



# Shorelines



August 2020

Published By The Balsam Lake Homeowners' Association  
A volunteer, nonprofit organization serving the lake community since 1974.

Member Website:  
[www.balsamlake.com](http://www.balsamlake.com)

## BALSAM LAKE HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

# WHAT A SHOW!

Thank you to all boat parade participants. This year the boat parade awards go to ...



1st Place:  
The Brewer Crew - VW Bus



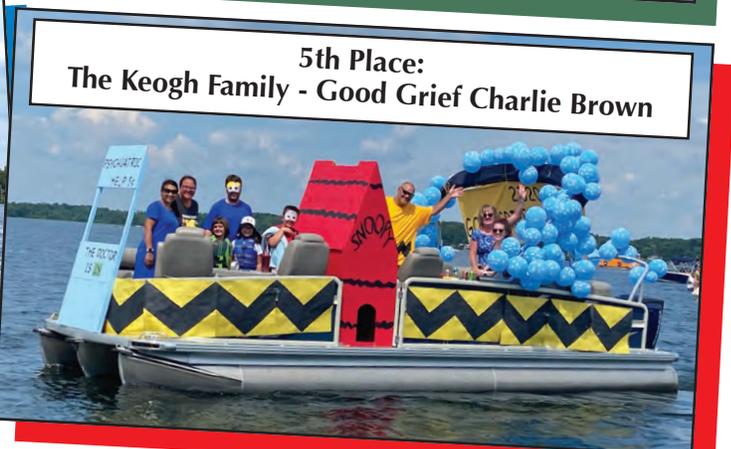
2nd Place:  
Pete Petersen and Parnell Troops - Going Bananas



3rd Place: The Heck Family - The Tiger King



4th Place:  
Peter Tangley and Friends - Missing Sports



5th Place:  
The Keogh Family - Good Grief Charlie Brown

# SAVE THE DATE!

(Due to the current COVID-19 crisis, all of these events could be postponed or cancelled. Look for updates on the BLHA website [www.BalsamLake.com](http://www.BalsamLake.com) and our email blasts.)

## Balsam Lake Homeowners' Association Annual Meeting

Saturday, August 8, 9 a.m. Possibly outside at Paradise Landing. Time & options to be determined.

## Balsam Lake Invitational Ski Show

Saturday, September 5, 6 p.m. - Bring a chair or blanket to sit in front of Sunnyside Marina.



Where People And Ideas Meet And Connect

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[www.balsamlakepubliclibrary.org](http://www.balsamlakepubliclibrary.org)

*The Balsam Lake Public Library* continues to provide fun offerings for the whole family. Follow the library on Facebook, check their website or find them in the newspaper to stay informed on upcoming activities.

*Keep in mind*, the Balsam Lake Public Library has a wide variety of online resources. Stop in to see all that is new at the library; they have been working to provide more kits like disc golf, dementia kits, blood pressure monitors, hot spot, and many new kits for kids.

*Remember, the library* also provides faxing, copying, WIFI and public computers as well as a friendly atmosphere. Enjoy the beauty of Balsam Lake and stop by the library to say hi.



# BALSAM LAKE FARMERS MARKET

Every Friday from May 22 thru Oct. 9  
(Weather permitting.)  
3-5 p.m.

## LOCATION

Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church  
Parking Lot - 507 W. Main Street

## FEATURING

Rhubarb - Fresh Fruit - Berries -  
Vegetables - Shiitake Mushrooms -  
Maple Syrup - Honey - Eggs - Bake Sale -  
Homemade Jams, Jellies & More -  
Bedding Plants - Flowers, Crafts  
(Rugs, Wooden Utensils & More)

**NOTE:** Flowers & crafts not allowed at this time because of COVID-19

## Shoppers:

- Please do not touch the product until sold
- Practice social distancing, 6 ft. apart

## VENDORS WELCOME

Contact Person:  
Esther Nelson, 715-268-8223



Farmer's Market



# shorelines

Published and distributed three times a year (June, July, August) to homes adjacent to Balsam Lake, Wisconsin by the Balsam Lake Homeowners' Association, a private, nonprofit volunteer organization supported by membership dues, contributions, and advertising subsidies.

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**2020 August article contributors:** Special thanks to John Parks, Mary Skaret, Michael Jekot, Chuck and Pat Petersen, Tim Plant, Tom Mattison and the BLHA members who share their pictures and stories.

**Editor:** Jean Egerman. **Layout:** Gayle Olson.

# CABIN ON THE LAKE

By Tom Mattison

**On June 10, 1950**, my grandfather, Kermit Mattison, purchased a small cabin on Balsam Lake, which means on that date this year, my father, Tom, will have been “on the lake” for 70 years. What is it about that kind of longevity milestone that is so impressive?

**You’d think that I’d be able to put down on paper** the stories I’ve been told over and over again about the people my father knows all over the lake; the tales I’ve heard about his childhood antics; and the local anecdotes about the bygone resorts, fishing spots, and restaurants. There are so many that I can’t distinguish one from another.

**Recently, my sister, Karen, and I** reminisced about what we remember of growing up on the Lake, and we can’t think of a better way to recognize our dad’s love for this lake than to expound on our own experiences – 50 years’ worth.

**Although our parents built a new cabin** on the property in 1974, I remember taking naps on the screen porch of the old cabin. Fortunately for us, the lack of indoor plumbing doomed that place, as my mother insisted on building a newer cabin because she wasn’t going to let her kids fall through the hole in the outhouse while doing their business.

**During the construction of the new cabin**, the crew pulled a massive, flat-topped boulder out of the foundation excavation, and instead of disposing of it, my dad insisted on placing it on the front lawn. “Mattison Rock” has hosted picnics, family conversations, fish filleting, and a solid roof to a family of chipmunks.

**Back in the 1970s and 1980s**, Twin Cities’ youth sports were scheduled during the week, so nearly every summer weekend was spent at Balsam Lake. From our swimming spot in a much-less-populated Little Balsam, to our competition for highest score on the boating safety test (Karen won), to taking the fishing boat all the way to the Rock Pile in East Balsam to scare the gulls, to the annual fireworks show on July 4th, my sister and I had more quality time together than we realized at the time. Just make sure you don’t hit the boat motor on the underwater stump 50 feet straight out from the neighbor’s dock!



Tom and Marie Mattison love Balsam Lake.

**And it wasn’t just summers on the lake.**

I love Balsam Lake in the winter. We still make an annual walk to First Island or over to the gigantic stone on Preacher’s Point. You can’t beat a wood fire in the fireplace and Christmas lights on a snow-covered deck, after sledding down the hill in the front yard and laying on the ice looking at more stars than you could ever see in town.

**Karen and I have introduced our spouses and kids** to lake life, but today’s pace of life and priorities have changed. As much as our new family members enjoy time at the lake, it’s still OUR place. We have the emotional attachment, the memories, and the yearning to keep up the old traditions. We have all that because of our parents committed to owning a cabin. Thank you, Tom and Marie...we owe you for a lifetime of experiences on one of the most beautiful places on Earth – Balsam Lake!

## HOME ON THE RANGE

**The legal surveying system**, which started when the United States first issued its patent in the 18th century, uses townships and “ranges” for mapping. Land is divided into sections of 640 acres. Townships run north and south and ranges run east and west. The township/range system was established in 1785 and has been used ever since. Polk County includes Ranges 15-20. Balsam Lake is Range 16-17 W.

# Where Does **BALSAM LAKE "SHOP"**?

Submitted by Mary Skaret

## **"I'm looking for a good cup of 'Joe'!"**

- KJ's New North, the ice cream shop in town.
- Balsam Lake Cafe has fresh coffee until 2 p.m. (and even a drive-up window).
- Cafe Wren in Luck and Julia's Java in Milltown for gourmet coffee.

## **"I'm looking for fresh vegetables"**

- Balsam Lake Farmer's Market sells fresh vegetables, flowers and seedlings. The market is open Friday afternoon 3:00 to 5:00 in Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church parking lot from Memorial Day Weekend to mid-September. (Watch for pies and caramels rolls.)
- Baker Orchard on County Road 35, just south of Centuria, has a beautiful orchard. Open weekends during apple season, they offer wonderful apples and cider too!

## **"I want the best corn-on-the-cob"**

- Glenna Farm and Country Store on 120th between County Rd. I and Highway 8 features the best of the season. You will find organic jams and pickled items, maple syrup, corn-on-the-cob, pumpkins, gourds, Wisconsin beers and much more.

## **"We need some decorations for our garden!"**

- Just south of Highway 8 on 150th Ave. (about 2 blocks and right onto Bridget Lake), you will find BogHouse Vintage Antiques. They have a variety of yard decorations, and you will find beautiful and unique pottery made by potter in residence, Paul Supplee. Watch for advertising on weekends.

## **"Where can I find art and gifts in Balsam Lake?"**

- Balsam Arts on Main Street exhibits original contemporary art from around the country. They are open weekends 12-5 and by appointment..
- Cafe Wren, in nearby Luck, displays local artwork and hosts a Holiday Art sale on Thanksgiving weekend. (Gourmet coffee and access to the Gandy Dancer Trail).
- Midnight Winds Gift Shoppe, at the roundabout of Highway 8 and County Road 46 (previously Acme), offers an amazing assortment of gifts including jewelry, clothing, and metaphysical items to satisfy your soul.

**Tell us where you like to "SHOP" when you are "at the lake." (We really want to know about discoveries you have made!) Email [maryskaret@hotmail.com](mailto:maryskaret@hotmail.com) or [jeanegerman@gmail.com](mailto:jeanegerman@gmail.com).**

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# THE SKY ABOVE THE LAKE

By John Parks

**In late July of 2018**, at one of our family gatherings at Ward's Resort, a few of us were sitting and talking on my brother-in-law's back porch. You cannot sit for very long on nights like this without looking at the sky above the lake. It was a beautiful clear night with no moon, so the number of stars you could see in the sky was beyond spectacular! As I was sitting there contemplating the vastness of the Milky Way, I noticed that one of the "stars" in the sky was moving really fast from the southwest to the northeast. I immediately recognized that what I was seeing was probably the space station, but to confirm my observation, I looked it up on an application (application name: ISS Spotter) that I carried on my phone. The space station was flying right over our heads! One of mankind's greatest exploration accomplishments was visiting us, in the North Woods!

**Now the fact of the matter is**, the orbital intervals between these visits are pretty frequent (there are about 15.5 orbits a day) and it has been doing this (at this writing) for the last 21 years, 4 months, and 26 days! Consequently, although every orbit does not take the station right over Balsam nor would you be able to see it with the "naked eye" during the day, the opportunity to watch this relatively "Little House in the Sky" presents itself pretty often. I think the best place to observe it, is next to a fire pit while sitting and chatting with family!

**The space program**, for most people, is generally thought by Americans to be a government program that takes place down south. But the tendency to identify NASA missions as a southern undertaking couldn't be farther from the truth. The fact is, the people who populate the science and engineering ranks of NASA come from all over the country; many come from right here in WI.

One of the original Mercury 7 astronauts was Deke Slayton from Sparta, not to mention Jeffrey Williams from Superior who still holds the record for most time in space over 3 missions of 534 days. And, we mustn't forget Laurel Clark who claimed Racine as her home. Laurel tragically died, along with the entire Columbia crew in the skies over the Southwest.

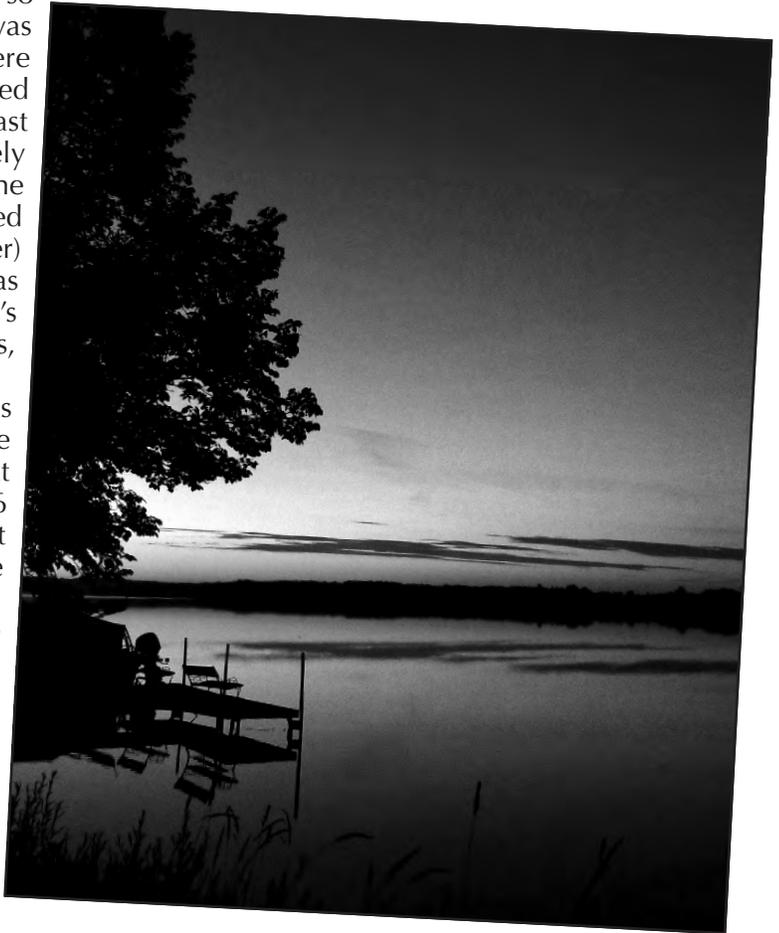
**I have many stories from my 35-year association with NASA.** Stories that range from space flight to advancements in aviation; projects and research that often challenge the breadth of our understanding of the universe. Interesting episodes, but events that lack the Balsam Lake connection I am attempting to make with this article. One notable experience that meets the criteria actually occurred in the Main Street Cafe.

**My wife and I were finishing up breakfast one morning** when we started talking to a woman who noticed that we were NASA people (probably a shirt or hat with a NASA logo). She asked what we did and wanted to know about some of the programs. I talked about Grand Challenge Programs for a few minutes, and then told a story about how one of my senior researchers (Dochan Kwak, Ph.D. in Computational Fluid Dynamics CFD) was asked to research some impeller blades for the Debakey artificial heart. In his analysis he discovered that the turbulence on the poorly designed impeller blades were thrashing the blood cells and destroying their ability to carry oxygen to the body. Using his analysis, the makers of the pump were able to redesign the blades with the net result of significantly improving life expectancy for the patient. The woman to whom I had just told the story asked us to stay where we were and left. My wife and I looked at each other in bewilderment and quickly going over what I had said and how I might have offended her. We couldn't think of a thing.

**After a few moments, the lady came back into the cafe** with her husband in tow; he was wearing one of the heart assists!

Ref: NASA Computer Rocket Science Helps Debakey Heart Pump Team

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2000/02/000228081201.htm>





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Once a sawmill, now a bridge crossing Mill Pond.



A view across Mill Pond.

# The Answers Are:



1. Town Bay
2. Mill Pond
3. Raskin Bay
4. First Island
5. Big Rock
6. Preacher's Point
7. Cedar Island
8. Pine Island
9. Bear Island
10. North Shore
11. Big Island
12. Paradise Island
13. Carlson Island
14. Minneapolis Point
15. Sand bar
16. Stumps
17. Boston Bay
18. Little Narrows
19. Little Balsam
20. Big Narrows
21. East Balsam

*Balsam Lake*

Thank you Pat and Chuck Petersen  
and Michael Jekot for the art

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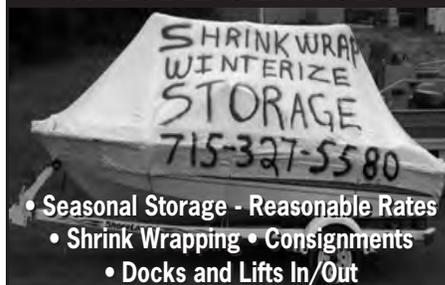


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# BLISS AND BLUSTER - MEMORIES OF JULY 19, 2019

By Tim Plant

**Plant-Sundermeyer summers on Balsam Lake** have produced countless memories of unforgettable times with family and friends since 1980 but July 19, 2019 provided unsurpassed highs and lows.

**We purchased one of the last remaining 1939 Boy Scout cabins** on East Balsam when Peggy was pregnant with our oldest daughter, Corrie, in 1980. Now, nearly 40 years later, we were about to celebrate her daughter, Evelyn's 6th birthday, cabin style. Our multi family gathering of 18 included all six grandkids, parents and friends.

**A raucous lunchtime with nine kids** in the screen tent was followed by piñata (imported from our San Antonio winter residence) bashing, special birthday cake from Marketplace, fun water and land toy presents and Captain Uncle Nate's thrilling tube rides behind the pontoon for all the kids.

**Of course, the kids never tired of the tube rides!** This was one of those magic days that no one wanted to see end. But because another unexpectedly severe storm hit Balsam Lake earlier in the week, Nate and Corrie cast a wary eye to the blackened ridge across the west horizon. They nervously hustled the kids and boat back to dock earlier than the last time. By the time the adults cleared everyone and everything from the lake and headed to town for more shelter, the 'Derecho' (near tornadic) 70 mph winds hit East Balsam and felled countless trees in their wake.

**Peggy and I, our other son Brennan, and grandson, DJ,** weathered the storm's howling winds and pouring rain inside the small cabin shower area. We were spared from serious damage (or worse) by our old oak tree on the lakeside, which had been weakened in the middle over the years by a pesky woodpecker. The tree split in the middle and the top half was sent brushing off to the kitchen corner of our 80-year-old seasonal cabin.

**After the storm subsided, we emerged from the cabin** in wonder at the damage all across our side of the Lake. We were saddened by the losses of nature but relieved that the human cost was far less than it might have been. The collective response of neighbors helping neighbors and buzz of chainsaws boosted our spirits in the days to come. Nothing can take away the precious memories of special times and once in a lifetime celebrations shared with family at Balsam Lake!



## DID YOU KNOW?

**Weed killer can sometimes harm your garden,** rather than help it. Plus, the cost of weed killer can add up over time. To eliminate those problems, make your own weed killer at home using natural ingredients. Simply mix up a little dish soap, vinegar and salt, pop it into a spray bottle, and watch those weeds disappear.

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# WHOO GOES THERE?

While there are many types of owls that roam the United States, the most common species in Wisconsin are the Great Horned, the Barred Owl, and Screech Owls.

## Great Horned Owl

With its long, earlike tufts, intimidating yellow eyes, and deep hooting voice, the Great Horned Owl is an ominous creature. This powerful predator can devour birds and mammals larger than itself. It also snacks on smaller prey, such as mice, and frogs. It's one of the most common owls in North America and can be found in almost any semi-open habitat between the Arctic and the tropics. Don't be fooled by its gentle luring call: "Hoo, hoo hoo hoo, hoo hoo." This is one tough bird.



## Barred Owl

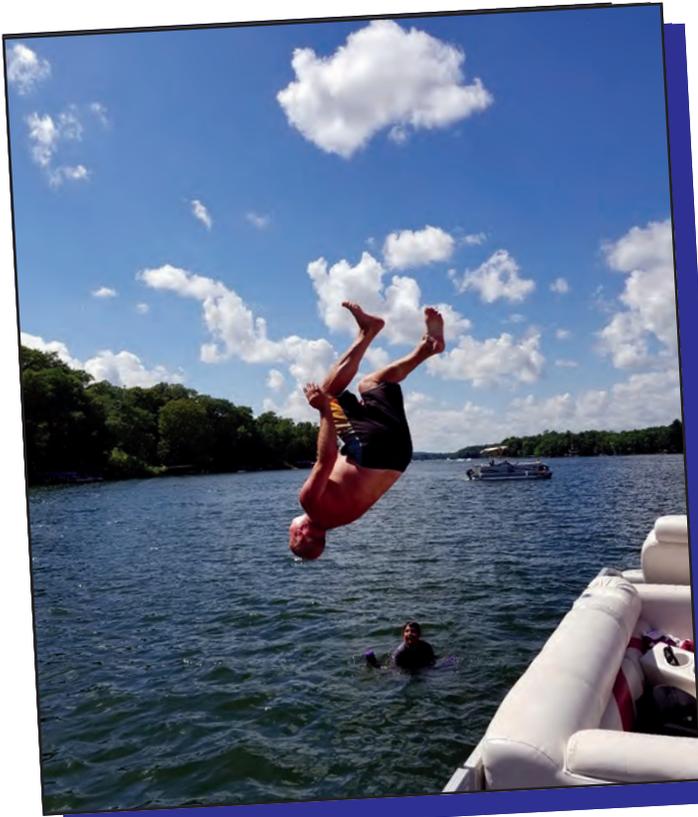
The Barred Owl's hooting call, "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you-all?" is a classic sound in forests and treed areas. This attractive owl, with deep brown eyes and brown-and-white-striped plumage, can pass completely unnoticed as it flies through the trees or sleeps on a tree limb.



## Eastern Screech Owl

If you hear a mysterious trill in the night, the spooky sound may come from a tiny screech owl. The Eastern Screech-Owl is a tiny, stocky bird, with a large head and almost no neck. Its wings are rounded; its tail is short and square. These camouflaged birds have pointed ear tufts that are tucked back and not always visible. They live in woods, suburbs, and parks and hide in nooks and trees during the day. Nearly invisible during the day, listen for them at night. Their hoots, screams, calls and trills sound like a host of banshees.

# THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING FUN



Hoping he sticks the landing.



Moll family fun.



Janine Terhaar shares her view of Balsam Lake.



Congratulations on your retirement Tom Parnell!

# HAPPENING AROUND BALSAM LAKE!



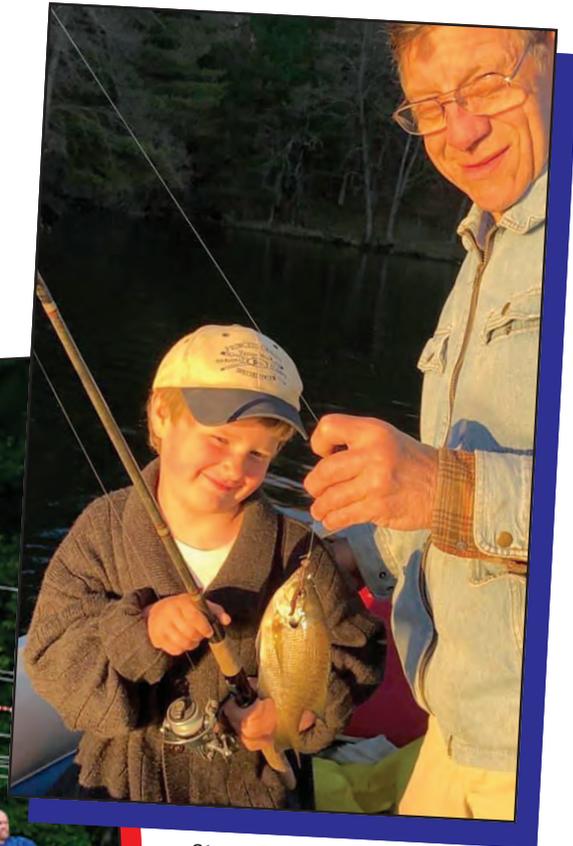
No shortage of fun at the Parks home.



Papa Terry Nigon with grandchildren, Elsie & Charlie. Terry and wife Betsy have been on Balsam Lake since 1980.



What a team!



Steve DuBois teaches a man to fish.

# THE ART ANTIDOTE

**“Art calls to the optimism within us and beckons us to breathe.”**

Ava DuVernay, Oscar nominee director of *Selma*, *13th* and *A Wrinkle in Time*.

Whether you're **Claude Monet** or a doodler of stick figures, a study by Drexel University found that making art can reduce cortisol, a stress-related hormone.



**No artistic talent is necessary** for art to be beneficial; the therapeutic process is not about the artistic value of the work, but rather about finding associations and telling stories.

**Art therapy is founded** on the belief that self-expression through artistic creation helps people who are seeking deeper understanding of themselves, their situations, and their personalities. Art is a way to express thoughts, feelings, and psychological disposition.

**According to the American Art Therapy Association**, art helps children, adolescents, and adults explore their emotions and express themselves. It can improve self-esteem, manage addictions, relieve stress, improve symptoms of anxiety and depression, and cope with a physical illness or disability.

**As studies demonstrate**, art can be beneficial for people of all ages, genders, and ability levels. Don't be afraid to doodle.

*Reduction of Cortisol Levels and Participants' Responses Following Art Making*, Girija Kaimal, Kendra Ray and Juan Muniz. *Art Ther.* 2016 Apr 2; 33(2): 74-80. Published online 2016 May 23.

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# HOW IS YOUR BASEMENT?

In 2019, several cities in Wisconsin climbed into the top 20 wettest years on record. Precipitation totals ran 150-200 percent above normal, and people noticed.

In the spring, farmers were late planting crops due to rain, and in autumn, they couldn't enter the flooded fields to harvest the crops. The trees on the roadside were under water, shorelines rose, and basements flooded. The Balsam Lake watershed was brimming.

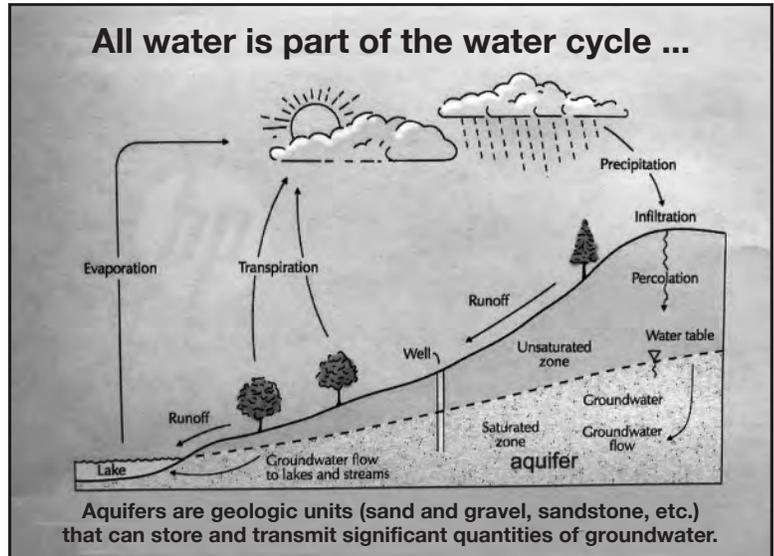
A **sandstone aquifer** is present in over two-thirds of Wisconsin. This aquifer is composed of Karst topography, which is made up of broken rock, such as limestone, and has underground drainage systems with sinkholes and caves. A perfect example is Pothole State Park across the river from St. Croix Falls.

Because "water seeks its own level," water in two basins, connected by a pipe, must equalize to the same level. (People have recognized this principal since before Aristotle, but Aristotle wrote it down).

In 2019 the aquifer through Polk County and most of Wisconsin was full. There were reports of water rising up out of the wells; no pumping required. For many homes, rising groundwater caused hydrostatic pressure, which caused soil to push on foundation walls and floors. This can make cracks in basement concrete, particularly in wet seasons and is often why there's water in your basement after rain.

**Question:** Many people know that water seeks its own level, but very few people know why. The reason has to do with:

- atmospheric pressure
- water pressure depending on depth
- water's density



**Answer:** If water is at rest, the pressures must be equal. If one region of water is higher, a flow would occur from the higher region to the lower region until the pressures equalize. This is true whatever the density of the water and without atmospheric pressure.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Layers:** Water that collects beneath the Earth's surface to fill porous spaces in soil, sediment, and rocks is considered **groundwater**. This water originates from rain and melted snow and feeds the aquifers, springs, and wells in the region. An **aquifer** is an underground layer of permeable rock that contains fractures or porous materials. The upper surface of groundwater is the **water table**. Groundwater can be extracted from an aquifer using a well. A **watershed** is the surface area from which rainfall collects and drains, including drainage basins and catchment areas.

## HONK, HONK ... DID YOU KNOW?

Wisconsin DNR asks people not put goose "poop" in the lake.

**Geese honking overhead** are a sure sign of the coming cold and the passing seasons. However, this poetic scene isn't appreciated by all. As David Sperling wrote in the Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine:

"And then there's the poop thing. Geese feed on the ready supply of grass and leave behind piles of "goose cigars." Loaded with bacteria, the goose feces can make water unattractive for swimming."

**Geese feces increase phosphorus levels** and often contain the parasites cryptosporidium, giardia, coliform, and campylobacter. These parasites can be hazardous when ingested or inhaled. However, walking past "goose cigars" or lounging near them on the beach is usually safe for healthy people.

**The best option?** Deterrence.

**Some studies show** that synthetic grape flavor methyl anthranilate is an excellent repellent for waterfowl. To dissuade geese from nesting in your yard, remove any wildlife feeders and sprinkle grape Kool-aid® or powdered grape Jolly Ranchers® on your grass.

**Another option?** Get a Border Collie.

References: <https://lemonbayconservancy.org/the-power-of-purple/> Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources



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# Spaghetti alla Carbonara

Total: 25 min. Prep: 15 min.  
Cook: 10 min. Yield: 4 to 6 servings

## Ingredients

- 1 pound dry spaghetti
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 ounces pancetta or slab bacon, cubed or sliced into small strips
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, plus more for serving
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 handful fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

## Directions

1. Prepare the sauce while the pasta is cooking to ensure that the spaghetti will be hot and ready when the sauce is finished. It is important that the pasta is hot when adding the egg mixture, so the heat of the pasta cooks the raw eggs in the sauce.
2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, add the pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until tender yet firm ("al dente"). Drain the pasta well, reserving 1/2 cup of the starchy cooking water to use in the sauce if you wish.
3. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a deep skillet over medium flame. Add the pancetta and saute for about 3 minutes, until the bacon is crisp and the fat is rendered. Toss the garlic into the fat and saute for less than 1 minute to soften.
4. Add the hot, drained spaghetti to the pan and toss for 2 minutes to coat the strands in the bacon fat. Beat the eggs and Parmesan together in a mixing bowl, stirring well to prevent lumps. Remove the pan from the heat and pour the egg/cheese mixture into the pasta, whisking quickly until the eggs thicken, but do not scramble (do this off the heat to ensure this does not happen.) Thin out the sauce with a bit of the reserved pasta water, until it reaches desired consistency. Season the carbonara with several turns of freshly ground black pepper and taste for salt. Garnish with chopped parsley. Pass more cheese around the table.



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# HAVE YOU SEEN ME?

A **decade ago**, a Kirtland warbler was the holy grail for Wisconsin birders: everyone wanted to be the first to see one or to confirm the sighting of this beautiful little songbird. Nearly extinct 50 years ago, the Kirtland Warbler (also known as the jack pine warbler) had almost exclusively nested in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. As they started expanding their range, Wisconsin offered an ideal habitat.

**Habits and habitats:** Kirtland warblers nest only on the ground near the lower branches and in large stands of young jack pines 5 to 20 feet tall and 6 to 22 years old. The tree's age is crucial, although biologists are not sure why. It's possible the birds need low branches to help conceal their nests.

**Food:** They are Insectivores, gathering food mainly among pine needles, leaves of deciduous trees, and ground vegetation. Sometimes they hover to snatch flying insects.

**The number of Kirtland warblers** in Wisconsin is still quite small, leading the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to list the bird as a state endangered species. Biologists working on warbler conservation mark the birds for study and make it possible for the DNR to track movements and nesting patterns.

**To help increase and manage Kirtland warblers**, the DNR, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and other partners conduct annual surveys and set traps to keep cowbirds away from the warblers' nests. (Cowbirds are brood parasites that lay their eggs in the nests of other species.)

**Conservation groups also are making efforts** to maintain and expand a mix of jack pine trees and fields to welcome the warbler to Wisconsin. What a beautiful addition to the community.



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