

Exploring the Elkhorn Area

Compiled by Jason Francis

Hot Spots

The **Webster House Museum** (9 E. Rockwell St.), once the home of noted composer Joseph Philbrick Webster, features collections highlighting the Webster family, Civil War paintings and mementoes, Indian artifacts and more. According to museum records, the Greek-revival style cottage was constructed in 1836 and was originally located in Elkhorn's public square, now known as courthouse square. The building served as the federal land grant office, selling land to Walworth County pioneers before Wisconsin became a state in 1848, and was used for court cases by the district judge until a real court house was constructed. The museum, which is also the home of the Walworth County Historical Society, is open Wednesday-Friday from 1-5 p.m., or by appointment from mid-May through mid-October. The Greek-revival style cottage was constructed in 1836. 262-723-4248, www.walcohistory.org

Founded in the 1950s, the **Lauderdale Aqua Skiers** continue to perform free shows for audiences at Don Jean Bay (Highway 67 five miles north of Elkhorn) and Babe Mann Park (960 Proctor Dr., Elkhorn). Shows run most Saturday nights from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The group's "Future Team" performs at 5:30 p.m., followed by the main team at 6 p.m., www.laswaterskiteam.com

Trivial Matters

•Elkhorn is laid out like a New England town because it was settled by New Englanders. A New England-style town square is found at the city's center.

•Due to its highly decorated state during the Christmas season, Elkhorn has been called the "Christmas Card Town" since before World War II.

What's in a Name?

City of Elkhorn (2010 pop. 10,084): Elkhorn was actually named after elk horns. As the story goes, Col. Samuel F. Phoenix was traveling along an army trail in 1836 when he sat down to rest under a bur oak tree in a prairie. When he looked up into the tree's branches, he discovered large elk horns hanging. He subsequently named the prairie "Elkhorn" and the village

also took the name. (Source: Robert E. Gard and L.G. Sorden's 1968 book, "The Romance of Wisconsin Place Names.")

Curious Connections

Legendary songwriter and composer **Joseph Philbrick (J.P.) Webster** (1819-1875) moved to Elkhorn with his family prior to the Civil War. As summarized on Wikipedia, he was most notable for his musical compositions during the Antebellum and American Civil War periods of United States history, and his post-war hymns. He composed the ballad "Lorena" in 1857. The song went on to become perhaps the most popular song for both sides of the war. His "In the Sweet By and By" (1868), meanwhile, is one of the best-known Christian hymns in American history. He produced more than 1,000 songs in total. Webster also served as a drill sergeant for Elkhorn's local home guard, the "Wide Awakes," during the Civil War. At his burial site at the Hazel Ridge Cemetery in Elkhorn, his epitaph reads, "Joseph P. Webster. In the Sweet By and By We Shall Meet." Webster's former residence is now the home of the Walworth County Historical Society and serves as a museum to both Webster and Civil War-era antiques.

Elkhorn-born **John Raleigh** (1887-1955) pitched parts of two seasons in Major League Baseball for the St. Louis Cardinals. The lefty saw most of his work with the team in 1909, when he appeared in 15 games, including 10 starts, and registered a 3.79 ERA. In 1910, he appeared in only three games, covering five innings, and registered a 9.00 ERA. He also had 24 plate appearances and two base hits in his brief career.

Save the Date

Ongoing-Elkhorn Antique Flea Market, held four times a year at the Walworth County Fairgrounds (411 E. Court St.). With over 500 vendors participating, spectators come from all over looking for that special treasure. Dates this year are May 21, June 25, Aug. 13 and Sept. 24. 414-525-0820, www.nlpromotionsllc.com

June 9-10-Elkhorn City Wide Rummage Sale, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Stop by the Elkhorn Chamber to pick up a map. Look for specials and deals from area businesses as well the entire weekend. 262-723-5788, www.nlpromotionsllc.com

July 14-16-Elkhorn Ribfest: A national rib competition featuring food, music and fun. Competitors from as far away as Australia. Live music headlined by Cherry Pie on Friday, Bella Cain on Saturday and Triple D Band on Sunday. Walworth County Fairgrounds, 411 E. Court St. 262-723-3228, www.walworthcountyfair.com/p/events/291

Aug. 4-5-Corn & Brat Days (formerly Festival of Summer): Support the Elkhorn Chamber by feasting on brats and roasted corn all day. Walk around and do a little shopping with the many crafters and vendors that line the square. Also children's activities and live entertainment. Veterans Park in the downtown square, 100 W. Walworth St. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. each day. 262-723-5788, www.elkhornchamber.com

Aug. 5-6-Madison Classics Car Show & Swap Meet: Walworth County Fairgrounds, 411 E. Court St., Elkhorn. Offers more than 1,300 car part vendors, perfect for finding the parts you need for your summer project. There are also hundreds of cars in the Cars for Sale Corral. 6 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and 6 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday. 608-244-8416, www.madisonclassics.com

Aug. 18-19-Big Hat Pro Rodeo: Walworth County Fairgrounds, 411 E. Court St. 262-723-3228

Aug. 30-Sept. 4-Walworth County Fair: One of the oldest fairs in the state, the Walworth County Fair was established in 1849. Livestock judging, exhibits, carnival rides, concessions, harness racing, tractor and truck pulls, demolition derby and free grandstand shows. Walworth County Fairgrounds, 411 Court St. 7 a.m.-11 p.m. Midway open noon-11 p.m. daily, except on Labor Day (11 a.m. - 8 p.m.) 262-723-3228, www.walworthcountyfair.com

Sept. 16-Elkhorn Snow-Drifters Tractor and Truck Pull: Walworth County Fairgrounds, 411 E. Court St. 262-723-3228

Oct. 21-Elkhorn Octoberfest: More than 100 crafters and vendors, classic car show 11 a.m.-3 p.m., kids activities, food vendors, chili cook-off 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., wine and beer tasting tent 11 a.m.-5 p.m., live entertainment 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Veterans Park-Downtown Square, 100 W. Walworth St., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 262-723-5788, www.elkhornchamber.com

Oct. 28-Annual Scare on the Square: Fall fun for the whole family, with kids' activities, storytelling, costume contest and more. 2-4 p.m., Veterans Park, 100 W. Walworth St. 262-723-5788, www.elkhornchamber.com

Information compiled from internet sources, including local chamber of commerce websites, municipal websites, the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's www.travelwisconsin.com, and other websites, unless noted.

JM Carpets Flooring Design Center



JM Carpet 1/2

- Carpet
- Ceramic & Porcelain Tile
- Hardwood
- Laminate
- Luxury Vinyl
- Vinyl Sheet Goods
- Window Treatments

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Closed on Sunday

(920) 563-0820

107 S. Main Street • Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

www.jmcarpets.net



Jerry Mooren, Owner

JM Carpets
Flooring Design Center

Big city service, small town feel