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AUTUMN-WINTER ACTIVITY GUIDE 2024





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This sign at Hafs Road Orchard directs customers to different apple varieties.

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ALL OTHER APPLES

Visit a local orchard for the freshest apples

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**
CORRESPONDENT

In addition to cooling temperatures and changing colors, fall is also the time of year to take a drive to the countryside and check out an apple orchard. Apples are not only enjoyable but have the added benefit of being a healthy food.

With a large variety from very sweet to tart, it's likely anyone can find one for their palate. They can be eaten fresh off the tree, or covered in caramel on a stick and baked into an apple pie.

HAFS ROAD ORCHARD

W632 Hafs Rd. • Genoa City • 262-279-3638

The history of Hafs Road Orchard goes back to the late 1930s, when 40 trees representing 25 different varieties of popular apples were planted by the family on the Hafs Road farm.

In 1982, Richard and Debbie Polansky purchased the orchard and have continued to increase both the number of trees and the number of varieties of apples grown here.

"The original trees planted were full-sized trees," Debbie Polansky explained. "Over the years, we have added a variety of dwarf trees, increasing the number of trees and the number of varieties that are grown."

Today, the orchard has about 3,000 trees, most of the dwarf variety. According to Debbie, there are still a few of the original full-sized trees that produce apples.

This year the weather has been extremely hot, leaving one to wonder how it has affected the apple crop.

"This year we expect to have a good harvest, as many apples as last year," said Kimmy Gaul, who has worked with the Polansky family for several years.

Last year, the Polanskys introduced a new apple to their orchard, the Kinder

2024 FALL FUN GUIDE

A publication of

Southern Lakes Newspapers

1102 Ann St., Delavan, WI 53115 • (262) 728-3411

Editor in Chief: Heather Ruenz

Creative Director: Heidi Schulz

Advertising Director: Vicki Vanderwerff

Page Design: Jen DeGroot

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Krisp – a sweet eating apple that was new to the area. Because of the limited number of these new apples that were grown during that first year, it was recommended that those wishing to try this new variety put in an order for them when they first became available.

“This year, since additional Kinder Krisp apple trees were planted, there will be more of these apples available to purchase, but we still expect them to go fast,” Gaul said earlier in the fall. “They will be one of the early ripening apples and available in our early opening days.”

The orchard will also have a large number of Honeycrisp apples, which continue to be the favorite in the area. When the orchard first planted Honeycrisp apples in 1992, again, there were only a limited number of trees producing them. The new variety, developed by the University of Minnesota, proved to be a hit for both apples and caramel apples.

“Even if Honeycrisp are your favorite brand of apples, consider trying one or more other apples for a change of taste,” added Gaul. “You will need some of the other kinds of apples, especially if you want to bake with them, as some are much better for baking and cooking than others.”

Each year, once the Honeycrisps ripen, the Polanskys begin making their famous Honeycrisp caramel apples, which are sold plain or rolled in pecans, are usually available early in September. Apple cider, apple cider vinegar and frozen applesauce made with a mix of apple varieties will also be available.

The early ripening apples – Zestar, Ginger Gold and Kinder Krisp – were available when the orchard opened for the season in late August. To find which apples are ready at any given time, call the Orchard before visiting.

While the orchard does not offer the



Bushels of Gala apples are a sight to see at Hafs Road Orchard in Genoa City.

HAFS ROAD ORCHARD PHOTO *Fun Guide*

opportunity for people to pick apples, the orchards are open for walking. Later in the season, pumpkins and squash will also be available.

“We do not offer pick your own apples but do recommend that you take a walk through the orchard and enjoy the beauty of the trees,” added Gaul.

The orchard will remain open until Christmas week. Hours are Monday through Thursday from noon to 5 p.m., and weekends (Friday through Sunday) from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Check the website www.hafsorchard.com for current hours and species of apples available.

THE APPLE BARN ORCHARD AND WINERY

W6384 Sugar Creek Rd.
Elkhorn • 262-728-3266

Six generations ago, beginning in 1848, the Jacobson family began farming the land. Along with the Apple Barn being a

working farm, the family has grown the space to include the apple store, bakery and even its own winery.

With several thousand apple trees, one can expect a large number and varieties of apples this year. The apples begin to ripen in late August and early September. Among the most popular apple varieties at the Apple Barn are Gala, Zestar and Honeycrisp varieties.

For the 35th year, Apple Fest will be held at the Apple Barn. The weekend of September 28 and 29 will be filled with activities such as pick-your-own apples, music, food trucks, wine tasting and more.

One of the earliest varieties to ripen are the Paula Reds. The ever-popular Honeycrisps tend to ripen in mid-September, but with the recent hot weather, it is possible they may be available earlier.

“On weekends during Apple Fest, music and food vendors will be present on the grounds,” said Judy Jacobson, who,



above: A large apple stands tall near the orchard entrance at the Apple Barn. It's across the street from the barn and shop that features everything from freshly baked goods and gifts to a variety of wine offerings. **at right:** In addition to apples (and all things related to them) as well as homemade baked goods, the country store at The Apple Barn features seasonal home décor and more. Hours at The Apple Barn will be Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

HEIDI SCHULZ *Fun Guide*





with her husband Steve, are the current generation of the Jacobson family to own Apple Barn.

Apple picking is a favorite family activity and many visiting families look forward to coming to the Apple Barn to enjoy the day on the farm. It is one of the few orchards that still allows self-pick in the area. Apple picking is available on weekends and pick your own pumpkins should be available around Oct. 1.

Fresh, warm apple cider donuts are also a favorite, and other baked goods made on site are also available.

The Apple Barn store offers hand-crafted and cooking items, as well as fruit wines created on site. All wines are created from non-grape fruits and berries in small batches, and wine tasting is available. Apple cider is also for sale.

Fall hours at the Apple Barn are Tuesday thru Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed on Mondays. The website, applebarnorchardandwinery.com and the Facebook page will list current event dates and updated hours.

BRIGHTONWOODS ORCHARD AND AEPPELTREOW

1072 288th Ave. • Burlington • 262-878-3000

Brightonwoods Orchard was established as a weekend retreat in 1950. At that time the orchards, a few apple trees, were located on a farmland getaway property.

Throughout the years, the number of apple trees increased and are now located on over 18 acres. Bill Stone, son-in-law of the original owner, took over the property and has worked to continue the growth of the heirloom varieties and to include some of the newer varieties.

Currently the orchard has 150 varieties



above: Brightonwoods Apple Cider is made fresh and always a treat, especially in the fall.

top: The apples at Brightonwoods Orchard are sold in the barn. The two-story playhouse, which can be seen in the distance, is a favorite stop for the younger visitors.

BRIGHTONWOODS ORCHARD PHOTO *Fun Guide*

of apples, while seeded and seedless grapes, quince and pears are also grown on site.

The family friendly grounds feature a two-story playhouse for children, as well as open areas with picnic tables. The orchard's fall hours are Wednesday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Charles McGonegal, the owner of AEPpeLTreow, will replace Bill Stone in overseeing the orchards at Brightonwoods.

"Bill has been trying to retire for some time and now the time has come for me to take over managing the orchard," McGonegal said. In addition, Jeremy Thelen has been hired as orchard manager for this year.

"We expect an incredible crop this

season," Judy Stone said earlier this fall.

With many of Brightonwoods' trees full-sized, the orchard does not offer self picking. All fruit is sold inside the barn, in addition to Glas Naturals – a locally produced cheese spread.

Many of the same events that have been held on the grounds of Brightonwoods will continue this season. The first event will be the Farm to Table dinner, held by Braise Restaurant of Milwaukee, which will be held on site as it has been for over 15 years. Contact Braise at 414-212-8843 for menu information and to purchase tickets for the event.

On Sept. 28 and 29, the fourth annual craft and vendor fair will be at the orchard from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. On Oct. 6, the Caledonia Lions Club will sponsor the Orchard Cruise In. A large number of classic cars will be on site from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

In 2001, Charles McGonegal and his wife, Milissa, opened AEPpeLTreow Winery and Distillery on the grounds of Brightonwoods in the large barn that was currently not used. They remodeled the barn to allow for space to distill their products and a space for a tasting bar.

AEPpeLTreow is a producer of small-batch cider, perry and spirits. Ciders are made from apples and pears, using a fermenting process. Perry is the pear analogue to cider, and a distillery creates whisky and brandy on site.

"This year we have added a new light pear drink in cans," McGonegal said. "This drink was due to obtaining some unexpected pears of opportunity. I obtained these pears after we had already purchased what we needed for our regular perry, so we developed this light drink with moderate alcohol content and a slightly sweet taste."

For more information, visit either of the websites at brightonwoodsorchard.com or aeppeltreow.com.

Time to hit the snowy slopes

AREA SKI HILLS OFFER A VARIETY OF RUNS FOR ALL ABILITIES



The Southern Lakes area features three full-service ski hills including The Mountain Top at Grand Geneva Resort.

GRAND GENEVA PHOTO *Fun Guide*

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.

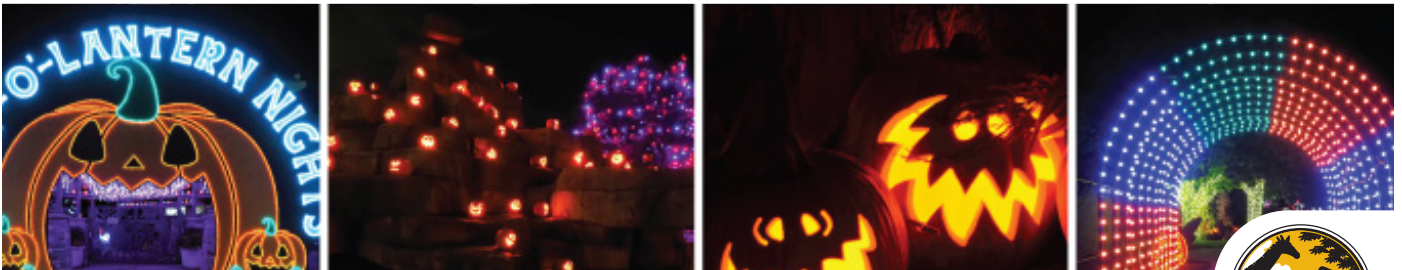
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In addition to skiing and snowboarding, Wilmot Mountain has a large tubing run. These kids are all smiles while tubing down the hill.

WILMOT MOUNTAIN PHOTO Fun Guide

- 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 hills at Wilmot were created by the glaciation in the Kettle Moraine. There are 25 runs that 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.

Statistics about Wilmot Mountain include the following: highest elevation is

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 with The Mountain Top's snow-making

capabilities

- Three chairlifts and two carpet lifts.
- Six-acre Terrain Park with dedicated lift.
- Lessons offered by professional ski instructors for kids and adults



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960 feet; skiable terrain covers 120 acres; the mountain has 10 ski lifts; and 25 trails.

The expanded progression terrain parks offer unique and innovative features and set-ups, designed and created by terrain park staff, as well as the high-speed rope tow to enable skiers and snowboarders to spend more time in the terrain park, according to the website. The terrain parks are: The Gully – which features hips, bonks, and innovative off camber rails and boxes; The Pasture – a great step up from The Gully. Expect to have rails, small jumps, rainbows, and much more; The Rope – the furthest and most advanced area of Wilmot’s parks with longer rail jumps, stair sets, walls, and advanced innovative features.

Lessons are available for people of all ages in skiing and snowboarding, in groups as well as private offerings.

Snow tubing has its own area located 1/4-mile south, and tickets are purchased at the tubing lodge. While Wilmot Mountain guests have differing preferences as to their winter sport of choice, tubing is an activity nearly anyone can enjoy. Snow tubing has an outdoor patio overlooking the hill.

Most of the operations run out of the lodge at Wilmot, including tickets, retail, repair, Ski Hill Grill and patrol. Equipment rental and Ski & Ride School operate out of separate buildings.

More details can be found on the website.

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.

According to ski and snowboard staff, Alpine “offers services you would see out west but for half the price and local.”

Specific to the ski hill aspect; Alpine has 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 at 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.

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

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

The hill also includes three terrain



Alpine Valley Ski Resort is the largest of the area’s ski facilities with 90 acres featuring 21 runs including a long run of 3,000 feet.

ALPINE VALLEY PHOTO *Fun Guide*

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.

Visit the website for more information.

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING 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.

GENEVA NATIONAL

1221 Geneva National Ave. South
Lake Geneva • (262) 245-7000

Enjoy cross country skiing over the Gary Player Course. Complimentary ski rental available to Geneva National Resort guests. The trail is open depending on weather and snow accumulation.

WHITE RIVER COUNTY PARK

6503 Sheridan Springs Road
Lake Geneva • (262) 741-3114

With nearly 200 acres and two miles of frontage along the White River, this park features walking trails, cross country skiing and more.

Celebrate the season at Winterfest

*Snow sculpting
competition, bonfires
and ice sculpture
walk highlight event*

by **Sandra Landen Machaj**

CORRESPONDENT

To many, Lake Geneva is a summer resort town, a place to enjoy the beauty of the lake and take in summertime activities. But the city is a happening place year-round, including winter events and activities that can make the cold, snowy days an ideal time for people to head outdoors.

The annual Winterfest event is one of the highlights of activities in the area during the colder weather. For the past 30 years, it's featured the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Championship, where championship teams from around the country compete against each other in creating detailed snow sculptures.

This year, Winterfest and the snow sculpting competition kick off Wednesday, Jan. 29 and go through Sunday, Feb. 2. The sculpting takes place in Riviera Plaza and Flat Iron Park.

Visitors can wander and watch as the teams turn large blocks of snow into sculptures, working on them day and often, through the night.

"Although in some years there is no snow or very little that has accumulated at the time of Winterfest, there is never a problem with holding the snow sculpting competition. We are fortunate to have the support of Grand Geneva Resort who produce man-made snow for their ski runs. They produce enough snow for the event and deliver it to the Riviera for use by the sculptors," Deanna Goodwin said in a previous interview.

"The City of Lake Geneva works with Grand Geneva and helps transport the snow to Riviera Plaza by Wednesday when the competition starts," added Goodwin, Vice President of Marketing, Communication, and Development for VISIT Lake Geneva.

According to Goodwin, while the snow provided by Grand Geneva is needed for the sculptures, it's always nice to have



The 2023 winner of the U.S. National Snow Sculpting Competition was the North Dakota Team with their piece titled "The Nemean Lion." They also won first place in the People's Choice event that year, which is voted on by visitors.

VISIT LAKE GENEVA PHOTO *Fun Guide*

some natural snow covering the ground as well, giving the area "a cleaner palate to display and enjoy the sculptures."

The competition

The sculptures, according to Goodwin, which are up to nine feet tall, are judged by a panel of judges comprised from the teams competing in the event.

"Then there is additional judging called the People's Choice where visitors vote for their favorite displays," Goodwin said. "They vote by ballot from 10 a.m., Saturday through 3 p.m., Sunday. Ballots are deposited at the Riviera or may be sent to ballot@riviera.com."

She said emailing ballots, which began during COVID, allows viewers from the

sculptors' home states the ability to vote.

The snow sculpting begins the Wednesday of Winterfest and teams can work on their creations until 1 p.m. Saturday. At that time, it's "all tools down" and judging commences. At 3 p.m., the awards ceremony is held inside the Riviera.

The teams of snow sculptors come from several states.

Last year's championship was won by Wisconsin Team No. 1, second place went to Minnesota Team No. 1 and earning third place was Minnesota Team No. 2. Winning People's Choice honors were first place – Team North Dakota, second place went to Wisconsin Team No. 4 and third went to the overall champion, Wisconsin Team No.

The teams for the 2025 event had not



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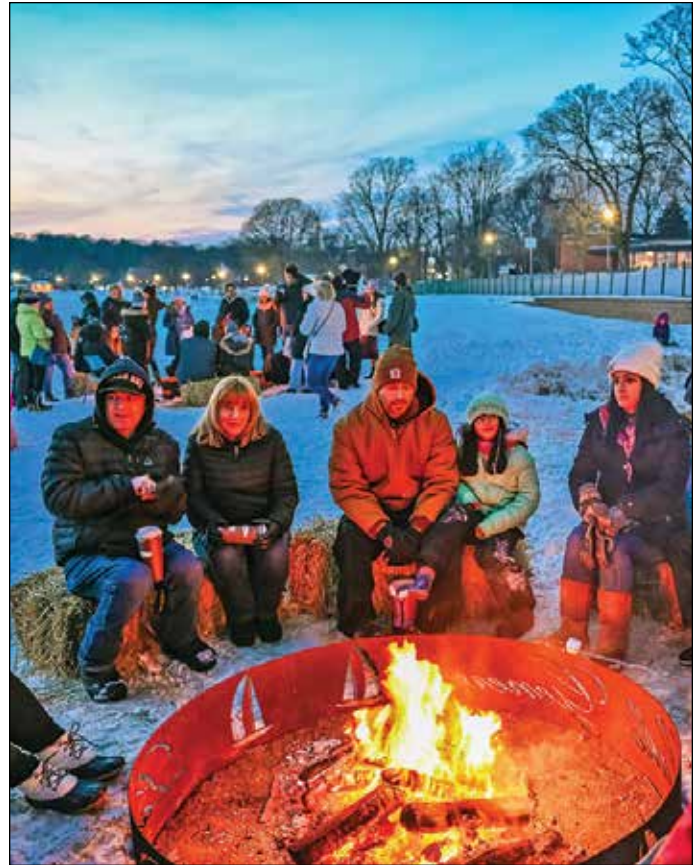


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Visitors warm up around bonfires on the beach during Winterfest.

VISIT LAKE GENEVA PHOTO Fun Guide

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been announced as of mid-September but once set, they'll be listed on the Visit Lake Geneva website.

During the event, the Riviera is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday for visitors to stop in, warm up and enjoy some concessions. There are generally bands playing music inside the Riviera for the enjoyment of the visitors.

Each year, the teams also partner with local children on some special projects while sharing their passion for snow sculpting.

"On Thursday and Friday, we invite two local schools to participate in the children's sculpting program in Flat Iron Park. The children work with sculptors to create their own special snow sculpture displays," Goodwin said.

The snow sculptures remain on display until they melt. They are usually in good shape through the Monday following the competition but that's entirely dependent on the weather.

Take a winter walk

In addition to the snow sculpting competition, there is another featured display throughout downtown Lake Geneva during Winterfest.

"On either side of Main Street there are ice sculptures in front of various businesses. There are 40-plus sculptures commissioned and created by Art Below Zero that will be on display," Goodwin said. "The businesses along Main Street – along with the Lake Geneva Tourism Council – help with cost of these sculptures."

The ice sculptures have a very different look than the snow sculptures as snow and ice have different textures. The ice sculptures though, will melt from the sun shining on them and those on the side of the street where the sun hits longer tend to melt first.

The ice sculptures are usually in place along Main Street beginning the second day of Winterfest, on that Thursday. The distance between them is walkable and wandering the downtown area is doable even in the event the temperatures are cold as there are plenty of places to stop and warm up.

Bonfires on the beach are held on Friday and Saturday of Winterfest, from late afternoon into the evening, allowing guests to warm up with hot cocoa while making s'mores. Sometimes there is additional entertainment such as fire arts performances.

Parking at the lakefront and surrounding downtown area is metered in Lake Geneva beginning Feb. 1

For more about Winterfest, including maps showing the city's parking as well as the Ice Sculpture Walk locations, go to visitlakegeneva.com. Handicap parking is free (with a properly displayed and valid handicap placard or license plate.)

There is also a free shuttle bus service offered the Saturday and Sunday of the event. Pickup locations are the Park-n-Ride at Sheridan Springs and Edwards Boulevard, and Home Depot with drop off being at U.S. Bank, 303 Center St., in the downtown area. Tentative hours the shuttle will operate are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. with confirmation closer to the event date.

For more information, stop by Visit Lake Geneva, 201 Wrigley Dr., call 262-248-4416 or visit the website at visitlakegeneva.com.



above: This ice sculpture, "Trust Me" by Wisconsin Team No. 1 Sculptors Borealis, won first place overall at the 2024 Winterfest event. It also earned third place in the People's Choice voting.

at left: Wisconsin Team No. 4 Up to Snow Good created this piece for the 2024 competition, named "We're All Quite Mad Here." It was second place by those voting in the People's Choice category. **below:** In addition to the snow sculpting competition, the downtown area of Lake Geneva features an Ice Sculpture Walk.

VISIT LAKE GENEVA PHOTOS
Fun Guide



Tips to stay safe on the snowmobile trails

Snowmobiling can be an exhilarating experience and a fun past time for the winter season, but it can also be very dangerous if the proper safety precautions are not taken. To help keep you safe, we've compiled a list of important snowmobile safety tips.

Take a snowmobile safety course

Many states require a snowmobile certificate, and each state has its own rules and regulations. A snowmobile safety course will instruct you on how to ride safely and responsibly and teach you the rules. It is especially essential for first time drivers or riders. You will learn riding techniques to help you operate the snowmobile and avoid hazards

Check forecast, trail conditions

It is always a good idea to check the weather and trail conditions to plan ahead. If the trail is frozen, the wind chill is too low, or a blizzard with white out conditions is in the forecast, you will want to plan your ride for another day. Checking the weather also helps you select the proper clothing for the day.

Wear appropriate clothes, gear

Staying warm and dry during your ride will make it more enjoyable and safer. Wear a snowmobile suit, which commonly consists of a jacket and insulated bibs. Under your snowmobile suit, dress in layers. Stay away from cotton because if it gets wet, it will freeze. Choose polyester blends to wick moisture away from your body. In addition, wear goggles or a face shield if you do not have a full-face helmet, socks (no cotton), waterproof gloves, winter hat, facemask and winter boots. Always wear a DOT-approved helmet, not only to keep you warm but to also protect your head from injury. Make sure children have a helmet that properly fits.

Inspect your snowmobile

Make sure your snowmobile is running properly before heading out on the trail. Having your owner's manual handy on your ride is a good idea for extra safety. It is important to follow the recommended service schedule to keep it maintained and running smoothly. Before each ride, check fuel and oil levels, battery, brakes, drive belt, skis, throttle, handlebars, headlights and taillights. Also, make sure you allow your snowmobile time to run for at least a minute to warm up before taking off.

Bring a buddy

Riding with a friend or in a group is fun and also safer, especially on trails you



Hitting the snowmobile trails in a group or with at least one buddy is one of several safety guidelines riders are encouraged to follow.

STOCK PHOTO Fun Guide

have never taken before. Someone else can help you if your snowmobile breaks down or if you get into an accident. It is also recommended to tell a friend or family member your plans and route for your ride in case you do get stranded. Keep in mind that cell phones don't always work in remote areas.

Be prepared

Keep a basic first-aid kit in the snowmobile in case of injury. It should include disinfecting wipes, bandages, hand sanitizer, gauze, adhesive tape and Band-Aids. In addition, carry an emergency kit with waterproof matches, flashlight, compass, map, blanket, water, snacks and a knife. A repair kit is also essential and should include: duct tape, tools, spare belt, tow rope, spark plugs and pry bar.

Avoid frozen rivers

It is impossible to gauge the thickness of ice. Ice can easily crack and give way under your snowmobile.

Do not speed

Driving at a moderate pace will allow you to react to an unexpected occurrence on your trail and avoid an accident. Many trails have posted speed limits to follow.

Stay on the trail

Marked trails are safer because they have been groomed for you and are less likely to have hazards. Going off trail can result in accidents because you are

treading on unfamiliar terrain.

Also, many "public" trails run close to private property. Unless you have received permission from the landowner, stay on the marked trail. Failure to do so can also result in the trail being closed to the public in the future. Be a responsible rider by following the posted signs and trail markers.

Age appropriate activity

It is also strongly recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics that children under the age of 16 do not operate a snowmobile. The reason for this is because they may lack the skills needed to safely operate the vehicle and due to their stature can be easily injured.

Children younger than 6 should never ride as a passenger according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The snowmobile can ride rough and it takes a strong person to hold on tight, especially for long periods of time. Children younger than six lack this strength.

Do not overload your snowmobile

Make sure you check your manufacturer's guide for the approved number of passengers and also the amount of weight it can carry. Exceeding these maximums either from an additional passenger or heavy gear can increase your chances of accidents and injuries.

Stay alert

It is important to be observant and watch for obstacles in your path, such as rocks, fallen trees, barbed wire fences, ditches, open water, other snowmobiles, snowbanks, animals, hikers and skiers.

Never drink and drive

Just like driving a car, operating a snowmobile while impaired can lead to delayed responses and cause accidents.

Do not pull anything

Snowmobiles are not designed to pull sleds, skiers or saucers and it is very unsafe to do so.

We hope these snowmobile safety tips lead to a fun and safe riding experience. For further protection, your snowmobile needs insurance coverage that's different from what your auto or homeowners' insurance can provide. That's why Markel offers specialized snowmobile insurance coverage tailored to meet your unique needs.

For more information, visit markelinsurance.com.



above: There is no shortage of different games to play at the arcade and quarters are not needed as it's a flat rate charge, which allows access to all of them. **at left:** Vintage Vault Arcade has games suitable for people of all ages and often welcomes families with older members showing the younger generation how to play many of the games on hand.

VINTAGE VAULT PHOTOS Fun Guide

Not your average gaming place

Vintage arcade has everything from Frogger and Pac Man to pinball and Warlords

By **Jennifer Eisenbart**
STAFF WRITER

For James Srniec, Vintage Vault Arcade has been a seven-year process – of finding machines, restoring them and bringing back the arcade experience key to the 1980s.

Now, Srniec has a dedicated site where classic gamers can come and play everything from Pac Man to Area 51 to Mortal Kombat, all for one price and without the need for quarters.

Vintage Vault Arcade, 715 Main St., Suite 200, Mukwonago, has a 5-star rating on Google review and an original concept – pay one flat price (\$20) to enter and play as many games as you'd like.

Gone are the days of plugging quarters into a machine to keep a great run going. Instead, Srniec's location offers more than 100 vintage arcade classics that range from the popular to the rarely seen.

"I don't feel like I work a day in my life," said Srniec. "Arcade machines are kind of like classic cars. You're only holding them for the next guy. That's what I really like about the job – making the games work really well for the customers."

Getting started

Srniec made the decision to start finding and restoring original arcade games about seven years ago after he and his friends played the one game he owned originally – Ms. Pac Man, a smaller cabinet form that is

harder to find – for hours on end.

"I noticed all my friends were playing it, and I thought, 'I need more of these,'" Srniec said. "Before I knew it, I had 22 in my house."

For the first three years, he was paying for storage, about \$600-700 a month.

"I reached a bubble where I needed to start doing something with them," Srniec said.

For the first five years, he spent his time and efforts in finding machines, repairing them and restoring them.

Then, Srniec started leasing the machines out to various bars and other spaces, where he would split the profits with the owners.

But back in 2022, Srniec said he realized it was time for him to have a dedicated space. He was living in Madison but his girlfriend (now fiancé) lives in East Troy. He saw a need

"We kind of decided, let's just put it in Mukwonago," he explained. "That's when we started looking for a space to lease."

Classic games

Srniec opened the location on Main Street, which is on the first floor of a two-story building that has a back entry.

"It has a really nice view, because we're right on the lake," Srniec said.

But those who come in aren't looking for a view of Lake Phantom. They're looking to try out the 130 games available.

For the classic games, there are several different varieties of Pac Man, including the original game from Srniec's basement.

"I'll never get rid of it," he said, adding that there is also regular Pac Man, Super Pac Man and a four-player Pac Man game.

Arcade classics include Qbert and Frogger, as well as a variety of pinball machines.

For those whose tastes run to a little bit more recent time, Mortal Kombat and Area 51 – two 90s classics – are available.

Games like Area 51 have a storyline, but difficult gameplay. The cost of the game could quickly escalate back in the 1990s, with players often bringing a roll of quarters to the game.

It's one of the advantages to Srniec's one-price-covers-all plan. For that flat price, people can come in and play a game for as long as they would like.

"We even let our customers leave and come back," Srniec said. "We just stamp their hands."

But it's not just the big-name games that Srniec has. He takes pride in offering games that are a little off the beaten path, rarer gems like Tapper – featured in Wreck-It Ralph and serving beers down an old-fashioned saloon from the 1800s.

Srniec said he has a rarer version of the game, with color side art.

He also has Robotron, which he calls a precursor to Geometry Wars, where you're a human trying to defeat robots 100 years in the future (well, 100 years from 1984, anyhow).

"It's a simple-to-play game," Srniec said. "It's from my favorite manufacturer, Williams. Robotron stands out because it's a precursor to Geometry Wars."

And then there's a table-top Pong, and Warlords – where up to four players can go after the opposition's castle with their dragon shooting fireballs.

In short, there's a little something for everyone and the arcade can be booked for parties.

Vintage Vault Arcade can be found on Facebook, or by calling 262-378-3079. The arcade is open Friday through Sunday, noon to 10 p.m., with additional hours at times.

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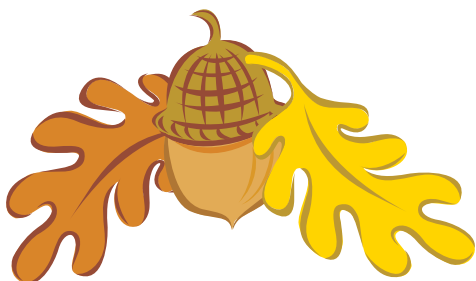
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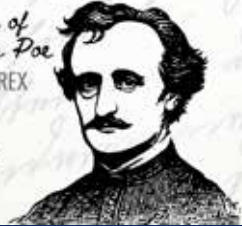
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