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PHOTOGRAPHED BY HILLARY SCHAVE ON LOCATION AT GARVER FEED MILL

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## ON THE COVER

Keep your shopping local this season with our curated gift baskets, P. 43. Featured in our cover basket: **clockwise from top:** Rusty Dog coffee, Fisher King wine, Gail Ambrosius chocolates, bottle opener from Orange Tree Imports, Potter's crackers, Roth cheese, cheese board by Alex Clarke and **center:** coasters by Human Crafted. Photographed by Sunny Frantz.





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# BRAVA

MAGAZINE

## BUSINESS

### PUBLISHER

Barbara Krause  
[bak@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:bak@ntmediagroup.com)

## EDITORIAL

### INTERIM EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLICATIONS

Becky Peck  
[bpeck@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:bpeck@ntmediagroup.com)

### ASSISTANT EDITOR

Julia Richards  
[julia@bravaenterprises.com](mailto:julia@bravaenterprises.com)

### ART DIRECTOR

Ann Christianson  
[annc@bravaenterprises.com](mailto:annc@bravaenterprises.com)

### GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Jerriann Mullen  
[jem@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:jem@ntmediagroup.com)

Kayla Ermer

[kerner@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:kerner@ntmediagroup.com)

### EDITORIAL INTERNS

Annie Rosemurgy  
Kathryn Wisniewski

## SALES

### SALES MANAGER

Dena Frisch  
[dena@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:dena@ntmediagroup.com)

### SALES EXECUTIVE

Danielle Letenyei  
[danielle@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:danielle@ntmediagroup.com)

### SALES EXECUTIVE

Sybil Winchel  
[sybil@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:sybil@ntmediagroup.com)

### ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

Julie Schiller  
[ads@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:ads@ntmediagroup.com)

### DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & EVENTS

Ashley Duchemin  
[and@ntmediagroup.com](mailto:and@ntmediagroup.com)

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951 Kimball Lane, Suite 104, Verona, WI.  
(608) 848-6700.

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NEI-TURNER MEDIA GROUP



## WRITERS

## KATY MACEK

"FORGING A NEW PATH," P. 19;

"THE REASON IS THE SEASON," P. 32

Katy is a recent Madison transplant who is enjoying learning about the city through telling its residents' many stories. She enjoys discovering new trails, neighborhoods and cute coffee shops.

## EMILY MCCLUHAN

"GOOD VIBRATIONS," P. 22

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.

## AMY PFLUGSHAUP

"NO ONE LEFT HUNGRY," P. 67

Amy is an award-winning broadcast journalist who covers hard-hitting topics as part of the NBC15 news team. Her favorite stories connect to her agricultural roots.

## GRACE TIMMERMAN

"PERFECT PAIRINGS," P. 58

A graduate of the CIA Greystone, Grace spent her teens working at Madison staples Vin Santo and L'Etoile. She's passionate about food, wine and travel.

## CANDICE WAGENER

"COFFEE AND QUESADILLAS," P. 56

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. @candicewagener.

## ARTISTS

## KAIA CALHOUN

"FORGING A NEW PATH," P. 19

Kaia is a portrait photographer (specializing in senior, newborn, family and boudoir photography) and freelance photographer serving the greater Madison area. kaiaalcalhounphotography.com

## SUNNY FRANTZ

"LOCAL LOVE," P. 43; "COFFEE AND QUESADILLAS," P. 56; "PERFECT PAIRINGS," P. 58

A former BRAVA gal Sunny uses her marketing, graphic design and styled photography skills to connect small businesses with their ideal audience. @sunny.frantz

## KATIE MYHRE-DAEGER

"MANTEL METHODS," P. 28

Katie is a professional home stager specializing in occupied homes and styling within any budget. Her approach is creative, comprehensive, and honest. gladeydesign.com

## HILLARY SCHAVE

"GLAMOUR," P. 48

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

## KATRINA SIMYAB

"GLAMOUR," P. 48

Katrina is the creative behind her styling and social marketing business Inspo & Co. She's also the co-founder of local plus-size consignment sale Curve Shop. @inspoandco

## VALERIE TOBIAS

"NO ONE LEFT HUNGRY," P. 67

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

## SHANNA WOLF

"THE REASON IS THE SEASON," P. 32;

"MANTEL METHODS," P. 28;

"ECLECTIC EXTRAS," P. 30

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 [BRAVAmagazine.com](http://BRAVAmagazine.com).



(L to R): Elizabeth Loughrin, Private Banking NMLS#1583444; Anne Conlin, Relationship Banking NMLS#1264283; Briel Kohl, Commercial Lending; Amy Gile-Enge, Mortgage Lending NMLS#586017



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## CELEBRATE THE SEASON

**THIS MONTH** we have created an issue that is sure to put you in the holiday mood if you're not there already! For those of you inspired to help others during the season, we share stories from several community members working to make the holidays brighter for those in need. Have some extra time and wish to help out? Be sure to check out the list of opportunities we've compiled on P. 34-35.

Searching for the elusive gift that will wow the hard to buy for friend or family member can be frustrating—especially if you've waited until the last minute like I usually do! But don't worry. The BRAVA elves have done the research for you! Check out the themed gift baskets on P. 43-46 that feature a variety of locally available products. Unique gift ideas all while supporting local retailers!

If you're looking for inspiration for your company's holiday party or seasonal gala, don't miss the glam wear local stylist Katrina Simyab has curated on P. 48-51. Beautiful holiday colors, as well as textures that you can almost feel as you browse the pages will put you in the mood to celebrate this season.

With the new year, the BRAVA team is excited to turn a new page. We are thrilled to share with you that Shayna Mace will be taking over as the new editor January 1. Shayna may be familiar to some of you as she has been leading our sister publication, Lakeshore Living Madison, for more than three years. She is also a local style expert and you may have caught her on one of her many local TV appearances. Shayna has been part of the Madison community for more than a decade and we are excited to have her join the BRAVA team.

But before we call it a wrap on 2019, we at BRAVA want to thank you, all of our readers, for your support this year as we continue to work to bring you stories we hope inspire, inform and maybe also distract you from the chaos of your daily life. We look forward to introducing you to even more amazing local women in the year to come.

Cheers!

*Becky*

Interim Editor



**DON'T MISS** | On the first of the year we'll announce our 2020 Women to Watch! Mark your calendar now to meet these remarkable women in person at a soiree in their honor Wednesday, Jan. 29 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at American Family Insurance DreamBank, 821 E. Washington Ave.



WOMEN TO WATCH

BRAVA  
MAGAZINE

Sairée

*Join us to honor BRAVA's  
2020 Women to Watch, who will make a  
positive impact on the Madison community and beyond!*

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# CONNECT



PHOTO COURTESY KANOPY DANCE COMPANY, PHOTO BY SHAWN HARPER

**GLISTENING GRACE** | Embrace the beauty of the season with Kanopy Dance Company's performance of "Winter Fantasia." Don't miss this show running Dec. 13-15 at Overture Center, starring young sisters who have been dancing with Kanopy since preschool. Amelia Shadrach-Rudels, 11 (above right), opens the dance in "Once Upon a Winters Eve" and Nia Shadrach-Rudels, 14, plays the young girl in "The Norse Tree of Life." [kanopydance.org](http://kanopydance.org)

## BRAVA SPONSORED EVENTS



12/12 | 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

### BRAVA NIGHT OUT AT RUBIN'S WEST

Don't miss this chance to collect useful home design tips from the expert interior design team at Rubin's West. Sip complimentary wine and beer and enjoy appetizers, as well as live holiday music. Enter to win contemporary wool rugs. Plus, create a make-and-take project on us! *Details at BRAVAmagazine.com.*

### THANKS TO OUR DIGITAL PARTNERS



## SAVE THE DATE



1/17 - 1/18 | Times Vary

### 2020 WELL EXPO

Ramp up your metabolism in the new year with the 2020 Well Expo at Monona Terrace, the only event in the Madison area showcasing local resources for wellness programs, healthy foods, green living, weight loss, beauty and much more! It's the Expo's 11th year, and with over 100 exhibitors, it promises to be the best Expo yet. *For schedule and tickets, visit wellexpomadison.com.*

1/29 | 5:30 - 8 p.m.

### 2020 WOMEN TO WATCH SOIREE

Meet BRAVA's 2020 Women to Watch, amazing Madison-area women whose work enriches the community every day. Nibble on tasty food, enjoy a beverage and network with like-minded women in the fabulous DreamBank space downtown. *Details at BRAVAmagazine.com/w2w.*

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## MONEY SMARTS



## MONEY SMARTS

BY KIM SPONEM

**How do I keep from spending too much at the holidays?**

Your future self, likely around January, will thank you for asking. It's a good idea to decide what you want to spend for this season of entertaining, gifts and special donations ahead. What would "spending too much" look like? Put a dollar amount on it. It's easy to spend too much if you don't know what too much is. And it's hard to celebrate your success without a goal. It's a busy time of year, so I'd also suggest jotting your goal into Summit's Climbr™ financial management tool, free with online banking (also free). With Climbr, see your progress any time, and use alerts to stay on track.

Now let's get to those ideas...

- Holiday decorations are appealing, but you probably don't need them. If you are drawn to decorations, you likely have plenty. Check your supply and rearrange them for a new look.
- Last minute stocking stuffers can, but do not need to, bust the budget. Consider wrapping \$1 bills around candy or a few items rather than looking for more things to add.
- Remember that all those \$1 "deals" add up, and they are usually things you think are neat but really don't need. Pass them up.

- Before buying, think about things you are looking at as ending up in a garage sale for 25 cents.
- All the good deals can make you want to shop for yourself. If you do, just limit yourself to two or three gifts. No more. Now that you have a limit, you'll need to be picky.
- If you send holiday cards, resist buying upgrades on photo cards. They start out at one price and quickly become 25-50% more. By the time you check out, you have so much time invested you may not want to go back and start over. If you go ahead and buy, it can take a chunk out of your holiday budget. Each card and stamp could cost you \$2.50-\$3.00, so think about who you're sending to and consider sending some greetings through email or social media.
- If you still overbuy for your kids because of all the deals, consider setting aside at least one gift for their birthday. It will save you money in your holiday budget, and you'll have some birthday shopping done in advance.
- For office gift giving, something small is really nice, or consider giving to a nonprofit in all your coworkers' names. Announce the donation in a card with a treat attached and everyone's happy, including the people benefiting from the donation.

• For friend gifts, put a low, odd dollar limit on exchanges (\$7, \$11...). It forces you and others to be more creative and have some fun with it. Gift givers may even make something, and that's even better!

• Re-use and recycle-conscious people will really like white elephant gift giving. With the right resourceful group it can be fun, creative, and help everyone stay out of holiday debt.

• Babies and toddlers are cute, and they need very little. If you are buying for them, buy something they need. We all want to get them their "first" holiday gifts but really, you can save money as the parent and help parents save money if you buy their child something they need too. Even a pack of diapers is fun to open with this group. It's the paper they like.

Have fun thinking of this, too: **What if I spend less than my holiday budget?** It may help to have a plan ahead for using the savings for a reward, a donation or savings. It makes saying no to things you don't need a bit more fun!



SummitCreditUnion.com

Kim Sponem is CEO & President, since 2002, of Summit Credit Union, a \$3.6 billion, member-owned financial cooperative with more than 193,000 members. Kim has a passion for empowering people to improve their financial well-being for a richer life.

**Ask Kim your money questions at**  
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**For five years running, Design for a Difference-Madison has helmed the largest charity makeover in the nation. 2019's free transformation of the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center is valued at over \$700,000.**

BY JENNIFER ROSEN HEINZ

Sitting in his office at his new desk, Gary Kallas gushed, “There’s not a good adjective to describe this. It’s spectacular.” Kallas, executive director of the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, added “This makeover means that we are turning over a much better space for the next generation of Wil-Mar.”

Wil-Mar is the center of life for the East Side of Madison. For over 50 years, it has occupied a 100+ year-old church building at the corner of Jenifer and South Brearly streets, providing services and space for organizations ranging from childcare to event space for community groups along with a food pantry, wellness programs and life enrichment classes.

“We chose Wil-Mar because they do so much good through their programs and the amazing festivals they organize are all about celebrating community, which this world really needs right now. They needed an interior that functioned better but also that captured the funky, welcoming and eclectic spirit of the neighborhood,” said Angela Skalitzky, vice president of design at FLOOR360. FLOOR360 started Design for a Difference-Madison five years ago as a way to give back to the community through design.

“This could not happen without the entire FLOOR360 team involvement and the support of our flooring suppliers Jaeckle Distributors and Shaw Industries who donated over 8,000 square feet of flooring,” said FLOOR360 owner and CEO, Bob Tobe.

**YEARS OF MAKING A  
DIFFERENCE**

## 2019 BY THE NUMBERS

- **\$700,000+** value of money, materials and labor donated by FLOOR360 and partners
- **9,500 sq ft** made over
- **200+** businesses donated time, money or materials
- **50+** design team volunteers
- **1,500+** Madison, WI area individuals served every year by Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center

## HOW IT WORKS

<b>JAN</b>	Collect nominations from nonprofits
<b>APR</b>	Announce makeover recipient
<b>MAY to SEP</b>	Begin design team planning and design process, procure materials, volunteers and donations
<b>OCT</b>	Makeover, surprise reveal

## PAST RECIPIENTS

<b>2015</b>	Center for Families
<b>2016</b>	The Rainbow Project
<b>2017</b>	Centro Hispano
<b>2018</b>	East Madison Community Center



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YAHARA ROOM

Over 50 local interior designers made dreams come to life in the nearly 10,000 sq. ft. facility after six months of planning, two weeks of design execution and countless hours of securing donations from over 200 local businesses.

"We love participating in DFAD every year," said Katie Merical of Cabinet Masters, who has participated since year one. "We love being able to give back to the community, but also to have a different challenge from our day to day business." Merical's team found Nick Ringelstetter, a local artist from Atomic7, whose original artwork she had custom printed onto laminate. The kitchen cabinets were transformed into a colorful and whimsical focal point which is visible in the downstairs children's space.

At the grand reveal, one of the childcare staff taking in the kitchen and adjoining kids' area said, "I am so excited for the kids. There is so much to do here now. It's going to be hard to get the kids to go home!" A minute later, a 7-year-old girl walked in the door and saw the new loft area designed by students at Madison College's Interior Design program. "We can make our own fort!" she squealed.

Designers Tara Buedding, Cathy Driftmire and Brenda Szarek may have had the tallest order of all—redesigning the facility's landmark space, the Yahara Room, which was the former church sanctuary.

The group transformed the space from dingy and well-worn to clean and soaring. Large-scale floral murals painted by artist

Christy Grace and the installation of exterior-style lighting help give the space a distinct open-air feel, echoing indoors the yearly memories created at Wil-Mar's outdoor festivals. Food service and storage areas in the back create a coffeehouse-style space which, together with the adjoining kitchen, were donated by likewise five-year veteran company Bella Domicile.

As a special nod to the importance of art, designers Lori Jolin and Laurie Lundgren transformed a crowded, messy storage space downstairs into a dedicated art room, complete with supplies. "We were inspired by pop art, and we reached out to the artist Howie Green, whose famous painting 'The Hippie Musician' was the perfect style and fit for the space. He gifted us two of his images to use." The designers custom-built tabletops which they painted to look like artist's palettes.

"I've participated in Design for a Difference as a muralist from the beginning, but this makeover blew me out of the water," said Lynn Lee, President of the Marquette Neighborhood Association, which helps run the center. "I wasn't allowed to be on site for this one because they wanted to surprise me. So even though I know how the magic happens, it's totally overwhelming when it happens for you."

"When people come into this space, they're going to recognize it, but even more, they're going to feel that *they* were seen and recognized. People are going to feel like they belong." ■





“This makeover means that we are turning over a much better space for the next generation of Wil-Mar.”

*Gary Kallas*

*Executive Director  
Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center*



# FLOOR360

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## FORGING A NEW PATH

Sarah Godlewski leads the way for others who become parents while holding office

BY KATY MACEK

INTERVIEWED BY MARNI MCENTEE

As the Wisconsin State Treasurer prepares for maternity leave at the end of 2019, she isn't only thinking of her personal life. She's setting the bar for how all constitutional officers after her will be able to take paid maternity or paternity leave.

Winding down her first year of office, Eau Claire native Sarah Godlewski is the first constitutional officer in Wisconsin to have a baby on the job. The Family Medical Leave Act, which provides guidelines for expecting women, doesn't cover elected officials.

"I want to make sure I set a really good model so the next woman—or even dad—knows how to navigate this," Godlewski says. "Because it's not an issue of if this happens again. It's more about when it happens."

She and her team are working with a lawyer to outline policies and planning for her to take off December and return in 2020. Meanwhile, she's got big plans to support women-owned businesses, return funds to taxpayers and turn the treasurer position back into the financial authority it once was.

Godlewski is a fifth-generation Wisconsinite, but it was her journey around the country that landed her in the state treasury.

Godlewski lived in Eau Claire until she attended George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., where she completed her undergraduate degree in peace and conflict resolution.

At 22 years old, she found herself the youngest woman working for the undersecretary at the Pentagon. She stayed for almost a decade, ending at the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Godlewski also worked with UNICEF, which is where she met her husband, and co-founded MaSa, which invested in companies focused on making a positive environmental impact. Around four years ago, she co-founded WE Capital, an investment fund that invests in women-owned businesses.

That's where she met Jenny Abramson, who runs venture capital firm Rethink Impact. It invests in female leaders in technology, including WE Capital. Abramson is excited to see where



PHOTOGRAPHED BY KAIA CALHOUN



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## CONNECT | PERSPECTIVE

Godlewski takes the treasurer's position.

"While we're breaking down barriers in the venture capital space, Sarah's doing that as well in office," she says.

Godlewski never intended to be state treasurer, but when she moved back to Wisconsin in 2015, she saw small businesses she loved suffering. "The Wisconsin I grew up in was not the Wisconsin I was seeing, and it made me really sad," she says.

Motivated to help, she started researching and learned other states' treasurers were helping small businesses by partnering with local banks. She wanted to help Wisconsin's treasurer do this. So she called ... and no one answered.

"Come to find out, the person in the position was actively trying to remove the office, and I just didn't think we wanted to lose our chief financial officer," she says.

She found herself cofounder of a bipartisan ballot committee to save the treasurer's office. Voters saved the position with a 61.75% majority in April 2018.

Teri Jacobson, Kenosha County treasurer, has served 16 years in a county treasurer role, and says she has been impressed with all her interactions with Godlewski.

"Sarah has brought a level of energy and insight that we haven't seen in the state treasurer's office in a long time," Jacobson says. "It's a breath of fresh air to see someone so genuinely excited to serve the people of Wisconsin to the best of her ability."

Godlewski has returned more than \$200,000 in unclaimed property—when employees don't claim their funds and the money is returned to the state—to taxpayers, mostly with nonprofit organizations and local government entities.

With a baby on the way, she wants to show you can raise a family and be an elected official. She worries women think too much about the reasons they aren't "ready." But she knows they are.

"Following through, being authentic and representing your communities—I think women worry that's not enough," she says. "And it is. That's what an elected official should be." 🌸



INSPIRED LIVING

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*Read more in Dwell on P. 30*

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANNA WOLF

*Blu Dot Otto Ottoman, \$250; The Century House*

## A GUT FEELING

### Settle Your Stomach With Digestive Health Supplements

BY KATHRYN WISNIEWSKI



**FROM HEARTBURN** and bloating to sensitivity to certain foods or irregular bowel movements, digestive problems can manifest in myriad ways. Health supplements, such as digestive bitters, probiotics or enzyme supplements, can offer relief.

How do you know when it's time to seek out an aid to your digestive health?

"Most people will ignore their digestive problems until they're really serious," says Katy Wallace, Doctor of Naturopathy and certified natural health professional. "Digestive health is one of those pretty easy things to address if you do it early and do it right"

Not having regular bowel movements or becoming bloated from foods are clear signs your digestive system needs support.

"Most digestive aids are safe for everyone, including kids," Wallace says, though she warns that anyone taking pharmaceuticals or who have health diagnoses like ulcers should check with a pharmacist prior to adding a digestive aid to their regimen.

Stomach acid production slows after the age of 30, and those over 40 are more likely to have digestive issues as a result, according to Wallace.

Digestive bitters, like the ones made by Urban Moonshine Herbal Apothecary and stocked at Community Pharmacy, support digestion by stimulating natural stomach acids. They are a blend of herbs in an alcohol solution. The herbs, like chamomile and ginger, are intended to warm or cool the stomach to soothe distress.

Enzyme supplements, like Lactaid, break down foods so they can be absorbed by the body. "As we age, we have fewer digestive enzymes naturally," says Community Pharmacy's Lulu Roberts, a professional homeopathic practitioner. Different enzymes target

different types of food: proteins, carbohydrates or fats. Enzyme supplements can help overcome general bloating or gas or can counteract a nutritional deficiency, according to Wallace.

Both enzyme supplements and bitters are best ingested prior to a meal, according to Roberts, though they can be used after successfully as well.

Another option for boosting digestive health is probiotics, microorganisms that carry health benefits when introduced to the body. The probiotics you'll find at Community Pharmacy will either be shelf-stable or refrigerated. Shelf-stable probiotics are just as effective as the refrigerated varieties, according to Roberts. The only difference is that shelf-stable probiotics have a coating that protects them until they reach the stomach and are ideal for on-the-go.

Because there are so many strains of probiotics, their uses can get fairly specific. According to Wallace, probiotics often help with constipation, diarrhea and bloating, as well as with reducing bad reactions to foods. In addition to alleviating such symptoms, probiotics improve overall immune and gut barrier health.

No matter the course you may choose for giving your digestive health a lift, Wallace recommends starting with half of the suggested dosage of the supplement and increasing from there.

All such supplements—probiotics, enzyme supplements and bitters—assist the gastrointestinal tract in detoxifying.

"In this day and age when we are exposed to more chemicals and environmental toxins than ever before, it's important to promote healthy digestion in order to help break down and excrete toxins that we encounter," Wallace says. 🌸



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## GOOD VIBRATIONS

Deeply relax with energy and sound therapy

BY EMILY MCCLUHAN

**IN THIS GO-GO-GO,** always-on world, being stressed is a normal state. Many seek an escape through yoga or meditation, but what will we find if we go deeper into the body to explore relaxation, balance and healing?

Lying in a wood paneled chamber on a wide memory foam mattress, music lilts softly as gentle vibrations pulse up my spine and legs. Rainbow colored lights are recessed about 12 inches from my face pushing my end-of-the-work-day mind into calm. Within minutes I drift away into a deep relaxation, somewhere between sleep and awake for the next 45 minutes.

This is the Energy Genesis chamber at Life Center of Wisconsin on Madison's West Side. Owner Liza Abitz explains that in this level of relaxation, we're shifting our stress response to the "off" position.

"Our autonomic nervous system is triggered on when we are stressed and for most of us it just stays on," Abitz says. "And when the body is in stress, we're just surviving and our body is not healing or addressing issues that arise."

In her 10 years of studying wellbeing, she's learned that a balanced autonomic nervous system is critical to whole body wellness. Most of her clients are referrals from others and anecdotally share that they saw faster recovery post-surgery, or use it to detox and rebalance during and after chemotherapy. Ultimately, Abitz recommends using Energy Genesis as part of a self-care regimen to keep the immune and nervous system strong. She even offers parent/child sessions and sessions for couples.

The theory is that the energy from one session works in the body for about four or five days. Abitz recommends first-timers come in three days in a row to address and unblock larger emotional or physical barriers.

"At Life Center of Wisconsin we believe the body does not know disease by name, only that there is an imbalance. We support and engage the body in a way to allow for healing on every level, emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually," she says.

Using a similar idea, massage therapist Susan Harrison added the So Sound Lounge to her studio, Spa-tique in Middleton in 2018. The "lounge" is a spa-like room with a comfy chaise that curves with your body. After selecting a desired sound experience (I chose crashing waves over the jungle walk, but there were many options), headphones blocked out the ambient noise and deep vibrations began pulsating along my spine in time with the music. The sound of the vibrations—which are more intense than the Energy Genesis chamber—and music took me to a meditative state where I felt completely zoned-out.

Harrison explains that these vibrations and sounds are like sonar seeking out dense areas, like tight muscles or thicker areas like scar tissue.

"The lower tones, meaning around 50 Hertz, get deeper into the body and into the muscles to help loosen and relax," she says. "While higher tones, closer to 4,000 Hertz, are going to cut through the chatter, kind of like cleaning out the grooves of the brain."

The idea, she explains, is that water molecules in the tissues become "bouncy" from the vibrations and the effects of each session build on each other. This movement in the tissue can lead to easier recovery from injuries or relief from chronic conditions like headaches or arthritis.

Both women exude passion when sharing the benefits of these modalities and the testimonials of their clients, but they acknowledge there are doubters.

"When people come through the door, they don't have to believe all of this, but they do need to be open to the possibility," says Abitz. "It can feel foreign to some people. It's difficult to get into that state between conscious and unconscious where we are completely uninhibited."

Whether you believe the effects or not, Abitz says, her biggest mission is to help her clients find value in self-care, and not just survive, but thrive. 🌸



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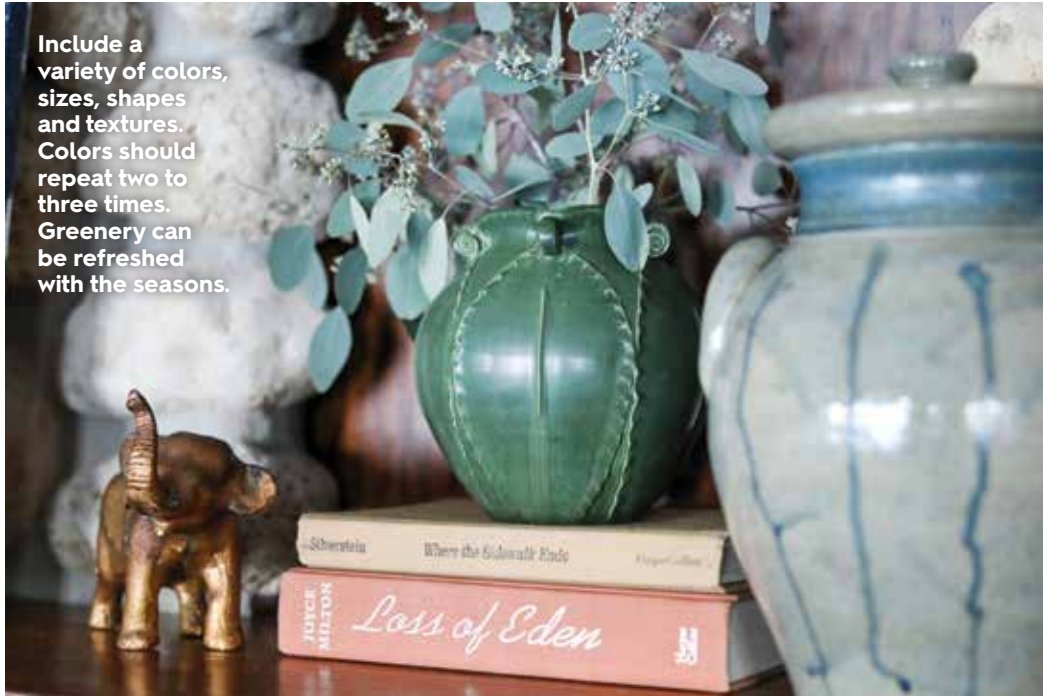
STYLED BY KATIE MYHRE-DAEGER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANNA WOLF

**WHEN STYLING** a mantel aim for balance, but not necessarily perfect symmetry. You don't need matching items on each side, but also don't want one side too heavy or too light, advises Katie Myhre-Daeger, home stylist of Gladeye Design Studio. Step back and evaluate, then keep moving things around until you achieve a harmonious look. *—Julia Richards* 🌸



Include a variety of colors, sizes, shapes and textures. Colors should repeat two to three times. Greenery can be refreshed with the seasons.



"Books are a great way to add interest and help with balance on your mantel," says Myhre-Daeger. "Just remove the jacket/book cover to give new books an old feel."











## ECLECTIC EXTRAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANNA WOLF

**THE POUF** craze is on! And with good reason—these portable, versatile, decorative cushions can be used as supplemental seating, as a footrest or in lieu of a coffee table. Poufs are a great way to add a splash of color or create a style vibe without breaking the bank. They're particularly good at articulating the boho-chic look that's so red hot these days, says Lora Brown of Brown & Beam, and are thus popular with the millennial set. Small rooms and apartments are perfect pouf candidates, Brown says, and can take a basic, neutral furniture set from bland to boho in no time flat. When coordinated with other textile elements like rugs, pillows and window treatments, "the right pouf can help tie a room's look together beautifully and inexpensively," she says. —Annie Rosemurgy 🌸



**Clockwise from top left:** Abena Knitted Cotton Pouf by Christopher Knight Home, \$60; Target. Fair Trade Floor Cushions, \$40 each; Art Gecko. Reyna Wool Pouf, \$195; Brown & Beam. Blush Abstract Symbols Pouf, \$45; World Market. Divine Footstool, \$505; The Century House. Woven Textured Floor Pouf, \$150; World Market.



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# THE REASON IS THE SEASON

## HOLIDAYS PROVIDE AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO CARE FOR OTHERS

BY KATY MACEK

PHOTOGRAPHED BY SHANNA WOLF

Christmas is a time of joy for many reasons. But for individuals and families in need, this time of year can be a source of anxiety or sadness.

To ease that burden, organizations big and small in the Madison area are working to put more smiles on families' faces this holiday.

From a men's club that collects Christmas gifts for children who are raising their siblings to a powerlifting competition in which the entry fee is a gift for a child, people are using their passions to bring together communities come Christmas Day.

Read on, be inspired and then give back yourself this holiday season (we've got plenty of options for you).





## POWERLIFTING FOR PRESENTS

Each December, Primal Strength and Fitness, LLC, owner Jimmy Brooks holds a powerlifting competition unlike any other he's had at his gym. Instead of competing for prizes, fame or money, these powerlifters come together to compete for ... Christmas gifts.

Brooks organizes Pushing and Pulling for Presents (formerly Squats for Tots) to raise donations for Stoughton Area Resource Team (START).

"When most people think of powerlifting or Strongman, they think of big, burly bearded guys with bald heads and tattoos up their muscles ... which some people have," Brooks says. "But powerlifters, from my experience going to different meets, are some of the nicest people you could find. Kinda scary-looking sometimes, but genuinely nice people."

Instead of a fee, Brooks says when powerlifters register, they choose if they would like to donate a toy, bedding, clothing, hats or gloves, etc. Same goes for spectators at the event; to watch, simply bring a donation for a child in need.

The donations go to children and families in Stoughton who are identified by START.

Pushing and Pulling for Tots begins with the warmup rounds at 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 7 and he hopes to have the first bench press going around noon, at Primal Strength, 318 S. Forrest St., Stoughton.

He's excited for the event, but even

more so for the ripple effects it'll have on the community.

"It's not about how much weight is lifted—that's just a cool side effect of the contest; you get to see something superhuman, something unreal," Brooks says. "But you're also doing something unreal for these families. It's a cool show and a great cause all at once."



*Jimmy Brooks with son, Adam, and friend, Ever. Below: Brooks with Dallas.*



## BRINGING THE PARTY TO THE NORTH SIDE

For more than 20 years, CityChurch in Madison has partnered with the Northport Apartments and Packers Townhomes to put on a Christmas dinner and provide presents for families in low-income homes.

Interested families can fill out a form with a "wish list" of items for the whole family, and members of CityChurch choose a family to buy those items for, say CityChurch organizers Jenny and Andy Czerkas.

"The form covers everyone in the family, and they are usually pretty humble requests," Jenny Czerkas says. "We see a lot of warm boots, warm jackets, maybe a toaster or a coffee maker."

But more than the gifts, Jenny Czerkas says the real highlight is the Christmas dinners, held at each location the Friday and Saturday before Christmas.

More than 30 countries are represented between the apartments,



*Sully Thao, Jenny Czerkas, Andy Czerkas, Pat Wongkit and Margaret Porco at the Northport Community Learning Center.*

Czerkases say, which provides for a “very diverse” buffet. They have also gotten to know the families well over the years and look forward to engaging conversations throughout the meal.

“Those neighborhoods have taught us more than we’ve provided,” she says. “Poverty generates stereotypes that we’ve real-



Andy and Jenny Czerkas

ized just don’t pan out. These people are rich in a lot of ways that we don’t always consider: Their family structures, communities, the way these kids are treated in after-school programs.”

What started as a way to provide some short-term relief during the holidays has grown into a life-long friendship for these communities, and the Czerkases hope they can continue partnering with them for years to come.

## HELPING KIDS BE KIDS

As president of 100 Black Men of Madison—an organization that works to empower black families and help them succeed—Floyd Rose says he’s worked with children from vastly different backgrounds.

The group’s Project SOAR works with students. Around three years ago, he and other leaders of the group began to notice many of the young teenagers they worked with were already acting as adults, caring for their younger siblings.

Rose says he was blown away by the responsibility these children had taken on themselves,

and that especially came out in the holiday season. So 100 Black Men of Madison’s Christmas for Children With Responsibilities toy and donation drive was born.

“These children are giving, and they don’t even have,” Rose says. “They have a sense of responsibility that is unbelievable. They’re the heroes, and all we’re trying to do is support them.”

CCWR is a partnership between 100 Black Men of Madison via Project SOAR and the United Way of Dane County. Toys and donations can be dropped off at Group Health Cooperative, 5249 E. Terrace Dr., #8339.

Rose says 100 Black Men of Madison partners with the schools, which provide names of families who will receive the donations.

Though he believes in charitable acts throughout the year, he thinks there’s something extra rewarding about finding ways to help others this time of year.

“Depending on how you believe, this time of year is the broadest example I can think of someone being brought about to be of service to all,” Rose says. “Why would we not do something in our manner of humanity that would echo this amazing time and blessing we receive?”



Melvin Welton, Mark Huth, Ginger Francis and Floyd Rose

PHOTO COURTESY PAUL MCMAHON

## HERE ARE 10 (MORE!) WAYS YOU CAN GIVE BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY:

**DONATE BLOOD:** American Red Cross is holding its 34th annual Holiday Blood Drive from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 24, at the Alliant Energy Center, 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way.

[redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)

**DONATE TO THE EMPTY STOCKING CLUB:** Donate to the charitable arm of the Wisconsin State Journal. This organization has been distributing toys in the Madison area since 1918.

[facebook.com/emptystockingclub](https://facebook.com/emptystockingclub)

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS SPIRIT:** Operation Help a Hero’s annual holiday project supports military families. You can “adopt” a military family, give a gift to a single service member, donate online or collect gift cards.

[operationhelpahero.org/operation-christmas-spirit](http://operationhelpahero.org/operation-christmas-spirit)

**GIVE A “GIFT OF HOPE”:** Middleton Outreach Ministry’s Gifts of Hope allows you to purchase an online gift for someone in need in the name of a loved one. So you can help your neighbors and give the perfect present to your friends and family who have everything.

[momhelps.org/stories/gifts-of-hope-catalog](http://momhelps.org/stories/gifts-of-hope-catalog)

**ATTEND A CRAFT FAIR FOR A CAUSE:** Middleton Outreach Ministry’s Holiday Art Fair, Dec. 7-8, at MOM Food Pantry, 3502 Parmenter St., Middleton. Browse the works of more than 60 local artists, who will all donate 20% or more of their proceeds to MOM’s homelessness prevention programs. You can purchase Gifts of Hope at this event as well.

[momhelps.org/events/creating-for-a-cause-mom-holiday-art-fair](http://momhelps.org/events/creating-for-a-cause-mom-holiday-art-fair)



## NO ACT TOO SMALL

For as long as she can remember, Gwen Kenney has volunteered her time at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, ushering, knitting items for various organizations, helping out at the food pantry or clothes closet and catering funerals.

After retiring, Kenney devoted even more time to her community. Her reasoning? She's got the time.



*Gwen Kenney*



*Donna Hintze, Don Lang and Gwen Kenney stock apples in the food pantry.*

"My feeling is, as long as I'm able to do stuff, I want to," she says. "I have more time than I have money to give, and sometimes you just need people to show up."

Around Christmas, they work extra hard for Shoeboxes, a program the church puts on that fills empty shoeboxes with clean underwear, socks, hats and scarves. Kenney says those are packaged and distributed throughout southwest Madison.

## EVERY LITTLE BIT MATTERS

Whether you help a neighbor bring in their groceries, shovel a driveway or organize a fundraiser, every act of service matters.

It is, after all, that mindset that makes a community a community, says Jimmy Brooks.

"I believe in a couple pillars of service: Service to self, service to family and service to community," he says. "Strong communities can only exist if people are willing to give back and be part of them." 🌟

**SPONSOR A CHILD OR FAMILY:** Goodman Community Center's Holiday Gift Sponsorship Program provides gifts for children up to 18 years old. Individuals, families or organizations can choose to sponsor as many children as they'd like. Contact Tanya Walker, [tanyaw@goodmancenter.org](mailto:tanyaw@goodmancenter.org) or 608-204-8034, to be assigned a child or family.

[goodmancenter.org](http://goodmancenter.org)

**JOIN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT:** Be a community scientist this season by joining the national organization Audubon's Christmas Bird Count. Visit the website to join a "circle," which encompasses a 15-mile diameter. Then, count the birds you see or hear. The count runs Dec. 14-Jan. 5.

[audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count](http://audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count)

**SERVE A MEAL** at The River Food Pantry (or any local homeless shelter or food pantry).

[riverfoodpantry.org/volunteer](http://riverfoodpantry.org/volunteer)

**"SHARE" THE HOLIDAYS:** The Road Home of Dane County's Sharing the Holidays is also a great way to sponsor a family with children. Sign up to be matched with a family and then receive a wish list form to shop for that family.

[trhome.org/sharing-the-holidays](http://trhome.org/sharing-the-holidays)

**PICK UP UNITED WAY'S HOLIDAY WISH LIST.** This booklet is a compilation of donation requests and volunteer opportunities during the holiday season. Find it at your local library.

[unitedwaydanecounty.org/wishlist](http://unitedwaydanecounty.org/wishlist)

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*Left to right:* Tey-Art Pattern Alpaca Socks \$21.90; fairindigo.com. Parallel 44 Frozen Tundra Red Wine, \$15.99; Steve's. AstroReality LUNAR Pro, \$230; Little Luxuries. Alchemy Goods Bike Tube Vegan Leather Belt, \$48.90; fairindigo.com. Eight oz. B&E's Trees Bourbon Barrel Aged Maple Syrup, \$15.99; Willy Street Co-op. Campfire Games, \$18; Little Luxuries. Unscented Beard Oil, \$15.99; The Soap Opera. Alchemy Goods Bike Tube Vegan Leather Wallet, \$39.90; fairindigo.com. Feelgoodz slippers, \$32.99; Willy Street Co-op.



# Let's Play in a Winter Wonderland!



Get your loved ones moving outdoors this winter with the right cold weather gear. A new pair of skates or snowshoes could lead to lasting memories.

*In the basket:* Quick Grip Chill waterbottle by Camelbak, \$28, Fair Isle knit mitten by The North Face, \$45, Dylan goggles by Giro, \$80, Rorvik crew socks by Wigwam, \$20; Fontana Sports. Figure skates by Jackson Ultima, \$79.99; Play it Again Sports. *Foreground:* Winter cap by Stormy Kromer, \$46.99, Winter hat with earflaps by Manzella, \$28, Banjees stretch armband by Sprigs, \$24; Fontana Sports. Traverse snowshoes by Emory Peak, \$69.99; Play it Again Sports.

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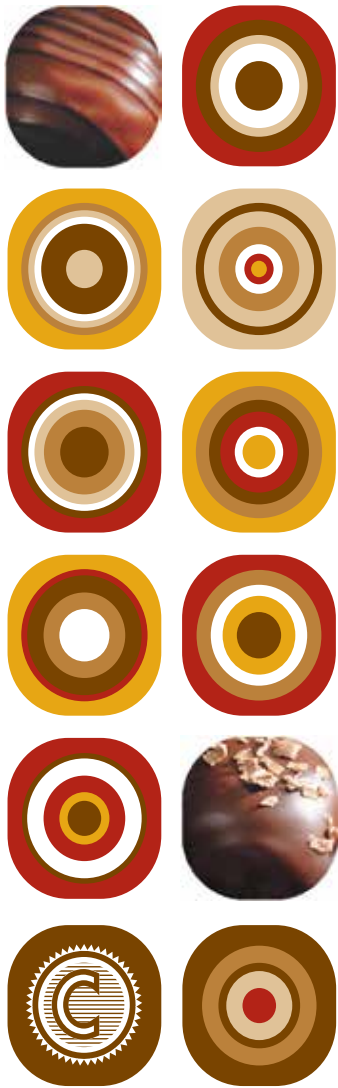
For those who still appreciate a handwritten card, how about giving the supplies to make a handmade one? Young and old alike can enjoy the stress relief of exercising their creative side. ✨



**In the basket:** Colorful pack of pens by LePen, \$19.95; Paper Source, Hilldale. Pencil roll up in rose by Speedball, \$13.95; Artist & Craftman Supply, 24-piece soft pastels by Reeves, \$6.95; Artist & Craftman Supply. Luxe paper place cards in mint, blush and night; \$8.95 each, Embossing heat tool, \$23.95, Embossing powder in red tinsel, garden patina and buttercup, starting at \$5.95, Rubber stamps fox and large leaf, starting at \$7.95; Paper Source, Hilldale.

**Foreground:** Paper paste by Mod Podge, \$3.95; Artist & Craftman Supply. Thank you script rubber stamp, \$8.95, Inkpad in Goldrush by ColorBox, \$7.95; Paper Source, Hilldale. Assorted handmade pattern papers, starting at \$5, Calligraphy pen, starting at \$7.50, Dip pen ink by Ziller Ink, starting at \$9.50, Charcoal drawing bricks, starting at \$0.90, Multi-drawing book by Holbein, \$18; Artist & Craftman Supply.





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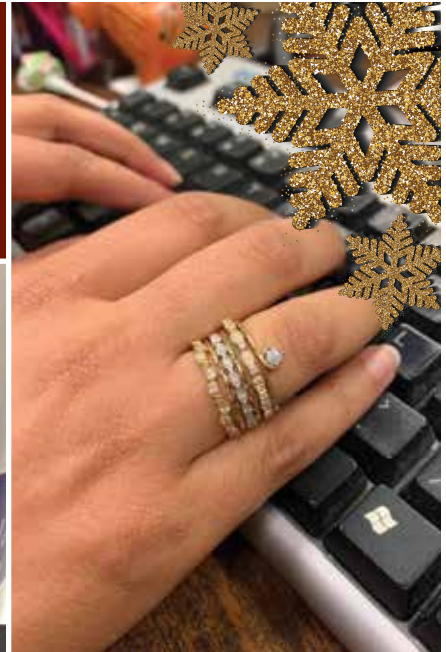
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ON LOCATION AT GARVER FEED MILL





**Left to right:**  
Red Bobble Scarf,  
\$28; Ciao Bella  
Boutique. Silver  
Circle Necklace,  
\$120; Change Bou-  
tique. Pearl Thread  
Evening Clutch, \$76;  
Ciao Bella Boutique.  
Black and Purple  
Brocade Dress,  
\$548; Premiere  
Couture.







**Left to right:**

Leather Earrings in Emerald, \$19.95; Cosa Boutique. Tall Boot in Black, \$218; Change Boutique. Cheetah Scarf, \$18; Suzen Sez. Velvet Stripe Dress, \$120; Cloth and Metal Boutique. Faux Pearl Necklace, \$22; Suzen Sez.

**Background:** Silver Wristlet, \$88; Change Boutique. Festive Scarf in Black, \$44; Ciao Bella Boutique.





## *Look Dashing in the Snow*

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**Top left:** Silver Sparkle Top, \$68, Abri Leather Knee-Length Skirt, \$248, Midi Camel Wool Coat, \$144, Belt Bag in Loden Green, \$68, Larissa Loden Necklace, \$28; Cosa Boutique. **Above:** Red Plaid Glove, \$18; Suzen Sez. **Left:** Suede Heels in Fire Red, \$125; Change Boutique.



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# Make Time for Taxes

## Do your planning now to make tax time easier

By Sue Sveum



'Tis the season. With fall behind us, you may be looking forward to the festive winter holidays ahead. But 'tis (also) the season to get your taxes in order for the coming year. Two local advisors weigh in with tax planning and preparation tips—including how to find the right professional to help.

If you're already confused, you aren't alone. So what's the difference between planning and preparation? "Tax planning is the process of proactively taking steps to manage your future tax liability," explains Alison Helland, a tax attorney at Boardman Clark. "Tax preparation is the process of completing and filing the tax returns required to report your prior activity." While income tax preparation usually occurs just once a year, income tax planning, whether for personal or business taxes, should be a continuous process, according to Helland. "I recommend that, at a minimum, clients meet with their tax advisor at least two times a year: once to discuss preparation of their income taxes and once to discuss their year-end income tax planning."

So why is this time of year especially important? "As the year progresses, individuals and businesses acquire more information regarding their income, expenses and other tax-related items, which enable them to more accurately estimate their year-end income tax liability," explains Helland. "Based on this information, there may be steps they

can take now—prior to year-end—to better manage their 2019 tax liability."

For instance, if their projected tax liability is higher than expected, they may be able to accelerate certain expenses and/or increase other deductions to lower their taxable income, according to Helland. "And if they anticipate their taxable income may be higher next year," she says, "they may want to defer some of the expenses and/or deductions to the following year."

Regardless of whether you prepare your own returns or hire someone to do so, you should still engage the services of a tax advisor to assist you with your tax planning.

"It's important to find a tax advisor that's right for you," says Helland. "Do your research, ask people in your network for referrals and contact a few different tax advisors for an initial call or conference before making a decision."

Alicia Greer, CPA, and partner at Berndt CPA, adds that it's important to pick someone that works well with

your specific needs. "While our firm works primarily with businesses and their owners; other firms might focus more on wage earners," she says, adding that it's a good idea to start with a phone call to make sure it's a good fit.

"You also need to be comfortable with the person you choose so they can understand your individual situation," she says. "The more information you share, the better advice you're likely to get—and you're more likely to share with someone if you feel comfortable."

According to Greer, professional help is essential when a complicated tax situation exists, such as business ownership, inheritance or family trust issues, or for high-wage earners with family changes like marriage or divorce. "It also might be a good idea if you simply feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed with the idea of taxes," she says.

So how early do you need to make that first appointment? "The earlier the better!" says Greer. "Our schedules fill up quickly from Dec. 15 to April 15, so it's best to call by the end of January."

"When meeting with a tax preparer for the first time, be sure to bring along a minimum of two years' previous tax returns," advises Greer. She recommends preparing a summary from receipts to have available upon request, documenting medical expenses, charitable contributions and personal expenses like meals, etc.

According to Greer, there are certain life changes that might necessitate a change in your taxes, such as starting a new business, marriage, the death of a spouse, receiving an inheritance, moving, starting a new job or starting a family. "And be sure to communicate those changes with your accountant or tax attorney. 'We aren't mind readers and we can't predict the future,' she says, "so give them as much information as you can. We're here to help, not to judge—and we want to understand your needs as best we can to give you the best guidance."



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## GO+DO



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

**FOODIE FOUNDATIONS** | We like these beautifully handcrafted cheese boards just as much as the mouth-watering displays contributor Sunny Frantz placed on them. Created by Madison-based female woodworker Alex Clarke, these boards are made of walnut, but she also uses cherry, oak and maple. Check out all of her wood creations at [etsy.com/shop/AlexClarke](https://etsy.com/shop/AlexClarke). And to create your own perfect cheese plate complete with wine pairings see *Eats + Drinks*, P. 58.

## COFFEE AND QUESADILLAS

Get a taste of El Salvador at Finca

BY CANDICE WAGENER

### COFFEE LOVERS AND FOODIES

can get a mini experience of El Salvador at the newly opened Finca Coffee on Madison's South Side. Owner Marleni Valle is proud to share her culture through the food, drink and ambience represented.



### PRODUCT

Be sure to try the quesadillas. An unexpected sweet treat, these housemade delights are reminiscent of a corn muffin, sprinkled with sesame seeds. They go perfectly with a cup of coffee.

Also, don't miss the national dish of El Salvador, pupusas, a thicker, filled corn tortilla which is lightly fried. A woman named Alba comes in daily to make the dough, and fillings—like the chicharron, are derived from Valle's old family recipes.

### PASSION

Valle wants "to bring a little slice of typical Salvadoran to Madison," says general manager Todd Allbaugh, who brings an extensive knowledge of coffee to the table.

In addition to promoting Salvadoran culture here in Madison, Valle supports the economy where she came from in buying direct from coffee growers. The name Finca comes from the Central American term for "farm" and is representative of the strong relationships the business has with their farmers.

### PHILOSOPHY

Through those direct relationships, Finca knows exactly how their coffee beans were grown and, by cutting out the middle person, they are able to pay their farmers beyond fair trade prices.

Allbaugh adds Finca wouldn't exist without the support of the Alexander Company. Finca is a part of their pilot project, which aims to assist minority women-owned businesses on tenant improvement allowances in order to bring greater diversity and food culture to the area. 🌸



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

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### CARR VALLEY CRANBERRY CHIPOTLE

This creamy, semi-soft cheese has the perfect proportion of chipotle, which lends just a hint of smoky heat on the back of cranberry's tang. Metcalfe's Market carries a variety of locally curated items that would pair well, including olives, cured meats and here, Nutkrack's caramelized pecans, which provide a sweet and salty dynamic.

*PAIR IT* with either white or red. Try an off-dry Alsatian reisling or a Loire Valley pinot noir. Avoid pairing with any wine that has been oaked.



### SCHROEDER KÄSE TRIPLE CREAM BRIE

A luxurious brie with a soft middle and a characteristic briny kiss at the edges of the palate. Sliced apple, Potter's crackers, Silver Spring whole grain mustard and Quince & Apple black tea and fig jam all harmonize well.

*PAIR IT* with mature, mushroomy Champagnes ideally. (James practically shouted "Champagne!" when I mentioned brie.)

## PERFECT PAIRINGS

To show off your favorite cheeses

STYLED AND WRITTEN BY GRACE TIMMERMAN  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUNNY FRANTZ

**FEW THINGS** make a more welcoming and generous presentation than a large wooden board—or a collection of little boards—bursting with local festive treats that showcase our dear state's true love and passion: cheese.

After selecting some favorites from Fromagination on the Square, I turned the corner onto West Washington to discover a wine haven at Casetta Kitchen and Counter. Pairing wine with cheese can be both a crapshoot and a subtle skill, so





### ROELLI'S RED ROCK

is an earthy cheddar, thanks in part to the modest blue mold streaks that create a delicious fusion. Here accompanied by Marcona almonds and blackberries, it's also the ultimate cracker topping.

*PAIR IT with an Italian Vin Santo for an indulgent treat. Santerini, Isole e Olena, Badia e Coltebuono and Felsina are all admirable producers.*



### MARIEKE TRUFFLE GOUDA

White as pearls, this black truffle-flecked standout is rich and creamy. Ames Farm single source honey and table grapes lend complementary sweetness.

*PAIR IT with a white Burgundy (French chardonnay) or a slightly sweet sparkling rosé such as Bugey Cerdon. Let the white sit out at room temperature for 15-20 minutes before pouring.*

### ROTH GRAND CRU

A beautiful blend of styles—think parmesan matched with a fine gruyere. Oh so smooth, with buttermilk sweetness and just a hint of funk. Serve with honey and fresh fruit, or with pickles and mustard.

*PAIR IT with a white wine with honey and floral notes, such as a German pinot gris from Zind Humerecht or Elena Walsh's gorgeous Italian gewurztraminer.*



I sat down with local sommelier James Juedes, who co-owns and operates Casetta, and got his guidelines for navigating the world of wine in a beer-dominated town. Here are the top takeaways: 1. Explore regions you've never heard of before or grape varieties you didn't know existed. 2. Ask Questions—Local wine shops want to match people with their perfect wine. 3. Beware Misnomers—

Price doesn't equate quality. Sweet doesn't equate fruity. Dry doesn't equate tannins. The best way to avoid misnomers is to practice tasting. Try the themed tastings offered at Square Wine Co.!

No matter what ends up on your cheese board, approaching it with abundance and sharing it with good company are the real keys to success. 🌸



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## RESTORE

Book a spa day for a gift to yourself

BY SHAYNA MACE

**AS 2019** comes to a close, it's a natural time for reflection and goal-setting for the new year—but what about building in some more self-care time too? At these Wisconsin destination spas, you can up your pampering game.

### KOHLER WATERS SPA

The luxurious Kohler brand recently expanded its spa portfolio from its original Kohler Waters Spa in Kohler to open another location at Lodge Kohler in Green Bay's Titledown district. Expect the same high-end treatments and facilities, with a focus on hydrotherapy (water treatments done with Vichy showers) and relaxing, sensory experiences. The spas also offer monthly specials and limited-time services throughout the year. [lodgekohler.com/spa](http://lodgekohler.com/spa)

### THE SPA AT THE EDGEWATER

As one of the state's few lakefront spas, not only can you get some serious self-care, but you can snag a scenic view from some of the treatment rooms, too. Located in the luxe Edgewater hotel in Madison, this soothing spa offers manicures, pedicures, facials, body treatments and massages. Tranquil hues of blues and neutrals echo the peaceful vibe, and guests can spend the whole day here and use the warm relaxation pool, take a yoga class through the Wellness Center or even schedule a haircut and color service at the salon. The Spa has monthly specials too, which have included discounts on services and unique add-ons. [theedgewater.com/spa](http://theedgewater.com/spa)



PHOTO COURTESY KOHLER SPA



PHOTO COURTESY THE SPA AT THE EDGEWATER, NICK BERARD

**SUNDARA SPA**

The state's signature destination spa in Wisconsin Dells is a must-visit for a true decompressing escape. Travel + Leisure and Conde Nast Traveler have heaped accolades on Sundara, whose interior is fashioned to reflect the surrounding Baraboo Hills and 80-acre pine forest. A massive indoor/outdoor saltwater pool, swim-up bar, hot soak pools, outdoor patios, nature trails and various treatment rooms complement the stunning array of amenities here. Make it a girlfriend's getaway by reserving one of the new Woodland suites and allow staff to organize a food and wine pairing demonstration, yoga instruction or recreational activity for your group. This sanctuary is also electronics-free for the ultimate escape. [sundaraspaspa.com](http://sundaraspaspa.com)



PHOTOS COURTESY SUNDARA SPA



PHOTOS COURTESY GRAND GENEVA RESORT AND SPA

**GRAND GENEVA RESORT & WELL SPA**

With its multi-million dollar mansions that line the lake, luxe accommodations and elegant dining, it's only natural that the resort community of Lake Geneva offers several of the state's most luxurious spas. At the sprawling Grand Geneva Resort, you'll find a comprehensive offering of spa services, with such unique treatments as a Lava Shell massage using just that—lava shells—and a custom blend of essential oils. There's also the seasonal treatments, such as the FarmHouse Massage with agave oil and shea butter. [grandgeneva.com](http://grandgeneva.com) 🌸



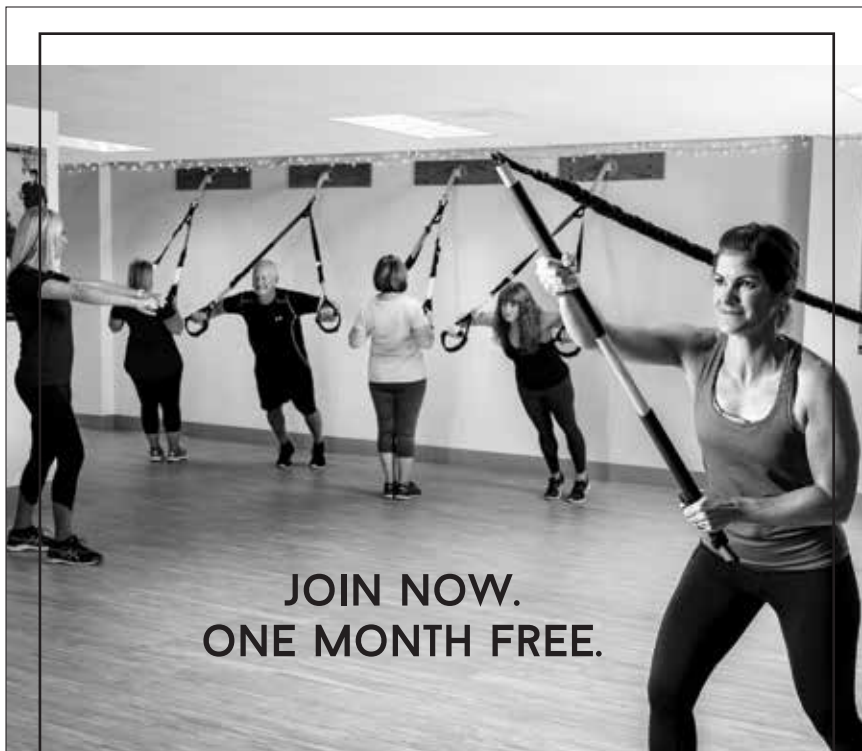
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## DECEMBER



\* Performing arts listings partially supplied by Footlights, a regional guide to performing arts.

## PERFORMING ARTS

12/6 | 7 p.m.

## HANDEL'S MESSIAH

A perennial favorite, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra returns to Blackhawk Church for the 11th year to present Handel's Messiah. *Blackhawk Church, Middleton. wisconsinchamberorchestra.org*

12/6 – 12/15 | Times vary

## "ALL IS CALM: THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE OF 1914"

A German soldier steps into No Man's Land singing "Stille Nacht." Thus begins an extraordinary night of camaraderie, music and peace. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

12/6 – 12/21 | Times vary

## "STRAIGHT WHITE MEN"

Amid the tree decorating, pie eating, brotherly horseplay and traditional Christmas Eve pajamas, Ed and his three sons are all dealing with the pressures of life differently. *Bartell Theatre, Madison. bartelltheatre.org*

12/7 – 12/22 | Times vary

## "A CHRISTMAS CAROL"

Travel back to Victorian England as the ghosts of Scrooge's past, present and future remind us of the power of generosity and the joy of giving. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

12/13 – 12/15 | Times vary

## A MADISON SYMPHONY CHRISTMAS

Embrace the season with Christmas classics and enchanting new music featuring the orchestra, three choruses and opera stars. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

12/15 | 7 p.m.

## "ROTTED ROOTS"

Charlotte sacrificed a promising career to be the best mother she could be—and her now grown children, Elaina and Forrest, never hear the end of it. *Bartell Theatre, Madison. bartelltheatre.org*

## FOLLOW US



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12/17 – 12/18 | 7:30 p.m.

## AN EVENING WITH GEORGE WINSTON

Winston's music is evocative, offering us all a chance to take a step back from our perpetually busy lives and let our minds adventurously wander. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

12/20 – 12/28 | Times vary

## "THE NUTCRACKER"

Ring in the holiday season with this timeless story filled with some of literature's most treasured characters. *Overture Center, Madison. overture.org*

12/20 – 12/29 | Times vary

## "ALICE IN PANTO LAND"

What do you get when you mash-up two beloved children's classics and throw in slapstick humor, corny jokes and silly song parodies? Alice in Panto-Land! *Bartell Theatre, Madison. bartelltheatre.org*

12/31 | 8 p.m.

## BALL DROP BLITZ

A group of writers, directors and actors meet to pick names and writing challenges out of a hat. Just 24 hours from pick-to-page-to-stage! *Bartell Theatre, Madison. bartelltheatre.org*

## ENTERTAINMENT

12/1 – 12/31 | Times vary

## OF WATER, AIR AND POETRY: PERSPECTIVES EN PLEIN AIR BY DIANE WASHA

Award-winning plein air painter Diane Washa captures the varying atmospheres of midwestern landscapes. *Abel Contemporary Gallery, Stoughton. abelcontemporary.com*

12/19 | 6:30 p.m.

## DAVID HECHT SOLO AND ACOUSTIC

Enjoy an evening with this guitarist extraordinaire while sampling culinary delights in a relaxed atmosphere. *Buck and Honey's, Sun Prairie. buckandhoneys.com*

12/24 | 8 p.m.

## LACKIN' SOME DIRECTION

This beloved local Grateful Dead tribute band always puts on a spirited, entertaining show! *The Crystal Corner Bar, Madison. thecrystalcornerbar.com*

12/31 | 8:30 p.m.

## VEHICLE 6

Come enjoy a New Year's Eve to remember with entertainment by local rockers Vehicle 6 and tasty Southwestern bites. *Me and Julio, Fitchburg. meandjuliomadison.com*

## FAMILY

12/1 – 12/29 | 5:30 p.m.

## ZOO LIGHTS

Come visit the zoo as you've never seen it before in this beloved Madison tradition! Thousands of twinkling holidays lights let you enjoy the exhibits after dark. *Henry Vilas Zoo, Madison. henryvilas zoo.gov*

12/7 | 10:30 a.m.

## TEA AND TRAINS

This special event benefiting the Madison Children's Museum features signature train collections by guest conductors, activities for children and families, and holiday high tea with hot chocolate. *The Madison Club, Madison. madisonchildrensmuseum.org*

12/14 | 9 a.m.

## PJS + PANCAKES WITH SANTA

Put on your favorite matching jammies and enjoy breakfast with Santa to get the whole family in the holiday spirit! Pose for photos and build your own scrumptious creation at a made-to-order pancake station. *The Edgewater Hotel, Madison. theedgewater.com*

12/14 | 10 a.m.

## THE SCIENCE OF SNOW

When we think of plants, we often think of sunny, warm days, but some plants actually appreciate snow too! Learn more about the relationships between snow, cold temperatures and plants through hands-on science exploration. *Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. olbrich.org*

12/14 – 12/15 | Times vary

## DANCE WISCONSIN PRESENTS "THE NUTCRACKER"

Enjoy a very special rendition of this timeless classic. *Shannon Hall, UW-Madison. uniontheater.wisc.edu*

12/22 | 8 a.m.

## MAKE AND TAKE COOKIE WORKSHOP

Learn the secrets of gorgeous, delicious holiday confections and take some home to brighten your holiday celebration. *Sur la Table, Hilldale, Madison. surlatable.com*

## JAUNT

12/5 | 4 p.m.

## GET FESTIVE WITH AGORA

Get your holiday shopping started with a special evening including free carriage rides, an outdoor big screen movie and pop-up boutiques and restaurants. *Agora Fitchburg, Fitchburg. agorafitchburg.com*





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**12/6 | 6:30 p.m.**

**LIGHT THE NIGHT WITH SANTA**

Enjoy the holiday light displays while visiting local shops and enjoy holiday music, performances, a train exhibit, treats and of course a special appearance by the big man himself. *Century Avenue and Main Street, Waunakee. waunakeechamber.com*

**12/8 | 3 p.m.**

**VICTORIAN HOLIDAY TOUR OF HOMES**

Ignite your holiday spirit by touring beautiful homes all decked out for the festivities. *Various locations, Stoughton. stoughtonwi.com*

**12/21 | 6 p.m.**

**MIKE MCCLOSKEY LIVE AT THE PAOLI SCHOOLHOUSE**

This longtime Madison-area singer and guitarist has played thousands of live performances throughout Wisconsin, ranging from jazz standards to country, swing, folk, rock, Irish and blues. *The Paoli Schoolhouse, Paoli. paolischoolhouseshops.com*

**12/28 | 11 a.m.**

**HIDDEN MPM TOUR: HOLIDAYS IN HISTORY**

Learn how holiday traditions brought from European immigrants to Milwaukee blended together to create our modern celebrations. *Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee. mpm.edu*

**12/31 | 5 p.m.**

**NEW YEAR'S EVE LUAU**

Don a lei and ring in the New Year with this unique event. Enjoy the island dinner buffet all evening, music by Big Spoon and a midnight champagne toast. *Lakeside Supper Club, Oconomowoc. lakesidesupperclub.com*

**SAVOR**

**12/5 | 6 p.m.**

**PARTY LIKE ITS 1933: PROHIBITION REPEAL PARTY**

Celebrate the repeal of that most unpopular amendment to the sounds of DJ Herbology and the Mad City Jug Band while sipping on 1930's inspired cocktails. Costumes encouraged. *Yahara Bay Distillers, Fitchburg. yaharabay.com*

**12/10 | 3:30 p.m.**

**ENTERTAINING WITH STYLE: PARTY FOOD. A COOKING CLASS WITH JOEL OLSON.**

Elevate your holiday party arsenal with this hands-on cooking class. You'll get to sample everything you make! *Vom Fass University Avenue, Madison. vomfassusa.com*

**12/15 | 10 a.m.**

**BINGO, BLOODYS AND BEER AT THE LONE GIRL**

Get your Sunday fun day started right with some craft-made beverages and bingo. Stick around for the Packers game. *The Lone Girl Brewing Company, Waunakee. thelonegirl.com*



PHOTO COURTESY HYWANIA THOMPSON

**12/15 | 11 a.m.**

**CHRISTMAS PIES AND LATTICE WORKSHOP**

Dazzle your friends and family with gorgeous lattice work on festive and delicious holiday pies. *Pasture and Plenty, Madison. pastureandplenty.com*

**THRIVE**

**12/6 | 11 a.m.**

**SPA-LIDAY SOIREE**

Begin the season feeling merry and bright with appetizers and champagne while you enjoy specially discounted spa treatments. *The Edgewater Hotel, Madison. theedgewater.com*

**12/8 | 3:10 p.m.**

**RUN SANTA RUN 5K**

Don your favorite holiday costume and join the fun in this beloved local tradition. *Capitol Square, Madison. runsantarun5k.com*

**12/12 | 6:15 p.m.**

**DREAM BIG: I NEED TO TELL YOU HOW I FEEL WITH DR. RON JOHNSON AND DR. DEB BROCK**

Open, honest communication is important in any healthy relationship. Come learn techniques for expressing yourself and listening to your partner. *DreamBank, Madison. amfam.com/dreambank*

**12/14 | 1 p.m.**

**EFFIGY MOUNDS: CONSIDERING THE PEOPLE, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

For hundreds of years, earthen mounds—including effigies of animals and conical and linear shapes—were built by Native peoples in southern Wisconsin. Join us for a presentation and discussion of the environment and ways of life of the people who created them. *UW Arboretum, Madison. arboretum.wisc.edu*

**12/28 | 10 a.m.**

**BIRD AND NATURE OUTING AT CHEROKEE MARSH**

Tour the beautiful winter-quiet Cherokee Marsh conservation area with a master naturalist and stick around for a bonfire and hot chocolate. *Cherokee Marsh Conservation Area, Madison. cityofmadison.com*

**12/31 | 10 p.m.**

**NEW YEAR'S EVE AROMA YIN**

Journey into the New Year with Dar's famous New Year's Eve Aroma Yin immersion! Sink into a deep yin practice complete with sensational aromas, hands-on assists and fresh, healthy snacks. Let go of 2019 and set your intentions for a bright and positive present and future! *Inner Fire Yoga, Madison. innerfireyoga.com*

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# NO ONE LEFT HUNGRY

Volunteer or donate to Second Harvest all year long

BY AMY PFLUGSHAUP

NBC15 ANCHOR

PHOTOGRAPHED BY VALERIE TOBIAS

**FOUR AND A HALF** million meals. That's the goal of this year's Share Your Holidays to Eliminate Hunger campaign. Looking at the numbers, 1 in 10 adults and 1 in 6 children in our local communities are

tions have some sort of connection to food.

Every dollar that is donated stays local and will provide up to three meals. You can make a difference by volunteer-

---

*Approximately 45% of all the work done at Second Harvest is done by volunteers.*

---

facing struggles of hunger, according to Feeding America.

Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin is the largest food bank in the southwestern part of the state, filling nearly one million food requests every year.

"Eliminating hunger is something I am deeply committed to and passionate about," says Michelle Orge.

She became the new president and CEO of the organization this past summer. While she's getting familiar with the need in the 16 counties served by Second Harvest, one thing she wants to make clear is that there isn't a spike in need during the holidays; it's a year-round problem.

She says it's only highlighted this time of year, because so many holiday tradi-

ing just an hour of your time too. Numbers from Second Harvest show that one hour of volunteering can provide up to 75 meals.

Julie Hitt is one of many volunteers and the program assistant for the Diabetes Wellness Program.

A nurse by profession, she understands the impacts the lack of healthy food can have on people, including effects on mood and health.

"'Hangry' is real. You can't be kind to other people. You can't take care of yourself. You reach for things that aren't healthy because you are hungry so you eat those potato chips as your meal rather than things that are healthy choices," says Hitt.

Approximately 45% of all the work done at Second Harvest is done by vol-



Michelle Orge

unteers. Hitt gives about 15 hours a week to the foodbank.

"It's very flexible. There are [hours during] weekends, evenings, during the day, so anyone can really work that into their schedule," says Hitt.

Throughout the course of the holiday season, there are more than 200 food and fund drives happening around the area. You can also donate during NBC15's Share Your Holidays Telethon on Dec. 11. On that day, all donations made online will be doubled as well as those made during "Mike's Miracle Minute." 🌸

[secondharvestmadison.org](http://secondharvestmadison.org)

## DECEMBER NONPROFIT EVENTS

**12/7 | 12 p.m.**

### 12 BARS OF CHRISTMAS

Don your favorite ugly sweater and come pub crawl through some of State Street's best bars, all while raising money for Toys for Tots. *State Street Area, Madison. 12bocwi.com*

**12/12 | 6 p.m.**

### MUTTS AND MARTINIS 2019

Come sip a custom cocktail and enjoy live music, snacks and a raffle while raising money for the Humane Society of Southern Wisconsin. *The Beloit Club, Beloit. petsgohome.org*

**12/14 | 11 a.m.**

### MADISON SANTA CYCLE RAMPAGE

Put on your Santa hat and join the jolliest ride of the year while raising money to maintain Madison as one of the bike friendliest communities in the country. *UW-Madison Library Mall, Madison. bfw.org*



PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL KNAPSTEIN

**STARRY EFFECT** | Transforming the Overture Center into a festive holiday atmosphere involves more than 400 strands of lights installed throughout the building by two crews, according to Gary Kohn, Overture director of public relations. “The rotunda lights require a special articulated-arm boom lift which needs to be tall enough to reach the top of the rotunda while being small enough to fit through the Fairchild Street doors,” he says. 🌟



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