

# A Day In May

By E. Bishop

Reminiscent of Mardi Gras and in the spirit of Cirque du Soleil; an enchanting masquerade ball combined with the colorful whimsy and wonder of a theatrical parade. Such descriptions of the artistic magic that occurs in the streets of Lake Geneva each May pale in comparison to actually witnessing the fantastic springtime explosion of community creativity.

Co-founders Liz Haseley and Terri Robert of the Cultural Arts Foundation initiated the *A Day in May* parade event in 2004 after seeing a similar parade held in Minneapolis by the Heart of the Beast Puppet Company. The Healthy Community/Healthy Youth Coalition as well as the Cultural Arts Foundation and the Lake Geneva School District have sponsored the event since its beginning, and many other community groups have joined in sponsorship over the years.

Breathtaking floats, spectacular costumes, and other charming props make up the *A Day in May* parade along with a whole host of musicians, singers, dancers, and other performers of highly skilled or professional levels. While participating students are encouraged to promote southeastern Wisconsin culture wherever possible in their projects, each year a theme is chosen for the parade. Themes have included *The May Day Masquerade and Theatrics Parade* as well as *Pan-Asian*, and in recent years professional adults groups such as the Jolly Giant Stiltwalkers and the Spirit of the Lakes Choir have been recruited to participate.

The annual parade was designed to give creative students and many others in the Lake Geneva community an outlet for showing off their artistic talents, though over the years the parade has grown so extensive that many other students and artists from around the county have become involved. Any individuals with a passion for the arts are encouraged to participate in the parade, from school students to home-schooled students, and from professional groups to talented individuals seeking an amazing opportunity to shine.

Traditionally beginning at the end of January, weekly parade workshops are scheduled, and anyone interested in helping with the parade is encouraged to attend and see what *A Day in May* is all about. Workshops are typically held at the Badger High School Set Department in Lake Geneva, and participating groups as well as individuals can choose their aspect or level of involvement in the parade.

One of the many remarkable features you will find behind the scenes of this springtime extravaganza is that many of the floats and other projects are constructed out of recycled materials as well as pieces of artworks from previous years. Artists of all ages are challenged to incorporate recycled materials in their projects, adding even more creative dynamism to the entire parade.

The artistic community in and around Lake Geneva springs into creative action each spring, and the *A Day in May* event has grown so large over the years that the parade and its traffic-stopping mystique have been moved to the vicinity of local parks and other accommodating areas. This year's *A Day in May* parade will once again showcase the exquisite artistry of people all over southeastern Wisconsin, and once again honor the cultural gem that is Lake Geneva.

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

## **Driehaus Family Legacy**

By Ea Bishop

Built in 1932, the Riviera building in Lake Geneva has been a tremendous part of the city's heritage for several decades. Previously famous for hosting the likes of Louie Armstrong during the era of swing, jazz, and big band music, the Riviera is now famous for its upper level ballroom as well as its busy lake docks. But before the avid lake-faring tourist reaches the restored building and the spectacular boats of the Lake Geneva Cruise Line, he or she encounters the majestic Driehaus Family Fountain in Riviera Park.

It was in New York City in 1842 that the inspiration for the most celebrated fountain in Lake Geneva was born. Upon the completion of the Croton Aqueduct in New York City, the "Angel of the Waters" Fountain was designed by Emma Stebbins, who was also the first woman in New York City to receive a sculptural commission. In 1873 the Angel of the Waters Fountain was placed at Bethesda Terrace in Central Park. Bearing an angel with a lily – a symbol of purification – the fountain commemorates the purification of the city's water supply. About a hundred and thirty years later in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, the replica known as the Driehaus Family Fountain was likewise dedicated.

The landscape design that flatters the fountain was the result of a competition proposed by the Lake Geneva Beautification Committee. In addition to the donation of the replica fountain, local philanthropist Richard H. Driehaus included a large sum of money for the placement design project. A handful of design firms submitted design proposals to various city committees for judging, though the public was also surveyed for their opinion on the designs.

One of the most dedicated advocates for local historic preservation, Driehaus is predominately committed to arrays of projects in the Chicago area as well as at his second home in Lake Geneva. Via the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation and the Richard H. Driehaus Prize, he and his family dedicate themselves as well as their resources to numerous projects ranging from art and architecture to history and culture.

In particular, his foundation prides itself on administering landscape and architectural projects to benefit communities equally enthusiastic about cultural, historical preservation. Among other things, Driehaus himself is famous for his community involvement. He is known for turning cultural concepts into cultural accomplishments, and helping communities flatter their own heritages. He is also an active supporter of the Time is Now charity and the Lake Geneva Conservancy. Truly a friend of the entire Lake Geneva locale, the Driehaus family continues to instill a legacy of cultural luminosity, and the Driehaus Family Fountain symbolizes the likewise dedication of the community.

## Going Green with Hannah Interiors

By Ea Bishop

Now more than ever, the eco-friendly lifestyle affectionately coined “going green” is becoming commonplace in homes as well as places of business and leisure. Creating stylish homes that are both modern and healthy while cutting down long-term costs is just one mission of Hannah Interiors, with the method being the use of organic as well as sustainable building and design elements.

With offices in both Scottsdale, Arizona and Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, Hannah Interiors has visited over fifty countries and continuously travels around the world to obtain knowledge of other cultures, styles, and design techniques. Recently named one of HGTV’s “top designers in the nation”, Hannah Interiors strives to help reflect clients’ own passions and styles through innovative ideas such as *green living* and the use of *new natural* materials.

*New naturals* are simply materials for home furnishings that are made out of organic materials such as coconut fibers, egg shells, bamboo, banana leaves, water hyacinth, and specially-treated cork fabric. These low-maintenance, easy to clean materials are used in many kinds of items such as furniture, floor coverings, and window treatments. Using reclaimed wood salvaged from other sources is also a fantastic way to add uniqueness and charm to your home as well as help the environment. But the most obvious way to bring the outdoors in is with oxygen-rich plants, which can be used to decorate every room in your home. Also making use of natural light by avoiding heavy window treatments enhances the health of your family as well as indoor plants.

However, green living is a way of life as well as design, and Hannah Interiors recommends many easy fixes to make your home a *green* home. Checking to make sure your home is well insulated and keeping your thermostat at a fairly constant setting are ways in which you can conserve on energy as well as avoid unnecessary energy lose and expense. Purchasing *Energy Star* appliances and compact fluorescent light bulbs may seem costly at first, but the money saved on reduced energy consumption is well worth it. Other energy-saving tips include unplugging electronic devices when not in use, and laundering clothes in cold water since they will wash just as clean as when washed in heated water.

Kristin Hannah, whose mother Susan founded Hannah Interiors in 1993, has perpetuated her mother’s legacy since her mother’s passing in 2001. Today Hannah Interiors continues to take design to whole new levels of rich aesthetics perfectly blended with eco-friendliness. With Lake Geneva as an office as well as an avid client of innovative design, the legacy of Hannah Interiors flourishes right here in southeastern Wisconsin, and assures that the worldwide campaign for green living is becoming the norm in our homes as well as our lives.

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# **A Tradition of Military Excellence**

By Ea Bishop

The rich tradition of academic and military excellence began in 1888 with Harlan Page Davidson, a highly revered leader in various educational systems throughout New England. In autumn of that year, he purchased Highland Hall at Highland Park on the north shore of Chicago. Once a hotel, the property was renovated and became the first site of the Northwestern Military Academy. The Academy was destroyed by a fire mere months later, though was very quickly rebuilt. Davidson's strive to instill discipline, values, and tradition in young men would not be thwarted.

As the twentieth century dawned, the Academy swiftly became known as one of the best military institutions in the country. In 1894, Davidson's son Royal Page Davidson designed the Bicycle Corps as a possible military application, and the Corps went on to deliver a message to the Secretary of War in Washington D.C. in 1897. Two years later, Royal Page Davidson began modifying automobiles with mounted guns as well as armor, thus yielding the Automobile Corps.

The Lake Geneva area became a prospective site for the rapidly expanding academy due to the encampment training that took place there. Upon the death of Harlan Page Davidson in 1911, Royal Page Davidson assumed control of the academy and moved it to the shores of Lake Geneva after yet another fire destroyed the main academic building in Highland Park. Cadets lived in tents along the lakeshore until winter when the construction of Davidson Hall was complete.

During World War I, cadets of the Academy underwent trench warfare training on ten acres of specially-designed campus grounds. This training would be implicated for the next two decades until warfare once again evolved. Many, many cadets went on to serve the country – a few sacrificing their lives – during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and even in Desert Storm in the 1990's.

Royal Page Davidson passed away in 1943, but the academic military might of Northwestern Military Academy remained strong for decades thereafter. However, as of the 1970's enrollment in the Academy began declining, and in 1995 Northwestern Military Academy merged with its rival school, St. John's Military Academy in Delafield, WI. The 40-acre Lake Geneva property was thus sold and Davidson Hall since torn down.

Today the land – which includes 900 feet of lakefront property – is now vibrantly occupied by the South Shore Club, an upscale Lake Geneva community boasting a wide range of recreational activities in addition to spectacular homes and services. Stone from Davidson Hall as well as a plaque now commemorate the site where the illustrious military academy once stood, and permanently pin the Lake Geneva community with an illustrious badge of honor.

# Priced to Sell

By Ea Bishop

Perhaps one of the most frustrating obstacles homeowners create for themselves when trying to sell their property is lusting after a certain price much too high for the market, and thinking themselves cheated when a real estate agent suggests a price range slightly less than the sellers' magic number. The work homeowners have put into their property, the nostalgia they harbor, and the burning desire to reap full monetary returns based on these emotions more often than not dull a property's edge in the real estate market. But no matter the state of the market, sellers need to keep their wits as razor-sharp as the competitive edge they should be aggressively striving for.

Like everything else in life, the first impression you make upon a real estate market can make or break that competitive edge. Overpricing your home will initially deter buyers, and it may also turn them off for good. Buyers will compare overpriced property to larger homes actually worth such a price, and will immediately know your game. They will know they have a chance at cutting your profit down to size, and may be better prepared to wait things out.

If buyers aren't completely turned off by a pricey first impression, they will opt to play your game and give you a sporting run not worth the money migraine and definitely not worth the wasted time. They will sit back and watch you be forced into slashing the price of your home again and again, and should they make an offer, it will certainly be the lowest number you've ever seen in the matter. In short, buyers can't be fooled by property mark-ups. Even those with above-average wealth are on the prowl for perfectly priced property, and are no doubt making themselves as real estate savvy as you the seller *should* be. Whether a market is rising because of high demand or declining because of lack thereof, or whether it's labeled as a "buyer's" or a "seller's" market, most buyers want as much bang for their buck as possible, and will do whatever it takes to get it.

Value of your home is based upon many things including but certainly not limited to location, property size, age, condition, amenities, price of comparable properties, and the overall demand. Value is best determined by both an appraiser as well as a real estate agent, however it is crucial that sellers understand the nature of a real estate market rather than wallowing in doubt and disappointment. While buyers are always in an objective position, sellers are always in a *subjective* position. Right from the start of a real estate endeavor, sellers should be aware of common misconceptions about pricing homes. They should strive to avoid such thinking all together.

One misconception is that it is better to slap an astronomical price on your home and allow for plenty of haggling room. Beginning with a number higher than your absolute bottom price is not a bad idea, but make sure that the difference is reasonable and won't completely turn off buyers. Let an agent guide you toward an initial price you will not only be comfortable with, but you will also have swift success with.

Another pipe dream sellers often suffer is the belief that their property is the crown jewel of the neighborhood and should be priced accordingly. While it could certainly be true that your home is worth more than your neighbors', driving up the price will simply alert buyers to bypass your property and zero in on your neighbor's much more affordable property package. Competitive pricing is a crucial key to pulling in offers, so educate yourself on the remote market in your very own neighborhood. No matter what improvements you've made to your home, such may not carry the weight in the present market that you think it should.

In addition, remember that buyers are always in objective positions and are likely to be armed with limitations enforced by the lenders they have no doubt pushed to the limit. Buyers have a certain price range, and your home must fall within that range in order to be accessible. Driving prospective buyers

away with a pricey introduction of your property dramatically lessens the chance that those individuals are going to want to attempt an offer to begin with. If they even step foot on your property.

The question you have to ask yourself – and others are too polite to ask – is do you want to sell your home or not? Playing the real estate market sounds like a good idea, but there *is* such a thing as beating it to death and missing opportunities for satisfaction. It is imperative that you trust in the advice of a seasoned real estate agent, and be open-minded as well as prepared to take what money comes your way and *run*. After all, agents are here to snag you the best possible price for your home, and to do so quickly. So relax, listen to the advice you're given, sell that property, and move on with your life!

# Williams Bay History Written in the Stars

By Ea Bishop

It's a white dome 90 feet in diameter that weighs 120 tons. Perhaps you've seen it while zipping around Williams Bay with eyes intensely focused upon the bustle before you. However, this dome is a testament to that which is bustling high above us all – the stars, planets, and galaxies accessible thanks to modern science. Once the ultimate achievement of modern architecture as well as astrophysics, the Yerkes Observatory is a monument of celestial grandeur not to be taken for granted.

As with many of the world's most crucial inventions, it was by chance that the new Professor of Astrophysics at the University of Chicago was able to create the world's largest refracting telescope in the late 1800's. Upon the news that two large discs of glass may be available for sale, Professor George Hale embarked on a bureaucratic quest for the funding necessary to purchase the glass discs as well as construct an observatory to house the refracting telescope. Astral discoveries were being made by the largest refracting telescope at the time, which was only 36 inches in diameter, and so the egotistical scientific urgency was truly astronomical.

Fatefully, Hale met Charles T. Yerkes, a businessman who had made his fortune by financing Chicago's electric railway system. The proposed rivalry against the James Lick Observatory (near San Jose, California) and its 36 inch refracting telescope proved to be irresistible to Yerkes, so he agreed to fund Hale's project and dedicated his pocketbook to "licking the Lick". Rumors of Yerkes' deep pockets included such figures as a million dollars towards the observatory project, which was a staggering sum in the late 1800's.

Though the 40 inch refracting telescope has long since been challenged, the Yerkes Observatory presently reflects classical opulence as it maintains its scientific bragging rights as the "birthplace of modern astrophysics" housing the largest refracting telescope in the world as well as several smaller telescopes. While it was a facility of modernity in the late 1800's, the architectural design of the entire complex is reminiscent of classical mythology. Mythical creatures, signs of the Zodiac, and phases of the moon are just some of many whimsical embellishments that adorn the architecture of beige Roman-style brick and terra cotta. Dragons, bulls, griffins, and even dolphins in sculptural relief welcome present day visitors and aspiring astronomers to the observatory for tours, celestial viewings, and other activities. In case a visitor forgets or is unaware of just who patronized the observatory project, within the grand main entrance rotunda of classical skylights can be found a classical bust of Charles T. Yerkes himself.

Tucked away from the glaring Chicago skyline, the Yerkes Observatory is nestled within the quaint warmth of Williams Bay, yet remains a colossal tribute to the stellar achievements of humankind.

# Stateline Choppers: A One-Stop Bike Shop

By Ea Bishop

Gorgeous Wisconsin weather indefinitely brings with it the heart-pounding roars of bikes galore, but for the motorcycle masters of Stateline Choppers, bikes are a year-round obsession. However, what sets them so obviously far apart from other bike shops in any given part of the country is their steadfast campaign to take bike-building to a whole new exhilarating level of passion. There *is* one thing that Stateline Choppers values as much as the vehicular masterpieces they arduously create, and that is those who *ride* them.

Like any extraordinarily inspiring story, this one began with a dream conceived among friends and family. In a basement playing poker one evening, to be exact. Out came the napkins and pens for taking notes, and now after about two decades of escalating expertise, Stateline Choppers shows no signs of taming the bike-building phenomenon they are taking the whole country by storm with. Operating a service center in Genoa City and a brand new 5,000 square foot, 3-story retail center in downtown Lake Geneva, it seems their revolution of the motorcycle industry has only just begun.

But what is it that makes their customer service so remarkably unique? Not only do the customer's needs and desires come first, but so does their respected budget. "Custom motorcycles don't have to break the bank," retail manager and bike-building expert Jeff Lloyd assures. Running the retail half of the business with his father Jack, Jeff has helped research and develop this mission along with the business since that fateful poker night. There is, however, much more to the canon of Stateline Choppers. To start, Jeff guarantees that anyone can custom design a high-quality bike that is exclusively theirs, and that bikes are constructed to be *ridden* as well as shown off. Moreover, one can obtain a quality custom ride for well under \$20,000. Not bad for starters.

Managed by Bill Jones and Jim Jones, the Genoa City service center is where the bikes are built. Customers have full control of the process from concept sketches to that magical first street ride. With neither a middle man nor a salesman in the way of raw creativity and first-class care, customers collaborate directly with the builders working on their bike, and no step in the process is concealed. Nor do any steps go unexplained, and builders will do whatever they can to let a customer examine and command all that is happening with their bike. Moreover, Stateline Choppers offers every service imaginable within the bike-building industry, and you can be confident that they will gladly handle everything from simple oil changes to full builds.

In addition, Stateline Choppers ships their work all over the U.S. and Canada via their own motorcycle transportation service known as Daily Direct. But their traveling ventures don't stop there, as every year they tour their work all over the country, namely at shows in Texas, Florida, and California.

What more could anyone in the market for an exclusive, personally-designed bike ask for? The brand new retail shop in downtown Lake Geneva is chocked full of black leather and silver stud delights absolutely perfect for accessorizing you and your new ride. Or if you too are an aspiring rider rife with two-wheeled reveries, visit the store front on Main Street to get all the info you need for making your chopper dream a roaring reality. *For under twenty grand.* Don't believe it? Visit the new Lake Geneva center today to see and hear it for yourself. As their motto states, "We make motorcycles, not TV shows." Stateline Choppers means *real* custom bikes for *real* riders – everything a real bike shop should be.

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