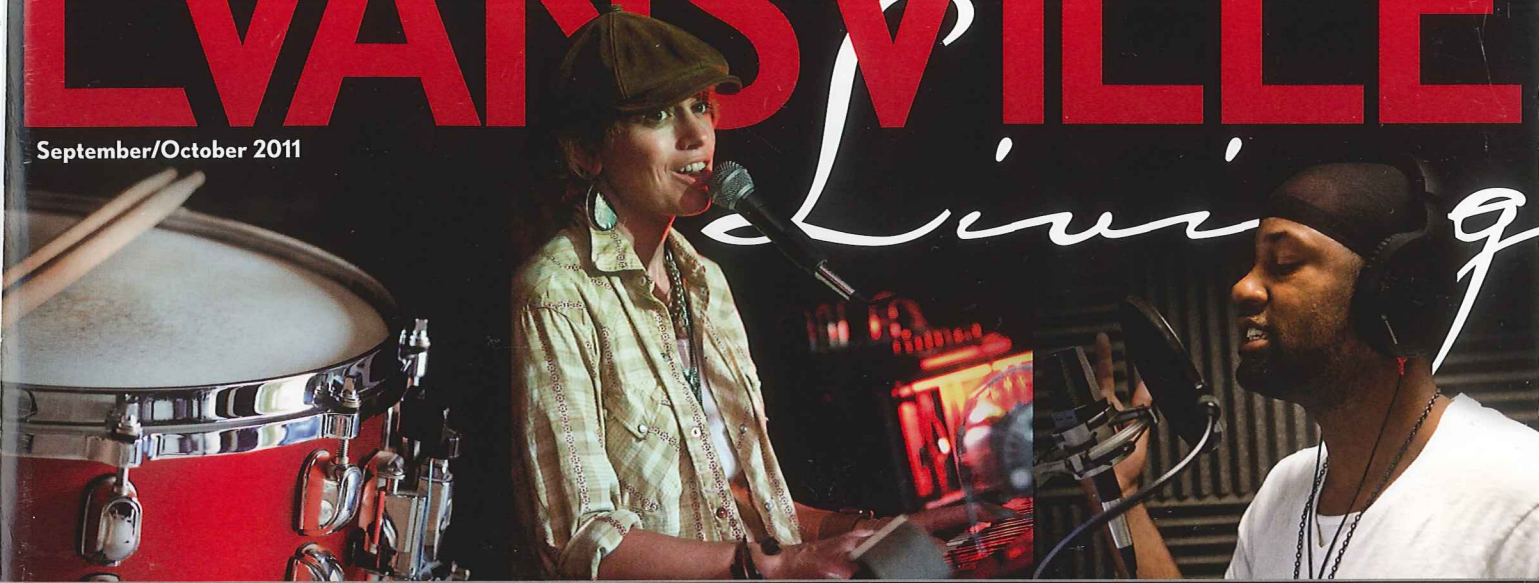


SEPTEMBER 11 - TEN YEARS LATER

EVANSVILLE

September/October 2011



THE MUSIC ISSUE



Fall Break

Hike, bike, kayak, sail, or snowmobile — the to-do list in Wisconsin

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DEBBIE HINTON

LAST FALL, I traveled on Wisconsin's Great River Road, a National Scenic Byway. The passage meanders through 33 historic Mississippi River towns and provides 250 miles of scenery vibrant with rich fall colors. It borders wetlands and bluffs known as the Driftless Area, a section of the upper Midwest spared from the flattening effects of the ice age glaciers that covered half of North America. The geography isn't the only beautiful aspect of this country. It boasts more than 260 species of birds and hundreds of species of fish.

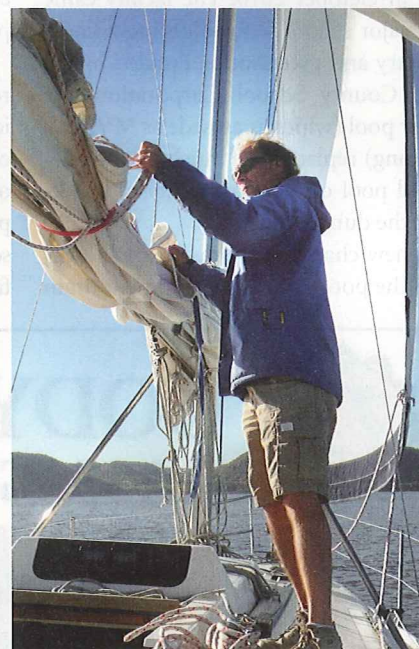
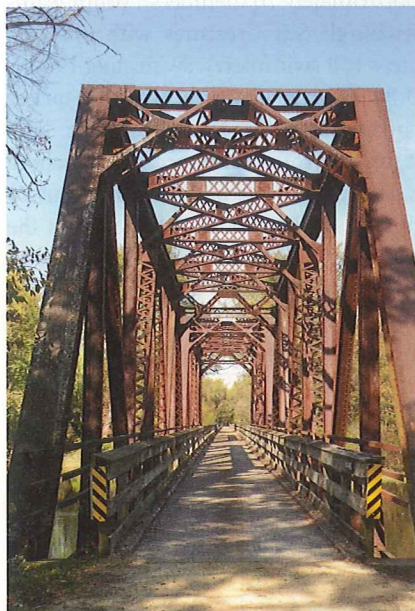
All this means that outdoor enthusiasts can hike, bike, kayak, sail, or snowmobile through one of the largest National Wildlife Refuges in the United States. Here's how to do that.

PEPIN

Reminiscent of quiet harbor towns of New England, Pepin is in one of the northernmost counties along the Great River Road. In this town is a water wonderland known as Lake Pepin, a 28-mile-long, three-mile-wide natural waterway that is part of the Mississippi River. The Pepin Marina offers overnight dockage, boat launching services, and transient docking for guests arriving by water.

Other attractions: Film buffs should plan their visit during the Flyway Film Festival (Oct. 20-23), an event with more than 70 independent and international films. Throughout the town are art and antique galleries, and for *Little House on the Prairie* fans, there is the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historical Museum.

The adventurous have the fall foliage sailboat cruise aboard the 31-foot sloop Messenger. Captain David Sheridan offers an educational, relaxing sail where bluff views are abun-



UP NORTH: From beautiful bridges to small-town appeal, Wisconsin is a fall destination. The cool air makes sailing in Lake Pepin easy breezy, and to hydrate, the area is rich in brewing companies.

dant — and so are the soaring eagles.

A SUMMER PLACE

Sitting atop a hill overlooking the marina and the Mississippi River, A Summer Place is a quiet respite. The comfortable inn offers a choice of three beautifully appointed rooms and provides complimentary appetizers and wine for guests upon arrival and breakfast each morning.

"The best from scratch" has been the motto of Harbor View Café since 1980, and news outlets such as *Minneapolis/St. Paul* magazine and *The New York Times* have raved about this gem. Owners Chuck Morrow and Ruth Stoyke continue the tradition of serving locally sourced food in a casually elegant atmosphere. "We make most everything on the menu from scratch daily," says Morrow.

Travel Journal

The café's twice-daily updated blackboard menu is full of delectable choices with a well-priced list of wines from around the world. The bar area has a warm and cozy vibe. One reason for the ambiance: the floor-to-ceiling bookcases.

GREAT RIVER STATE BIKE TRAIL

At the visitor center in Onalaska, the Great River State Trail connects to the La Crosse River State Trail, a link in a 100-mile chain of rail-trails. This four-trail chain dips into natural ecosystems, coils through Native American cultural sites, and passes by waterways. The trails also serve cyclists and walkers in the fall and snowmobile enthusiasts and cross-country skiers in the winter. Following the 25-mile trail northwest out of Onalaska, the terrain provides a comfortable ride for beginners and intermediates.

KICKAPOO RIVER TOUR

Wisconsin River Outings in Boscobel is the destination for guided canoe or kayak trips, rentals, and instruction. About 90 minutes west of Madison, the company has been in business for almost a decade and offers for rent 200 canoes and more than two dozen kayaks.

These are vessels you'll need to tra-

verse the Kickapoo River, nicknamed "the Crookedest River in the World." Paddling takes visitors past Plum Creek through Kickapoo River State Wildlife Area, past old railroad beds and wildlife. The "Three Rivers Trip" includes 10 miles on the Kickapoo River, 20 miles on the Wisconsin River, five miles on the Mississippi River, and one night of camping.

MONARCH PUBLIC HOUSE

In the 1960s, Wisconsin's Fountain City Brewing Company went out of business. Today, their beers are reborn inside the Monarch Public House, an 1894 historic structure. "It feels great to have saved it and brought it back," proprietor John Harrington says. "We use recipes from my great-grandmother on our menu which also makes this place special."

Another special attribute: Monarch has "snugs," Irish for the semi-private areas separated from the rest of the house by half walls. Harrington, a friendly fixture behind the bar, often greets families who sit here.

SEVEN HAWKS VINEYARDS

This is a business known for cross-breeding European grapes with local wild grapes. A popular option at the tasting

room is "Hunter's Blend," an award-winning blend of four grapes.

POTOSI BREWING COMPANY

A small Wisconsin village is home to the Potosi Brewing Company, established in 1852. Experiencing growth at its peak throughout the late 1800s, Potosi Brewing Company was the fifth largest in Wisconsin and gained a following throughout the Midwest and the West Coast, but the increased presence of national beer brands forced their closure in 1972 until a non-profit organization was founded in 2000. After an extensive renovation, the original facility reopened and expanded.

Today, visitors can not only tour this facility and sample its many craft brews but also enjoy dining in the on-site restaurant. Nearby is the National Brewery Museum and Library, which spans two and a half floors in the building and includes exhibits displaying thousands of brewery-related artifacts. The Great River Road Interpretive Center and Potosi Brewing Company Transportation Museum also are located here. ●

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HARBOR VIEW CAFÉ

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MONARCH PUBLIC HOUSE

www.monarchtavern.com

POTOSI BREWING COMPANY AND RESTAURANT

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SAIL PEPIN

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