

— Fox Cities —

FEB 25

SPORTS



*Finding Balance
on the Ice*

ST. MARY CATHOLIC'S

*Anne
Walsh*

Cover photo by Paul Stumpf, P.S. Portraits

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Real Estate Update

HOMES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

| MLS # | STATUS | LISTING TYPE | LIST PRICE | ADDRESS | MUNICIPALITY | SCHOOL DISTRICT |
|--|-----------------|--------------------|------------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 50301883 | Under Contract | Single Family Home | \$184,900 | 516 E 1st Street | Kimberly | Kimberly |
| 2 bedroom, 1 bath, with 1 car garage. 1,020 total sq. ft. Built in 1938 on 0.16 acres | | | | | | |
| 50302326 | Active-No Offer | Single Family Home | \$260,000 | 616 Harold Way | Kimberly | Kimberly |
| 2 bedroom, 1.1 bath, with 2 car garage. 1,418 total sq. ft. Built in 2010 on 0.20 acres | | | | | | |
| 50301323 | Active-No Offer | Single Family Home | \$540,000 | 407 Jerelyn Court | Combined Locks | Kimberly |
| 3 bedroom, 2.1 bath, with 3 car garage. 1,948 total sq. ft. Built in 2021 on 0.35 acres | | | | | | |
| 50301920 | Active-No Offer | Single Family Home | \$250,000 | 801 Cora Street | Green Bay | Green Bay |
| 4 bedroom, 1.1 bath, with 2 car garage. 2,412 total sq. ft. Built in 1910 on 0.08 acres Co-listing agent Brittney Jungen | | | | | | |
| 50302241 | Under Contract | Single Family Home | \$199,900 | 1225 W Summer Street | Appleton | Appleton |
| 2 bedroom, 2 bath, with 1 car garage. 1,240 total sq. ft. Built in 1922 on 0.16 acres Co-listing agent Fiona Tilley | | | | | | |
| 50302482 | Active-No Offer | Single Family Home | \$320,000 | 1 Clover Court | Little Chute | Little Chute |
| 4 bedroom, 1.1 bath, with 2 car garage. 1,946 total sq. ft. Built in 1970 on 0.23 acres Co-listing agent Alissa Olinger | | | | | | |
| 50302421 | Active-No Offer | Vacant Lot | \$149,900 | N7051 Everglade Road, Lot 52 | Greenville | Hortonville |
| 1.02 acres. Co-listing agent Becki Guard | | | | | | |

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From the Publisher



What is it about sports in February that makes us happy?

February may be the shortest month of the year, but it's packed with sporting events that bring joy and excitement, lifting us out of the winter blues.

One of the biggest draws is the Super Bowl, the NFL's biggest game. It's more than just a football game — it's a cultural event. People gather to watch the game, enjoy delicious food, and cheer on their favorite teams. The excitement of the game, the halftime show, and the commercials give people something to talk about, even for those who aren't die-hard football fans.

For winter sports enthusiasts, February offers the peak of winter sports season, including basketball, hockey, snowmobiling, ice fishing, and skating on the many rinks around the Fox Valley. The adrenaline of the games, the dramatic moments on the ice and courts, and the amazing performances of athletes bring excitement and inspiration, especially during what seems like the coldest month of the year.

February also marks the beginning of Spring Training for baseball players (and fans!), which brews optimism and anticipation for the upcoming season. Even if the weather outside is still chilly, the sight of players gearing up for the season ahead offers a sense of renewal and hope.

Additionally, the NBA All-Star game and the NHL's newest event, the 4 Nations Face-Off, which will feature international tournament play between NHL players from Canada, Finland, Sweden, and the United States, will give fans a chance to see their favorite stars shine in skill competitions and friendly matches.



Photo by Paul Stumpf

Here at *Fox Cities Sports*, we love February because we get to showcase another group of amazing athletes and coaches, like St. Mary Catholic junior Anne Walsh. Anne plays for the Fox Cities Stars girls' hockey team. We get answers to 20 Questions from Jacob Herm, a wrestler for the Neenah Rockets. February's One-On-One is with Little Chute pom and dance coach Beth DeBruin. The award-winning Little Chute Dance Team holds 23 State Champion Titles as well as nine national titles!

February may be short on days, but it is long on sports ... and that is what makes February so special and uplifting.

Break, on three... Ready! ■

Dale

— Fox Cities — SPORTS

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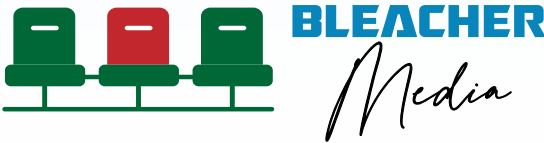
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FEEDBACK/IDEAS/SUBMISSIONS

Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of each month prior. Email your thoughts, ideas and photos to: dale@foxcitiesports.com.



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Small in Stature, Big in Determination

BY NICOLE CAMPUZANO



Standing at a mere 5'3" and weighing in at 130 pounds, it's difficult to imagine Michelle Bauer competing as a professional bodybuilder. The 59-year-old began her bodybuilding career at 45 years old after years of exercising with no true direction. She'd dabbled in weightlifting, fitness classes, and running, but never had she buckled down and followed a dedicated path. However, she felt "inspired by seeing other women go on stage in front of hundreds of people." Thus began her journey in 2011.

"I never saw myself as an athlete before," Bauer explains. That changed quickly as she dedicated herself to bodybuilding, which turned out to be more than just a sport, but rather a lifestyle. She found a fitness coach online who encouraged her when she was tired, reassured her when she was frustrated, and held her accountable with weekly check-ins. Bauer confirms that finding a great coach is "half the battle."

Only 15 weeks after starting her journey, she participated in her first competition. Despite the "knee-knocking, teeth-chattering" nerves she felt being onstage for the first time, she took second place. "That hooked me!" she states. She went on to participate in more than 30 competitions over the next decade, winning multiple titles, and eventually earning her professional status. During her final competition in October 2021, she brought home her largest award, earning first place, and a cash prize.

Though Bauer enjoyed the exhilaration of competition, there were parts of bodybuilding that challenged her. "I didn't anticipate having to measure every piece of food that I put in my mouth," she explains. Furthermore, the hours and hours of exercise she had to commit to in order to be at her best and ready for shows was exhausting. Then, there were discouraging injuries along the way, such as fractured toes, a



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ruptured oblique muscle, and various shoulder injuries, which hampered her progress at times.

Despite the setbacks and difficulties, Bauer feels she was able to build her confidence, gain a network of friends, and improve her overall health through bodybuilding. When asked why she stopped, she affirms she wanted to focus more on her grandchildren; however, she's still tempted to compete in the future. "Maybe I'll do it again when I'm 60!" she says with a smile.

Bauer's goal is to inspire others to reach for and achieve their goals. She wants people to know that anything is "achievable for anyone, and it doesn't have to be perfect."

Nicole Campuzano is an Antigo, Wisconsin native. She earned her bachelor's degree in English Education from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. She taught high school English Language Arts for several years. She and her family recently relocated to the Fox Valley, where they are enjoying the many exciting opportunities the area has to offer.

INSIDE FEB



Photo by Paul Stumpf

12-15

ANNE WALSH

As challenging as it may be to find physical and mental balance on the ice, Anne says she plans "to stick with the sport for as long as I can, whether it's on a school team or club team. It's hard to imagine ever not playing."

7

THE IMPACT OF THE COMMUNITY FIRST CHAMPION CENTER

A tournament hosted at the Champion Center gives local families one more weekend to sleep in their own beds while still letting their child play in a high-level competition.



22-23

THE GROWTH OF YOUTH RUGBY IN THE FOX CITIES

The future of rugby in the Fox Cities looks bright, with increasing opportunities for young athletes and growing recognition of the club's commitment to safety, skill development, and community involvement.

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20 QUESTIONS

With Neenah High School wrestler Jacob Herm.

10-11

DON'T BE A COUCH POTATO THIS WINTER

Parks, nature centers offer plenty of fun!

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LIMITLESS ELITE GYM

Gearing up for the USA Powerlifting High School Nationals Match 20-23.

18-19

ONE ON ONE

With Beth DeBruin, Little Chute High School's pom and dance coach.

Healthy Cauliflower Mock Mashed Potatoes

A Low-Carb, Creamy Alternative

BY KIRSTEN RICE

MOCK MASHED POTATOES

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium heads cauliflower (1-1/2 pounds each)
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter

DIRECTIONS

1. Core the cauliflower heads and cut the stems and florets into 1-inch pieces.
2. Bring 1 inch water to a boil in a large saucepan fitted with a steamer insert. Put the cauliflower into the pot, cover and steam until tender, 10 to 12 minutes. Lift the cauliflower pieces from the saucepan and spread out on a large platter lined with a clean kitchen towel. Let the cauliflower dry for 5 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, combine the oil, thyme and garlic in a small nonstick skillet. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is fragrant and beginning to brown, about 3 minutes. Scrape the garlic oil into the bowl of a food processor.
4. Add the cauliflower, yogurt, Parmesan, and 1 teaspoon salt and several turns of black pepper to the food processor and blend until smooth and light, scraping down the bowl as needed. Transfer to a bowl and top with the butter and some more black pepper. Stir the butter into the cauliflower before serving. ■

Kirsten Rice is the Operations Director at the Ogden YMCA and Valley Tennis Center. She has her bachelor's degree from Michigan State University in Kinesiology with an emphasis in Health Promotion Specialization. She is a certified personal trainer through the American College of Sports Medicine and a Certified Group Exercise Instructor. She has been working in the field for seventeen years and loves working with clients one on one to achieve their health and wellness goals and teaching to groups as a fitness instructor. If you would like to talk with Kirsten, you can contact her at krice@ymcafoxcities.org.



The Impact of the Community First Champion Center

BY MATT TEN HAKEN, DIRECTOR OF SPORTS MARKETING, FOX CITIES CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



Opened in November 2019, the Community First Champion Center was built to help positively impact the Fox Cities economy through spending by out-of-area sports teams in area businesses. In its first five years of operations, the facility has done so much more than that.

The main goal of economic impact and tourism generation has certainly been met. In 2024, 70 tourism-generating events took place at the Champion Center. Hockey, volleyball, and basketball tournaments made up the majority of these events along with figure skating, wrestling, and adaptive soccer competitions. An estimated 15,000 hotel roomnights and more than \$6 million of direct visitor spending was generated by the visitors at these events. A steady four years of growth led to the 2024 numbers, which shattered the pre-opening projections we had hoped for when ground broke in 2018.

While those figures are massively important to local businesses and our community as a whole, we would be missing out on so much of the story of the Champion Center if I stopped here.

Nearly every weeknight of the year, up to 30 teams with hundreds of area youth athletes will practice at the Champion Center. Area teams will host hundreds of games, especially hockey games, every year in the facility. Each summer dozens of hockey, volleyball, and basketball camps will take place with hundreds of participants. Open skate, golf simulator rentals, and open pickleball play allow for the general public to get some great physical activity in a state-of-the-art facility.

If you are a parent of a youth athlete in travel sports, you likely know the financial and time strains that are caused by many weekends of travel. At each weekend tournament hosted at the Champion Center, a handful of local teams will register to play. Those families get one more weekend to sleep in their own beds while still letting their child play in a high-level competition.

The Champion Center employs seven full-time staff members who lead the operations of the building along with 35 part-time staff members. Many of those part-timers are students who are learning valuable skills that they will take with them into adulthood.

Roughly 99% of the activities in the facility are for youth 18 and under. In addition, 59% of the users of the facility are female athletes. We know that participation in youth sports positively impacts the development of our children, and we hope the Champion Center is helping play a small role in that development.

None of these positive outcomes would be possible without the support of so many: Municipal staff and elected officials, hoteliers, business sponsors led by our naming rights partner Community First Credit Union, event directors, club administrators and coaches, referees, facility staff, and so many more. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in some way to an incredibly successful first five years of the Community First Champion Center and to the bright future ahead of us!

For more information on the Community First Champion Center, go to: www.championcenterwi.com. ■



Looking to plan a sporting event? *Let us help!*

Contact Matt and Abby at the Fox Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau to discuss ways we can help you plan and promote your event and possibly even help you secure grant funding support!



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20 QUESTIONS

JACOB HERM

NEENAH WRESTLING

MY TOUGHEST RIVAL IS: Kaukauna.

MY IDOLS ARE: My parents.

SOMETHING THAT WOULD SURPRISE PEOPLE ABOUT ME IS: I have dyslexia.

MY FAVORITE MUSICAL ARTIST IS: Dylan Gossett.

MY FAVORITE HOME-COOKED MEAL IS: Breakfast Burritos.

I WILL NEVER GO: Caving.

MY FAVORITE ATHLETE IS: Jon Jones.

MY FAVORITE JUNK FOOD IS: Kwik Trip glazers.

MY FAVORITE TEAM IS: The Green Bay Packers.

MY FAVORITE TEAM TO ROOT AGAINST IS: The Chicago Bears.

IF YOU COULD START A NEW COLLECTION, WHAT WOULD YOU COLLECT: Wrestling shoes.

WHO DO YOU WISH WAS WATCHING YOU PERFORM AT EVERY GAME OR MATCH: My grandparents.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SONG TO LISTEN TO PRIOR TO COMPETING: #19 by Aphex Twin.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SMELL AND WHY?: The smell of a campfire, it brings back a lot of memories.

I PLAN TO GO TO COLLEGE TO: South Dakota State University.

IF YOU HAD TO USE A FAKE NAME, WHAT FAKE NAME WOULD YOU MAKE UP? Fred.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SPORTS MOVIE: Vision Quest.

IF YOU COULD PLAY ANOTHER SPORT WHAT WOULD IT BE: Boxing.

WHAT SPORT DID YOU FAIL AT AS A CHILD: Baseball.

WHAT AGE WERE YOU WHEN YOU STARTED YOUR SPORT? 3.

WHAT'S A WEIRD FACT YOU JUST KNOW? Honey never spoils.

PHOTO BY PAUL STUMPF

A Parent's Perspective

BY JENNIFER HERM | PHOTO BY PAUL STUMPF



The biggest challenge of having kids in sports is finding a proper balance. Daily practices, one-on-ones, weekly competitions, weekend tournaments, and extra workouts/lifting often made it hard to balance wrestling and day-to-day life.

Jacob played various sports over the years — soccer, baseball, karate, and football — but nothing kept his interest like wrestling

did. He started to wrestle when he was three and when he was around nine, he stopped playing baseball to dedicate his time in spring to Greco and Freestyle Wrestling. This was about the time he started to wrestle year-round.

Jacob has a sister, McKenna, who is two years older. She was involved in softball from around ten years old until she graduated. She played softball year-round, both in the summer and fall. She was also a wrestling manager throughout middle school and high school.

So balancing sports, school, and family was hard, but it has become easier for us. Over time, we were able to find a rhythm and figure it out for our family. We as parents divided and conquered, especially when the kids were younger.

From the beginning, making time for meals together was instilled in our family, and that continues to be a way we find balance. Every day we would try to eat dinner together to ensure we all had a time and a place to check in with each other. Besides this, we did a lot of camping as a family when McKenna and Jacob were younger.

Wrestling has become very important to Jacob and the rest of our family, but never more important than family or school. He has always done what he needs to do to get good grades. He was doing tutoring for his dyslexia twice a week, year-round, from 3rd to 7th grade. There were a lot of nights that he practiced after school, came home quickly to eat, and then went back out to club practice from 8 to 9 at night.

As he got older, Jacob was practicing more often and farther from home. Over the past four years, he has been practicing four to six days a week and has traveled to practices in Madison, Mequon, and Green Bay. Before he got his license, driving fell on us as parents, but we found a rhythm and a sense of balance. Now that Jacob has his license, he is in control of when he needs to be somewhere and where he needs to be.

I could go into detail on all the daily tasks and events of Jacob's life as it relates to bettering himself in the sport, but that's not important. What is important is simply making it work behind the scenes, so the hard work shows when it matters. Jacob is so invested in being the best version of himself that we as parents can make his routine possible.

Watching your child lose is always heart-crushing, but a loss is not the end of the world. In our eyes, the losses Jacob had in his two state finals matches have made him not only a stronger wrestler but a stronger person. Those past defeats made Jacob's State Championship this past year twice as special.

Luckily, Jacob has had no serious injuries. He has suffered minor cuts that require stitches, along with a few other bumps

and bruises that have sidelined him for a limited time. Injuries in a contact sport such as wrestling are inevitable. Yes, we worry about them, but you can't dwell on it. If Jacob were to get injured, it would be a setback, but hopefully he could work through it and get back to doing what he loves.

We know that Jacob has gained many life skills from wrestling. Self-discipline is one of the biggest ones; you're only as good as the effort you put in. Mental toughness is another, and humility is another big one. Being humble is something that Jacob has truly embraced through wrestling by letting the results speak for themselves.

Because Jacob has been a wrestler, he has set himself up to succeed in almost anything he puts his mind to. He will attend South Dakota State University this coming fall and will wrestle there. He chose SDSU because of its top-notch wrestling program, and he found it was the perfect fit for him.

People may not realize the sense of community Jacob has gained by being involved in wrestling. Yes, wrestling is primarily an individual sport, but it carries a big team aspect that is just as important. Wrestling is a tough and demanding sport that requires you to have people you can rely on for support. As parents, we have found that when you surround yourself with people going through the same daily grind, it creates a priceless network of people. ■



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Don't Be a Couch Potato this Winter

Parks, nature centers offer plenty of fun

BY GREG SEUBERT



Northeastern Wisconsin is blessed with unlimited possibilities for outdoor recreation. Whether it's heading out on a charter fishing trip on Lake Michigan, trying to spear a lake sturgeon on the Winnebago System or taking a family camping trip in a state or county park, this part of the state offers something for everyone.

Although summer is the most popular time for people to get back to nature, there's plenty to do during the winter as well. All it takes is a little planning, knowing where to look and not being afraid to deal with the weather.

Here's a rundown on what's available for some winter fun:

STATE PARKS

High Cliff and Hartman Creek are among Wisconsin's most popular state parks and are open year-round.

A Wisconsin State Parks annual sticker or daily pass is required at each property.

Both parks also have active Friends groups that support each property. Their Facebook pages are facebook.com/FriendsofHighCliff and facebook.com/hartmancreekfriends/.



High Cliff State Park

High Cliff State Park is located about 20 miles southeast of Appleton and is the only state-owned recreational area on Lake Winnebago, Wisconsin's largest inland lake.

Although Lake Winnebago and a marina are major draws for park visitors, there are two hiking trails open during the winter: the Forest Management Trail (0.9-mile short and 1.4-mile long loops); and Red Bird Trail (3.4 miles).

Certain trails in the park are also designated for cross-country skiing when snow-covered. These trails are groomed for traditional skiing and suitable for beginning to intermediate skiers.

Fat tire biking is also allowed on the Red Bird Trail from the Red Bird statue to the family campground and on park roads.

Snowshoeing is permitted anywhere in the 1,200-acre park except on ski trails when snow-covered. The Forest Management Trail is ideal for winter hiking and snowshoeing. Snowshoe rentals are available on a first-come, first-served basis while the park office is open.

A three-mile-long snowmobile trail through the park connects Lake Winnebago with Calumet County's trail system.

High Cliff, located at N7630 State Park Road, Sherwood, is open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily and the office phone number is (920) 989-1106.



The 1-mile-long Deer Path Trail follows the shoreline of Allen Lake in Hartman Creek State Park. Photo by Greg Seubert.

Hartman Creek's winter activities center on skiing, fat tire bicycling, snowshoeing, hiking and ice fishing.

Six miles of trails are available for cross-country skiing in the 1,500-acre park located seven miles west of Waupaca off of State Highway 54.

Meanwhile, the park's 9.4 miles of single-track mountain bike trails are open year-round and 3.5 miles of trails are available for snowshoeing.

Snowshoeing and winter hiking are also allowed off-trail, except on groomed ski trails.

Anglers have an opportunity to try their luck on Allen, Mid and Hartman lakes, but the park does not monitor ice conditions.

Hartman Creek is located at N2480 Hartman Creek Road, Waupaca and is open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. The office's phone number is (715) 258-2372.

OUTAGAMIE COUNTY

Like most other counties in Wisconsin, Outagamie County maintains a system of county parks and natural areas that are open year-round.

They include Mosquito Hill Nature Center and Plamann Park.

Mosquito Hill Park, a 441-acre located two miles east of New London at N3880 Rogers Road, includes a hiking trail system with 3 miles of developed trails with a loop to scenic vistas at the top of Mosquito Hill, one of the area's highest elevation points.

The center has three signed snowshoe trails, one which takes people to the top of Mosquito Hill. Trails are open daily during daylight hours with the exception of the gun deer hunting season in November and shorter hunting seasons in December.

Information on scheduled events at the center can be found on its Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MosquitoHillNatureCenter/.

Plamann Park, located on Appleton's north side at 1375 E. Broadway Drive, is open during the winter for sledding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

The park's sledding hills are open for the 2024-25 winter season.

The cross-country ski trails are affected by construction throughout the park and are running parallel to the snowshoe trails. Snowshoers are reminded to stay on their trail and do not cross over to the cross-country ski trails.

Although the park's facilities are closed during the winter, a portable restroom is available for those using the sledding hills and cross-country ski and snowshoe trails.

A parking area for snowmobilers is located near Plamann Lake. The park's trails provide access to 302 miles of snowmobile trails in Outagamie County which are funded by snowmobile registration fees. These trails are opened after the Outagamie County Snowmobile Alliance and Outagamie County Parks Department determine there is enough snow cover to provide safe trails. These trails will close if snow cover becomes questionable.

Current snowmobile conditions and information can be found through an automated information line – (920) 832-4790 ext. 3 – as well as on Outagamie County's Facebook page.

Updated information can be found at facebook.com/p/Plamann-Park-100062874855801/.



Bubolz Nature Preserve. Photo by John W. Iwanski.

The Bubolz Nature Preserve, located at 4815 N. Lynndale Drive, Appleton, offers more than 8 1/2 miles of trails that provide year-round access to nature through hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

The Wilderness Trail remains closed seasonally due to high water. It is typically only open for skiing in the winter and

requires roughly a foot of snow.

Information about the preserve can be found at bubolzpreserve.org and its Facebook page, facebook.com/BubolzNaturePreserve/.

FOX CITIES AREA

Other possibilities for winter activities include Menasha's Heckrodt Wetland Reserve and Kaukauna's 1,000 Islands Environmental Center.



Heckrodt Wetland Reserve

Heckrodt Wetland Reserve is a 91-acre urban nature reserve at 1305 Plank Road, Menasha.

The trail system is open from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. every day of the year. Admission to the trails and nature center is free, but donations are accepted.

Nature center hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday; and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Trail habitats including forested wetland and cattail marsh. The reserve is home to numerous species of reptiles, amphibians, and mammals. Migrating songbirds and nesting waterfowl can also be found.

More information can be found at heckrodtnaturecenter.org and the reserve's Facebook page, facebook.com/heckrodtnaturecenter/.



1,000 Islands Environmental Center. Photo by Paul Stumpf.

1,000 Islands Environmental Center is located on the Fox River at 1000 Beaulieu Court, Kaukauna.

Trails are open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily year-round. The nature center is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

The center's Conservancy Zone covers 350 acres and has more than seven miles of trails, including a one-mile trail along the Fox River with approximately 2,000 feet of barrier-free boardwalk.

Admission is free, but donations are appreciated and needed.

Bald eagles take center stage at the center each winter.

Eagle watching along the lower Fox River can be spectacular and 1000 Islands has always been an ideal area each winter to watch eagles either perched in large trees along the water's edge or soaring above.

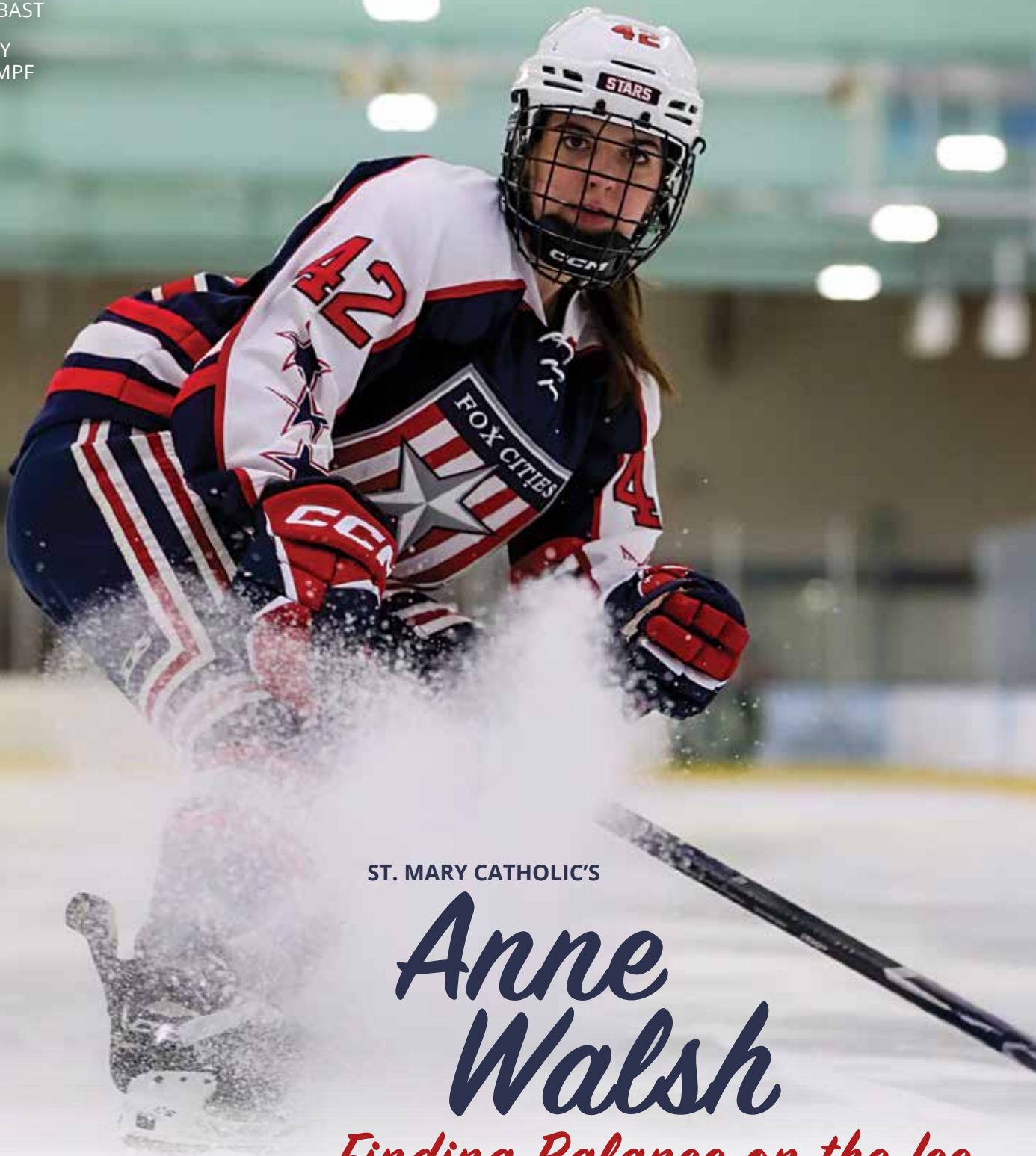
The eagles are drawn to areas of open water in search of fish, their preferred food. Early morning or sunset is a prime time during the day to see eagles flying and fishing.

The center hosts Eagle Days each year on the fourth Saturday in January. This year's event, held Jan. 25, included an educational program featuring a live bald eagle. Other activities included a full-size replica of an eagle's nest, hands-on eagle activities, children's crafts, a coloring contest, door prizes and more.

Details on the center can be found at 1000islandsenvironmentalcenter.org or the center's Facebook page, facebook.com/1000IslandsKaukauna/. ■

Greg Seubert is a freelance reporter, photographer and editor based out of his rural Weyauwega home. He spent 28 years covering high school sports for the Waupaca County Post, a Waupaca-based weekly newspaper, before stepping down in April 2024. Before that, he spent 10 years as a reporter and editor at four other newspaper in Wisconsin: the Cornell and Lake Holcombe Courier in Cornell (1986-89); the Marshfield News-Herald in his hometown of Marshfield (1989-92); the Daily Jefferson County Union in Fort Atkinson (1992-95); and the Monroe Evening Times in Monroe (1995-96). He joined the Waupaca County Post prior to the start of the 1996-97 school year and eventually covered sports teams from Waupaca, Iola-Scandinavia, Weyauwega-Fremont, Little Wolf (Manawa), Amherst, Wild Rose, Almond-Bancroft, Stevens Point, New London, Clintonville and Hortonville high schools. He returned to the County Post in August 2024 and continues to cover sporting events and outdoors issues on a part-time basis for the newspaper and its website.

BY DIANE BAST
PHOTOS BY
PAUL STUMPF



ST. MARY CATHOLIC'S

Anne Walsh

Finding Balance on the Ice

Every student athlete knows — as do their parents and friends — that finding balance is an important key to success in any endeavor. Balancing sports, school, family, friends, maybe even a part-time job ... clearly, that's a tough challenge for anyone. Now imagine doing all that balancing ... on the ice! On skates! Anne Walsh, a junior at St. Mary Catholic High School, clearly understands the challenge.

"The biggest challenge in playing hockey for me is definitely balancing everything: school, practice, games, and still having time for myself," she says. "Hockey takes up a lot of time, especially during the season, and it's tough to keep up with homework, studying, and social stuff." Anne seems to have it mostly worked out, and it's not really rocket science ... just common sense that most of us understand but not all of us implement.

"I've found that the best way to maintain a healthy balance is by staying organized and prioritizing my time," she explains. "If I know I have a busy week with games and practices, I'll try to get my homework done in between classes or during any free time I have."

"I also make sure to take breaks when I can," she continues. "Hockey can be mentally and physically draining, so if I have a little extra time after practice or on weekends, I'll spend it with friends or family to recharge. Having a balance is really important for staying motivated and not getting burned out."

Multitasking at a Fast Pace
Balance is important to a hockey player in more ways than one, Anne points out.

First, there's the unique physical balance required for a sport played on ice, on blades about a quarter-inch wide.

"I love how completely different hockey is from any other sport," Anne says. "It combines so many skills like stickhandling, shooting, quick decision-making, and physicality, all while on skates. Being able to skate and move at that speed while handling



the puck is unlike any other sport. You're constantly multitasking: thinking ahead, reacting to what's happening, and working as a team to create scoring chances.

"Plus, there's the physical element, which I love," she admits. "You don't get that level of contact in most other sports, and I enjoy the physical challenge, whether it's battling in the corners or getting aggressive in the house."

While physical balance is an obvious requirement if you're going to excel at hockey, mental balance is less obvious but just as important. "Staying balanced and not getting too emotional about the ups and downs helps me stay focused and keep improving," Anne says.

"The best advice I've ever gotten came from one of my coaches, who told me: 'Don't let the highs get too high and the



lows get too low.' It really stuck with me because in hockey (and in life), things can change so quickly. One minute you're scoring the game-winning goal, and the next minute you might miss an important shot or get penalized."

Rituals and ... Reptiles?
Over her 12 years of playing hockey, Anne has learned that pre-game rituals help manage the highs and lows.

"I always put my gear on in the exact same order, ever since I started playing," she says. "It's become so routine, it feels like muscle memory at this point. Having a certain pattern to getting dressed really helps to calm me down. If it's a high-stakes game, it reminds me that it's just a game like any other one I've played, and there's no need to overthink it."

Off the ice, Anne has many other interests to keep her life grounded.

Like many student athletes, she loves "to travel and spend time with my friends." Anne also mixes things up by helping out in the school's theatre program and staying active by learning new sports — she plays tennis and enjoys skiing, too.

And then there is the volunteer work. "I also love to volunteer at a local reptile rescue, which is super fun for me," Anne says. "It feels really fulfilling knowing that I'm making a positive difference in the community."

Teamwork and Trust

Anne has been playing hockey since she was 4 years old, and she's played on several teams: the Fox Cities Stars, Fox Valley Blades, and Sundrop Bulldogs. The Stars' website features a statement that Anne seems to have taken to heart: "You shouldn't climb mountains for the world to see you, but for you to see the world."

"The biggest thing I've learned from hockey is the importance of teamwork and trust," Anne says. "Hockey is a sport where you absolutely can't do everything on your own. You need to rely on your teammates, and they need to rely on you. Knowing that we all have each other's backs makes a huge difference. It's taught me to be selfless and think about the team first, not just my individual performance."

The team became especially important for Anne when she faced a significant personal setback. She explains:

"A big challenge I faced was when I broke my collarbone a few years ago in the first game of the season. It wasn't breaking it that was the worst part, but rather not being able to play for half of the season. I loved cheering on my teammates from the bench, but in all honesty, I wanted nothing more than to be out on the ice with them."

"When I finally got cleared to play again, I felt like I was so behind everyone in terms of skills and conditioning. It was a huge blow to my confidence, and I had to restart my season, even though I had barely played yet. Injuries happen, and all you can do is rest, recover, and go back with a newfound sense of hard work."

The injury taught her "a lot about resilience," Anne says.

"Hockey can be tough, and you're going to face challenges, whether it's a tough loss, a hard practice, or a personal setback. But being part of a team means you can't just give up, because if you sell yourself short or don't put in the effort, you're also selling out your teammates and undermining the team."

Memories, Friends on Ice

"A huge part of my hockey career was spent on a co-ed team," Anne says, "and some of my best memories are from that team."



"Hockey takes up a lot of time, especially during the season, and it's tough to keep up with homework, studying, and social stuff."

"Because there is a girls' youth hockey team in the area, many girls choose to play there, so every year I played with the [co-ed] Blades, I was the only girl on my team. This really didn't bother me, and I was usually welcomed by all of my teammates. I wanted to play co-ed as long as I could, since I loved the pace of the game and the friends that I played with."

She remembers that "transitioning into a girls' high school team was honestly terrifying, since I was the only girl coming up from Blades and the only girl in my school who played, so I really didn't know anybody. Thankfully, I ended up making friends so easily and felt immediately like part of the family. I am so grateful for the friendships and memories I have made on the Stars."

As challenging as it may be to find physical and mental balance on the ice, Anne says she plans "to stick with the sport for as long as I can, whether it's on a school team or club team. It's hard to imagine ever not playing."

"I've learned so much over the years both on and off the ice. I've made tons of friendships and gained lots of really cool experience from playing on different teams, and I definitely want to continue that."

"My personal goal in hockey," Anne says, "is to keep improving every day, both on and off the ice."

"Overall, I just want to keep pushing myself, stay passionate about the game, and have fun while doing it! Whether it's working on a new skill or bonding with my teammates, I want to make the most out of every opportunity in hockey." ■

After 35 years as senior editor for the Illinois-based Heartland Institute, Diane Bast returned to the Fox Valley and now enjoys with her husband, Joe, a retirement of bicycling, kayaking, long walks, and tennis.

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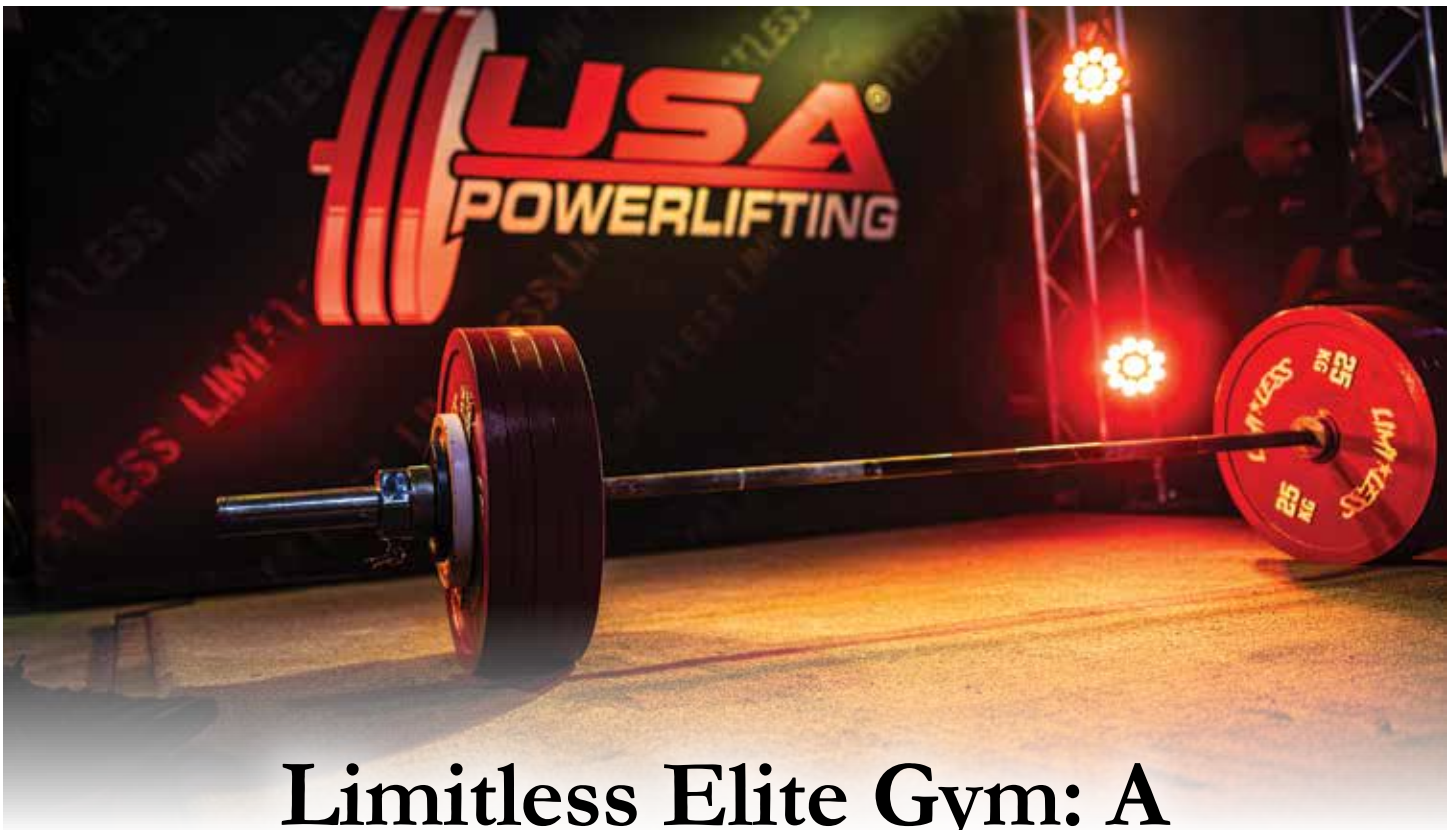
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- ◀ A: Anne at age four, first day of hockey.
B: Anne at age five on the ice.
C: Five year old Anne celebrating the end of a Mite season with the medal.
D: Anne with her best hockey friend and defensive partner, Madeline Woodford.
Photos submitted by the Walsh family.



Limitless Elite Gym: A Transcendent Athletic Experience

BY NICOLE CAMPUZANO | PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY LIMITLESS ELITE FITNESS



Quintin and Sara Meyer are a powerhouse couple who seem to pull their drive and ambition from a bottomless well. They are the owners of Limitless Elite Gym, located at 3003 W. Prospect Avenue in Appleton, Wisconsin.

The couple first met (where else?) at a gym! Quintin explains that they helped push each other to excel at their respective sports: he as a powerlifter and she as a professional fitness competitor. Their trek to build their brand and grow their gym shows an uncommon determination.

Aside from owning a gym, both Quintin and Sara possess impressive athleticism. Some of Quintin's personal achievements include competing for Team USA 12 times, winning Nationals five times, and winning the Arnold Sports Festival three times. His best competition lifts include a 911-pound squat, a 700-pound bench press, and a 799-pound deadlift.

Meanwhile, Sara has competed in 17 shows at both the amateur and professional levels, has been invited to the Arnold several times, and continues to compete after having children. She also competed as a powerlifter at Nationals in 2019 alongside Quintin.

Their competitive journeys have taken this couple around the world, including to places such as Brazil, the Czech Republic, Japan, Sweden, and United Arab Emirates, just to name a few places.



These days, the couple has shifted their focus toward running their businesses and raising their three children, ages 7, 3, and 8 months. In fact, and perhaps not surprisingly, their oldest daughter has begun to show interest in powerlifting, as well.

Since opening their gym on April 15, 2017, they have transformed the space from a "small, rough-around-the edges facility" purchased out of foreclosure into a "state-of-the-



Quintin and Sara Meyer



art gym that often leaves returning visitors amazed by the improvements," Quintin explains. The 10,000-square-foot, two-story space is equipped with competition-grade powerlifting equipment, treadmills, cable stations, and turf areas.

Additionally, there are 16 combo racks, each equipped with competition kilo plates, bars, and platforms, resources that Quintin says are difficult to find elsewhere. Their gym, Quintin states, is "a space for everyone, from retired Silver Sneakers members, to the beginning high schooler, to the serious athlete."

Limitless Elite Gym is also, according to Quintin, "a premier venue for powerlifting meets." The Meyers have "built a reputation for hosting national-level events with features like professional lighting, audio, live streaming, stage smoke, custom medals, and more." Quintin confirmed the gym has about 300 members "who enjoy a facility that combines the best of both commercial and specialty gyms."

In 2024, Limitless Elite Gym hosted "14 meets with 874 athletes competing at [their] facility, representing 27 states and various levels of the sport." The Meyers also organized the Midwest Regionals, which, Quintin affirms, "serves as a crucial step from state-level competition to the national stage."

Elite Limitless Gym will host a number of events in 2025, including the USA Powerlifting Val-Lift Open (held February 15), the USA Powerlifting Appleton Assault (held April 12), the USA Powerlifting Mayhem (held May 17), as well as many others. Quintin explains that larger events are hosted at the Fox Cities Expo Center in downtown Appleton.

Their marquee event of 2025 is the USA Powerlifting High School Nationals, which takes place March 20–23 and is "a prestigious competition expected to attract between 700 and 1,100 athletes." This event holds special meaning for Quintin who shares, "I competed in it during my high school years [between] 2005 to 2009."

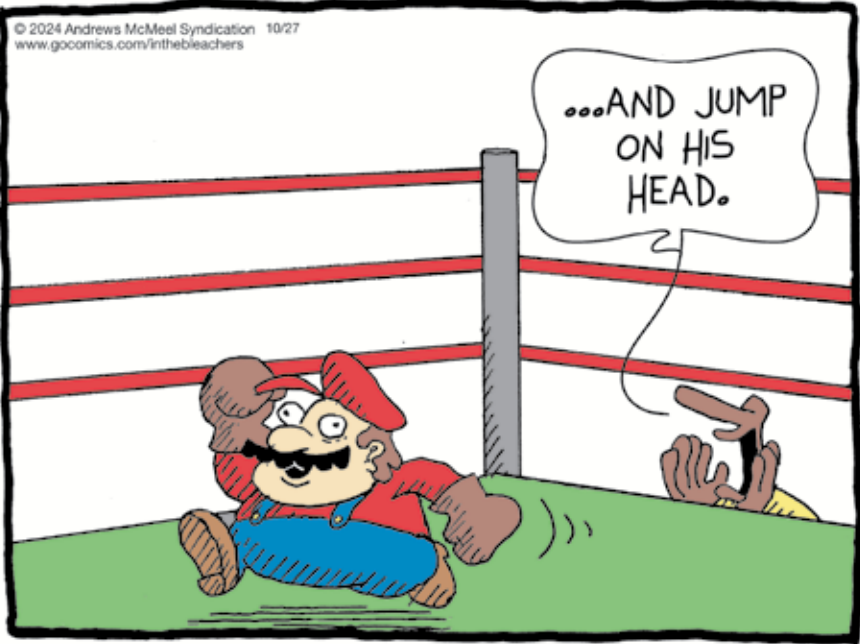
The Meyers have worked to create an elite athletic experience that transcends their own personal achievements. They aim to provide a space that offers limitless potential to all those who choose to walk through their doors. ■

Nicole Campuzano is an Antigo, Wisconsin native. She earned her bachelor's degree in English Education from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. She taught high school English Language Arts for several years. She and her family recently relocated to the Fox Valley, where they are enjoying the many exciting opportunities the area has to offer.

IN THE BLEACHERS



BY BEN ZAEHRINGER



ONE ON ONE

BY DIANE BAST
PHOTO BY PAUL STUMPF

WITH LITTLE CHUTE
HIGH SCHOOL
POM AND DANCE COACH

BETH DEBRUIN

How long have you been coaching? 23 seasons — since I graduated high school.

What is your background in this sport? I danced my whole life at studios in the Appleton area and was on the high school team at Little Chute. I started my coaching career by helping out in the summer after my senior year of high school, and I never left.

What is your coaching philosophy? Hard work pays off. In the first eight years of coaching the team, I realized that if we wanted to be successful, we had to change our philosophy and not do only what is expected. We had to work harder and push ourselves to be better. One season early in my coaching career, the seniors and I had a meeting, and they told me they were going to win a state championship. We went undefeated that season, and that set a precedent for what was to come. It was amazing to see a group of kids come together with a new mindset that it would change the history for the program forever. We also always have to be changing up what we do. We try to look to the future or even look for inspiration outside of our state. How are those teams training and doing their best?

What does the team do in training that are keys to its success? The team pushes each other to always pay attention to the little details in the routines. With dance we can't go back and make up for mistakes. We have to remember the little things and what to do with that pressure of having to be perfect every time we dance. We also really work on being a team and having each other's backs. This is important on and off the competition floor. We do drills in practice where we have the kids yell out things in the dance to remember, and it's all about teamwork and making sure the girls on either side of you are just as successful as you are. This teamwork has been the biggest key to our success. Not everyone is always supportive of successful programs, and we have to be there for each other when others root against us. We cannot have drama and fights between the dancers, because the judges can tell when teams are not connected. It is definitely a WE before ME attitude.

Describe the most memorable competitions your team has won. The first would be the 2011 state champion/undefeated season. It was the first time I coached a state winning team, and this was



the team to first change how hard we were going to work from then on out. They wanted it so badly and worked so hard. It was a huge moment for them and so exciting to see the entire community cheer for us and support us. The second was our "Aladdin" season. The girls had to overcome some adversity to the routine I picked out, and coming from a loss the previous season at state the girls had to figure out how to work hard even if they didn't see the big picture of my vision right away. Once they realized the dances were loved by judges and fans, they were unstoppable. The third best win was this last season at nationals. We not only won nationals, we also got picked to dance in a showcase battle at the end of the competition. We had to go up against other pom routines from different divisions. The girls were excited to make it in the battle and we honestly didn't care if we would win. But they performed their hearts out and came away with the National Championship and Battle win. The excitement from that win is something I will remember forever.

How do you encourage the team after a disappointing loss? We jump back in and figure out what we need to do to fix the problems that cost us points from the competition before us. If the loss is at the end of the season, we find the good in that performance. We always have to realize that dance is a sport with human judges and there is no scoreboard. Things do not always come out the way you want. But finding things to be proud of always helps. Some of my favorite routines of all time are actually not routines that we won a state championship with.

Describe your proudest coaching moment. My favorite moments are when there is a tough performance, such as state or nationals, and two things happen. (1) My job at this point is finished, they coach themselves. When warming up they are so in the moment that they remind each other what needs to be done and when. They become each other's cheerleaders and coaches. (2) When they come off the floor after that pressure-filled performance and they nailed it. They are all screaming, cheering, crying, and hugging each other and parents.

What is the biggest life lesson you've learned from being a coach? As much as we all like being a winning and successful team, the memories that the dancers take from their time on the Little Chute Dance team are about the teamwork and friendships made. The memories made in the dance room, the buses, the hotel rooms, trips across the country, and hard moments with teammates are what this is all about.

What legacy do you hope to leave as a coach? That no matter where they go in life, the dancers and their families know they always have a home with Little Chute Dance. ■

After 35 years as senior editor for the Illinois-based Heartland Institute, Diane Bast returned to the Fox Valley and now enjoys with her husband, Joe, a retirement of bicycling, kayaking, long walks, and tennis.

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Finding Your Stride: Lessons From A High School Cross Country Team

BY HEATHER SALDIVAR



Empowering people to get the most out of every step isn't just a core part of the Superfeet brand, it's a mission statement we back up with actions supporting elite competitors and everyday athletes alike. With the help of a local Fleet Feet store, Superfeet recently donated insoles to a high school cross country team in Menasha, Wisconsin. Here's the story of how dedication and hard work, an inspiring coach, and proper support in footwear can lead to incredible results at the finish line and beyond.

Meet Coach Tony

After running track at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, Tony DeVine became a nationally licensed sprint coach. He was coaching at a nearby middle school when an opportunity came up to coach the Menasha High School cross country team. Tony jumped at the chance, even if it was difficult at first. He had to pitch students on the idea of joining cross country. Luckily, he's a natural salesman. "If I wasn't a teacher, I'd probably be selling used cars someplace," he joked in an interview. He also recognized the value of representation, knowing there weren't many Black cross country coaches. As he put it, "There's not a lot of people who look like me that are coaching cross country."

Finding Their Stride

When people think of the Menasha Blue Jays, cross country isn't the first sport that comes to mind. Menasha High, like many schools, is primarily known for its football team. When Coach Tony started three years ago, there were only five students running cross country, even though the sport was popular across the greater area. "We are in the center of possibly some of the best cross country programs in the state of Wisconsin," Tony said, "How can we be part of that and what does that look like?"

It started with recruiting more runners, but also meant outfitting everyone with the right equipment. In the beginning, "We had kids that were running in basketball shoes," recalled Tony. Leah Schapiro from the local Fleet Feet Fox Valley store stepped in to help. She knew the support inside the shoes

was just as important as the shoes themselves. The donations started small at first, but by this past season, the Blue Jays cross country team had proper running footwear outfitted with Superfeet insoles. Thanks to Coach Tony's dedication and inspiring approach, the team grew to 28 runners from a variety of backgrounds, including neurodivergent students and students from immigrant families.

A Little Help From Superfeet

Leah from Fleet Feet first started donating like-new running shoes that came back to her store as returns. She has been able to increase her donations and add Superfeet to the mix for the most recent season. Having the right footwear certainly made a difference from years past, but it wasn't until this past season that the Blue Jays made true strides in performance. The team's growth and hard work were the most important factors leading to their success. Still, Tony isn't shy about sharing how Superfeet also played an essential role. They were able to train harder with less injuries, increasing their distance from 12-15 miles per week to 25-30. "We had six kids that made all-conference this year," Tony proudly declared. "The insoles are part of that journey for us to do that."

The Power of Running

Running is hard work, especially training for a large race or running competitively, but the rewards are always worth it. Decreasing your risk of injury while increasing performance and mileage gives you an even greater payoff for your efforts. Running means so much to Coach Tony, he credits it with saving his life during tough times. "Running was everything," he said. It brought him joy and created connections with others. Here's to the joy of running and empowering everyone to perform at their best. ■

Heather Saldivar is a Marketing Specialist, Social Media and Partnerships at Superfeet Worldwide LLC. Superfeet empowers athletes to perform at their best and supports communities through a variety of product donation and grant initiatives, including giving 1% of annual sales to organizations creating a happier, healthier world.



THIS MONTH IN SPORTS HISTORY

FEBRUARY 1, 1950 Green Bay Packers founder, player and coach Curly Lambeau resigns after 31 seasons and 6 NFL titles to his credit

FEBRUARY 2, 1959 Vince Lombardi signs a 5 year contract to coach NFL Green Bay Packers

FEBRUARY 3, 1876 Albert Spalding invests \$800 to start sporting goods company, manufacturing first official baseball, tennis ball, basketball, golf ball and football

FEBRUARY 5, 1989 Kareem Abdul-Jabar becomes 1st NBA player to score 38,000 points

FEBRUARY 6, 1958 21 dead in air crash at Munich-Riem Airport; 8 players and 3 staff are from the Manchester United football team

FEBRUARY 8, 1996 NFL and Cleveland allows Art Modell to move his NFL franchise to Baltimore but he had to leave the Browns' name behind

FEBRUARY 9, 2018 Al Michaels joins NBC's "Sunday Night Football" broadcast with John Madden

FEBRUARY 11, 1965 Atlanta Braves propose to pay 5 cents from each ticket to bring a new baseball team to Milwaukee

FEBRUARY 13, 1977 Eric Heiden is 1st American to win world speed skating championship

FEBRUARY 15, 1936 Sonja Henie of Norway becomes the most successful Olympic figure skater ever by winning her 3rd consecutive gold medal at the Garmisch-Partenkirchen Winter Games

FEBRUARY 16, 1975 Benny Parsons wins the 17th Daytona 500 after Cale Yarborough sends race leader David Pearson spinning on the backstretch

FEBRUARY 18, 1978 1st Iron Man Triathlon (swim, bike ride, marathon) held, Kona, Hawaii

FEBRUARY 23, 1988 Chicago gives Cubs right to install lights and play up to 18 night games

FEBRUARY 24, 1980 United States ice hockey team clinches gold medal with 4-2 win over Finland at the Lake Placid Winter Olympics; comes after 4-3 "Miracle on Ice" victory against heavily favored Soviet Union

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Fueling Your High School Athlete

“How is the fridge empty again?!”

Can anyone relate?

BY KATE HARRELL JENKINS, MS, RD, CSSD, LD | YMCA DIETITIAN AND PERSONAL TRAINER, NEENAH-MENASHA

Fueling a high school athlete is not an easy task. This age and stage demand high calorie intake to support not only their training and activities, but also significant growth demands as well. Pair that with sport (or multi-sport) schedules, school schedules, family schedules, and more ... it's very easy for nutrition to take the back seat. Let's explore more!

HIGH ENERGY DEMAND

High school athletes have significantly high energy or calorie needs. Athletes training multiple hours per day most days of the week could need 3,000–4,000 calories or more per day simply to maintain their current body weight and support activity. These needs can be challenging to meet. Below are some helpful strategies.

Start with a good breakfast. More times than not, when meeting with high school athletes, I find breakfast is not a daily habit. Breakfast is important for growing athletes to provide the energy and stimulus for continued growth and repair. The body does a lot of recovery and repair overnight, so we need to kick-start the day so your athlete can continue to build and recover.

Easy breakfast options could include toast, bagels, or waffles with peanut butter/fruit/honey and a glass of milk, smoothies (either prepared at home or bottled), yogurt and granola, cereal and milk, egg sandwiches or egg bakes (easy for batch cooking in advance).

Incorporating snacks between meals and even at bedtime can help high school athletes meet their high energy needs. Including a bedtime snack can help to boost calories but also provide a stimulus for recovery overnight.

Convenient snack ideas for athletes on the go could include trail mix, nuts or dried fruit, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, granola bars (homemade granola bar recipe below), and portable fruit (apples, mandarins, bananas, dried fruit, fruit leathers) paired with protein (see more on protein below).

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PROTEIN NEEDS FOR TRAINING AND GROWTH

Just like calories, protein needs are also high at this age, to account for growth as well as the demands of sport. Per Nancy Clark's Sports Nutrition Guidebook, growing teenage athletes may need 0.7–0.9 g/lb or 1.6–2.0g/kg protein.

Encourage your athlete to distribute protein across the day. This will help provide the stimulus and raw material for the muscles and tissues to continue to grow and develop as well as repair from workouts. Pair proteins with carbohydrates that supply the needed energy for performance as well.

Protein-rich foods are plentiful and include eggs (omelets, egg bakes, egg sandwiches, egg salad, hardboiled eggs), meat, poultry, fish (example: tuna fish packets), milk and milk alternatives, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, nuts, seeds, nut butters, and beans.

DON'T FORGET HYDRATION

Hydration is another key area where high school athletes may fall short due to the busyness of the day, class schedules, access, and availability. Hydration needs are also high due to sweat losses in sport and daily demands. Quick and easy ways to check in on hydration status include urine color (aim for pale yellow or straw colored) and listening to your thirst. Encourage your athletes to keep a water bottle with them and refill it throughout the day. One option is to include labels on the water bottle as a reminder to drink down to a certain level by the end of a class period or by lunchtime or have a goal for number of water bottles to consume across the day.

KEY NUTRIENTS FOR GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT, AND SPORT

Many nutrients are critical for high school athletes, but two stand out, especially related to growth and sport.

Iron

Iron is a mineral that is critical for health AND performance. Iron is part of hemoglobin, which helps our body transport oxygen, a very critical process for our daily lives. One of the common symptoms of iron deficiency is fatigue and shortness of breath — makes sense!

Adolescent female athletes are particularly vulnerable if they have started their menstrual cycles, as iron needs go from 8mg per day to 18mg per day.

Iron-rich foods include meat, seafood, beans, nuts and seeds, some dark leafy greens like spinach, and some whole grains.

Concerned about your athlete's iron status? Ferritin is a lab value that helps to assess iron stores and can help to catch iron depletion early on, before it becomes iron deficiency anemia.

Calcium

Calcium is another mineral critical for both health and performance. Most of us know that calcium is important for bone health, but it also is involved in muscle contraction.

At this age, adolescents are working to build to their peak bone mass, which will ultimately affect their health now and down the road. That's a lot to think about in your teens. So it's important to make sure high school athletes consume sufficient calcium (and its partner, vitamin D) to help them build to an optimal peak.

Calcium-rich sources include dairy like milk, yogurt, and cheese; non-dairy alternatives with calcium added such as plant-based milks and yogurts; calcium set tofu; some leafy greens like kale; seeds such as chia seeds or sesame seeds; white beans and edamame; and more!

Bottom line, it takes work to adequately fuel a high school athlete. Above are just a few of the key nutrients and areas for focus. It's also important to be mindful of the key transitions a high school athlete's body is going through during puberty and adolescence. This can have a significant impact on body image, which can influence nutrition as well. Setting a good example and checking in at home can also help with these transitions. ■

I wish you and your athlete all the best in the new year!

Kate Harrell Jenkins is a registered dietitian, certified sports dietitian, personal trainer and group fitness instructor. She loves all things wellness, and is an avid runner with over 20 marathons and ultramarathons under her belt. She also has a passion for working with Parkinson's and is certified in Rock Steady Boxing, PWR! Moves and Pedaling for Parkinson's. Kate believes in bringing together nutrition and fitness and would love to talk with you! Feel free to email Kate at kharrell@ymcafoxcities.org or kateharrellrd@gmail.com.



Homemade Granola Bar Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 3-1/2 cups whole oats
- 3/4 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/4 to 1/3 cup milk or milk alternative
- 1/2 cup dried fruit
- 1/2 cup semi-sweet or dark chocolate chips
- Spices to taste: cinnamon, pumpkin pie spice, pure vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

- Mix all the ingredients together. Press into a 13x9 pan and refrigerate. Cut into bars.
- Can be made into balls as well for easy eating!

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OTL

OUTSIDE THE LINES

A look at sports from outside of the Fox Cities

Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh

Offers State-of-the-Art Facilities

BY SAM UTESCH, DIRECTOR OF ATHLETIC FACILITIES



The Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh is a leader in providing first-experience athletic programming and creating meaningful opportunities for youth of all ages to engage in sports. The Club is home to exceptional facilities, including the E.W. Wyman Gymnasium, a brand-new second gymnasium, and the Community First Credit Union Multi-Purpose Field, a turf field. These state-of-the-art spaces offer an ideal setting for introducing Club members to athletics and fostering a passion for sports.

The Club's athletic programs serve youth as young as five years old through high school seniors, offering opportunities in basketball, soccer, running, baseball, wiffle ball, tennis, and



other racquet-based sports. Older members can also participate in volleyball and flag football. Beyond serving its members, the Club frequently partners with distinguished organizations to host notable athletic events. These partners include the Milwaukee Bucks, Badger Region Volleyball Association, USTA Midwest, MLB, NFL Alumni Youth Sports Camps, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, and more.



What sets the Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh apart is not only its state-of-the-art facilities but also its commitment to excellence in programming. The Club's athletic programs are developed and overseen by a professional team that incorporates modern, evidence-based practices to ensure programs are both effective and enjoyable. The staff's expertise and educational background enable them to create a growth-centered environment where young athletes can explore their interests, develop skills, and grow a love for sports.

At a time when the cost of youth athletics continues to rise and participation declines nationwide, the Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh plays a vital role in making sports accessible to all. By fostering an inclusive and supportive atmosphere, the Club helps cultivate the next generation of athletes and ensures that every participant has the opportunity to succeed both on and off the field.

Her Path to Empowerment Starts at

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Scan to learn more!

Or contact program director Kelly Ellington at 920-450-6398 or kelly.ellington@girlsontherun.com



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LOTT

HENDRICKS

BRADY

NAMATH

CRAIG

MONTANA

TAYLOR

AIKMAN

SIMMS

FAVRE

WARNER

See page 27 for solution

The Growth of Youth Rugby in the Fox Cities

BY DALE VER VOORT | PHOTOS BY BADGERKINGS RUGBY

Fox Cities Youth Rugby, a thriving sports organization in Wisconsin, has been fostering a love for the game of rugby since 2015. The story of the club's creation traces back even further, to the early 2000s, when rugby at the high school level was facing challenges due to a lack of players. In response, Zeb and Ashley Bayer took the initiative to unite the scattered rugby programs across the region, eventually creating the club we know today. Their mission was clear: to introduce the sport of rugby to children of all ages and provide a fun, competitive environment that encourages growth, teamwork, and sportsmanship.



A Commitment to Youth Development

One of the distinguishing features of Fox Cities Youth Rugby is its focus on youth development across all skill levels. The club offers a wide range of programs, from flag rugby for younger kids to full-contact high school rugby. "By providing a progressive structure—from 1st grade through high school—players are able to develop at their own pace, gradually increasing the level of competition as they grow in skill and experience," said Andy Goodyear, vice president of the Fox Cities Youth Rugby Club. "This approach allows new players to join at any stage, whether they're starting as a 1st grader or as a teen with no prior rugby experience."

The club believes in meeting players where they are and helping them develop at a pace that suits their individual needs. Coaches, many of whom started their rugby journeys as beginners, emphasize the importance of mastering fundamentals. For more experienced players, the club ignites a competitive spirit, offering opportunities to try out for state, Midwest, and national teams.

Programs for All Ages and Abilities

Fox Cities Youth Rugby offers a variety of programs catering to different age groups and skill levels. In the summer, the club runs a non-contact flag rugby league for boys and girls. This league is divided into age groups: 1st-2nd grade, 3rd-4th grade, 5th-6th grade, and 7th-8th grade, allowing for fair competition. These teams participate in a 5-tournament series

across Southeast and Northeast Wisconsin, with the option of attending larger tournaments in Milwaukee and Monona Grove.

For high school athletes, the club offers a fall 15's rugby team for girls and a spring rugby season for both boys and girls. The growing popularity of 7's rugby—an Olympic event—has led to a surge in participation, especially among young women. The club also runs middle school rugby teams for both boys and girls, offering 7's rugby on a smaller field, which fosters skill development and teamwork.



Fostering a Love of Rugby

Rugby's unique blend of speed, strength, strategy, and teamwork naturally draws in young athletes, many of whom find a passion for the game once they experience it. The relationships formed through teamwork and hard work are a key aspect of the club's mission.

Off the field, the club encourages community involvement. Fox Cities Youth Rugby actively engages with local schools, running after-school rugby programs, and partnering with organizations like the YMCA and Boys and Girls Club.

Parent Involvement and Community Support

The club places a strong emphasis on the role of parents in creating a supportive environment for both athletes and coaches. Parents are encouraged to donate their time at tournaments, assist with transportation, and contribute to the club's operations. Many parents also take on coaching roles or serve on the club's board of directors, helping to ensure the program's success and sustainability.

One of the most rewarding aspects for the club is seeing athletes grow in confidence through their participation. Parents often report that their children, who might have been initially hesitant to join other school sports, gain confidence through rugby and begin participating in other activities, such as football, wrestling, or volleyball.

Overcoming Challenges and Expanding Opportunities

Like many contact sports, rugby faces some misconceptions,



particularly concerning safety. The idea that rugby is an excessively dangerous sport because of the lack of helmets and pads is a common concern. According to Goodyear, however, "rugby's governing bodies have implemented numerous rules designed to minimize the risk of injury, such as strict guidelines on proper tackling technique." The club's

focus on these fundamentals helps players develop skills in a safe and controlled environment.

The sport itself is evolving, with increasing participation across the state and country. The growth of college rugby programs, especially for women, has opened up new opportunities for young athletes, including scholarships and the chance to compete at higher levels. Fox Cities Youth Rugby is proud to support players who show exceptional promise, helping them transition to national-level teams and offering sponsorships to make these opportunities more accessible.

Looking to the Future

Fox Cities Youth Rugby has come a long way since its inception, but the club's growth is just beginning. With a dedicated staff of over 13 coaches, many of whom are also educators and community leaders, the club is well-positioned to continue expanding its impact. The future of rugby in the Fox Cities looks bright, with increasing opportunities for young athletes and growing recognition of the club's commitment to safety, skill development, and community involvement. ■



Solution to the word search puzzle on page 25.

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~ *Dustin Poirier*
American professional
mixed martial artist

*Logan Stumpf competing in and winning
1st Place in the North American Grappling
Association Wisconsin Grappling
Championship in Milwaukee.*

PARTING SHOTS

Photo by Paul Stumpf, P.S. Portraits

