

FALL INTO FUN

AUTUMN-WINTER ACTIVITY GUIDE 2023





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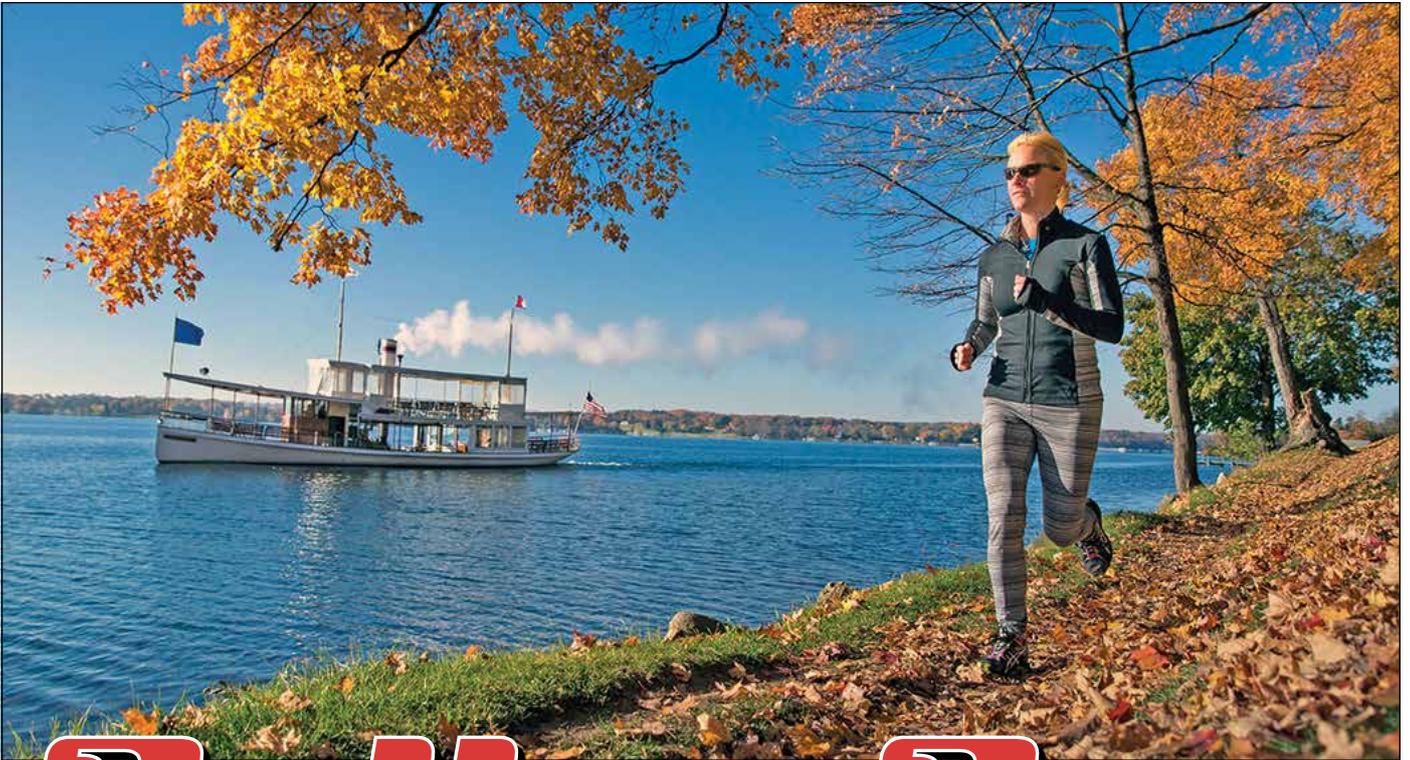
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Fall into Fun

Geneva Lakes area offers seasonal activities for the whole family

For an area well known as a summer resort destination, the Geneva Lakes area does not transition to fall with resignation, but with a sense of celebration for the beauty and familiarity of a season of warm comfort.

Like the turning of the leaves, the Geneva Lakes area turns to a list of activities that light a fire of autumn adventure for visitors and residents alike each October.

Here's a look at some of the activities available.

Sparkling waters

• **Geneva Lake Shore Path:** This really is a remarkable find – a 21-mile public foot path that follows the shoreline of Geneva Lake, taking walkers into the back lawns of those magnificent mansions built by

wealthy Chicagoans as “summer cottages.” The estates look even more impressive against a backdrop of saturated fall color.

• **Lake Geneva Cruise Line:** Go ahead and pretend you're a celebrity out on a yacht for a leisurely sightseeing tour of your favorite hidden lake in Europe. That will require no stretch of the imagination on Geneva Lake.

• **Lake Lawn Queen:** Why stop at one lake when you can tour two? Lake Lawn Resort hosts cruises of Delavan Lake aboard the Lake Lawn Queen.

• **Lake Como:** OK, make it three, with an after-dinner cocktail cruise offered by supper club Mars Resort on Lake Como.

Golf, biking, hiking, paddling, ziplining

• **Golf:** Golf floats to the top of the list for outdoor sports, with golf pedigrees in Lake Geneva to impress even the most discerning golfer. Two 18-hole courses at Grand Geneva Resort present the kind of challenge golfers relish, thanks to the contributions of original designers Jack Nicklaus and Pete Dye. At Geneva National Resort, golfers can put their skills to the test on 54 holes of award-winning golf designed by legends Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, and

Lee Trevino.

Other area courses of note include Hawks View in Lake Geneva, Evergreen Country Club in Elkhorn, Delbrook in Delavan, Majestic Oaks at Lake Lawn Resort – also in Delavan, and Brighton Dale Golf Course in Kansasville.

• **Biking:** Avant Cycle Café combines a coffee bar featuring locally roasted brews

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2023 FALL FUN GUIDE

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A fall ride with the Lake Geneva Cruise Line or a jog along the Geneva Lake Shore Path are two of many fall activities available to residents and visitors.

COURTESY OF VISIT LAKE GENEVA *Fall Fun Guide*



FALL INTO FUN • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

and a bicycle shop featuring cruiser and e-bike rentals. The coffee roasts are named after cycling routes in the area and the labels include a link to an online route map. Pedal and Cup is another coffee/bike rental pairing, this one located right at the trailhead to the White River State Trail.

- **Hiking:** Big Foot Beach State Park, rimming the shore of Geneva Lake, has a total of 6.5 miles of various hiking trails that are classified as easy or moderate, making this is a perfect destination for beginner hikers looking to take a fall hike.

If weather works in your favor, a late-season canoe or kayak excursion should be considered, with rentals available from a vendor just south of the park entrance.

Four Seasons Nature Preserve, a passive park for hiking, has a new Storybook Trail that tells the tale of a migratory bird family via illustrations and activities.

- **Paddling:** Rent a stand up paddleboard or kayak from Clear Water Outdoor and ply the waters of Geneva Lake or Lake Como. Gage Marine also has rentals on Geneva Lake.

- **Adventure:** Grand Geneva Adventure Center offers archery and disc golf, along with hiking and mountain biking.

At Lake Geneva Ziplines and Adventures, zip over the tree canopy on the 100-acre woodland property, test your fortitude on the high ropes course, try the new climbing tower, and take to the hiking and mountain bike trails.

The wilds of Wisconsin

- **Safari Lake Geneva:** Not a zoo, not a theme park, but a wildlife preserve that is home to animals from around the world. The animals roam free while visitors traverse the grounds “safely



top: Fall's spectacular colors are especially impressive while taking a cruise on an area lake. **at right:** Oktoberfest brings a bit of ethnic fun to Lake Geneva Oct. 7 and 8 including music, food, a beer garden and more. Note that for 2023, the celebration will return to Broad and Geneva streets downtown.

COURTESY OF VISIT LAKE GENEVA *Fall Fun Guide*

caged” in their cars, making for a very enjoyable role-reversal experience.

- **Kishwaukee Nature Conservancy:**

This hidden gem in Williams Bay reveals rolling creeks, mirror-like ponds, and lush fall colors to satisfy the senses.

Stroll the boardwalk that hovers above the wetland or walk the trails that traverse the 231 acres of forests and prairie.

Kishwaukee is the largest watershed on Geneva Lake and presents a rare and evolving lakeside ecological area.

Join Board Chairman Harold Friestad each Friday through October for a guided walk of the Conservancy. Meet at the main entrance at 251 Elkhorn Rd. (Highway 67) at 9 a.m.

- **Geneva Lake Conservancy:** This non-profit organization is dedicated to the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands, tending to five preserves including the Helen Rohner Children’s Fishing Park.

Fall drives and rides

- **Lake Geneva Balloon Company:** For a breathtaking view of the fall color show, try a hot air balloon ride. Flights are offered until mid-November.

- **Lake Geneva Scooter Tours:** Scoot around on your own or take a guided tour.

- **American Classic Rental:** See fall colors in classic style with a car rental from American Classic Rental, where the vehicle choices represent the best of the 1940s through the 1970s.

Down on the farm

- **Pearce’s Farm Stand:** Crunch into the flavors of the season at Pearce’s Farm Stand.

Leave with armfuls of apples, pumpkins, and gourds.

Their professionally designed corn maze is huge at 12 acres and a fun fall activity for the family.

- **Apple Orchards: Brightonwoods,** in Kansasville, features more than 150 already-picked antique and commercial apple varieties, along with fresh apple cider. **Hafs Road Orchard,** Genoa City, specializes in Honeycrisp. Pick a peck of apples at **Apple Barn Orchard and Winery,** Elkhorn, then stop in the country store and bakery for cider donuts, maple syrup, and some local wine and honey.

Rainy day pursuits

- **Magic:** The Tristan Crist Magic Theatre, Lake Geneva, is home to illusionist Tristan Crist, known for his large-scale illusions performed up close and personal.

On select dates in October, the theatre will host special guest David Seebach – Illusions in the Night.

- **Dancing Horses:** See the local version of dressage equestrian with the horses performing to music at the Dancing Horses Theatre, Delavan. The 90-minute show is full of pageantry and the performers (both the horses and their trainers) sparkle in



COURTESY OF VISIT LAKE GENEVA Fall Fun Guide



COURTESY OF ELKHORN AREA CHAMBER Fall Fun Guide

above: Oktoberfest in Elkhorn features a craft and vendor fair in Veterans Park, a variety of German and local food options, live entertainment on a stage downtown and more including an all around town wine/beer tasting event, a 5K run/walk and a classic car show. **top:** Autumn’s canopy of colors provides a special experience for bicyclists along the White River Trail or one of the many Rustic Roads in the area.

rhinestones.

Festivals and other events

Sept. 16: The 23rd Annual Scarecrow Fest, in downtown Delavan, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It features free admission and parking. There will be Walldog Mural Tours, DIY scarecrow kits for \$10, a petting zoo, free pumpkins, children’s activities, food, crafters and vendors, live music and more.

- **Oct. 7-8:** Lake Geneva Oktoberfest, staged downtown on Broad and Geneva streets, it’s a celebration of many traditional

German festivities including a beer garden, artisan market, tasty treats, live entertainment and family fun and activities.

Oct. 21: Elkhorn Oktoberfest, held downtown, has band, brats and golden beers. Veterans Park has craft and commercial vendors, local and German cuisine is available along the street from a variety of food vendors. Live music plays on the park stage and there is an all-around town wine/beer tasting event. That’s not all as there is the Oktoberfest 5K run/walk and annual classic car show.

Racine Zoo to host Jack-O'-Lantern Nights

It features more than 1,000 hand-carved lanterns and illuminations

More than 1,000 hand-carved Jack-O'-Lanterns and festive illuminations will light up the night at the Racine Zoo's Jack-O'-Lantern Nights, Sept. 28 through Sunday, Oct. 29. The family friendly event will be open Thursdays through Sundays from 6 to 10 p.m. at the zoo, 2131 N. Main St., Racine.

In the crisp fall air, guests will stroll through the zoo along a dedicated paved pathway and become immersed in dazzling lights and charming decorations.

The intricately designed Jack-O'-Lanterns will look like pieces of art during the day and come to life at night for all to see. There will be an abundance of custom designs to discover including cats, owls, scarecrows, and more Halloween-themed creations.



Amanda Rise carves a Jack-O'-Lantern for the Racine Zoo. The zoo will host its Jack-O'-Lantern Nights event this fall from Sept. 28 through Oct. 29. The event features more than 1,000 hand-carved lanterns and illuminations along a dedicated path at the zoo.

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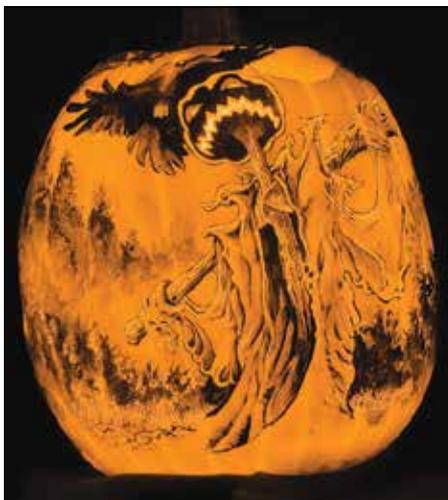
To compliment the lanterns, there will be enchanting light displays throughout the route. Within the event, the zoo will host a decorating contest that businesses and organizations can sign up to participate in.

Guests will be able to vote on their favorite decorated space and the winner will be announced at the end of the event. As they take in the sights, guests can warm up with seasonal food and beverages on site.

“We are absolutely thrilled to be bringing this event to the Racine Zoo,” Racine Zoo Executive Director Beth Heidorn said prior to the first event, held last year. “This is a fun, family event that will let you see the zoo in a different ‘light.’ With the amazing support from the State of Wisconsin’s Tourism Department and two incredibly creative companies, we are certain to put smiles on our guests’ faces! Please join us this fall!”

The zoo is working with the company Rise of the Jack-O’-Lanterns, based in New York, to create the masterpieces to line the walkways of the zoo in a glorious fall setting.

Using scalpels, knives, gouges, and power tools, artists for Rise of the Jack-O’-Lanterns will spend up to 15 hours sculpting a single one. These professionals have done incredible shows in New York and are now bringing their creativity to southeast Wisconsin.



In addition to the Jack-O’-Lantern display, the Racine Zoo will have a light show and decorating contest for visitors to take part in during the event, Sept. 28 through Oct. 29.

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For the light displays, the zoo is working with Traditions Holiday Lighting and Seasonal Décor. Traditions, which was founded in 2011, is based in Wisconsin, providing services to clients from Green Bay to Lake Geneva. The company specializes in holiday lighting and landscape lighting, combining high quality products with a unique design and personal touch.

“The Racine Zoo has been a top attraction for more than 99 years, and is always finding new ways to attract and delight visitors,” Secretary-designee Anne Sayers said. “Congratulations on receiving this JEM grant to build a spectacular fall event that is positioned perfectly to capitalize on the Chicago drive market.”

Jack-O’-Lantern Nights is perfect for kids and adults of all ages. The event provides a safe opportunity for guests to go out and enjoy some holiday-themed fun.

Admission is only available at the door – cash or credit cards accepted – and is \$10 per person and free for children 2 years old and younger. Proceeds benefit the animals and programs of the Racine Zoo.

About the Racine Zoo

Nestled along the sandy shores of Lake Michigan, the Racine Zoo is open year round.

Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the last admission at 4:30 p.m. Admission rates are: Members and children 2 and younger, free; children 3 to 15 years, \$9; seniors, \$10; and adults, \$11.

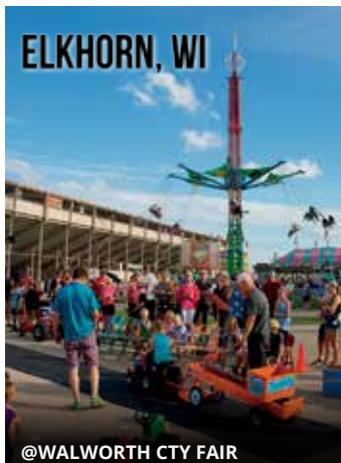
For more information on the Racine Zoo, including its programs and events, visit racinezoo.org, call 262-636-9189 and follow the zoo on social media including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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COURTESY OF GRAND GENEVA Fall Fun Guide

Time to hit the slopes

Area ski hills offer a variety of runs for all abilities

Skiing and snowboarding remain popular among outdoor enthusiasts who refuse to be relegated to the couch during the winter months.

For the men, women and children who hit the slopes each winter, the thrill of racing down snow-covered hills is a feeling unlike any other.

The Southern Lakes Area features several ski hills including The Mountain Top at Grand Geneva Resort and Spa, Wilmot Mountain Ski Resort and Alpine Valley Resort.

The area also features several opportunities for cross country ski enthusiasts.

Here's a closer look at the area's skiing options:

THE MOUNTAIN TOP AT GRAND GENEVA

7036 Grand Geneva Way
Lake Geneva
(262) 248-8811 • grandgeneva.com

The Mountain Top has 21 ski runs covering more than 30 acres of downhill ski runs with a 211-foot vertical.

The ski and snowboarding offerings are suitable for all levels, according to staff at

The Mountain Top.

Some additional amenities and services offered by The Mountain Top include:

- Skiing and snowboarding all winter long with The Mountain Top's snowmaking capabilities
- Three chairlifts and two carpet lifts.
- Six-acre Terrain Park with dedicated lift.
- Lessons offered by professional ski instructors for kids and adults
- Equipment rentals
- Trolley transportation from guest rooms at Grand Geneva and Timber Ridge Lodge.

Group rates are available for 15 people or more. Seniors 65 and older qualify for reduced priced tickets; there are also price breaks depending on the age of skiers and the day of the week being booked.

After a day in the snow, skiers and snowboarders can relax and enjoy a warm fire, hot beverage and food at the Leinenkugel's Mountain Top Lodge.

There are a variety of stay and ski packages offered at Grand Geneva.

In addition to skiing, the resort offers ice skating, sledding, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, just outside of The

Mountain Top Ski Hill.

Hours, lift ticket prices and more information can be found on the website.

WILMOT MOUNTAIN SKI RESORT

11931 Fox River Rd
Wilmot • (262) 862-2301
www.wilmotmountain.com

The 25 unique runs at Wilmot Mountain offer varied terrain for all skiers and snowboarders; from novices stepping onto the snow for the very first time to experts looking to further push themselves and their sport.

Snowmaking, according to Wilmot General Manager Peter Disch, is a combination of science and an ideal atmosphere.

"While any natural snow is certainly always a plus, making our own snow at Wilmot Mountain really is a science," he said. "Temperatures must be consistently 28 degrees or colder with low humidity's in order for us to make quality snow."

Officials monitor weather conditions closely and develop a snowmaking plan, he said.

Wilmot Mountain reports daily



FILE PHOTO Fall Fun Guide

conditions on its website.

“We typically focus our efforts on ski and snowboard terrain once temperatures allow us to make snow early season,” said Disch, whose staff then moves its efforts to Wilmot Mountain’s tubing hill.

For tubing, Disch said, officials need more snow, considering the ski hill offers 22 carved lanes of snow tubing.

“It takes a lot of snow to open tubing given that we have up to 22 carved lanes of snow tubing. Depth of snow is really important as we carve those lanes,” Disch said. “There’s also thorough testing of lanes to ensure guest safety. And, obviously, we test the lanes daily.”

While Wilmot Mountain guests have differing preferences, tubing is one activity nearly anyone can enjoy.

Tubing, he said, is also beneficial to large groups.

“Anyone can tube because gravity does

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

above: Three area ski resorts – Alpine Valley, Grand Geneva and Wilmot Mountain – are a way to spend time outdoors in the winter. There are also options in the area for cross-country skiing as well as snowshoeing, tubing and sledding. **right:** Alpine Valley Ski Resort is the largest of the area’s ski facilities with 90 acres featuring 21 runs and a long run of 3,000 feet. **opposite:** The Southern Lakes area features three full-service ski hills, including The Mountain Top at Grand Geneva Resort.



COURTESY OF ALPINE VALLEY Fall Fun Guide

the work,” he said. “And it’s a fun thing to do with family and friends. We see many school groups, clubs and organizations that come out and utilize our group rates of 20-plus.”

ALPINE VALLEY RESORT

W2501 Highway D
Elkhorn • (262) 642-7374
www.alpinevalleyresort.com

Alpine features 20 slopes that range from beginner to expert mogul runs with 388 feet of vertical skiing. The hill also includes the Mohawk Terrain Park, which offers snowboarders and freestyle skiers a variety of rails, boxes and snow features.

“We offer services you would see out west but for half the price and local” Elizabeth Firestone, Ski and Snowboard Director said.

“Specific to the ski hill aspect; we have three high-speed quads, snow carousel, four triple chair lifts, two rope tow and five beginner magic carpets which provide our customers less time in line and more time on the snow” Jamison Satchel, General Manager for Alpine said.

Alpine features over 100 skiable acres with 20 runs that range from beginner to expert and vertical drop of 388 feet. The longest run is 3,000 feet.

Alpine offers classes for beginners to well-seasoned skiers and riders.



Tubing is a fun activity for all young or old. The tubing hill at Wilmot Mountain has divided lanes to protect the tubers from crossing into each other’s space, making it very safe.

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If you are looking to get back on the slopes or to brush up on your skills, a lesson with one of Alpine’s qualified and enthusiastic instructors is a great way to start the season.

Instructors will help you learn a new sport and improve skills for all ages and levels to enjoy skiing and snowboarding.

The hill also includes three terrain parks, offering a variety of rails, boxes, and snow features.

After time on the slopes, visit Alpine’s indoor Café for a slice of pizza, or warm up with a cup of coffee or hot chocolate at the Coffee Shop. Visit the outside bar or grill

on the weekends. Those looking for a more elegant dining experience are encouraged to visit Alpine’s fireside or dining room.

Season passes are on sale as of Sept. 1.

BIG FOOT STATE PARK

1550 S. Lake Shore Drive
Lake Geneva

The park entrance is at 1550 S. Lake Shore Drive, one mile south of the city of Lake Geneva. Vehicle admission sticker is required. Cross country skiing and snowshoeing allowed. Bring own equipment.

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Church builds large, free play area

Indoor facility can be used by the public for free

BY JENNIFER EISENBART • STAFF WRITER

Lakeland Community Church, at N3181 Highway 67 in Delavan, is taking its community interaction to a new level.

Early in 2023, the church opened an indoor public playground with free hours for the public and the ability to rent the space to groups.

“The church wanted something that was going to reach more of the community,” said Amanda Breen, the brand and communications director at the church. “They’re really excited to offer something for free.”

Breen said the 5,000-square-foot space is the largest indoor play space in Walworth County and the second largest in the state – behind The Wilderness in Wisconsin Dells.

“There really wasn’t anything indoor for the winter,” Breen said. “There’s nothing really in our area, especially for free.”

“People can come in and let their kids run around, even just for an hour,” she added.

The facility, which is attached to the church but does not require church membership, has a half-court basketball court, an interactive game wall and a toddler play and climbing area.

Public hours for the play area are Monday-Wednesday, 9 a.m. to noon, Thursday and Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m.

The best way to monitor capacity at the park is through the Facebook page: Lakeland Park – Walworth County. If at capacity, new guests who arrive are added to a waitlist.

The church included the public indoor



above: Lakeland Community Church, at N3181 Highway 67 in Delavan, opened the new indoor play space earlier this year as a way to offer a place for indoor activities for kids of all ages.

below, right: Lakeland Park, the Lakeland Community Church indoor center that opened earlier this year, has plenty of room for large groups and rambunctious play. There is a check-in area to make sure they don’t exceed capacity however, as guests leave, those on the waiting list are allowed to enter the play area. **below, left:** There are a variety of games that can be played at the indoor park. They are often rotated so participants can experience new ones when the stop in.

LAKELAND PARK PHOTOS Fall Fun Guide

playground as part of last year’s capital campaign. The church also redesigned its “next gen” spaces, including classrooms and other parts of the church.

The play area, Breen said, gives everyone a chance to check out what Lakeland offers.

“People are really excited about it,”

Breen said, adding that the church was originally hoping to cater to moms and kids, but also heard interest from homeschool communities, groups in the church.

“Really just times for adults to come and let their children play,” Breen said.

For more information or to reach the church, call 262-245-4567.



Take your golf game inside

Evergreen Golf Club makes the most of the winter season

BY JENNIFER EISENBART • STAFF WRITER

Once the temperatures drop and most golfers would prefer not to play outside, Evergreen Golf Club in Elkhorn has another option – an indoor golf simulator.

The club, at N6246 Highway 12 in Elkhorn, started a new winter golf league last year, played on golf simulators at the golf course.

General manager Bill Rogers said when the weather cooperates, regardless of what month it is, they will offer outside golfing.

“People really get a kick out of playing year round. People will come out on a lousy day just to say they played in January,” he said following mild temperatures early in the year.

Outdoor golfing remains open – at Evergreen and other courses in the area – as long as the course is playable.

But for those looking to escape the dreary winter weather, there is the new option of simulated golf as well. Two, 10-foot high simulators were installed late in 2022, allowing people to play a course indoors.

Rogers said early in the year, the simulators were seeing an average of three to four reservations per day. An hour costs \$35 Monday through Thursday, and it’s \$45 per hour Friday through Sunday.

Typically, an hour is enough for a person to play 18 holes. However, if multiple people want to share an hour, that is allowed.

“It’s based per hour,” Rogers said. “I don’t care if one, three, four people play. You’re paying the one rate.”

The decision to bring the golf simulators in was made by owner Nehang Anand, who purchased the property in March 2022. There are two simulators, which are set up side-by-side in the pro shop.

“It requires a 10-foot ceiling, so you’ve got to have a little bit newer of a building,” Rogers said.

A player hits the ball into the screen, and then optical sensors in the floor pick up where and how far the ball will go. The projector screen, which shows the course, then moves to where the ball landed.

The simulator plays like real golf.

“If the club face is open or closed, it goes either left or right, just like real golf,” Rogers explained. “Then it calculates how long it takes to reach the screen, which figures out how hard you hit the ball.”

Players then proceed to where the ball landed, and hit a follow-up shot, and putt once the ball is on the green. If more



Golf simulators offer golfers a way to play, or polish up their skills, during the winter months.

They feature optical sensors that determine where and how far the ball will go once hit. The projector screen that shows the course then moves to where the ball landed.

FILE PHOTOS
Fall Fun Guide

than one player is using the simulator, they follow typical golf rules. There are numerous different scoring options, including best ball, stroke play, scramble play and match play.

“There’s just a lot of things you can do,” Rogers said. Players can also choose to play on a hitting range or on one of 70-plus courses around the world.

Though the next indoor league at Evergreen has yet to tee off, last year it featured a nine-week season with golfers registering as two-player teams. It was an 18-hole league that followed best-ball format.

Fall golfing events

For those looking to get more golf in outside while they can, Evergreen is

offering fall scrambles as well as a Turkey Shoot Scramble.

The Turkey Shoot will be on Sunday, Oct. 10 and feature an 18-hole scramble with four-person teams. There will be six on-course hole events and prizes for first, fourth and eighth place teams.

“And everyone brings home a turkey,” the event page states.

The 27-hole fall scrambles have dates available through mid-October. They are four-person events that offer cash prizes for first, fourth, eighth and 12th places as well as a steak cookout dinner.

For more information, call Evergreen Golf Club at 262-741-6200 or visit evergreengolf.com.

Heather Ruenz contributed to this story.



A cool start to the New Year!

Williams Bay hosts an annual New Year's Day Polar Plunge on Jan. 1. Dozens of people gather to take the annual run into Geneva Lake or cheer on those that do. Once in the water, they generally waste little time making their way out of the lake.

DAVE DRESDOW Fall Fun Guide



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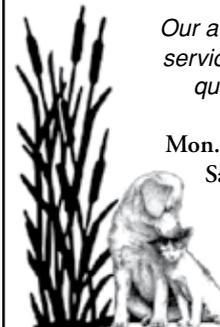
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