Foot problem solutions
Organic food options
Home buying & selling tips

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— Tracy Ertl of TitleTown Publishing

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Here are so many ways to look back on your days of summer: Did I take advantage of every nice day to walk early in the mornings or fly a kite at night? Charlie, our dog, would definitely say he did not get as many walks as he’d like! If food problems are prohibiting you from walking comfortably, check out our story on page 12 about common foot problems and what you can do about them.

In this issue of Women, we recognize how busy you are. If you are thinking about buying or selling a house, then our story on page 30 has some great tips for you from local experts in real estate. If you are thinking about going back to school, our Learning Options story on page 32 should be an interesting read for you. Continuing education isn’t just for kids!

My family is going through a new phase and is preparing for our first daughter to go away to college. Time is flying by, and I wonder what she will remember from this summer. I hope you make some time to do something special for you this summer!

Leslie Asare,
Publisher
WHAT’S YOUR BEST TIP FOR HEALTHY LIVING?

Exercise! Since I get bored easily I like to change it up! For strength, cardio and resistance training I go to Fox City F.I.R.E. Fitness Camp where they push me outside of my comfort zone. To improve flexibility, I do Yoga at 95 Yoga House. I also enjoy the outdoors and girlfriends so I walk or run a couple days a week and the extra benefit is that I get my dog out for exercise too. Bottom line: Keep it fun!
Sarah Schneider, Freedom

Healthy living is more than just what you eat. It’s mind, body, and soul. If your mind is happy, it helps keep your body and soul on track.
Of course you should keep moving, exercise is so important! Eat right, get enough rest and keep smiling! I don’t take anything for granted, I work hard, play hard, and love my crazy fun life! Enjoy the ride, my friends!
Dawn Christensen, Neenah

I am a new Fitbit user and I love it! It has really helped me be more mindful of my activity and gets me motivated and moving towards a healthier me.
Christine Rondeau, Neenah

Take time for yourself! It is so easy to get caught up in the everyday hustle and bustle of work and family life that we often forget about ourselves. I carve out an hour of most days for me. Whether it’s a class at the gym or quiet time before the house wakes up. It’s rewarding to do something for you!
Stephanie Blavat-Vesely, Green Bay

“Make yourself a priority with at least 30 minutes of activity a day!” My other tip is “Go easy on the sugar!”
Katie Voight, Appleton

Learn to prepare your favorites at home to save a ton of calories, fat and sodium. Make exercise a non-negotiable appointment in your calendar. Prepare a few meals on Sunday, one being a large salad, and set yourself up for success for the week.
Erin Minsart, Green Bay

Healthy living really starts with your mind (brain); it is the most powerful part of your body. It can determine if you are going to have a good or bad day, whether you are going to eat that cheesecake or not, am I going to exercise or not, are other people’s words and opinion going to determine who you are, the difference between survival and defeat, etc. Best advice “Capture your thoughts daily and determine are they healthy or not, is this thought going to help me grow and be strong or tear me down and be weak – The rest of the body follows suit.” I truly believe a lot of illnesses start, maintain and progress with bad thoughts.
Heidi Frederickson, Kaukauna

That’s easy: The 3 P’s: live Passionately, be Productive, Pray, and (not included in the 3 P’s ... walk a dog!
Chris Hanson, Appleton
SPECIAL SECTION health

HOW TO KNOW WHICH FOODS TO BUY ORGANIC

by ALISON VER HALEN
THE DIRTY DOZEN AND THE CLEAN FIFTEEN

You may have heard of the Dirty Dozen and/or the Clean Fifteen, but do you have those lists memorized? Probably not, since they change every year.

“They actually test the foods for the herbicides, fertilizers and pesticides that are sprayed on them,” said Kristyn Madalinski, the owner and clinic director of Alo Health in Appleton. “They want to know which foods will absorb those chemicals the most, and therefore cause more problems in the body.”

THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

The organization that compiles this list every year is called the Environmental Working Group and they can be found at ewg.org.

“I direct people to those lists, and they also have a mobile app that you can download and use on your phone, so if you’re in the grocery store, you can use that as a reference,” said Rebecca Aldag, a certified nutritional specialist, registered herbalist and owner of Aldag Wellness in Neenah.

“So if someone, for example, eats an apple every day, the apple is on the Dirty Dozen list, I would say that it is money well spent to buy organic apples, since you’re consuming it on a frequent basis,” said Aldag. “The Clean Fifteen fruits and vegetables set you don’t have to be as concerned if you’re eating them frequently because they are the least sprayed.”

FARMER’S MARKETS

Aldag also recommends people use their local farmer’s market whenever possible because that gives you the opportunity to talk one-on-one with the people growing your food.

“Even though a farmer may not be certified organic (because there’s a cost associated with getting certified) they may be utilizing organic growing methods, so that’s one way to get produce that is grown under organic conditions that may not be labeled as such,” said Aldag.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

As far as why you should worry about chemicals in your food, it all has to do with your body’s own detoxification process.

“We get particularly interested in how the lymphatic system is doing if people are not routinely eating these things organically,” said Madalinski. “The lymphatic system is the sewer system of the body: its job is to remove all those toxins, and if you keep eating conventional produce on the Dirty Dozen list, the lymphatic system will get congested and won’t work right and that will lead to chronic health issues.”

MEAT AND FISH

In addition to steering clear of certain produce, Aldag recommends staying away from conventionally raised meat and fish as much as possible.

“When it comes to beef, grass-fed is a much better choice than going conventional or commercial. If someone’s not able to afford grass-fed meat, then I say buy conventional because there are a lot of good properties in meat, but maybe don’t eat it as frequently,” said Aldag.

“With grass-fed beef you get a higher omega-3 fatty acid ratio than you do with commercially fed beef, and the omega-3 fatty acids are anti-inflammatory, so you can think of a grass-fed piece of meat as having a fatty acid profile that’s more similar to salmon.”

Grass-fed beef also contains conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which has been shown to support weight loss and has anti-cancer properties. Additionally, grass-fed beef contains minerals we need that aren’t found in commercially farmed beef.

“I always recommend wild-caught fish because farmed fish generally are raised in really close quarters, so they use antibiotics in their feed,” said Aldag. “That’s not so good for us, so I recommend going with wild-caught or sustainably farmed fish.”
FACT OR FAD

Popular diets promise results for women — but are they necessary?
At the annual meeting of the American Society for Nutrition, held last month in Boston, it was noted that the obesity rate climbed to 41.5 percent of women in 2016. In total, 69 percent of women in the United States at that point were either overweight or obese. As a result, weight management has become an even larger topic in the U.S. Trending diets like the ketogenic, Whole30 and paleo have certainly resulted in success for some of those women who have struggled with weight management, or they wouldn’t be so popular. But from a dietitian’s perspective, are they safe and effective?

**WHOLE30**

The Whole30 diet is based around the elimination of what founder Melissa Hartwig considers the most common inflammatory food groups for a full 30 days. Gone are real and artificial sugars, alcohol, grains, legumes, dairy, carrageenan, MSG, sulfites, baked goods and junk foods.

Anne Vollrath, registered dietitian with Bellin Health, says whole grains, legumes, and some of the fruits and dairy the diet cuts out actually offer good nutritional value. And, while the diet encourages a reduction in processed foods – which is a great idea for all of us – the rigid nature of it can set the stage for more failure for some dieters.

“There’s no proof that it’s resetting anyone’s metabolism, so I see it more as eating with intention,” Vollrath adds. “Not that it’s resetting your health and habits and relationship with food.”

**KETOGENIC DIET**

The ketogenic diet, first introduced for patients who suffered from seizures, is a low-carb, high-fat and adequate protein diet. The body produces ketones in the liver to be used as energy, instead of relying on carbohydrates. A strict keto diet is between 70 and 90 percent fat, explains Angela Halderson, integrative and functional nutrition practitioner with Natural Healthy Concepts in Appleton.

“Plenty of case studies show that a keto diet is beneficial for obesity, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and there are trials underway for cancer,” she says. “But when you remove inflammatory foods from your diet, you’re going to see a benefit for many chronic diseases, because chronic disease is inflammation.”

Vollrath says the concern with keto is that a high-fat diet does not include enough fiber, since whole grains are cut out. Studies have show whole grains can reduce the risk of colon cancers, she furthers.

“The keto diet is way too high in fat for what we need, and I don’t know that there is enough good information to say this is a good diet.”

**PALEO DIET**

The Paleo diet recommends veggies, fruits, meats, fish, certain fats, nuts and seeds, while eliminating grains, beans, soy, dairy, certain vegetable oils and refined sugar.
As Halderson states, the diet also emphasizes the quality of the meat, vegetables and fruit, encouraging the use of organic fruits and veggies and grass-fed animal proteins.

“That will ensure a better ratio of omega-3s to omega-6s, with omega-3s being the more anti-inflammatory versus the pro-inflammatory ... Paleo also emphasizes exercise.”

But as Vollrath explains, the idea of living like a caveman may be a bit of a reach.

“We’re looking back at what we think the cavemen ate, and we’re really not there anymore,” she explains. “We’ve changed what we’ve eaten and our bodies have adapted to that. It’s good to get rid of refined foods and include more whole grains and legumes, but again, this diet cuts that out too.”

HOW SHOULD WE BE EATING?

Vollrath says that the ideal plan is something like the Mediterranean diet, where you can choose to have lean animal meat, some beans, lots of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and stay within caloric needs. Centenarians across the world are often found to have followed something similar.

“They aren’t doing high amounts of fats, like the keto diet,” says Vollrath. “They aren’t drinking lots of sodas, they’re not eating lots of cookies, cakes and pies that we are, and they’re not eating potato chips. The centenarians are active; we’re probably eating way too many calories for what our physical activity is for the most part.”

Halderson says she believes in the 80/20 rule for successful weight management, where you can have a fun day where you allow yourself a glass of wine or dessert, for example.

“In general to lose weight, I would encourage someone to eliminate the processed foods and at least for 30 days give up grains and dairy. Then bring them back in to see how you feel,” she recommends. “Watch portion control. We should be eating off a 9-inch plate; we don’t need to eat seconds. Have a glass of water, stay hydrated, and if in another 20 to 30 minutes you’re still hungry, eat extra fruits or vegetables.

“Know that it’s a lifestyle change,” she adds. “It’s one day at a time and you have to see the end goal in sight.”
Waseda Farms is a certified organic farm in Door County, Wisconsin. We raise 100% Grass-Fed Black Angus Beef, Heritage Berkshire Pork, chickens and eggs. We also grow an organic two-acre vegetable and fruit garden. We have a quaint, full-service grocery store on the farm property. We sell all the cuts from the meats we raise, farm fresh eggs, fresh harvested produce, many goat and cow cheese varieties, kefir, kombucha, yogurt and many organic grocery items!

Kombucha is very beneficial to your body in that it is full of probiotics and antioxidants. Probiotics are good for your gut health. They increase your good gut bacteria, improve digestion, detoxification and help improve your immune system. Antioxidants are good for you because they fight free radicals in your system. Free radicals have been linked to cancer and premature aging. The best way to consume probiotics and antioxidants is from real foods, not supplements.

Kombucha is made from boiling 3 quarts of distilled water, then add 1 cup of organic white sugar. Bring back to a gentle boil until sugar has dissolved. Take pot off heat and add 10-15 bags of organic black and green tea. I prefer to do 10 green tea, 5 black tea bags. Steep 5-10 minutes. Remove tea bags. Cover pot and let cool down overnight or several hours. When completely cool, place in a glass gallon jar. Add scoby and its liquid to your tea. Cover with paper towel and secure with rubber band. Put in a dark cabinet for 7-14 days. Temperature should remain between 73-80 degrees. After 7-14 days you can add ginger or berries to flavor your kombucha. At this point you may want to do a second fermentation to produce the amount of fizz that you like.

Sometimes if a batch is allowed to ferment too long it can have a bit of a vinegar taste to it. That can turn some people off. Do not let one bottle of kombucha foil your efforts. Try other flavors or other producers. I've found that if one producer has a higher vinegar taste, others do not. There are many producers of kombucha, find the one that works for you!

I always flavored my kombucha with frozen or dried raspberries, blueberries or ginger. They were easy to remove and gave great flavor to my kombucha! I must give credit to Marilyn Jarzembski (marilynjarz@gmail.com). Her recipe for kombucha was handed down to me from a friend of a friend - along with a mother scoby. If you don’t know anyone to get a scoby from, you can order one from the internet. Marilyn credits “The Balancing Act” by Len Porzio. Do not use honey or any fruits that are/have antibacterial properties (such as lemons, limes, pineapple etc...) - that will defeat your purpose! Stick with berries, apples, ginger, pears, peaches etc...

Basically, making kombucha is a way of fermenting tea. As we know, green tea has many beneficial health benefits, such as increased metabolism, improved brain function, anti-inflammatory properties, antioxidants and a natural energy boost. When we ferment the tea, we add probiotics into the mix. Probiotics are very important because they increase the good bacteria in our intestines. This is very beneficial to our gut health, which has been strongly linked to the overall health of our body.
THE MOST COMMON FOOT PROBLEMS: SOLVED
There are 206 bones in the human body and 26 in each foot. That means almost 1/4 of all your bones are in your feet, which leaves a lot of room for things to go wrong. Extend that to the ankle, and you have even more potential for problems.

For example, did you know that one of the most common reasons people go to the emergency room is for a sprained ankle?

**ANKLE SPRAIN/FRACTURE**

“Whether it’s the weekend warrior or the high school athlete, ankle sprains are extremely common, and ankle fractures are quite common along with those sprains,” said Todd Derksen, a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine at the Orthopedic and Sports Institute of the Fox Valley.

While some of the more severe cases do require surgery, others can be treated with the simple RICE protocol: rest, ice, compression and elevation.

Tim Tougas, a podiatrist and doctor of sports medicine with the Northeast Wisconsin Foot & Ankle Associates, agrees that RICE can still be effective in treating some cases, but not all. “I think the RICE protocol still holds true today, as it did a number of years ago,” said Tougas. “But if you’re having some persistent issues, you really want to have it looked at by somebody who knows what they’re doing.”

While Tougas touts ER doctors as highly intelligent professionals, there’s just no substitute for experience. “The emergency room is a good starting point, but they don’t do a lot of foot stuff, and that’s when you need to see podiatry or orthopedics to get it evaluated,” said Tougas.
PLANTAR FASCIITIS

The other thing Tougas and Derksen both see on a daily basis is plantar fasciitis, also known as heel spur syndrome, which is when a ligament on the bottom of the heel becomes inflamed. Symptoms usually include pain on the heel, especially first thing in the morning when getting out of bed, and it’s usually caused by tight muscles, something with which many of us struggle in our modern world.

“Plantar fasciitis affects about 10% of the population, so it’s quite common,” said Derksen. “Generally, the treatment options include stretching, which may include just a home stretching program or physical therapy. Anti-inflammatories can also be used, whether it’s prescription or just something over the counter, like Advil.”

BUNIONS AND HAMMER TOE

Probably the second-most common problem seen by podiatrists is bunion, which is a small deformity of a bone in the foot. The main symptom is just a bump at the base of the big toe and it usually becomes problematic when it rubs on shoes, which can be quite painful.

“Because women’s shoes tend to be narrow and more pointy, women seem to be affected by bunions more, even though it has an equal incidence between men and women,” said Derksen.

It’s a genetic disorder that is most often inherited directly from the parents, but because it’s a bone deformity there are really only two options
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COMMON CONDITIONS TREATED:
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- HIP PAIN
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- NECK PAIN
- SHOULDER PAIN
- TENDONITIS
- HEEL PAIN
- CHRONIC PAIN
- INJURY PAIN
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for treating it: either accommodate it with larger, softer shoes that won’t rub on the bunion, or have surgery to cut the bone and realign it. Recovery from surgery varies depending on the patient, but it’s generally an outpatient procedure, done under sedation, and patients typically go home that day with a special shoe to wear for a couple months.

Another bone deformity that has become prevalent, especially as people age, is hammer toe, in which the smaller toes curl up and become prominent on the top of the middle of the toe. These can also rub on shoes, and because it’s another bone deformity, treating it is almost exactly the same as treating bunions.

EACH CASE IS UNIQUE

But just because podiatrists tend to see a lot of the same things over and over doesn’t mean every case is the same. Tougas in particular stresses the importance of considering the individual factors in each patient.

“I look at their foot, and then at their old shoes,” said Tougas. “You can very simply read a shoe by setting it on the counter and seeing how the shoe sits after you’ve worn it for a little while. Somebody that has more of a flat foot is going to compress the shoe on the inside, while a high arch will compress it on the outside.”

Tougas also wants us to remember that things going on in other parts of the body can affect the feet. “There are 26 bones in each foot and there’s a lot of stuff going on and a lot of people are putting a lot more stress because of weight-related issues and I think all that stuff needs to be looked at,” said Tougas. ✡
(FINANCIAL) INDEPENDENCE DAY

Declare your freedom with these steps toward savings flexibility
knowledge, as they say, is power.

And when you’re talking personal finance, it also equates to financial independence. To become financially independent is not to become completely debt free. And it isn’t simply the ability to buy what you want when you want it.

“It is being knowledgeable and in control over finances. It isn’t eliminating debt. It is calculating it and managing it,” said Kate Thome, financial advisor for Synergy Advising Group in Appleton.

So, how do we get from here to there? Thome and Devon Schoenbohm, an Edward Jones financial advisor in Appleton, have some steps to get us in the right direction.

GET THE BIG PICTURE

“Money talks shouldn’t be difficult,” said Thome. “They’re normal and necessary ... Sometimes I talk with women who don’t even know where their money is. So, it isn’t OK to say ‘Oh, my husband handles the money.’”

Instead, Thome said, sit down together to discuss which banks, investors and retirement plans are managing your money.

“Undertake and understand a status check on your overall financial picture,” Schoenbohm said. “That includes reviewing a credit report and score. Make sure there’s accurate information out there.”

NEGOTIATE SALARY

According to Equal Pay Negotiations LLC, only 30 percent of women attempt to negotiate their salary. And for an average woman, avoiding this uncomfortable topic can add up to upwards of $1 million over her career.
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30s: Retirement savings should equal about one year’s salary.

40s: Retirement savings should equal about three years’ salary.

50s: Retirement savings should equal about four to five years’ salary.

60s: Retirement savings should equal about six years’ salary.

Source: Devon Schoenbohm, Edward Jones financial advisor

“Negotiating salary forces a woman to know her whole financial picture,” Thome said. “It is empowering women to be strong financial stewards.”

FOLLOW A BUDGET

“It’s best to have a budget or general idea of what your true expenses are now versus in retirement,” Schoenbohm said. “Do you want to keep paying mortgage in...
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Financial Freedom

8 STEPS TOWARD FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

2. Do not let today’s bills sink tomorrow’s needs. Despite economic hard times, continue contributing to retirement plans.
3. Put time on your side. Start now. Time grows the account balance more than returns achieved.
4. Don’t rely on social security. It was never meant to be a complete retirement fund.
5. Resist borrowing from retirement/401(k) accounts prior to retirement. There are typically tax penalties.
6. Don’t cash out retirement plans when switching jobs. Either keep the money with your former employer, roll it over into an IRA or transfer the funds to a plan with your new employer.
7. Taking advantage of retirement account options available. Determine whether a 401(k) or a Roth IRA is a better choice for you.
8. Don’t try to time the stock market.

Source: Devon Schoenbohm, Edward Jones financial advisor

retirement or have everything paid off prior? By having a plan in place, it makes them more efficient. It’s never too early to put a plan together and never too late to start, either.”

Begin detailed financial discussions with family members.

“No is the time your children are listening to you again,” Thome said of women in their 50s. “Involve them in discussions so they know where your money is.” She said another benefit of this is they may also pick up some keys to financial independence in the process.

And a key component to financial health is one’s physical health.

“Make sure your health is strong going into retirement,” Thome said. “The healthier you are, the fewer medical bills you’ll encounter as you age.”

“I T’S BEST TO HAVE A BUDGET OR GENERAL IDEA OF WHAT YOUR TRUE EXPENSES ARE NOW VERSUS IN RETIREMENT,” SCHOENBOHM SAID. “DO YOU WANT TO KEEP PAYING MORTGAGE IN RETIREMENT OR HAVE EVERYTHING PAID OFF PRIOR?”

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“You”
COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIM MARTIN, ACCENT PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIM, GREEN BAY.
SPOTLIGHT MAKEUP BY ALYSSA MAJORS AND HAIR BY MICHELL BARTLEIN OF SAVOYE SALON SPA, GREEN BAY.
PHTOGRAPHY LOCATION: OLD ST. JOSEPH CHURCH IN THE HEART OF ST. NORBERT’S COLLEGE CAMPUS IN DE PERE.
Hard work and tenacity turned Tracy Ertl’s dream into thriving TitleTown Publishing.

Tracy Ertl is a fighter, though you’d never guess it by looking at her. At 5 feet 2 inches, she’s petite, quick to flash a genuine smile and nearly as fast with a warm hug and a gracious compliment. But Ertl, who launched the Green Bay book publishing house TitleTown Publishing, has learned along her life’s path how to zero in on a goal and fight interminably to write her own story.
A former newspaper reporter on the police beat, Ertl was drawn to the work done by officers and eventually quit to become a 911 operator. She has held that position for 25 years and continues to work full time in that role. During that time, she and husband Terry raised three now-grown children.

Meanwhile, TitleTown Publishing is celebrating a decade in business this year and spoiler alert: just like Ertl’s, the company’s tale is one of a triumphant underdog. But when Ertl founded TitleTown in 2008, she was admittedly a novice who was gearing up to compete with the likes of Simon & Schuster and HarperCollins.

“Nobody would give me a loan to start a publishing company. That year 25 percent of publishers went out of business. So, my husband started working six nights a week at the post office and more recently picked up a job as a bellman at the Lodge Kohler hotel,” Ertl said. “It was like piloting a plane and learning to fly while I was up in the air.”

That’s one example of how her background as a 911 operator comes into play.

“Although we were in trouble, what we were going through was nothing compared to the cries I heard on the phone,” she remembered. “As an operator, you’re fighting for your callers, you’re fighting for the responders. That’s where I learned to be a fighter. I wasn’t able to call for help as a child. They didn’t teach us to call for 911. Things that happened at home were to be kept private. So now I take great pride in taking those calls and helping people get the help they need.”

**HER BOOK’S PROLOGUE**

Ertl grew up in California in an abusive home. As a preteen, she ended up in Green Bay. Later, with a growing family and a forgiving heart, she extended a second chance to her father. He ultimately shattered her trust and shook her family’s foundation.

Feeling as though she had nothing left to lose, Ertl made three dreams for herself, thinking specifically of her troubled childhood, and the activities she chose to flee her reality. She recalled voraciously reading books to imagine life in a healthy family dynamic. She remembered her fixation on the Olympic games as a form of escape. And she recalled rapidly bouncing balls against the garage door, pretending to break world records. She turned these childhood memories into three wishes: Author a book, make it to the Olympics and set a Guinness World Record.

In 2005, Ertl co-authored “True Crime in TitleTown, USA” with Green Bay police officer Mike Knetzger. While researching for the book, she discovered that Green Bay’s Thomas Hawley was the longest-serving police chief (1897-1946), earning her a Guinness World Record certificate. (The honor has since been surpassed by a Florida chief.) Then, in 2006, she was dispatched to Torino, Italy as a volunteer communications specialist for the U.S. government. She watched the U.S. men’s curling team win bronze and experienced a personal epiphany as she snuck onto the ice during the celebration.

“I got down on my hands and knees and kissed the ice – I know that sounds so crazy,” she laughed. “I made a wish and said to myself, ‘I’m going to start this company.”’

**DO WHAT YOU KNOW**

She loved the experience of writing her first book, but thought she...
I got down on my hands and knees and kissed the ice – I know that sounds so crazy. I made a wish and said to myself, ‘I’m going to start this company.’
could improve on the process of getting the book into print.

“What I didn’t like was the publishing,” Ertl said. “I thought, ‘There’s got to be a better way to do this.’ I wanted to compete with the big publishers but still be warm and kind and Midwestern. I wanted to form a publishing company that also takes care of its people.”

Running parallel to Ertl’s work as a 911 operator, TitleTown Publishing’s first title “Bodyguard to the Packers” focused on the police officer who became director of security for the football team. Then came “Torture at the Back 40” and “Run at Destruction,” both regional true crime books.

“Suddenly, this is a real company, and everyone is thinking, ‘Who is TitleTown Publishing?’”

As she got into a rhythm with her developing business, its niche came into focus. TitleTown would specialize in true crime and high-profile survival stories.

The latter really elevated in 2010 when “Alone: Orphaned on the Ocean” became TitleTown’s first Barnes & Noble bestseller. The next year, “When I Fell From the Sky” became an international bestseller. That book is being made into a feature film starring Game of Thrones’ Sophie Turner as Juliane Koepcke, who survived a 10,000-foot fall from a burning airplane onto the canopy of the Amazon rainforest. The film is expected to be released late next year.

Later this year, TitleTown will be re-releasing Make-A-Wish founder Frank Shankwitz’s memoir, “Wishman,” alongside the feature film release starring Andrew Steel.

**TRIUMPH THROUGH TENACITY**

Ertl’s successes are easy to focus on. But she is quick to explain how hard she has fought for them. In the first few years in business, TitleTown weathered the shuttering of Borders Books and a lawsuit, both of which could have easily sunk the fledgling company.

“It was haphazard,” Ertl admitted. “I failed numerous times. And for every failure, there are just as many wins. Now I have a robust, thriving international company. But I fought so hard for it. At times it made more sense to get out. We were taking on water and financially I should have quit. But, I had children who were watching. And children learn from your failures and how you handle them.”

So despite outside pressure to wave the white flag, Ertl pushed on with her wish. She was doing it all: editing, accounting, orders, publicity – and continuing to work full time at the 911 call center.
What are your “words to live by”?
Live for HIM. Love like tomorrow is no guarantee.

Hobbies?
I love to garden, ride my bike, read, write letters to family, spend time with friends, cook and travel.

Favorite local restaurants?
Bangkok Garden, Z Harvest, Kavarna, Union Hotel, Los Bandidos.

Dream vacation?
Peru. Our book “When I Fell From the Sky” is in movie production and I want to explore land occupied by my beloved survivor/author and enjoy the Amazon and the preserve she has created.

Favorite beauty product?
Chi oil. It is my secret for smooth, healthy hair and skin.
“I pawned my jewelry. We went without television for two years,” Ertl said. “My family was OK with that because we give a voice to people without one.”

Ertl is insistent to share the tough times as readily as the triumphs.

“It is important to be authentic and real in business and in life,” she said. “If you pretend it is perfect, nobody will ever start. They’ll think they need to wait for perfection. You have to be honest about successes and failures and how you rose from them.”

**EXPANDING THE WISH**

From TitleTown’s meager beginnings, a strong niche publishing house that now employs 25 people across the nation has emerged. To celebrate a decade in business, Ertl awarded $10,000 in books to teachers.

“I wanted to create a company where people are most comfortable. We tried to break the traditional business rules,” Ertl said. “The best creativity happens when people have that freedom of movement anywhere across the globe.”

Last year, TitleTown acquired Peregrino Press, which is the Catholic publishing imprint. Ertl brought Peregrino’s founder Travis Vanden Heuvel aboard as TitleTown’s president and chief operations officer. Ertl also launched a second imprint, TitleTown Children, most notably publishing “Kindness in a Scary World,” a children’s book that helps parents explain mass violence and terrorism.

One of Ertl’s passion projects include the “Blue Lives Matter” series TitleTown is publishing. The series explores police officers’ line-of-duty deaths – historic and current.

And despite having a staff to help keep TitleTown running, Ertl still enjoys dabbling in what started her down this path: writing. She’s currently ghostwriting a book with Capt. Wren Thomas, who was captured and held for nearly three weeks by Nigerian pirates. It is set to publish next year.

**THE NEXT GENERATION**

Tracy and Terry Ertl’s three children are grown, but have varying roles in the company. Bradley is in his third year of law school in Houston, Texas. After graduation, he will be TitleTown’s legal counsel. Andrew is a former U.S. Marine sergeant who is attending an accelerated international business graduate program in China. His TitleTown role is acquisitions editor.

And Sister Karolyn Rose of St. Joseph in Los Angeles is in her third of eight years of discernment en route to becoming a Catholic nun. Before she moved to the convent, Sister Karolyn Rose was an associate publisher at TitleTown.

Ertl said she considers TitleTown Publishing her “baby” too. And just as she describes watching her children mature and set off on their own, she loves the same aspects of her business.

“The most rewarding part of my job is seeing our stories come to life,” Ertl said. “We’re fortunate to see this happen in two ways. First we see the joy and excitement in our authors when we’ve been able to make their dream of writing a book come true. Second, we’re able to see the impact this content has on our readers. That’s how I know we’ve succeeded in our mission.”

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3 Do’s and 3 Don’ts

by Kim Willems
Events, Promotion and Social Media Coordinator for Mile of Music

**DO:** Use a recognizable photo for your profile photo!

A logo is best, if you have one. If you have a logo that doesn’t fit to Facebook’s profile photo dimensions, resize it! A great tool for up-to-date social media sizes is Sprout Social’s sizing guide, found on the Sprout Social website for free! (Google “Sprout Social Sizing Guide” for a direct link.)

A logo lets users know that it’s the real you, and takes away any questions of the legitimacy of a page. If you have your logo up, you mean business! Pun intended ... sort of.
**DON'T:** Forget to fill out your full bio!
Your full Facebook profile will also help users know you are serious about being on Facebook. Facebook offers lots of auto fill-in tools such as hours, location, phone number, email address, website, etc. You can also add your own bio to give it some flair! Many users will go straight to Facebook even before your website, so make sure these items are up to date!

**DON'T:** Ignore compliments ... or complaints!
Customers may not tell you about their experience when they’re at your establishment, but many times they’ll go on social media to tell friends and fans. Whether it’s good or bad, responding to feedback is a great way to engage with your audience. If the feedback is negative, you have a great opportunity to make it a positive simply by responding in a timely fashion!

**DO:** Consider using paid advertising and boosted posts!
It sounds daunting, and probably expensive, but paid posts can make a huge difference without breaking the bank! You can create paid posts using Facebook Ads or by boosting an existing post. Both platforms allow you to target your preferred demographic (age, location, etc.), and you can choose how long your ad will run.

**DO:** Use images and video as often as possible!
Think about it ... you’re scrolling through Facebook, and what catches your eye? A photo (or video). Whether it’s experience photos, testimonial images or any image your heart desires, you’re sure to see extra reactions on posts that feature videos or photos!

**DON'T:** Use too much text in your paid images!
Facebook will remove posts (yes, even paid ones) that have too much text in images. The rule is that no more than 20% of a photo can be covered in any sort of text. How do you know? You can upload your image to a testing tool to try it out! Google “Facebook 20% Tool” for more info and to test out your image!
REAL ESTATE TRENDS

Northeastern Wisconsin is experiencing a hot real estate market, the likes of which are unprecedented.

“I’ve never seen anything like it,” said Stacey Hennessey, of Century 21 Ace Realty, Appleton. “It’s virtual insanity.”

In this insanely fast-paced market, however, there are a few key things of which home buyers and sellers should be aware.

SELLER’S MARKET

“In early spring, there were a lot of buyers and inventory was really low,” said Karen Cain, who works for Coldwell Banker The Real Estate Group, Appleton. That’s what’s known as a seller’s market, in which there are more buyers looking for homes than there are properties available. For house hunters, this tight competition means homes are selling quickly – and for more money.

“Things are going up to $15,000 over list price,” said Hennessey.

In such a competitive market, people shopping for homes need to get their ducks in a row before they start to look at listings – first by finding out how much home they can afford.

“Make sure they have a pre-approval letter in hand,” Hennessey recommended.

Secondly, understand that the market moves quickly, and only licensed agents have access to the up-to-the-minute MLS, or multiple listing service, Cain said.

“Zillow, Realtor.com and those sites just can’t keep up with the market.” Potential buyers will come to her with a list of 10 or so houses that were listed as “active” online – only to find that eight of them already have accepted offers. “That can be really frustrating for buyers,” she said, to get their hopes up and fall in love with a house that is no longer available.

Be prepared to put in an offer above list price, Hennessey said. It helps to
sweeten your offer if it isn’t contingent upon the sale of your current home. She noted that some clients are opting to sell their homes first and become short-term renters or live with family or friends while house hunting.

By the same token, sellers should make sure their property stands out among the crowd – even in the most vibrant of markets. “Sellers have to present their homes in the best possible light and make sure it’s priced accurately to come out on top,” Cain said.

DON’T DIY

In this fast-moving market, it might be tempting to skip the real estate office and try to sell your home yourself using Craigslist or social media. Realtors have a whole litany of reasons why that’s not a good idea.

Besides helping customers avoid costly legal mistakes and navigate complicated paperwork, a real estate agent can be a calming ally during an otherwise tumultuous time for home buyers.

“We deal with timeline details related to the other party, title companies, lenders, inspectors, contractors, appraisers and all contingency deadlines,” Cain said. “It’s our business to make sure that everything gets done as scheduled.”

A real estate agent can also help homeowners get top dollar while trying to sell their house, Hennessey said. While a seller might have an approximate value in mind at which to price a home, “they don’t always know the true potential of their home,” she said. “With a Realtor, they’ll be able to capture the biggest audience possible. And they’ll most likely have higher offers or more offers to choose from.”

“Anyone can put their home on the market,” Cain added. “Realtors take it a step further.”

FIND YOUR FIT

Be sure to do your homework, though, before entering into a working relationship or buyer agency with a real estate agent, Hennessey advised.

“Make sure you are working with an experienced agent,” she said. “Interview agents and find a good fit – someone experienced who is going to work hard for you.”

“Any Realtor can help you buy or sell your home,” Cain added. “A great Realtor manages the process for you.”

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FLEXIBILITY ABOUNDS FOR ADULT LEARNERS IN THE FOX VALLEY
Whether you are thinking about going back to school to further your two- or four-year degree, improve your employment opportunities or change career direction entirely, a plethora of accelerated, flexible and graduate programs exist in the Fox Valley.

“We realize the core of our student body are working adults,” explains Sarah Schneider, Appleton Center Director with Concordia University Wisconsin. “With that comes juggling family, as well as other commitments that exist in people’s lives.”

As an adult accelerated learning campus with locations throughout central and southern Wisconsin, Concordia offers students a unique opportunity.

“This means that our classes meet one night a week from 6 to 10 p.m. or on a Saturday, depending on the semester, term and class,” says Schneider. “And it only meets for six or eight weeks [dependent on program]. It’s intended to allow our students to have 12 to 14 weeks of coursework condensed into the six- or eight-week terms.”

At the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh, graduate programs are also offered with flexibility in mind.

“Between all of our programs we have a gamut of options – everything from only in the classroom and on campus during regular school days, to programs that are completely online,” explains Greg Wypiszynski, director of graduate services. “There are many classes that are a hybrid of in-class meetings and online course work. It varies by program and each program does it strategically.”

There are a couple of factors to consider before deciding on the graduate program path, he noted. Time is an issue for any graduate student, but certainly with people who have been in their careers, have families and/or are part of a sandwich generation, where they are taking care of elder parents and younger children.

“Another factor at the graduate level is the money,” he states. “Unlike the
You can pick your home, but you can’t pick your neighbors.

If you could pick your neighbors though, Tera Lind would make a solid choice. She has lived in her Appleton home for four years and she and husband Trevor have perfected the art of being great neighbors.

They like to park their pickup truck in the front yard, pop popcorn, load up on Kool-Aid and invite the neighbors over to watch a movie projected onto their garage door.

They have a fire pit in their front yard and schedule frequent s’mores roasts for the neighbors.

They keep their freezer stocked with popsicles and installed a basketball hoop and volleyball net out front.
“Kids will come over, knock on the door and ask if Trevor can come out to play,” Lind laughed.

And while it sounds like loads of fun, their efforts are so much more than a good time: They’re part of a push to elevate the neighborhood as a community of people, not just a collection of homes.

Judy Episcopo, the director of women’s ministry at Appleton’s Alliance Church, specializes in that aspect of being a neighbor – building community. She, too, embraces the camaraderie and even the tough cases.

“Being neighborly sometimes means learning how to live with difficult people,” Episcopo said. “It’s easy to love people you like. The challenge is when you have someone who is irritating you. How do you love this person with boundaries?”

That’s the aspect of the neighborhood dynamic that causes many to hesitate in cultivating stronger ties. An unkempt lawn, a barking dog, roaming children: Avoiding conflict can seem more desirable than growing a strong community fellowship. But, Episcopo said, it’s worth the hard work.

Episcopo’s husband, Dennis, had a longstanding Monday Night Football tradition with their Appleton neighbors. But when the couple moved to the Town of Center, the farming neighbors were further flung and more resistant to his invitations. He invited the closest residents, Judy prepared appetizers and nobody showed up. But he kept the invites coming, and cultivated a community.

“Be willing to persevere, Episcopo said. “Relationships are so important. Your neighborhood is a place to build relationships, and you can expect it to take some work and effort. But it’s worth it in the end.”

After 15 years at their Neenah home, Becky Kopitzke has fostered multitudes of neighborly interactions. Her best advice is to always choose kindness. For many, neighbor interactions can be difficult. But Kopitzke said leaving one’s comfort zone is crucial.

“I think it’s a generational thing,” Kopitzke said. “People really tend to hole up at home. We can get very isolated in our own homes behind our own walls. We would see an elderly man sitting in a lawn chair in his garage in our neighborhood. Finally my husband went over to talk to him. He said he hated to see people sitting inside looking at a TV and didn’t want people to forget that there’s entertainment outside, too.”

Kopitzke is the author of two books, one of which, “Generous Love,” focuses on loving others bravely and generously. She, too, is the epitome of a model neighbor.

From organizing a Christmastime brunch for neighborhood women to helping shovel driveways and baking cookies for new transplants, the Kopitzkes and their two young daughters do their best to sow an accepting, friendly community.

“If we are unkind to the unkind, it only reinforces to them that the world is an unkind place,” Kopitzke said.

SIMPLE STEPS TO ENCOURAGE NEIGHBOR RELATIONSHIPS

- Participate in random acts of kindness. Make a batch of cookies. Drop off some fresh-cut flowers from your garden.
- Offer to pick up packages if a neighbor works late.
- Don’t be a neighborhood gossip.
- Smile and wave. “I’m trying to bring that back,” Lind said.
- Build a relationship first. “If someone’s dog keeps running all over the neighborhood, build a relationship first instead of confronting them immediately,” Kopitzke said. Be a good listener. “That will help guide you into knowing what you need to do to be a good neighbor,” Episcopo said.
- Be accessible. Keep the garage door open after you get home from work. Go outside where it’s easier to be approachable.
- Start a neighborhood Facebook group or e-mail list.
The 6th annual Fly a Kite Fest took place on June 30 in Green Bay at the Arnie Wolff Sports Complex. The event was sponsored by the Family and Childcare Resources of NE WI.

undergraduate level, where there are more options for financial assistance, at the graduate level it is much more difficult in terms of state or federal funding ... Graduate students end up having to do a lot of homework, trying to find resources to finance their programs and courses.”

At Fox Valley Technical College, flexible options are also offered among the various programs. This fall, the business analyst program – brand-new to FVTC – will begin employing online options this spring for the core classes in the program, explains Lisa Hubert, department chair of the Business Analyst program.

“We’re also looking to do some hybrid accelerated classes, as well as evening classes,” she adds. “The goal for this program is to make it so that if a student wants to take a class on campus in person, they would only have to devote one night a week to getting their program complete. We want to make sure we are flexible with our students and we’re allowing them different options to get the education they want.”

The paralegal program is another one implementing the evening classes as well as the hybrid offerings, while the business management program will be offering the “Fast Track” format, which is structured as a five-week course.

More classes are also using Blackboard Collaborate, a real-time, Skype-like option students can use to take courses remotely, Hubert adds.

Which choice is correct for you?

Admission requirements will vary across colleges, tech schools and universities, and will vary further among programs on those campuses. And while flexibility is attractive to prospective students, it might not be a fit for every adult learner. There is just as much work involved, requiring diligence and discipline on the part of the student, said Hubert. That sentiment was echoed by Schneider and Wypiszynski about their respective program options.

“We all understand how busy students are with work and school and personal things they have going on, and we just want to make sure we’re offering these classes and students can fit that in within their lifestyle,” adds Hubert. w
poached pears with caramel sauce

This recipe, which combines pears with the rich taste of caramel, is a great way to enjoy pears throughout the year.

Ingredients
4 firm-ripe medium-sized pears, such as Bosc or Bartlett
¼ cup lemon juice
¼ cup prepared caramel sauce or caramel topping

Directions
1. Peel the pears, leaving the stems attached. Cut a thin slice from the bottom of each pear so that the pear will stand.
2. Place the pears in a saucepan large enough to fit 4 pears without the fruit toppling. Add the lemon juice and 4 cups water.
3. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer, and cook for 10 to 15 minutes or until pears are tender but not falling apart.
4. Drain the liquid. Place the pears on a plate, cover and chill 3 hours or overnight.
5. Arrange the pears on individual dessert dishes. Drizzle caramel sauce over the pears, making a small puddle of sauce on the plate.

Cooking Note
Instead of using lemon juice and 4 cups water, substitute 4 cups apple juice to cook the pears. If the pears are short on flavor, this will give them a boost.

Nutrition Analysis (per serving)
Calories: 100; Total Fat 0.5g; Saturated Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 20mg; Total Carbohydrate: 24g; Dietary Fiber: 3g; Protein: 1g.

Recipe courtesy of eatright.org.

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