulations to Casey Behrend, executive director of Briarpatch Youth Services**, for work with youth and families; **Shannon Barry, executive director of Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS)** for helping domestic violence survivors and their families; **Erin Thornley Parisi, executive director of the Rape Crisis Center**, for offering hope and healing to victims of sexual violence; **Pearl Foster, chair of SlaveFree Madison**, for the group's work in response to human trafficking in Dane County; **Sara Finger, executive director of Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health**, for advocating for women's health, safety and economic security; and **Sara Dillivan-Graves, president of the Wisconsin Women's Network**, which promotes the advancement of women and girls in Wisconsin.

Congratulations to **local animal expert Pamela Hart**, who has been appointed executive director of the Center for Animal Law Studies at Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon. Hart, who was a 2017 BRAVA Woman to Watch, was the first person to develop and teach an animal law course at the University of Chicago Law School, and at her alma mater, UW-Madison. She's a founding board member of Sheltering Animals of Abuse Victims, or SAAV, a Dane County nonprofit aimed at recognizing the role of animals in family violence.

BRAVA CULPA



In our story about Meriter's Forensic Nurse Examiner program ("Trained to Treat Trauma," June 2019), we should have said that Meriter is the only nursing program designed to collect evidence from and treat victims of all ages who have faced physical and sexual assault, and child abuse. In addition, forensic nurses can gather evidence for about five days after an attack and Dr. Barbara Knox also treats pediatric victims at the American Family Children's Hospital.

FAREWELL



After more than 30 years in broadcasting, NBC15 Weekend Anchor Amy Carlson hung up her microphone effective June 30. Carlson has been a steady BRAVA media partner, along with her NBC15 colleagues, penning articles about nonprofit organizations for our Catalyst department. Carlson's first BRAVA piece was in 2013 and her final Catalyst is in this month's edition on P. 63. We wish Amy well in her retirement and in all her new adventures!

OPPORTUNITIES



Interested in writing for BRAVA Magazine? We're on the hunt for freelance writers who are passionate about all things home and garden for new opportunities in one of our most popular BRAVA departments. Experienced writers who can hit the ground running should send a resume and up to five published clips to BRAVA Editor-In-Chief Marni McEntee at marni@bravaenterprises.com.

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LEADING A MUSEUM

Amy Gilman curates a new chapter for the Chazen

BY HEATHER OWENS

AMY GILMAN didn't originally plan on a career in the museum field, but her studies eventually took her there. After earning a bachelor's degree in performance studies, she began working on a master's degree in photography and interning at a museum. The experience stuck with her, and she decided right then to become a museum director.

"All of my choices had been leading me closer to the right mix in the arts, in a museum space and working with artists," she says. Gilman pursued her Ph.D. in art history and worked as a curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Cleveland. She soon joined the Toledo Museum of Art in Ohio, first as a curator, then as deputy director. Her goal was finally realized when she became the director of the Chazen Museum of Art at UW-Madison in September 2017.

Gilman and her staff have been strategizing about how to bring the Chazen into its next chapter as it turns 50 in the fall of 2020 by honoring the museum's past, along with moving it into the future. Later this year, a café will open in the lobby. Next year, UW arts faculty will exhibit work inspired by the collection and the spaces, along with an exhibition from UW alumni collections paying homage to the museum's first exhibit.

Besides the anniversary preparations, the museum continues to have numerous activities throughout the year including the family-friendly series "Art Spin" once a month during the school year and then as

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KAIA CALHOUN

CONNECT | PERSPECTIVE

"Summer Spin" held weekly on Thursday nights. Gilman encourages those with children to wander the museum and see artwork at their eye level. Her son's favorite piece "...is the yellow bridge. He runs up to the bridge and asks me if I can see his footprints," she says of the translucent walkway on the museum's second floor.

Gilman says any profession can thrive in museums and advises the next generation of museumgoers and leaders to "listen more than you talk."

For artwork unique to the Chazen, she recommends visitors seek out John Stuart Curry's works, the world-class Terese and Alvin (alum) Lane collection that allows people to see and understand the artistic process, and Russian artwork donated by UW graduate Joseph E. Davies, former ambassador to the Soviet Union in the 1930s. No matter your age, give yourself time to experience the second largest art museum, after the Milwaukee Art Museum, in the state.

Gilman says any profession can thrive in museums and advises the next generation of museumgoers and leaders to "listen more than you talk." She is interested in developing and supporting her staff, including paid interns, to be leaders at all levels. Gilman likes to see people expand their horizons, such as her mentee, Adam Levine, who became director and CEO of the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens in Jacksonville, Florida. Levine says of Gilman, "Part of what differentiates her from others is that she mentors people into leadership in addition to management. She strives to help people become their authentic selves and activate their potential."

When asked about her own current creative practice, Gilman says, "My creative practice is the museum. I curate finances, resources, relationships with the university, objects from the collections, etc." You can see her curated exhibition "In the Studio" through Aug. 11. 🌸

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PHOTOGRAPHED BY KAIA CALHOUN

KID STUFF

Kelly Harms' favorite books for teens—and adults

BY LAURA ANNE BIRD

KELLY HARMS WOULD love more sleep. Or a vacation. Or both.

Harms, who has lived in Madison for nearly nine years, is a full-time writer and mother to her 8-year-old son. Although divorced, she's in a relationship with her partner, Chris, whom she affectionately refers to as "the Irishman."

In her third novel, "The Overdue Life of Amy Byler," Harms explores the toll that motherhood can take, particularly when a woman is on her own. "Single parenting was really hard for me," she says. "It doesn't matter if you get pneumonia, you just keep going."

Her character, Amy, is desperate for a break, which comes in the form of a conference for children's librarians. She leaves her two kids with her almost-ex-husband and flees to New York City, where she embarks on a summer of unanticipated self-rediscovery.

Amy's journey is touching, humorous and deeply reassuring, particularly for readers whose own wells have run dry. "In the moment, you don't know where the other side is," Harms says. "But it's there."

THREE BOOKS TO STEAL FROM YOUR KIDS

"Amy Byler is a children's librarian," Harms says. "So is it any surprise that while writing my book, I lost myself in a huge stack of titles often assigned to teen readers?" These are her favorites:

TIGER LILY

by Jodi Lynn Anderson

In this reimagining of J. M. Barrie's classic "Peter Pan," Tiger Lily meets Peter in the woods of Neverland. Their bond is tight but fated to be severed. "This is a heartbreaking romance," Harms says. "But while teens swoon, adults will be dazzled by the language and elegance of Anderson's writing."

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHTTIME

by Mark Haddon

Christopher Boone is trying to solve the murder of a poodle. Ostensibly on the autism spectrum, he struggles to understand human emotions, which makes his investigation even harder. "This book has become mandatory reading for teaching kids empathy," says Harms. "But for adults, it's a satisfying exploration of an exceptional mind."

PIECING ME TOGETHER

by Renee Watson

Jade is an ambitious, African-American student at an otherwise white high school. Struggling to fit in, she creates an identity she can be proud of. Teens might overlook the nuances of the grown women in Jade's life, but adults won't. "Plan to sob your way through this beautiful, award-winning story," says Harms. 🌸

THRIVE



GO GREEN

A little foliage is good for you, and Kate Holl, owner of Wildewood on East Johnson Street, will help you curate the right house plants for your home or office space.

Read more in *SHOP TALK*, P. 25.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

SHOP LOCAL



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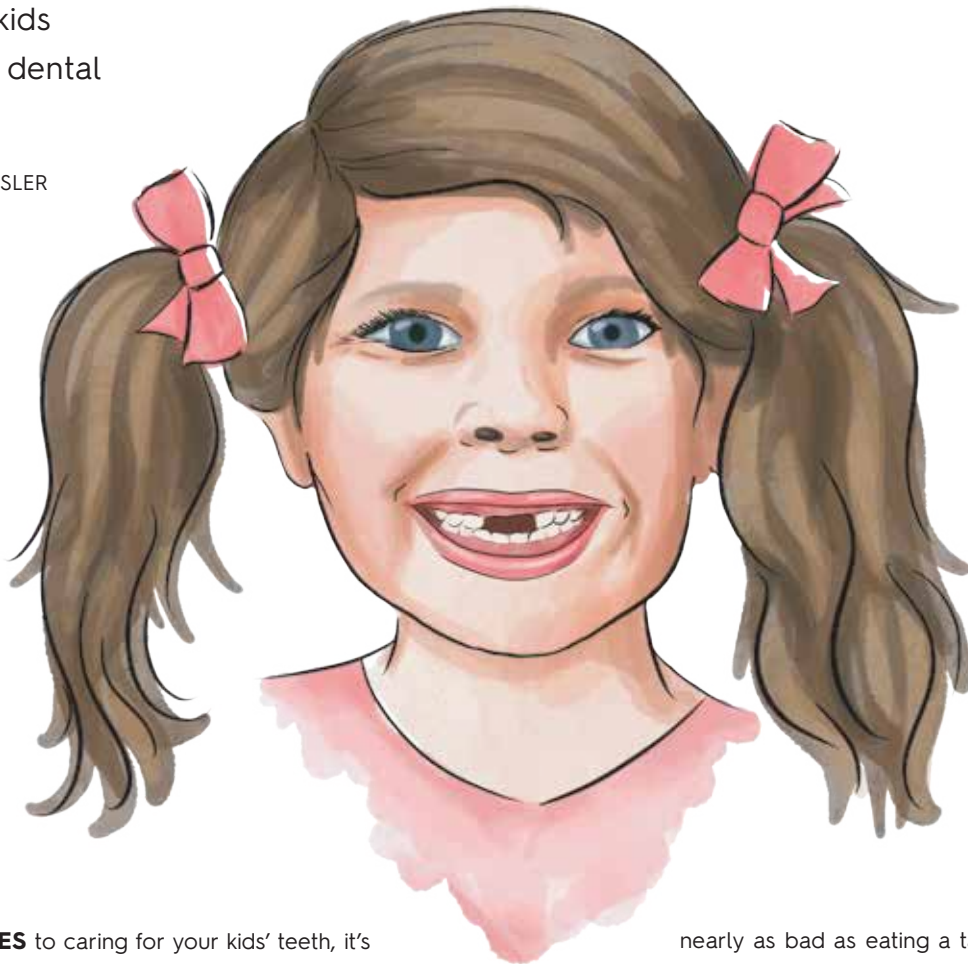
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TOOTH FAIRY WISDOM

Help your kids
build good dental
habits

BY MEGAN ROESSLER



ILLUSTRATED BY HOLLY TYLER

WHEN IT COMES to caring for your kids' teeth, it's best to keep ahead of the game. "We're always focused on prevention," says Grace Wenham, pediatric dentist at Madison Pediatric Dental. She recommends starting regular dentist visits once teeth have erupted, usually age 1. It's important to care for baby teeth, she says, because they "protect and hold space for developing teeth coming in." Infection in a baby tooth, left untreated, can spread to the permanent tooth, Wenham explains.

Another key part of preventing dental problems is establishing good habits early. Clumsy kiddos can struggle with a number of things—one that might go unnoticed is tooth-brushing, which calls for more dexterity than we realize, especially when it comes to brushing teeth toward the back of the mouth. Eric teDuits, a pediatric dentist at the Children's Dental Center of Madison, says an adult needs to help with brushing and flossing in the evening until the child is 8.

teDuits also suggests that parents serve milk and juice at mealtimes only, opting for water the rest of the day. Sugars in milk and juice can sit on teeth and provide a food source for aggressive bacteria that cause decay, he explains. teDuits paints a vivid picture—eating a cup of sugar in one sitting isn't

nearly as bad as eating a tablespoon every hour. "It's not the amount of sugar as much as the frequency," he says. By opting to serve water between meals and before bedtime, rather than milk or juice, parents can keep kids hydrated without the consistent sugar intake that can lead to decay.

teDuits also recommends parents avoid sharing drinking cups and eating utensils with their children, in order to prevent the transmission of bacteria. A father of five, teDuits knows that life around the house can get chaotic. "You can't always keep that from happening," he says, "it's easier said than done."

If cavities do occur and are caught while they're still small, they may be treated with an application of silver diamine fluoride, rather than a filling, Wenham says. Early intervention can also help correct alignment before larger problems develop. "Coming in routinely every six months can prevent orthodontic problems in the future," she says.

Good health in kids' teeth requires both professional care and good habits at home. When patients come in for a cleaning, teDuits calls the appointment a reminder, rather than a follow-up. "I can clean all the teeth in the world," he says, but there's no substitute for day-to-day effort 🌸

BABY BENDS

Simple moves to stretch and comfort baby

BY ANNIE ROSEMURGY
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
KAIA CALHOUN



BABIES THRIVE ON TOUCH, and lots of it. Gentle movement stimulates the feel-good centers in their brain and releases tension from their body. Learning a few basic baby stretches can give you a repertoire of intentional touches that may help reduce fussiness, help your little one sleep more peacefully and alleviate the common discomforts of babyhood. Stretching is a wonderful way for people besides Mom to bond with the baby as well. Soothing touch and movement are beneficial from the day of birth, says Kara Donovan-Guido, an expert in infant massage at Madison's Lighthouse Healing, and can continue until baby decides she's on the move. Here Donovan-Guido shares some her favorite stretching and massage movements.



CONSENT

Wait till baby is in a receptive state of quiet wakefulness. To begin, always greet her with a smile, make eye contact and ask her permission to be touched.

Briskly rubbing your hands together signals the movement session begins, and baby may delight you down the road with a smile and full-body wiggle upon hearing this cue!



HUG-A-BABY

At the end of pregnancy, womb conditions get very crowded indeed and many babies are born with tight shoulders as a result. Cross baby's right arm

over left in a hugging motion across her body and apply easy pressure. Repeat with opposite arms.



TUMMY KNEE PRESS

Colic, that bugaboo of the first three months of life, can be the ultimate frustration for new parents. Baby seems to be in pain but where is it coming from? Knee

bends often benefit colicky babies by applying pressure to the stomach, which may be the cause of the discomfort, as well as stretching tight hips. Gently extend the legs and then press to the abdomen three to five times.



CONDITIONED RELAXATION RESPONSE

Many newborns struggle with the transition from quiet-womb life to the noisy, chaotic world. Baby can benefit from a

total-body tension reducer. Hold baby's arm in your hand and tap the back of the arm to encourage it to release and extend. Give baby verbal cues to relax.



HANDS OF A CLOCK

Another great technique for tummy trouble. Move hands around baby's abdomen in a clockwise circle, one hand following the other. This motion outlines

the direction of the intestinal tract and may help a gassy, fussy baby. Your older tike may squeal in ticklish laughter though! 🌸

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EYES WIDE OPEN

The savvy woman's guide to a second marriage

BY LISA MEIDL

IT'S HAPPENED. You're up to your eyeballs in romance, and you intend to marry for the second time. Regardless of why you and your first partner went your separate ways, you want to capitalize on the lessons of your first marriage and play it smarter in round two.

Even amidst the butterflies, you can prepare yourself for this new direction in your life.

First, do the emotional work, says Lauren Papp, Ph.D., director of UW-Madison's Couples Lab.

"You bring your experiences whenever you transition from one relationship to another," Papp says. "It's a good point for all of us to stop and consider what contributed to how that first relationship went. Ask yourself if there is anything

about yourself that you can work on and change to make your next relationship go more smoothly."

Don't think of it as baggage.

"That's negative," she says. "Think about those previous experiences as turning points that offer a new opportunity."

It's vital that each of you look at your patterns for handling major events. If you're the type to hole up and process during death, job loss, travel, holidays and relocation, your partner should be aware of that and know how to support you.

"Look ahead and anticipate rather than be taken by surprise," Papp says.

In 2005, retired nurse Kathleen "Kitty" Law, now 64, married her second husband, Bob Law, 71, after two years of dating, in part because he treats her with appreciation and support.

"He's the sweetest man I've ever met," she says. "He gives me gifts every day with his attitude, his character and little acts of kindness."

Before they married, they talked about how to handle finances and their adult children, and where they would live. They decided she'd move to Illinois, where he had a dental business.

Then, seven months after they married, Bob was in a serious ATV accident that left him unable to keep his dental business. So, they sold their Illinois condo and moved back to Madison where they had a lake home. It's also when they had a deeper conversation with their financial planner about how to ensure each would be secure when the other died.

The Laws did get a pre-nuptial agreement, as do many couples marrying for the second time, says Rhonda Hazen, of Boardman & Clark, LLP. She's practiced family law for 23 years.

"There are two big areas that come into play: minor children and finances," Hazen says. "If a couple is going to enter into a new relationship and they have minor children, there is a lot of work and thought that needs to be done."

It's a project the couple has to handle themselves, she says, such as who makes rules and holds children accountable or how to work with former spouses while

THRIVE | DELVE IN

co-parenting. Hazen recommends talking directly to all parties so expectations can be shared and discussed. It may not be that everyone comes to an agreement, but the new couple should be aligned.

The financial aspect of marriage can be especially complicated when one or both have children from a first marriage, when they've accrued some retirement interest or if both have a home. It's also crucial to discuss what happens to assets when they die.

"A woman may want some of those assets to go to her children instead of just automatically going to the spouse," Hazen says. "That's a biggie, and it's often when a 'prenup' comes into play."

It's also critical that both partners are completely transparent when it comes

"We wanted to enjoy the ride of falling in love and finding our sweetheart, but that doesn't preclude being smart. We wanted to look through the appropriate lenses as we merged our lives together," says Tracy Ashfield, married to her second husband for 18 years.

to what each owes and owns. At some point, says Hazen, she'll refer the couple to a financial planner if they don't use one already.

Jody Brown, vice president of wealth management for Summit Financial Advisors, is a financial advisor at Summit Credit Union and has walked many couples through those talks.

"Our job is to remove the emotion and help them look at the facts so we can see what path they're on and where they might need to adjust," Brown says. "Even if it's not a second marriage, people have different personalities when it comes to savings, spending, retirement goals."

Tracy Ashfield, 58, has been married to

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her second husband, Tom Burton, 66, for 18 years. She's president of Ashfield and Associates, a consulting firm that works with credit unions on real estate lending strategies. Tom is a former journalist, now a freelance editor. Even though they were "smitten" with each other, their professional and personal experiences prompted them to be analytical when it came to considering marriage.

"We realized pretty quickly we wanted very much to be together and to grow old together," Ashfield says. "Although both of our first marriages dissolved for different reasons, each was difficult, and we had both been single for a long time."

They consulted a lawyer and discussed the financial and legal pros and cons of marriage as well as estate planning and how to handle wills.

"Neither of us was wealthy and neither of us had children," she says. "We wanted to enjoy the ride of falling in love and finding our sweetheart, but that doesn't preclude being smart. We wanted to look through the appropriate lenses as we merged our lives together."

What surprised her was that they hadn't previously considered many of the questions the pros asked, for example, about travel and entertainment budgets and timing for retirement.

"I think we both genuinely enjoyed the process of asking ourselves as individuals these questions, and then seeing how they compared," Ashfield says. "Not because we were looking for differences, but because it helped us identify our own desires and how they married or maybe that they needed more conversation."

Despite what you may believe, one item you don't have to worry about is that second marriages are more likely to fail. According to Papp, the sampling pool for second marriages is much smaller than first marriages, so the best determining factor is how the two get along and whether they're determined to work through issues or to give up.

"There's no formula and no amount of money that can guarantee a relationship's success," Papp says. "People in all financial situations need to think about how to work together." 🌸

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BY LIVIA KING

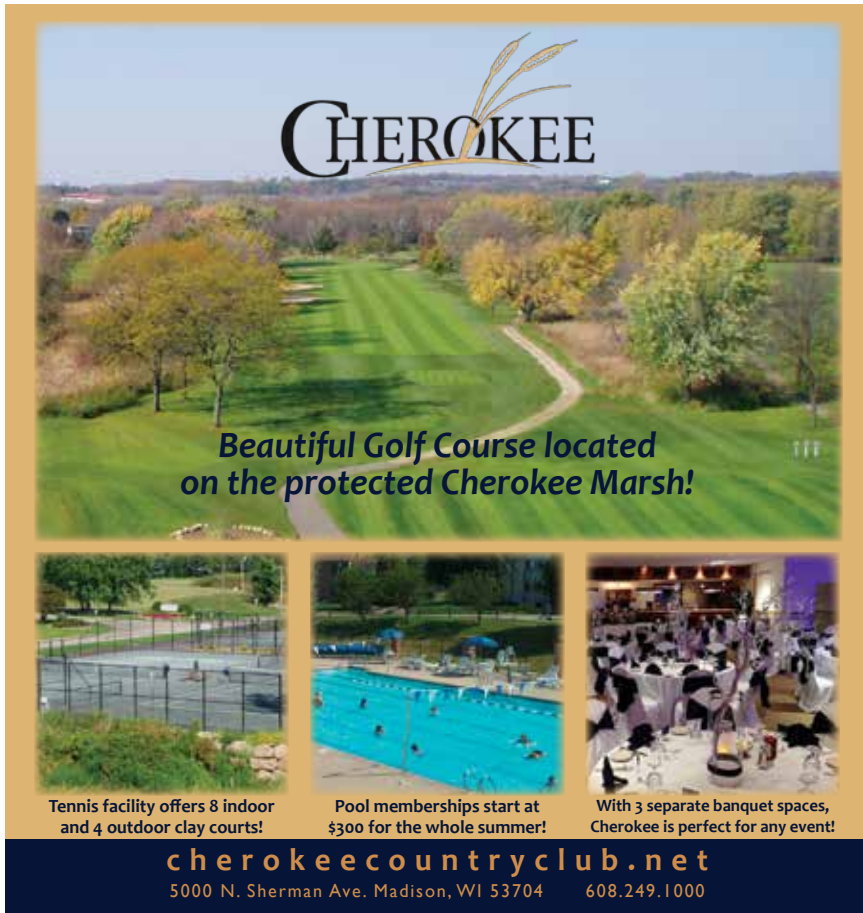
INSPIRED BY a 2014 visit to Yosemite National Park, Kate Holl decided to make an abrupt shift from her digital photography profession to one more rooted in nature.

"I realized I wanted to get into a passion that got me more on my feet and using my hands," instead of sitting in front of a computer screen, Holl says.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ





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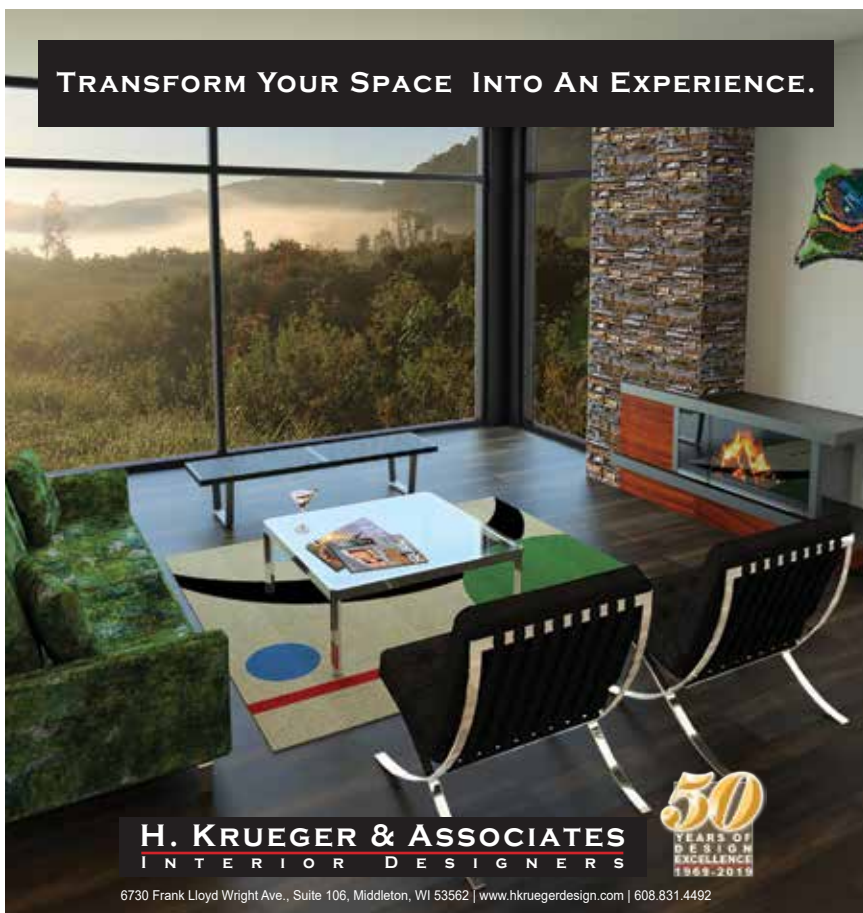
After taking classes on botany and floristry, Holl opened her own plant store, called Flora, in East Nashville, where she was living at the time. It wasn't long, though, before she decided to move back to Madison, her hometown. She opened her plant and design store, Wildewood, on East Johnson Street this year.

The store isn't meant to simply be a museum of plants. "I want people to pick things up and touch them, kind of get to know their plant before they buy it," she says. The staff can suggest the best plants for customers' home or office space, based on lighting and how much time the client has to care for the greenery. Holl will even come to a home or office (or visit with a client via FaceTime) to help select plants for the space.

"I see the whole project through," Holl says. Wildewood also offers décor, such as pots and earth-themed coffee-table books.

"We just want to introduce people to all the benefits of keeping nature and plants in our lives," Holl says. "There are so many studies about how having plants around can really help with productivity and creativity." 🌸

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PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANNA WOLF



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Creating FAMILY

It's often been said of late that love is love and, we might add, family is family. To be sure, trends in the makeup of American families have been changing for decades. In the following pages, you'll find several stories of modern families in the Madison area who are making their own rules.

By Emily McCluhan
Photographed by Hillary Schave





From left, Erik, Theo and Kelli Massey along with Erin, Blake, Elyse and Alex Elliott

Happily Ever After Infertility Journeys

When Erin Elliott and Kelli Massey met in college, they didn't know that a few years later they'd become each other's support system, shoulder to cry on and even consider each other family as they both tried to create families of their own.

"Both Erin and I thought that's what happens when you get married. You get pregnant, you make babies. But it didn't happen," Massey says.

Ultimately both families conceived through in vitro fertilization, but as Elliott and Massey learned, there are many layers to every IVF story.

Elliott and her husband Erik knew they wanted to have kids a few months into marriage when Erin's niece was born, about six years ago.

"We started trying and did that for about a year, but no luck. I started seeing my doctor and getting all the tests done which all came back fine. Just unexplained infertility," Elliott says with frustration.

She decided to reach out to Wisconsin Fertility Institute on the recommendation of a friend and eventually did two rounds of Intrauterine Insemination (IUI). It starts with medication and shots to stimulate the egg follicles, then sperm is injected directly into the uterus. Although IUI has a low success rate, it's less expensive and less invasive than IVF. When IUI didn't work, Elliott's doctor recommended IVF.

As Elliott started down the IVF road, Massey was also trying to conceive and not having success.

She made an appointment at Wisconsin Fertility but

then got pregnant and miscarried. Soon she began her own path through IUIs and eventually to IVF.

What both gals come back to is that many people don't know how intense the IVF process is until you are in it.

"What most people don't realize is that when you talk about 'doing fertility,' medication and IUI are at one end of the spectrum and IVF is way over on the other end," Elliott says. The biggest hurdle, she says, is the financial one.

When faced with the nearly \$20,000 price tag, both women say that because the process is already in motion, you just figure the finances out.

Besides the financial commitment, there are the ups and downs, the grief and the joy. Elliott and Massey look at each other amazed that they've forgotten some of the steps or gloss over these events that completely changed their lives.

There's prepping your body for egg retrieval with medication and hormone shots into the stomach. Then the retrieval itself. Then, the anticipation and waiting on phone calls from the clinic to tell you how many eggs were fertilized. Then, the weeks of preparing for the egg transfer, including injections of an oily proges-

terone concoction directly into the butt muscle with a huge needle. And waiting for your body chemicals to be just right to accept the transfer. Then the transfer itself which is hopefully the point of conception. Then the waiting.

As each woman went through all of these steps (some of them more than once), they became as close as sisters.

Elliott initially had eight fertilized embryos after the egg retrieval, but her first three transfers failed.

"That first one was probably the most devastating because we had gone to this step and it was a huge deal. And there's no reason this isn't working," she recalls. After further testing, she found out that only three of the remaining five embryos were viable.

"I had done progesterone shots in my butt so many times and was just done. So, my doctor suggested we transfer two embryos at once. And yeah...it worked! Twins!" she says, still surprised.

As Massey and her husband Alex moved from IUI to IVF, Elliott created a binder for her friend covering



all 15 steps of the IVF process with a fun gift at each milestone. And after Massey's first transfer ended in a miscarriage, Elliott showed up for her second transfer, pregnant with twins, dressed in a clown costume.

"During my first transfer, Kelli joked about having an IVF clown because the doctors always say you must stay relaxed and laugh," says Elliott. "So yeah, I was there when Theo was conceived, in a clown costume!"

Elliott and Massey agree that having a strong support system, whether it's friends, family, Facebook groups or meetings at a fertility clinic, is one of the most important factors for getting through IVF.

"The worst thing to do is just dump all of your struggles on your husband," says Massey. "We joke that Erin



and I were basically married through all of this because we would just call each other and ask questions or cry."

But they acknowledge the growth they've seen in both of their husbands and agree that all of them are better parents because of this process.

"There were two years where I had very little control over my life. You're at the mercy of when your body is ready. So, when the clinic calls, you go. You learn to let go of that control before baby even happens," Massey says.

They both joke that the biggest difference now that they have babies is they can make plans and travel.

Will they try for more babies?

"We don't have any embryos left, so if we can't get pregnant naturally, we'd have to start over with the retrieval. That definitely stresses me out, but I think we'll start trying again soon," Massey says.

Elliott has one embryo left and also wants to try to get pregnant naturally but struggles with the idea of having that potential human sitting out there in storage.

"Before it was just an embryo, but now there's a tie to it because I have children from those embryos," she says. "I also have to pay a \$400 per year storage fee."

Elliott and Massey tick off the options for Elliott's embryo: transfer it and see if it works, donate it to science, donate it to a family that needs it.

For these two women who knew they wanted babies, it became a matter of hope and pushing until they got the outcome they wanted.

Elliott says that along the way, they knew they controlled the end of their IVF story.

"We may not get to control all the steps in the process, but we get to control the end." 🌸

Family is Family

Two adoption stories



Jim, Maia, Leighton and Kim Hart

Families come in all shapes and sizes and can grow in all sorts of ways. For these couples, the desire to share their love with children was met through adoption.

Kim and Jim Hart had a long—and sometimes perilous—journey to creating the family they knew they wanted. After six years and three rounds of unsuccessful IVF, including two life-threatening tubal pregnancies, they decided to take a breath.

“I began to realize I don’t have to carry a child to love a child. It’s not about being the bus,” Kim Hart says.

They knew they wanted to adopt but weren’t sure where to start, so the couple talked to friends and went to meetings to learn about international adoption. Kim Hart notes that Guatemala stood out because at

that time babies went to foster care instead of orphanages after birth, which gives them a one-on-one adult connection from the start.

After a lot of paperwork, multiple trips to Guatemala and patiently waiting, the Harts brought Leighton home from a small town in southern Guatemala and returned from Guatemala City with Maia a few years later.

They quickly realized that whether they had a baby naturally, or through adoption, they faced the same new-parent challenges.

“You still learn as you go along,” Jim Hart says.

His wife nods and adds that she got really good at middle-of-the-night feedings. They both learned when they brought Maia home that parenting is also a lot of trial and error. What works for one child doesn't always work for the other.

Now that Leighton is 15 and Maia is 10, the family is going to Guatemala this June to visit the kids' birthplaces.

"I really just want to show them how beautiful their home country is and embrace where they come from. It's a place where I feel like they'll fit in," Kim Hart says.



Jim, Kim, Leighton and Maia Hart

Between activities like hiking a volcano and cliff jumping, Leighton and Maia will get to see the cities where they were born. The Harts decided not to hire lawyers to find the birth mothers and foster families, knowing they wanted to focus on their own family time while exposing the kids to their home country.

Hart remembers how excited and anxious their extended family and friends were as they went through the adoption journey. She says they were all accepting of the process and reflects on how she and Jim were both raised, with the idea that family is family.

"It's not based on blood. It's life experiences and sharing and giving and being there for each other," she says. "All of that stuff forms your family and builds your tribe."

The Karls Family

Roxanne and Joe Karls grew up with big families so it was a given that they would have a large family of their own. But when Roxanne got pregnant with their first son, her doctor called him a miracle baby and fertility tests later showed that she couldn't produce more eggs. The Karls knew they needed to move to adoption if they wanted to grow their family, so they found a private agency and adopted their daughter Alida at birth from Texas. Soon after, Roxanne met a friend who had fostered children.

"I had heard about foster care, but I had no idea it

was so big right here in our own area," Roxanne Karls says. "We knew we wanted a big family and it was exciting to know we could help other kids."

After connecting with Dane County Foster Care in 2014 and getting approved as foster parents, the Karls were quickly asked to take in siblings, 6-year-old Troy and 8-year-old Olivia, for a weekend. There was no family lined up after the weekend and the Karls didn't want the kids to spend another night in a shelter. So they offered to take them in as a short-term placement. Four years later, Troy and Olivia made the Karls a family of six when they were officially adopted in early 2019. Dane County foster care of-

ficials caution that fostering a child isn't an automatic path to adoption. It just happened to work out for the Karls clan.

"Reunification with the biological family is always the goal," Karls says. "But that makes the process an emotional rollercoaster."

The Karls built a relationship with Troy and Olivia's biological mom and dad, even celebrating Christmas with the kids' mother. When their birth mother got pregnant and was allowed to keep the baby, Troy and Olivia started preparing to go home. But their mom overdosed and died, and the one-year old baby went to live with another family member.

"We can often be very quick to judge. Looking back now, it's very sad. I know they love their kids, they just

couldn't be the parents they wanted to be," Karls says. "But building that relationship with the parents is so important, because we knew that if the kids went home, we could visit. You invest so much as a foster, so that makes it a little easier."

During the first year of the ups and downs with Troy and Olivia, the Karls got a call for an emergency placement for an infant, JJ, in 2015. They fell in love with him and started the same emotional rollercoaster. Both JJ's parents were in and out of jail and JJ's short-term placement turned into an adoption in October 2018.

But the Karls weren't complete until Troy and Olivia's half-sister, Harlyn, joined them in September of 2018 when her family placement didn't go as planned. The Karls were able to adopt Harlyn in May 2019.

Now as a family of eight, the Karls are juggling

therapy sessions, managing meal times and configuring rooms for optimal space. But their support network is what gets them through it.

"Finding those other foster families that have gone through it was so helpful," Karls says. "Just having the support for the ups and downs when mom or dad come back in the picture, or to get ideas on how to handle a certain type of behavior."

The rollercoaster isn't ending but the Karls crew is complete. After Harlyn's adoption, they threw a party with friends and family, cake and special T-shirts, and photo timelines of each of the kids' journeys. And even though the Karls know they may foster more children in the future, their big-family dream is complete. 🌸



From left: Alida, Joe, Olivia, Troy, Eldon, JJ, Harlyn and Roxanne Karls





Sylvia Seeliger and Appa

A Member of the Family

The pets we rescue— and who often rescue us

BY HYWANIA THOMPSON
PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANNA WOLF

For many of us, our family isn't complete without at least one pet. In fact, nearly 57% of American households own a pet—usually a dog or cat, with higher numbers found in rural states, according to the American Veterinary Medicine Association. Wisconsinites have one of the highest rates of cat ownership in the country, at 32%, the association reports.

And studies continually show that pets are good for us, mentally and physically. They often inspire us to exercise; dog owners are far more likely than non-dog owners to take regular walks, for example. Rescue dogs have helped rehabilitate prisoners and comforted military veterans. Working dogs find us when we're lost and save us from danger.

Animals give us unconditional love and often seem to sense when we're troubled. One recent study found that dogs mirror their owner's stress and anxiety levels, an indicator of how close these human-animal relationships are. Pets are often the first ones who run to greet us at the door and the ones we fall asleep beside at night. In short, they're part of the family.

With the help of the Madison-based Underdog Pet Rescue of Wisconsin, BRAVA asked three local families to share how their pets became integral and nurturing parts of their daily lives. And how their compassion helped save pets who might otherwise not have survived.

Sylviah and Appa

Eleven-year-old Sylviah Seeliger and her dog, Appa, were made for one another. Sylviah spent her first two years at an orphanage in China before being adopted by Elizabeth Seeliger. Sylviah arrived in Wisconsin with severe separation anxiety and was unable to sleep through the night.

Appa, found on the street as a puppy, was malnourished and had poor vision, and ended up being fostered by a volunteer for Underdog Pet Rescue.

"These two souls were clearly well matched, right down to their early neglect and trauma history," says Seeliger. After a conversation about Sylviah's struggles, Seeliger and a friend—an Underdog volunteer—discussed the possibility of a dog that could help give Sylviah some emotional support.



Elizabeth Seeliger, second from left, along with Kierik, Sylviah, Jess Dallman and Kaden

It was almost a year before the right dog came along, and he came at a difficult time in Seeliger's life. "I was in the middle of a divorce, my finances were strapped and I was leaving the state on a business trip," says Seeliger. But Seeliger's friend convinced them to meet

the little yellow pup.

When they met, Sylvia watched from afar as the puppy played with another dog. Then the puppy stopped playing, climbed into Sylvia's lap and fell asleep. Seeliger says, "I saw Sylvie's typically rigid body soften and a smile light up her face." She began to think the puppy would be a great fit for their family but there were barriers—finances and her upcoming trip.

Days later, Seeliger's friend sent her a message saying the hurdles were gone. Underdog had received a donation and all adoption fees were being waived for pets adopted that Saturday. Seeliger's friend offered to keep fostering the puppy until she returned from her trip. "All the barriers had been magically eliminated," Seeliger says, "we took it as a sign that this was indeed the puppy we had been waiting for."

It was Sylvia's job to name the pup and to be his principal caretaker. She chose to name him Appa after the flying bison character in her favorite cartoon "Avatar: The Last Airbender." Much like the character he's named after, Appa gives Sylvia and her family unconditional love and support, sensing when one of Sylvia's older brothers is upset, or wrapping around Sylvia like a glove.

"While at first glance, we're working to save lives of the animals, very often we hear that the animals who a volunteer fostered or who a community member adopted really saved them, or greatly improved the human's lives," says Underdog Executive Director Lauren Wojtasiak.

Sylvia now sleeps through the night and is a "happier and more well-adjusted child overall," her mom says. Appa, Sylvia says, gave her hope. "He gives me comfort on scary nights and in scary situations," she says.

Stacy and Peanut

When Stacy Harbaugh first saw photos of Peanut, who was in an Alabama animal shelter, the diminutive cat had no hair on its tail end and had red, puffy lips caused by ulcers in her mouth.

Even though most kittens get adopted pretty quickly, Peanut's medical issues dissuaded rescuers. Harbaugh, who'd been fostering animals for Underdog Pet Rescue after her 13-year-old cat Schulie died, first saw the kit-



Stacy Harbaugh and Peanut

ten on Underdog's private Facebook group. The cat was named Hot Lips Houlihan, after the character in the TV comedy "M*A*S*H." The kitten was suffering from eosinophilic granuloma, an inflammatory condition which caused the mouth ulcers, and her hair loss was due to flea bites. She'd need a lot of veterinary attention.

As the time passed and Hot Lips wasn't rescued, Harbaugh says there just seemed to be something special about the cat, which had distinctive stripes and patches. She decided she'd take the leap and foster her.

"She's kind of brown and kind of gray. She's a very petite cat," says Harbaugh, who began calling the kitten Peanut because of its size. When the kitten responded to the name, Peanut stuck.

Over time, Harbaugh grew attached to Peanut. But as a volunteer foster, Harbaugh's job was to promote Peanut's adoption. "The goal is to get animals through the system and into loving homes," she says. Harbaugh posted on Facebook about Peanut but the longer Peanut stayed in her home, the more they bonded. Finally, in April, Harbaugh decided to keep Peanut. Another volunteer offered to pay the adoption fees.

Harbaugh didn't think she would bond with another animal after losing Schulie but says Peanut is the best cat—she's sweet, friendly and reminds Harbaugh to slow down. Peanut's condition is being managed with

medication, which she may need for the rest of her life. Harbaugh says, “She’s not the easiest animal to care for but she’s definitely the easiest animal to love.”

Laura and Gail and Charlie

Laura Novak and her partner, Gail Campbell, wanted an adult, female dog. And Novak, who owns her own massage therapy business, wanted a dog with a personality that allowed her to take it to work. Last September, a friend recommended they fill out an application with Underdog and wait for their dream dog.

They met a dog named Charlie who checked everything off their list, but later, Underdog contacted them about another dog—also named Charlie—an 8-month-old black lab mix. They weren’t interested in a puppy.

One Saturday, Novak was having a rough day and they changed their minds and decided to go to a meet and greet for Charlie the puppy. “He was just chilling out,” says Novak. “Oh, this is not what I was thinking about a puppy,” she says. They later met at the dog park with Charlie and Patti Manier, a volunteer who was fostering the pup, and brought along Campbell’s chocolate lab, Gretchen. The next day, Manier brought Charlie to Novak and Campbell’s house for another test drive and the deal was sealed. That night, they picked him up.

Charlie was found in a ditch in Georgia. He was emaciated, he had a condition that causes severe pain in his jaw, he had fleas and ehrlichia, a tick-borne illness.

Many of Underdog’s rescue animals come from overcrowded shelters in the South. They face euthanasia at higher rates because adopters are in short supply. Underdog can scoop those animals up and place them with one of its 200 volunteers in Wisconsin until the animal



can be adopted out. In 2018, Underdog helped more than 1,000 animals get adopted—most of them dogs and cats.

The couple initially didn’t want to take on a dog who was on medication and sought advice from friends and family who are veterinarians. But the little black dog won them over.

“We just kind of took it on because we loved him,” says Campbell. Novak and Campbell gave Charlie “dog ibuprofen” but eventually weaned him off of it. Novak also used massage to help Charlie’s jaw, which is better now. “He hasn’t exhibited any pain; he’ll chew on chew toys for hours and play tug-of-war for a really long time,” says Novak. Charlie does have occasional flare ups from the ehrlichia.

The couple has no regrets about rescuing Charlie. “Dogs can complete your life,” says Novak. “I always jokingly tell Gail, now I understand what it’s like to have a child because that’s how I feel about him.”

Because of Charlie, Novak and Campbell have been getting out more. They say it’s been fun seeing him experience things for the first time. “He’s a real good reminder to just slow down and enjoy it all,” says Campbell. 🌸



Gail Campbell, left, Charlie and Laura Novak



Circle of Support

Understanding and embracing your LGBTQ family member

BY KATY MACEK
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
VALERIE TOBIAS



Marlisa Kopenski Condon

A phone call from Marquette Elementary School's counselor last June told Marlisa Kopenski Condon that her child's request to go by a boy's name and use male pronouns was more than just a game played with friends.

The counselor asked her and her husband, Tim, to come in and go over a Gender Care Plan with their child, who is now 10 years old and goes by Rex.

Fortunately for Rex, his parents and older sister are fully on board with his decision to express his gender identity. For Kopenski Condon and her husband, the struggle has been knowing how best to care for their transgender son.

"The challenge has been knowing how to support Rex," Kopenski Condon says. "We haven't really known what to do, so we've kind of followed Rex's lead. If you want to wear boys' underwear, totally cool. If you want to use the boys' bathroom in the airport, cool."

The couple isn't alone in feeling unprepared. Most parents of LGBTQ youth don't know where to turn for help and support, says Sherie Hohs, a social worker with Madison Metropolitan School District. They simply don't have the information because they never had to learn it.

"There is a big gap for adults to see gender diver-

sity and understand gender identity,” Hohns says. “We didn’t get to learn this growing up.”

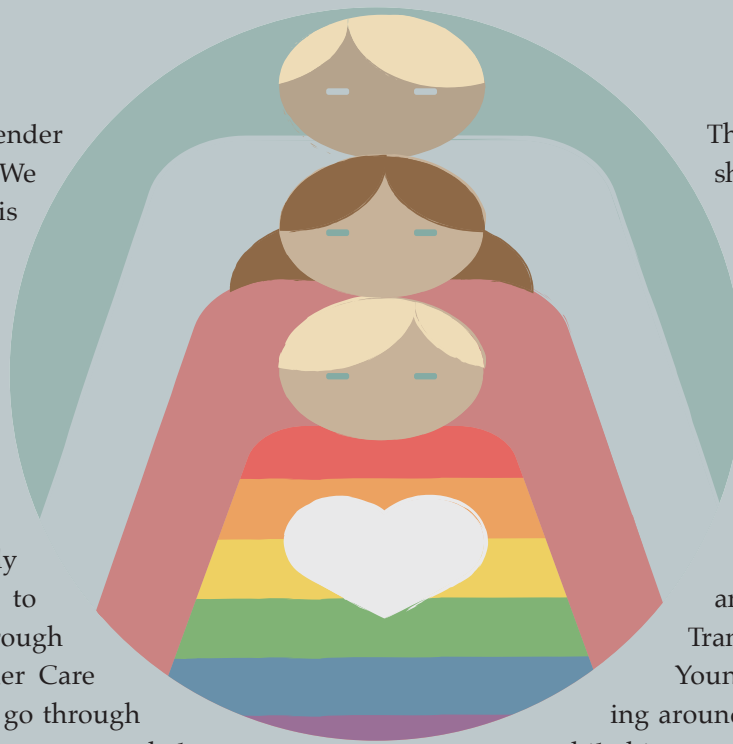
To help bridge that gap, Hohns said MMSD has introduced support groups as well as LGBTQ topics, especially in health class, into the curriculum.

The district recently did training on how to support students through things such as a Gender Care Plan, which counselors go through with students and their parents to help them understand what they are feeling. Questions on the plan include such things as, “What pronouns would you like to use?,” “What name would you like to go by?” and “What bathroom would you like to use?”

Hohns says family acceptance is a No. 1 indicator of positive health outcomes for LGBTQ youth. Acceptance affects everything from the child’s mental health to academic achievement and socioeconomic status.

A study done by the Family Acceptance Project, a national initiative working to prevent health risks for LGBTQ youth, found those who are rejected by their families have lower self-esteem and are more isolated than those who are accepted by family.

As those teens became young adults, ages 21 to 25, they were more than eight times as likely to have attempted suicide, nearly six times as likely to report high levels of depression, more than three times as likely to use illegal drugs and more than three times as likely to be at high risk for HIV and sexually transmitted diseases compared to their counterparts who were not at all or only a little rejected by their parents and caregivers based on their identity.



That support can take shape in many different forms, says Lee Young, a 33-year-old transgender man who has become an active voice in the Madison-area LGBTQ community. Young, who with his wife, Amber, has two young children, gives talks in the community and also leads MMSD’s TransParent youth group.

Young started transitioning around 24 years old and says, while his parents didn’t outright reject him, he didn’t feel his father and stepmom went out of their way to learn more about his experience



Lee Young with his daughter Elliot

nor ask questions about his relationships.

“I knew they loved me, but it felt like I was kind of a bummer,” he says. “They didn’t cut off communication with me, so I’m lucky, but it was really uncomfortable. It didn’t feel like they were at all ready or knew what trans was.”

Since he began transitioning, Young says his relationship with his dad still hits roadblocks because of barriers he can’t help his dad overcome.



"Having kids of my own was a huge reminder just how important family is to me and made me want to be my most authentic self with the people I love," he says. "It also gave me the courage to share what I needed with my loved ones in order to feel supported."

In February, Young asked his father to attend a PFLAG meeting, which is an organization uniting families and allies in support and advocacy for the LGBTQ community.

In perhaps his first show of active support for his son, Young's father, whom Young describes as a hardline conservative, attended the meeting.

"The fact that he walked into that room, just that effort, was amazing," Young says. "I told him, 'This might be the most important thing you've ever done for me,' and I think I heard him get emotional. I don't think he realized it was that simple."

Groups such as PFLAG can be helpful for parents in finding support, resources and just being around other people who can relate to what they are going through, says PFLAG Madison President Jeanne Williams.

Williams has been a member of PFLAG for 10 years and has served two terms as the group's president. She's seen how important the group is not only for

advocating for LGBTQ rights but as a safe meeting place to share stories, ask questions and feel heard.

"When parents come to meetings...sometimes they just have questions," Williams says. "Sometimes they just want to be around other people like them. There's a sense of community where they feel free to talk."

Like many parenting experiences, Kopenski Condon says she is constantly learning and always feels a step behind. However, she describes living in Madison and attending the Madison school district as being a huge lifesaver in providing resources and support to LGBTQ students and their families.

If it weren't for the school district, she says they might never have clearly heard from Rex what he wanted to be called.

"The school sort of pulled us into a reckoning," Kopenski Condon says. "The first time Tim and I heard what he wanted was with Mrs. G [the counselor]."

The school provides resources and support for parents, Hohs says, including a support group for families with transgender or gender non-conforming youth that has run for around eight years. The group holds monthly meetings at a centralized location on a bus route and also has a Google group chat with resources for parents and family members. Between the

in-person meetings and Google group, she estimates more than 200 families are connected.

The support group provides a space for families to swap resources and experiences. Hohs says having a space separate from their kids to do that is extremely necessary for parents as a show of support.

“It’s super important for families to do the work separate from their kids so they can be allies and advocates for kids,” Hohs says. “It affirms their dedication, but also is a space for them to learn and access resources and not have to rely on their child to be the primary source of information because that’s exhausting.”

The district also works with advocacy groups including GSAFE, which among other things, supports students in forming Gay-Straight Alliance groups in the schools. After hearing about GSAs at other MMSD schools last year, Rex and his friend Leo started one of their own at Marquette Elementary.

Navigating the world as a transgender person is not always going to be easy, but when searching out resources, especially in the Madison community, Kopenski Condon is confident it can be done.

She used to worry about the way the world would view her son, but Kopenski Condon says the world has changed a lot since she was growing up. She still worries, as any parent would, but she believes the overall world is more accepting than it was 40 years ago.

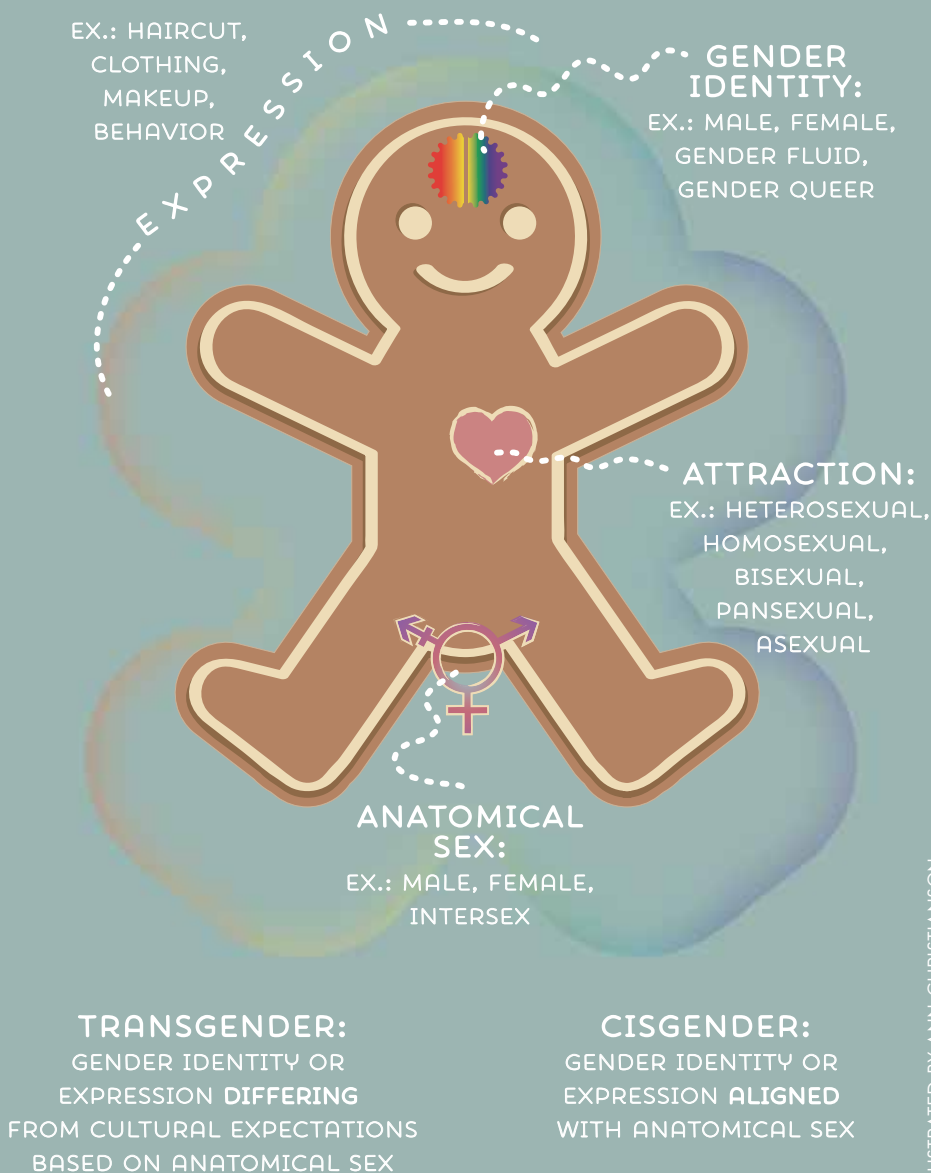
At 10 years old, Rex has surrounded himself with friends and family who understand and value him, and if he can keep doing that, she knows he’ll be fine.

In many cases, so does he. When asked about the future, Rex says he isn’t worried about it. And though he describes himself as transgender, he says on a daily basis he often forgets about it.

“Even though being transgender is a big part of me, it’s also a small part of me,” Rex says. “It’s like as normal as eating breakfast.” 🌸

The Genderbread Person

Getting the terms right is an important way to show support.
This learning tool clarifies some important distinctions.





Planning for pregnancy

Resources to help, whether you're pregnant or trying to get there

By Sue Sveum

Deciding to have a baby is a big decision. It can be an exciting time full of tests and information and choices—from picking the perfect name to the best color for the nursery. Home birth or hospital? Doctor or midwife? And of course, how much weight should you gain? But for others this can be a time fraught with anxiety. How soon should you worry when pregnancy doesn't come? What can you do about it? Here, three local medical professionals offer advice, encouragement and answers to your most commonly asked questions.

So, you're expecting!

Congratulations! If you're like many women, you probably took a home pregnancy test to find out you're pregnant. But what's next? According to Dr. Frederic Melius, an OBGYN with Melius, Schurr and Cardwell, the next step is to schedule your first prenatal appointment—usually about two weeks later. In the meantime, start taking your prenatal vitamins.

Among the most common questions Melius gets is how much weight a woman should gain during pregnancy. "The goal is to maintain a healthy weight, gaining about 25 to 30 pounds," he says.

Smaller women should gain a little more and larger women, less.

What about alcohol? "The threshold between safe and unsafe is unknown," says Melius, "but there's really no upside to alcohol." Caffeine is OK. Just stay under 300 mg, or about two 8-oz. cups of coffee daily.

And that Friday fish fry? Go for it! "Fish is actually a good choice, as long as it's cooked properly," says Melius. "In fact, we suggest eating fish two to three times a week, especially salmon." Foods to avoid? "Stay away from raw or undercooked meats—even unheated

deli meat," he says. "And fruits and vegetables are great choices as long as you wash them well."

As for other vices: "Pregnant women should not smoke anything," Melius stresses. No cigarettes, marijuana or vaping. "Smoking can decrease amniotic fluid, resulting in smaller babies and still births," he warns.

It is ok to exercise. "You shouldn't be huffing and puffing, but if you can carry on a conversation, you're fine," he says. "And swimming is good exercise—but stay away from the high temps of hot tubs."



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“You can, and should, use insect repellent with DEET—especially in high-risk areas,” says Melius. “And visit your dentist; poor oral health may result in pre-term births.” Traveling by plane, using your car’s shoulder harness, and dying your hair are all also doctor-approved.

But don’t worry—you don’t have to know everything. “Just relax and trust your body; the baby knows what to do,” says Melius. “This is a wonderful, magical time. Don’t worry yourself out of the fun.”

Worries aside, most women truly do enjoy being pregnant, with all the anticipation and excitement it brings. And besides, when else can you gain 25 pounds and have people still say you’re glowing?

It takes a team

Having an OBGYN team you trust on this journey can play a big role in helping you find the joy and alleviate those worries, says Kim Bertram, certified

nurse midwife. She joined the SSM Health team when they added three certified nurse midwives to their staff last year.

“Midwives are becoming much more common,” says Bertram. “It’s a really popular option nowadays.” But if your idea of a midwife comes from the popular PBS series, “Call the Midwife,” think again. Midwifery has come a long way since the 1950s and ’60s.

Certified nurse midwives, like Bertram, are required to have a master’s degree or doctorate. Those at SSM only assist with hospital births.

“Midwives are most known for assisting with childbirth,” explains Bertram, “but here we actually follow our patients from pregnancy through birth and postpartum.” Although many choose to see a specific midwife, patients meet all three over the course of their prenatal visits, so they’re familiar with whoever is on call when they go into labor.

Many people choose a midwife because of the personal relationship they develop during pregnancy. “We do bring in some holistic elements and refer patients to physical therapy and chiropractic options if indicated,” Bertram says. “And we also focus on the social and mental health aspect of pregnancy and postpartum.”

But that doesn’t mean that midwives are opposed to medical interventions, such as epidurals, if needed. “People tend to think of midwifery as being against medical intervention but that’s not the case,” says Bertram. “We need to bust that myth.”

The main difference between a midwife and a traditional provider, according to Bertram, is probably the time spent together during labor. “Physicians frequently check in on their patients’ progress but don’t usually sit with them for long periods of time,” explains Bertram. “We generally spend more time at our patient’s bedside, helping them relax and focus throughout



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labor.” In the hospital, doctors are always available for a consult, she says, but unless the patient is high risk or there’s a complication or a cesarean section needed, midwives generally handle the actual delivery as well. “I don’t like to say we ‘deliver babies,’” she says. “It’s the moms that deliver the babies—we just assist.”

But midwives don’t stop with childbirth—they conduct follow-up visits as well. “We see our new moms at two weeks and six weeks after birth,” she says. “Those are such big visits. We cover both psycho-social and physical healing. We want to know how it’s going, and how they’re feeling, both physically and emotionally.”

And for patients that become attached to their midwife, there’s good news. It doesn’t have to stop after baby. “Midwives are trained in a wide range of women’s health issues,” Bertram explains. “Now you can see us for your annual physical, breast exam, contraception, when trying to get pregnant and more.”

“Our OBs are fantastic and the whole department works as a team,” Bertram stresses, adding that everyone helps in their own way. “But we’re all here to make sure you feel heard and respected,” she says.

When pregnancy doesn’t come easy

Empathy and understanding seems to be a common trademark among all the professionals that work in the field of pregnancy and family planning. And as the Wisconsin Fertility Institute can attest, fertility can be a sensitive and important element in family planning, as well.

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having a hard time conceiving,” says Dr. Gretchen Collins, who’s certified in both OBGYN and Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility. “We mostly focus our time on helping couples achieve pregnancy, but we also help with gynecologic issues such as endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome.”

She says Wisconsin Fertility is also starting to see more young women wanting to freeze their eggs. “Many women are waiting to conceive until they’re financially secure and well-established in their profession,” Collins says, “but they’re also wishing to preserve the option of having a child in the future.”

Others come in due to a cancer diagnosis requiring a treatment that could result in infertility. And still others, for reproductive surgery. “We also see many patients in same-sex relationships who wish to start a family,” she says, adding they assist prospective parents through egg donation, sperm donation and gestational carriers.

But infertility still remains the prime focus. So is there a typical patient? Not really.

“People come to us at all different times along their fertility journey,” says Collins, explaining that infertility is defined as a lack of pregnancy after trying for one year if you’re under 35 years old and after six months for those over 35.

“However,” she stresses, “this doesn’t mean you need to wait for that length of time to see a fertility specialist if you think something may be wrong.” According to Collins, reasons that may bring women in sooner include a lack of regular periods, loss of both fallopian tubes, or maybe they’re part of a same-sex couple or their male partner has had a vasectomy.

On the other hand, there are many couples that wait much longer than that one-year marker to come in. “Most people are very hesitant to see a fertility specialist or talk about their infertility,” she says. In fact, it takes many



patients years to come in.

“Infertility is a team sport that usually involves both the male and female,” Collins explains, “and receiving the diagnosis of infertility is very stressful for couples.” The psychological impact of an infertility diagnosis is like a diagnosis of cancer, with couples mourning the loss of a life they cannot make.

Collins says 1-in-8 couples deal with infertility. “We want them to know they’re not alone—and we’re here to help and support them on their fertility journey.”

BRAVA

WOMEN^{TO}WATCH

2

2020

Nominations are Open!

Know a standout woman who’s got big plans on her radar for 2020? Someone who’s inspiring and empowering others both professionally and personally, and is sure to make an impact on the community in the year to come?

Each year, BRAVA Magazine recognizes and celebrates amazing women who are leading the way to a brighter future in our community. Winners are announced and profiled in the January issue of BRAVA Magazine and feted at a special BRAVA event in their honor.

Nominations close July 15, 2019.

More information at bravamagazine.com/w2w

GO+DO

CANNED GOODNESS

Looking for a portable cocktail for your picnic or party? Look no further than the beverages from Plain Spoke Cocktail Co., the brainchild of longtime Madison mixologist Tom Dufek.

Read more about his venture in *ENTRÉE* ON P. 53.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ



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COCKTAILS IN A CAN

Plain Spoke Cocktail Co.'s portable libations

BY CANDICE WAGENER

TOM DUFEK has slung his fair share of mixed drinks while working as a bartender for the past eight years at Merchant and Lucille. So, it was a natural fit for him to launch Plain Spoke Cocktail Co. last August, offering the experience of a craft cocktail in a portable can.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

PRODUCT

Plain Spoke currently offers two classic cocktails. The Moscow Mule blends vodka, lime juice, ginger and cane sugar, and the Bourbon Smash is a mixture of bourbon, cane sugar and lemon juice. Unlike other canned cocktails, Plain Spoke is using real ingredients and real spirits, not creating malt beverages. "I wanted to mimic the experience of getting a cocktail...of the same quality [offered at] nice bars and restaurants," says Dufek.

PASSION

Dufek and his silent business partner got married around the same time and commiserated with each other that "the options were pretty underwhelming" for ready-made cocktail offerings. Dufek held strong to his belief in a better way "to replicate that experience of the cocktail bar but do it in more of a convenient package." While part of his motivation was having the selfish pleasure of enjoying a good drink himself, he knew Wisconsinites would also be thirsty for a better beverage they could just throw into a cooler and enjoy by the lake, on camping trips and the like.

PHILOSOPHY

The company's name encapsulates its mission: Plain Spoke Cocktail Co. produces simple cocktails with quality ingredients that speak for themselves, harkening back to times when beverages weren't flashy or overly-sophisticated, just good drinking material. Plain Spoke is gaining momentum, with a recent expansion in distribution to Minnesota and its acquisition of Two Tall Distilling. Additional plans for a tasting room in Madison are in the works. Until then, Plain Spoke will continue to make summer easier by offering real cocktails you can enjoy with just the pop of a tab. 🍷

plainspokecocktails.com



PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANNIE ROSEMURGY

SUGAR RIVER RAMBLE

A natural offshore adventure

BY ANNIE ROSEMURGY

ONE CHILLY DAY this spring my family and I got a fresh perspective on our beautiful, agrarian state—from the water! The Sugar River Outfitters, in Belleville, made it easy to spend the day outdoors together, paddling the river.

Owner/operator Kelly Hickman told us that the first rule of river life is that conditions change daily; no two paddle trips are the same. We took to our canoe and kayak in mid-May as water levels were high with spring rains, making for a nicely varied, sometimes spirited, two-hour ride through fields, forests and meadows abloom. Some stretches were quiet and deep, an undulating water-highway cutting through fields of grass. Other sections—to the delight of my kids—roiled with rapids.



To say that Hickman is an experienced riverman is an understatement. A lifelong paddler, Hickman knew he wanted to start his own adventure company the first time he took his young daughter canoe camping. He says, "We spent hours singing songs and playing made-up games under our overturned canoe, which I wedged between two trees riverside while it rained... I knew then more than ever before, this was what I wanted to do."

With Sugar River Outfitters' new streamlined website, planning our river adventure was a snap. We decided on a two-hour excursion (trips range from a family-friendly, afternoon float to a two-day overnight camping option complete with a private riverside campsite). Clad in water-friendly togs and picnic cooler in hand (no glass on the river, please) we were off! Hickman made the excursion easy by providing the boats and gear,

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transportation and a short tutorial on safety and boating basics.

The Sugar was bursting into spring green on this day and animated with creatures. We enjoyed watching cattle drinking at the river's edge, hawks soaring, and herons, ducks and geese on the water. Hickman says that sharp-eyed paddlers have spotted otters, beaver and even an elusive badger from their boats.

Quaint **Paoli** is a perfect site for refueling at voyage's end. Landmark Creamery crafts grilled cheese bliss to suit every palate, a perfect accompaniment to The Hop Garden's rotating selection of brews. For a more refined experience The Paoli Schoolhouse offers local, seasonal cuisine in an elegant setting.



The Upper Sugar is a pristine place and a day spent paddling its waters can be a tonic for the soul. Most of the land is private or protected, minimizing boat and fishing traffic. Hickman works closely with the state Department of Natural Resources to balance guest safety with minimal environmental impact.

The diligence of these stakeholders in protecting this delicate ecosystem created my favorite moment on the Sugar—the experience of the true, alive-quiet of the outdoors. In the midst of a busy life these moments can be few and far between. I took a long moment to pause, close my eyes and soak in the sounds of the moving river and her creatures, connecting to the peace and balance that nature provides. 🌸

sugarriveroutfitterswi.com

GUIDED GETAWAYS

Jump on a locally hosted tour for headache-free fun

BY CASSIE HURWITZ



WANDERLUST NEVER ceases and even in the go-go digital age, you can relax sooner if you put your itinerary in someone else's knowledgeable hands. With guided tours, experts curate a trip that will give you the time of your life—without the logistics headaches. Several local companies and organizations offer guided tours of all kinds, from Milwaukee day trips to two-week trips abroad. Wherever the travel bug is telling you to go, Wisconsin provides a launching pad.

For a short but satisfying outing, **Van Galder** offers one-day tours to a number of fun nearby destinations, such as seeing the Cubs play at Wrigley Field or the Brewers at Miller Park. See the Lincoln Park Conservatory or the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago without having to navigate traffic. If you're feeling spontaneous, take the mystery tour for an adventure to an unknown destination!

Another local option is **Badger Bus Tours**, which brings travelers on short excursions to both Wisconsin hotspots and farther afield, including the Apostle Islands in Wisconsin; Louisville, Kentucky; Memphis, Tennessee and St. Louis. According to Director of Product Kris Hoff, the company's goal is to provide a unique experience, which usually means surrounding each trip with a specific theme. Beyond the

Midwest, Hoff describes trips to the Big Apple and Alaska, as well as a new line of trips, Purely Wisconsin, which will focus on genuine local experiences.

With the **Wisconsin Alumni Association**, globe-trotters can hit Iceland, the Canadian Rockies, Scandinavia, along with nearly every other world destination. You don't need to be a member of the WAA, but someone in your party should be—and membership is not limited solely to UW grads. Locals with Badger connections and lectures from UW faculty enrich the experience. "All of our tours do have an educational component built in," says Amy Klus, director of alumni travel.

Oshkosh-headquartered group **Fox World Travel** pairs trips with a local radio host or TV personality. Cruise down the Danube with TV host John McGivern, visiting Prague, Budapest and various German and Austrian cities. Traverse Alaska with WTMJ host Rose Gray. Sail through Amsterdam and on the Rhine alongside Milwaukee Radio host Jeff Wagner. For an international adventure with hotels picked, tour guides arranged and transportation secured, all



PHOTOS COURTESY WISCONSIN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

you have to do is sit back and relax.

Eau Claire-based company **Holiday Vacations** has also offered trips teamed up with radio personalities, such as Wisconsin Public Radio's Zorba Paster in Italy. Their options include trips by train and extended stays in sunny destinations. Choose from half a dozen different ways to see Alaska, all with airfare included.

Between Midwest voyages and worldwide holidays, the Wisconsin guided tour community ensures that a vacation can be what it's supposed to be—relaxing and rejuvenating. 🌸

For more information, tours.vangalderbus.com; tours.badgerbus.com; uwalumni.com; foxworldtravel.com; holidayvacations.com.

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JULY

EVENTS



PERFORMING ARTS

7/3 - 9/20 | Times Vary
"SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER"

A particularly witty young lady takes her marital future in hand, using all the creative misdirection at her disposal—and there's a lot. *American Players Theatre, Spring Green. americanplayers.org*

7/3 - 9/26 | Times Vary
"A LOVELY SUNDAY FOR CREVE COEUR"

Tennessee Williams may have succumbed to fits of optimism in his later years, as shown by this story about women stepping beyond youth, and the friends they choose to take with them on that tricky path. *American Players Theatre, Spring Green. americanplayers.org*

7/10 | 7 p.m.
CONCERTS ON THE SQUARE: FINLANDIA

A program of forgotten gems and familiar classics featuring Madison resident and virtuoso accordionist Sergei Belkin. The concert will feature selections by Dvorak, Glazunov, Khachaturian, Piazzolla, and conclude with "Finlandia" by Sibelius. *Capitol Square, Madison. wisconsinchamberorchestra.org*

7/14 | 3 p.m.
IMMIGRANT JOURNEYS FROM SOUTH OF THE BORDER

As our nation debates when and why people from other countries should be allowed to come to the United States, this exhibition invites you to meet eight immigrants whose journeys began in Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay and Honduras who are living in Wisconsin today. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

7/15 | 6 p.m.
CONCERTS AT MCKEE—MAD CITY FUNK

Bring a picnic and a bottle of wine or have dinner and drinks at one of many food carts and brew carts. Madison Music Foundry youth bands open for the headliner. *McKee Farms Park, Fitchburg. fitchburgchamber.com*

7/21 | 5 p.m.
DAVE LARSON QUINTET

Tight horns and a sizzling rhythm section anchor this classic combo. Bring your own chairs or picnic blankets and arrive early for the best spots. Part of a free Sunday afternoon concert series. *Allen Centennial Garden, Madison. allencentennialgarden.org*



PHOTO COURTESY VILLAGE OF WAUNAKEE

7/25 | 7 p.m.
CONCERTS ON THE ROOFTOP: SUPERTUESDAY

Hear covers of your favorite party tunes from artists like Bruno Mars, Bon Jovi, Michael Jackson and Prince. *Monona Terrace, Madison. mononaterrace.com*

7/26 | 7:30 p.m.
TONY BENNETT: THE "I LEFT MY HEART" TOUR

Having celebrated his 92nd birthday on Aug. 3, 2018, Tony Bennett's career as the preeminent singer of the 20th and 21st centuries is unprecedented. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

7/30 - 8/4 | Times Vary
"ANASTASIA"

Pursued by a ruthless Soviet officer determined to silence her, Anya enlists the aid of a dashing conman and a lovable ex-aristocrat. Together, they embark on an epic adventure to help her find home, love and family. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

ENTERTAINMENT
7/2 | 7 p.m.
GIN, CHOCOLATE & BOTTLE ROCKETS: SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Enjoy the evening with a concert on the Great Lawn of Olbrich's outdoor gardens. *Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. olbrich.org*

7/3 - 7/4 | Times Vary
MONONA COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Celebrate Independence Day at the two-day festival featuring a carnival, food and beer tents, live performances, fireworks and more. *Winnequah Park, Monona. mononafestival.com*

7/4 | 2 p.m.
5TH ANNUAL FOURTH FEST

Rock the dock with live music from Zac Matthews Band and headliner 5th Gear, kids' entertainment, games, carnival snacks and cold brews. Fill up on burgers, street tacos and foot-long hot dogs. *The Edgewater Hotel, Madison. theedgewater.com*

7/4 | 2 p.m.
WAUNABOOM

Bring the whole family for a kids' bike parade, glitter tattoos, bounce houses, obstacle course, food carts, helicopter rides and much more! And at dark, of course, a large fireworks display. *Ripp Park, Waunakee. waunaboom.com*

7/5 | 5 p.m.
BREWGRASS FRIDAY'S—THE LAST REVEL

Listen to the cutting-edge front porch Americana trio from Minneapolis, while enjoying a cold one from Door County Brewing Co. at this free show. Old-fashioned Wisconsin fish fry available in The Icehouse. *The Edgewater Hotel, Madison. theedgewater.com*

7/7 | 7:30 p.m.
AN EVENING WITH JANE FONDA

Join two-time Oscar award-winning actress Jane Fonda for a live on-stage career retrospective. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*



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7/9 | 6 p.m.

HIDDEN HISTORY OF THE CAPITOL SQUARE WALKING TOUR

Soak in the history of one of Madison's most defining features on this 1.25-mile walking tour. Hear the stories of the square and the people who established it as Madison's hub of politics, commerce and social life. *Wisconsin Historical Museum, Madison. wisconsinhistory.org*

7/11 | 4 p.m.

OAK BANK SUMMER SOIREE

Connect with business and community while enjoying a buffet-style picnic, cold beverage and live music. *Oak Bank, Fitchburg. fitchburgchamber.com*

7/11 | 7 p.m.

JOHN GALLIGAN, "BAD AXE COUNTY"

Hear this local author talk about his new book, a thriller about the first female sheriff in rural Bad Axe County, Wisconsin, who uncovers secrets while searching for a missing girl. *Mystery to Me Bookstore, Madison. mysterytomebooks.com*

7/18 | 8:30 p.m.

SUMMERJAM: SNAFU & GHOSTLAND RADIO

A free night of jam rock music. All ages are welcome. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. *Majestic Theatre, Madison. majesticmadison.com*

7/21 | 7 p.m.

MADISON SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE

Instruction and dancing with recorded music every Sunday. *Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, Madison. madisonscottishcountrydancers.org*

7/21 | 9 p.m.

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK

Watch the classic 1981 Indiana Jones film while feeling the breeze off of Lake Mendota. *UW Memorial Union Terrace, Madison. union.wisc.edu*

7/30 | 3 p.m.

VERONA ARTISTS' AND FARMERS' MARKET

Walk, bike or drive to Hometown Junction, on the Military Ridge State Trail, to shop, eat, visit, have fun and learn. *Hometown Junction Park, Verona. veronasmarket.com*

FAMILY

7/8 - 7/13 | 9 a.m.

WISCONSIN WILD THINGS CAMP

Make sure summer 2019 goes down in history for your child as they explore Madison's wild side with all the plants and animals Wisconsin has to offer. *Wisconsin Historical Museum, Madison. wisconsinhistory.org*

7/13 | 9 a.m.

MADISON BRAIN TUMOR 5K

In memory of Douglas Pink, this 5K is a family-friendly way to support the National Brain Tumor Society. Includes kids' fun run and silent auction. *Elver Park, Madison. nbtsevents.brainumor.org*

7/16 | 10 a.m.

LAKESIDE KIDS: TRULY REMARKABLE LOON

This free professional juggling show includes balancing, plate spinning, non-stop comedy patter and a big dose of foolishness. Ages 4 and up. *Monona Terrace, Madison. mononaterace.com*

7/25 | 5:30 p.m.

TASTES & TALES: CRANES AND CORN

Bring your kids ages 4 to 11 for a lively storytelling event on the relationships among cranes, their habitats and corn. Hands-on cooking, dance and exploration. *Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. olbrich.org*

7/27 | 9 a.m.

FAMILY NUTRITION WITH YUMMY SPROUTS

Bring the whole family and learn how to put together a nutrient-dense school lunch, try delicious snacks, take home simple recipes and more. *DreamBank, Madison. amfam.com/making-a-difference/dreambank/events*



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Artwork by Julie Raasch, showing artist at Midwest Fire Fest.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY HILLARY SCHAVE.

JAUNT

7/4 | 10 a.m.

OLD WORLD INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Celebrate Independence Day much like it was in the 19th century. Participate in ice cream making, period sports and games, or the greased-pole contest. *Old World Wisconsin, Eagle.* oldworldwisconsin.org

7/6 | 5:30 p.m.

SURF-N-TURF DINNER ON THE EAST TROY RAILROAD

Satiate your hunger for travel with this railroad dining experience. Enjoy the trip to Phantom Lake and Indian Head Park while savoring a surf-n-turf dinner. *East Troy Depot, East Troy.* easttroyrr.org

7/10 | 5:45 p.m.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIKE RIDES

Choose between short and long options on routes designed for minimum traffic density and maximum scenery. Most are hilly. *Brigham County Park, Blue Mounds.* WNBR.org

7/13 | 10 a.m.

YOUTH OUTDOOR FEST

Midwest Fisheries Center staff provide an array of free, hands-on activities such as a touch tank of fish, dragon boat and pontoon rides, fly fishing, archery, geocaching and much more. *Veterans Freedom Park, La Crosse.* facebook.com/YouthOutdoorFest

7/20 | 7 p.m.

SWING & WINGS

This 1940s hangar party invites guests to enjoy food, drink and live big-band music. Period dress encouraged! *Southern Wisconsin Regional Airport, Janesville.* wjvl.com/event/swing-wings-2019

7/21 | 11 a.m.

MILWAUKEE ARMENIAN FEST

Shish kabobs, chicken kabobs, luleh kabobs! Try Armenian foods and wines, listen to live Armenian music and learn about the culture of this ancient, storied country. *St. John the Baptist Armenian Orthodox Church, Milwaukee.* armenianfest.com

7/26 | 6 p.m.

FROGWATER

Come enjoy the rollicking spirit of live Celtic music while enjoying a cold summer brew on the patio. *Tyranena Brewing Company, Lake Mills.* tyranena.com

7/27 - 7/28 | 9 a.m.

MIDWEST FIRE FEST

Experience, participate in and learn about the role fire plays in art, food and dance. See artists create their pieces or make a work of art yourself while enjoying good eats and great music. *Westside Park, Cambridge.* midwestfirefest.com

SAVOR

7/6 | 12:30 p.m.

LAKE TO LAKE FOOD TOUR

For visitors and locals alike, this tour covers Madison's historic architecture, including Frank Lloyd Wright's contributions, and at least seven food stops along the way! *Madison Food Explorers, Madison.* madisonfoodexplorers.com

7/7 | 10 a.m.

BEATLES BRUNCH

Enjoy classic Beatles music videos and sing along during a great brunch featuring bottomless mimosas and a Bloody Mary bar! *The Rigby Pub and Grill, Madison.* therigby.com

7/13 | 10 a.m.

SANGRIA AND THE '70S

Mix Botham Vineyards' sangria recipe with your best 1970s style and dancing. *Botham Vineyards and Winery, Barneveld.* bothamvineyards.com

7/23 | 6:30 p.m.

HOPCAT STEM CIDERS DINNER

Get your ticket for an off-menu, four course Mexican-themed meal at HopCat accompanied by beers from Stem Ciders. *HopCat, Madison.* hopcat.com

7/24 | 6 p.m.

THE LOBSTER CLASS:

COOKING CLASS WITH CHEF JOEL OLSON

Learn to prepare various lobster recipes with a nationally-recognized culinary instructor! Wine, beer and cocktails will also be available to accompany your cooking and dining experience. *vomFASS, Madison.* madison.vomfassusa.com

THRIVE

7/11 | 3 p.m.

SUMMER SPIN-SILKSCREEN PRINTING

Meet artists from Artworking and silkscreen wearable works of art! Bring materials to print on (shirts, scarves, fabrics). Bandanas and paper provided on a first come, first served basis. *Chazen Museum of Art, Madison.* bit.ly/SummerSpin2019



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PHOTO COURTESY INTERNATIONAL CRANE FOUNDATION

7/11 | 6:15 p.m.

DREAM BIG: BRAIN DRAIN: OVERCOMING DECISION FATIGUE WITH DEBBY HERMAN

Join Pivot Consulting and Coaching founder to explore how decision fatigue happens, tactics for dialing down the information overload and ways to regain focus. *DreamBank, Madison. amfam.com/making-a-difference/dreambank/events*

7/11 | 6:30 p.m.

ORIGAMI CRANES WORKSHOP

Lizzi Condon of the International Crane Foundation will teach you to fold origami cranes into a beautiful bouquet! Learn about the importance of cranes to Japanese culture and be inspired to write your own nature-related haikus. All supplies provided. Ages 12 plus. Register by July 3. *Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. olbrich.org/education*

7/13 | TIMES VARY

FITCHBURG FESTIVAL OF SPEED

Criterion road race surrounding the Agora complex. Also includes a recreational 25-mile ride, as well as a 5K run/walk. Local food carts, kids zone and free live music concert. *Agora Pavilion, Fitchburg. fitchburgfestivalofspeed.com*

7/13 | 6 p.m.

BE BRIGHT HIKING EVENT FOR WOMEN

Join the women of the Ice Age Trail Alliance on guided hikes of a variety of distances on the Indian Lake Segment of the Ice Age Trail. Enjoy a picnic dinner and bonfire as well. *Indian Lake County Park, Cross Plains. iceagetrail.org*



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7/14 | 9 a.m.

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION WORK PARTY

Join volunteers in caring for the Lakeshore Nature Preserve. Remove invasive plants, plant native plugs, collect native seeds and maintain trails. *Frautschi Point parking lot, Madison. lakeshorepreserve.wisc.edu*

7/20 | 8 a.m.

MADISON GOSPEL 5K RUN/WALK

Includes a kid's run, 1 mile run/walk and a timed 5K run/walk and a concurrent health fair at Penn Park around the theme "Renewing Minds, Transforming Families." *Penn Park, Madison. runsignup.com/Race/WI/Madison/MadisonGospel5K*

7/21 | 7 a.m.

HER MADISON

Girls on the Run of Dane County fundraiser half-marathon, half relay and 5K run/walk designed for women. *Hilldale Shopping Center, Madison. hilldale.com*

7/25 | 6:15 p.m.

DREAM BIG: FROM STRESS TO SUBLIME SOLUTIONS WITH KIRSTY BLATTNER

Get your stress in check through three guided stations to help activate your laughter, calm your energy levels and zap stress into another dimension. *DreamBank, Madison. amfam.com/making-a-difference/dreambank/events*

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A PROMISE KEPT

Czar's Promise helps families dealing with canine cancer

BY AMY CARLSON
NBC15 ANCHOR

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANNA WOLF

BETH VINEY says her dog Czar, a Great Pyrenees, was "one in a million." He visited sick children at American Family Children's Hospital as a Pet Pal for five years and could sense which patients had been diagnosed with cancer and made a special connection with them.

to help others on the same journey and hope to find a cure for cancer. Czar's Promise takes a multi-pronged approach: seeking grant funding for canine cancer and pediatric cancer research, and providing financial support, education and awareness for families whose canines

As Viney held Czar before he died, she promised to find a way to help families going through cancer. Czar's Promise was born.

"I had Czar evaluated to be a Pet Pal since I had been a patient at UW Hospital as a child and missed my own dog at home. It was a way to give back because they saved my life," Viney says of the hospital staff.

Czar officially retired from active duty at age 10. Six months later, he was diagnosed with bone cancer. Eventually, Viney says Czar's pain was too much and his quality of life had diminished. As Viney held Czar before he died, she promised to find a way to help families going through cancer. Czar's Promise was born.

The nonprofit organization started from Viney's tremendous grief, a desire

have been diagnosed with cancer.

Mark Reichers and his wife, whose Boston terrier Bacon was diagnosed with a high-grade fatty-cell cancer on his side, are among those that Czar's Promise has helped. The group has helped pay for Bacon's costly chemotherapy treatments. He's got one more treatment left, Reichers says, and the prognosis is good.

Being able to talk about the experience with others through Czar's promise has been vital, Reichers says. "You wonder if you're putting him through too much. Being connected with this community who've been through this whole thing meant a lot"



Beth Viney and Lucciano

Czar's Promise held its first "Inspiring Hope Dog Walk" fundraiser this May, drawing 450 walkers and 200 dogs. The group raised over \$88,000.

Proceeds will go toward animal cancer research conducted by the UW School of Veterinary Medicine, pediatric cancer research at the children's hospital and financial support for families treating companion animals for cancer.

Viney promised Czar that she would never stop fighting to help stop cancer. It's a promise she intends to keep. 🌸

czarspromise.com

JULY NONPROFIT EVENTS

7/13 | 7:30 a.m. PEDAL AND PARTY IN PARDEEVILLE WITH A PURPOSE

Choose from distances of 12, 30, 40 or 60 miles for a bicycle ride to benefit multiple sclerosis. Finish your ride with free burgers, music and more at Caddy Shack. Chandler Park, Pardeeville. pedalandparty.com

7/20 - 7/21 | 9 a.m. AMERICAN GIRL 32ND BENEFIT SALE

Shop overstock or returned merchandise up to 70% off donated by American Girl and Mattel, and support Madison Children's Museum and American Girl's Fund for Children. 8830 N. Greenview Dr., Middleton. madisonchildrensmuseum.org

7/27 | 8 a.m. BIG SWELL SWIM

In partnership with the Clean Lakes Alliance, Big Swell Swim offers a choice of a 1.2 or 2.4-mile race in the waters of Lake Monona. Law Park, Madison. bigswellswim.com



PHOTO COURTESY TONI PULVERMACHER

FAMILY FUN | It's all fun and games for a fox and its kit cavorting in a lush patch of grass in Waunakee, captured by avid wildlife photographer Toni Pulvermacher of Springfield Corners.

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