

WISCONSIN

WATA
WISCONSIN AGRICULTURAL TOURISM ASSOCIATION

LUV R AG

Ag-ventures in America's Dairyland

wiagtourism.com

WATA
Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association



Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association

**Represents diverse members, some of
whom operate
Agricultural Event Venues
(AEVs)**

**Who is
AEV?**



Please bear with me as I take a minute to share a bit of my personal story.

I am Steve Nagy, a manufacturing engineer by education, with a sincere attraction to the natural world and to hands-on farm building projects.



I have spent my entire career in higher education, mostly as a manager and consultant, with an international scope of work.



During much of this time, I was a heavy duty barn enthusiast

- Restoring barns
- Converting barns
- Helping others repair barns
- Working with Barns N.O.W.

I have done lots of planning and design...



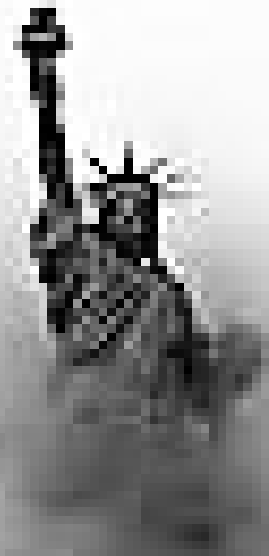


...but I am not shy of grunt work, either.



My family was in the food and hospitality business in Hungary, until the Soviet Communists nationalized the businesses of two generations of my extended family. We escaped to the West after the Revolution of 1956.





My family sailed on a military ship from Bremen, Germany on Christmas Eve, and arrived as refugees at the Statue of Liberty on January 7, 1957.

Our English vocabulary off the boat consisted of just one word, 'OK'.

“Just say OK, and you’ll be fine.”
we were told, in jest.

They were right.

We have lived the American Dream.

grateful beyond words for the opportunity.

The American Dream
life, liberty, pursuit of happiness

Working hard and always dreaming, Dad opened a small market in Cudahy in less than a year.



Soon we had a nice little sausage plant that served several stores. I learned welding, and fabricated lots of our equipment while attending high school.



Dad was a **joyous man** who loved his craft and loved serving his customers. He was infinitely grateful for the opportunity to work hard for his version of the **American Dream**.



WATA

The **Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association** gives voice and leadership to those who contribute to the agricultural segment of Wisconsin's

\$20.6 billion tourism industry.



Since becoming a member of WATA's Board, I have met some amazingly talented, hard-working, and visionary people.

OUR TESTIMONY IS NOT ABOUT

- Barns



OUR TESTIMONY IS NOT ABOUT

- Barns
- Weddings



OUR TESTIMONY IS NOT ABOUT

- Barns
- Weddings
- Alcohol



It's about something much grander. It's about our **Nation's Constitution.**



It's about something much grander. It's about our **Nation's Constitution.**



LIFE
LIBERTY
★ ★ ★ ★ AND THE ★ ★ ★ ★
PURSUIT
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ OF ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
HAPPINESS

Govin's Meats & Berries The Weddin' Barn

John Govin



*Connecting families to agriculture through education and
entertainment.*

Dunn County

2 miles east of Menomonie
Town of Red Cedar

The Town of Red Cedar will
not grant Class B liquor
license



Katie Walker
Photography



Govin's Meat & Berries

The Weddin' Barn

- Purchased our farm in 1989 - we are a first generation farm and dairy farmed until 2001
- Sold the dairy cows due to labor and a need to improve our quality of life.
- Unsure what to do next but wanted to be able to stay on the farm we had to think out of the box.
 - 2001 sold the cows and purchased a flock of sheep
 - 2002 Planted 6 acres of strawberries
 - 2005 started our Lambing Barn
 - 2009 started our Corn Maze and fall event
 - 2013 purchased the Weddin' Barn property to host private events. The house on this property is where we started our first few months of our marriage and now we get to share it with others.
- We have over 30,000 people who choose to come to our farm annually to learn and reconnect to agriculture.



- The barn is inspected annually by the Menomonie Fire department
- Has 2 egresses on each floor
- Has had an engineering study conducted
- Interconnected fire alarms and fire extinguishers
- Zoned Ag and weddings are permitted with conditional use permit.
- We are required to send event schedules to all of our neighbors
- Music must be off at 11pm and vacate property by midnight
- Seasonally permitted May-October
- There are no beverage sales at the venue
- The building is rented for private events. Our only customers are the couple getting married.
- We have personally been present at every wedding except 1 that was covered by our son and daughter-in-law.
 - Can tavern owners make that same statement?
- Unlike taverns, venues such as ours, have no financial incentive to over serve a guest.

We have a lot in common...

- A lot of us are family owned business
- A lot of us have struggled to survive in a changing economy
- A lot of fear change and the unknown
- But some of us embrace change
- There are even some in both of our industries that want to blame their business losses on those in the same industry that have chose to modernize

Through the evolution of our farm,
we have never expected the
government to “level the playing
field” or eliminate our
competitors.

**Is Wisconsin really open for small business?
It can't be if government picks winners and losers
and limits consumer choices.**



BRIDLE BARN & GARDENS

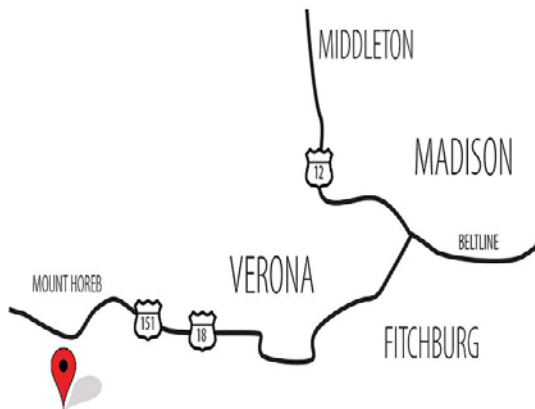
Celebrate your special event in a c.1870s historic barn

Pam Pennington & Robin Marohn





Dane County
 9736 Blue Valley Road,
 Mount Horeb, WI



THE BRIDLE BARN & GARDENS, LLC



© d-maps.com

Bridle Barn & Gardens

Celebrate your special event in a c.1870s historic barn



Bridle Barn & Gardens

Celebrate your special event in a c.1870s historic barn





Bridle Barn & Gardens

Celebrate your special event in a c.1870s historic barn





Bridle Barn & Gardens

Celebrate your special event in a c.1870s historic barn



- *Half percent historic barns left in WI**
- *Farm Preservation**
- *International guests**
- *Create \$1,000,000+ local economy**
- *Strict alcohol policy**
 - No Sales**
 - Licensed bartenders**

Croix-View Farm LLC

Sara Haase – Owner/Operator



Polk County

Osceola, WI.



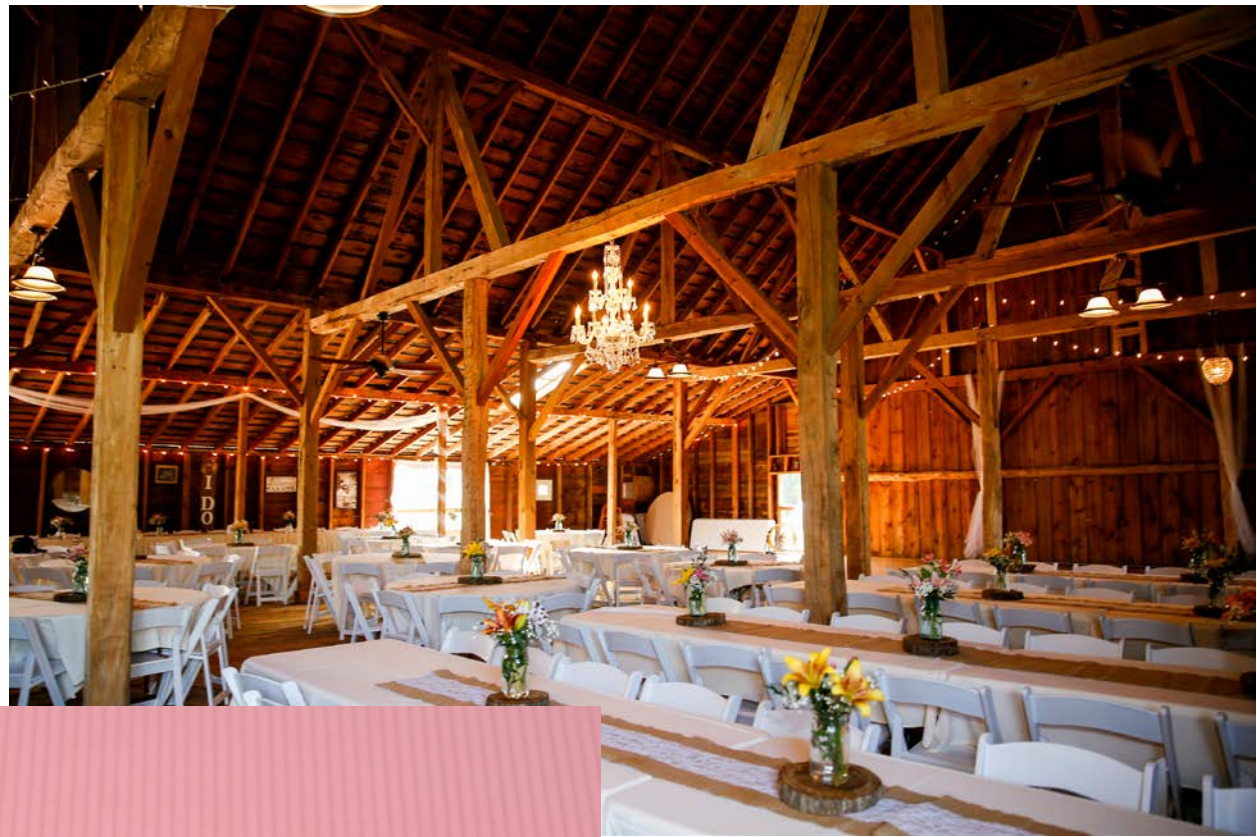
© d-maps.com



BEAU PETERSEN
PHOTOGRAPHY



- Third season
 - Event Season is May to October
 - Mostly weekends
- CVF Weddings have brought over 5K people into our community the last 3 years.
 - Generating revenue for local businesses as well as state sales tax. Much of which is from out of state guests.
 - Local bars and restaurants, florists, caterers, hair/make-up people, photographers, liquor stores, etc.
- Our mission is to create a relaxed and memorable experience for our couples as well as their guests.
- We are also a FT dairy farming family
- We host between 12-20 Private Invite only events a year.





- Permitted through our county
 - Insured
 - File yearly sales tax with the state
 - No county or township noise ordinance, but we have created our own standards.
- 11:30 pm End Time (at the latest)
 - Everyone must be out by midnight
- Licensed bartenders are **REQUIRED**
- Livelihood our family counts on



Owners:
Bob & Jean Bahn



**We are located
in rural
Green Lake
County near the
cities of Green
Lake, Ripon,
and Berlin.**



© d-maps.com

How and why did this former dairy barn become an event venue.



- The process of obtaining a conditional use permit and the restrictions it includes.



- My customers
- Benefits to other local business



Response to comments made at the July meeting

- Safety
- Operating under the law
- Unlicensed vs permitted





Gary and Mary Telfer





Busy Barns Adventure Farm
The Gathering Barn
7675 US HWY 26
Fort Atkinson, WI



© d-maps.com

PUTTING SMILES ON DRIVERS' FACES



“Growing Memories & Harvesting Fun”

SD Adobe Spark



Celebrations



Private Party Invitation Only Agricultural Event Venue Est. 2008



Wisconsin
Department
of Natural Resources



WELCOME
INSTRUCTORS



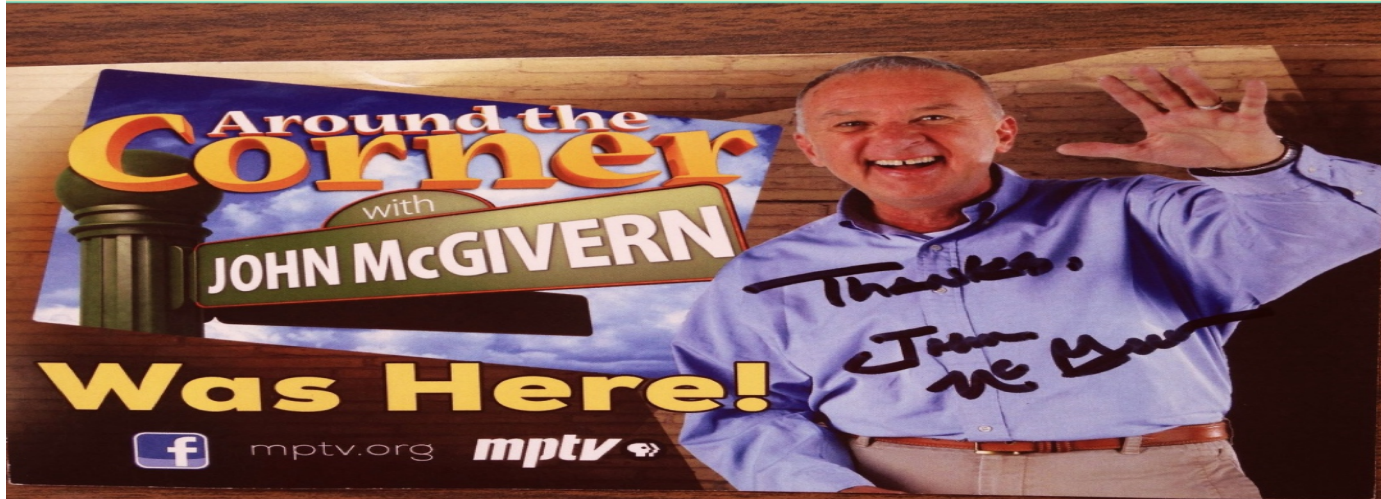
Busy Barns
Adventure
Farm



INSTRUCTORS
APPRECIATION
DINNER



SPECIAL GUESTS



Busy Barns Adventure Farm | SP Adobe Spark



**WE'RE
HIRING!**



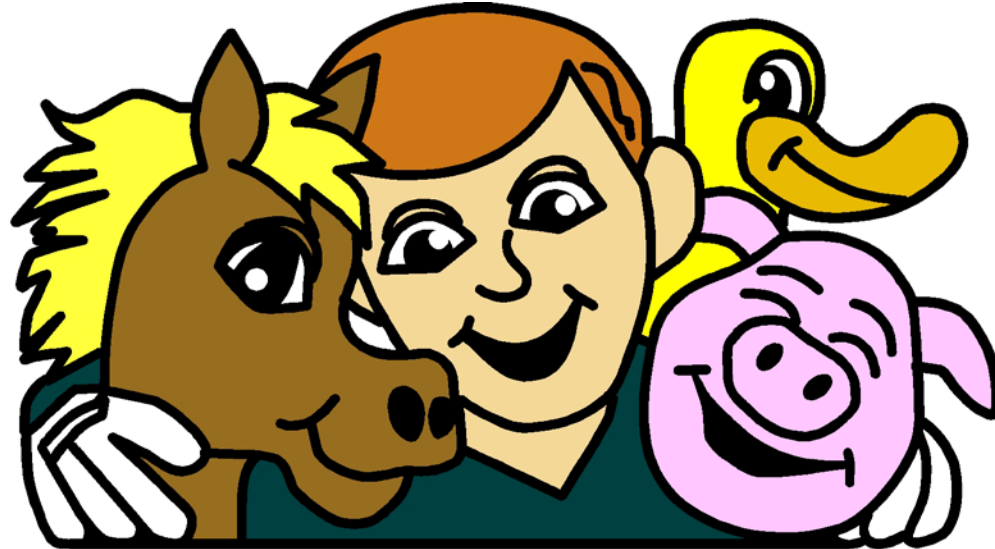
If your planning a wedding at Busy Barns Adventure Farm and need overnight accommodations for your guests contact our hotel to learn more about room blocks.

Economic Growth

Sp Adobe Spark

Mulberry Lane Farm

Bonnie Keyes



Kids Love
Our Critters!

Calumet County

3 miles east of Sherwood
at the northern tip of
Lake Winnebago

W3190 County Road B
Hilbert, WI 54129



© d-maps.com

125 acres working farm





Our Mission...

is to provide an ideal country learning environment where people of all ages can interact and learn about farm animals through “hands-on” group & self-guided tours.

Mulberry Lane Farm

- Operate the 6 mos of May – October
 - 42,000+ guests per year
 - 61% Families, 29% School Fieldtrips/Group outings, 9% Wedding Guests
- Group outings have included companies such as Plexus, Affinity Health Care, 4imprint, Coldwell Bankers, Kimberly Clark, even the Green Bay Packer Organization
- 1st wedding: October 31, 2010
- 15-20 weddings during the 5 mos of May - Sept
 - Because of our very busy petting farm/pumpkin season we do not host fall weddings
- We host one wedding per weekend
 - Couples have access to the farm 1PM Friday thru 1PM Sunday



Because the barn is decorated 24 hours in advance we do cover tables with plastic to keep them dust free & pristine and yes, maybe even clean from a stray barn swallow



July 25, 2018 Committee Mtg Concerns

Although irrelevant to the fact, that by DOR Secretary Richard Chandler's testimony on July 25th, we are operating by the letter of the law, I will share for your appeasement:

- We are **permitted** by Calumet County with weddings listed as an axillary activity to our children's petting farm
 - To obtain our permit a **Certificate of Insurance** was presented to Calumet County for record
 - Additional requirement to obtain permit was to show we had adequate off road **parking**
 - Our barn has been inspected and approved to hold 250 guests by the Town of Harrison Fire Chief
 - Entry/Exit traffic flow for safety was approved
 - Number and location of fire extinguishers was determined
 - **Yearly inspections occur**
- We are a **smoke free** farm but on wedding day we do have a designated smoking area about 130 ft from the barns

July 25, 2018 Committee Mtg Concerns

- Our bridal couples, family reunions, company picnics, birthday parties, etc. more often than not contract with a license food caterer and beverage caterer
 - Our farm receives no monetary benefit in the food or beverage service offered at their private event
 - 90% of the time event host contract with WI Tavern League member, Ray Pethan, of Valley Liquor
 - Beverages are served by the host as an open bar
 - There are NO cash sales
 - By contract we reserve the right to check IDs
 - As per contract we maintain the right to demand alcoholic beverage not be served to any individual who in our judgment appears to be intoxicated
- As per our contract, and in consideration of the residents who reside in Woodville Township, beverage service and music cease at 11PM
 - Guests must be off property by 11:30PM
- As per contract the maximum music volume is 85 db
- We encourage shuttle service keeping cars overnight

July 25, 2018 Committee Mtg Concerns

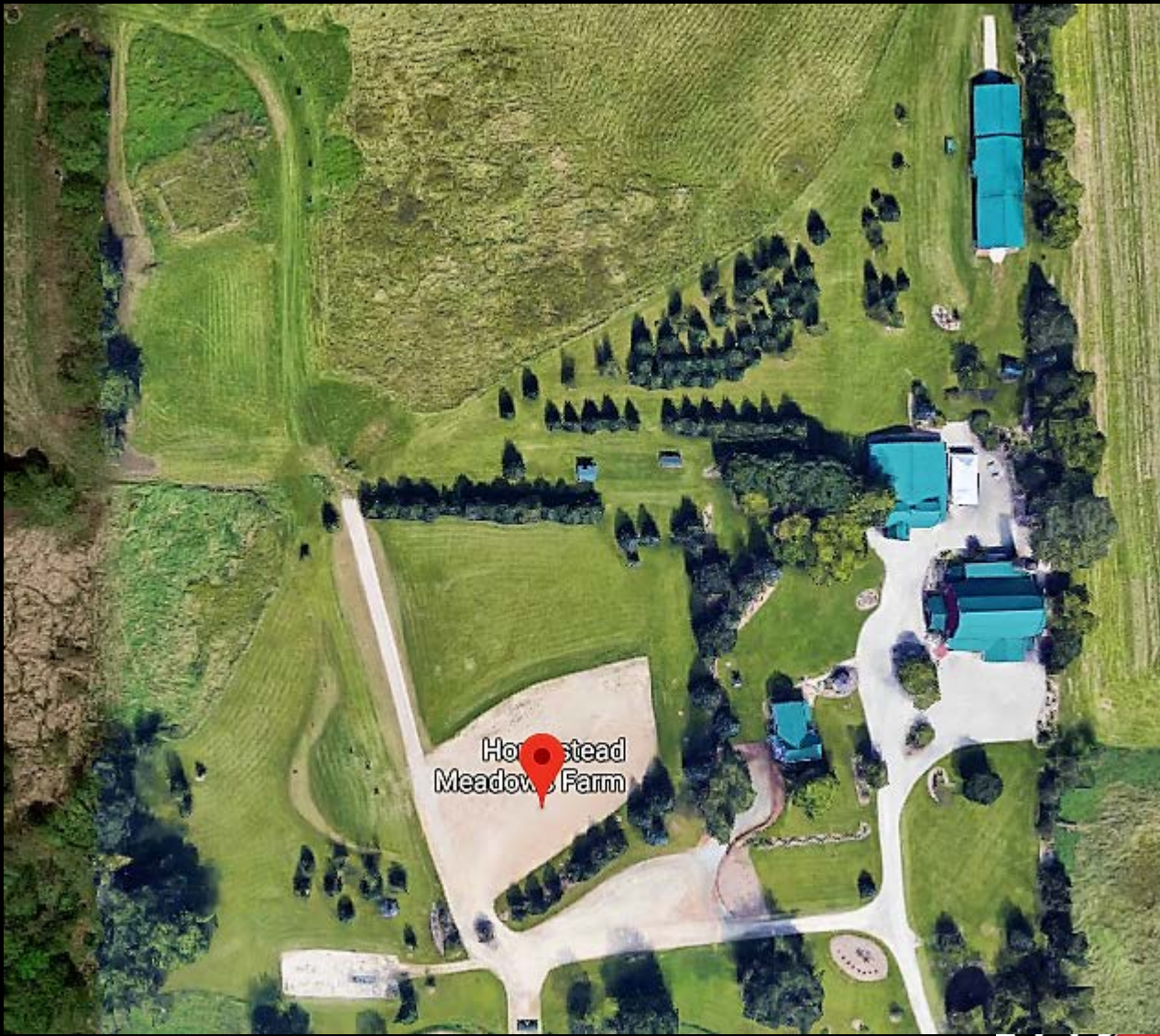
- *If it ain't broken, don't fix it!*
 - We are 100% in compliance with State Statute Chapter 125
 - We have never had an alcohol related incident at our private property, invitation only events
- I'd advise caution if you argue that agricultural event barns have to carry a liquor license to be properly regulated
 - You're implying counties and municipalities that currently issue ag event barns their permits, those who regulate us, and those who inspect us, that those government agencies aren't doing their job
- There is no demonstrated need to change our agricultural conditional use permitted business model that generates annually upwards of \$350,000 in weddings alone, to say nothing of our petting farm business, to our rural economy
- Changing the current law will not level the playing field as you hope it would
 - Every bar, banquet hall, winery, barn venue has it's own unique attraction. Ours is the interaction with our farm animals



David Rabe, Legal Counsel to Gov Walker 07.11.2015



Homestead Meadows Farm



From humble beginnings at a 1970 farm estate auction

AUCTION SALE
Farm and Personal Property
SAT., MAY 2, 12:30 P. M.
Sharp
On the Farm of **ART RADLOFF** - EDWIN C. RADLOFF - ESTATE
Located: 4 Miles West Of Appleton On Highway 10 To Intersection Of 10 And 45 Then
South 1 Mile To Spenser Road Then West 1 1/2 Miles.

Barn, Silo, Machine Shed And 2 Bedroom Home. This Farm For Sale To Satisfy Estate.
Come Prepared To Bid. This Is Very Good Land. If You Have Property To Trade, Contact
Long Winkler & Sorel Before Day Of Sale.

55 Acre Farm -

24 HEAD DAIRY CATTLE
GUERNSEY
14 Cows, Some With Calves
Gals, 5 Yearlings, 3 Yearlings















Farm-to-School Gardens

We work with the Hortonville/Greenville School System to develop farm-related experiences for students.

Funds raised support the greenhouse and education programs.



Little Chef Program

Students pair with chef mentors to develop farm-to-table recipes and participate in cook-off contests. Over \$30,000 was raised in 2017 to support local needs.



CONSERVATION Field Days

Our 54th Event Sponsored by:
The Outagamie County Land
Conservation Department



September 18-20, 2018
Homestead Meadows Farm

Every sixth-grade student in Outagamie County will visit Homestead Meadows each year for a ten-station conservation-themed, all-day learning experience.

















8

7

6







Yes, weddings pay the bills.





And weddings offer other benefits.

Hugs and kisses from the Brides, their Moms, and YES, even from the grooms at times.

I love this Country!

I love this business!

And guests love it, too.
They say...



Verizon LTE 6:54 PM 27%

18

2 Messages

Emma reviewed you on Th...

You received a new review on The Knot!



posted 08/03/2018

Where to begin! Homestead Meadows is one of the most beautiful places in Wisconsin and most definitely the best place to have a wedding. The Nagy's are SO accommodating and clearly have put so much love into this perfect venue. All 220 of our guests enjoyed the night and there was not a dull moment between the breath taking scenery, hayrides, beautifully decorated barn, and tons of space to run around. We have gotten so many compliments and are so happy that we chose Homestead Meadows for our wedding, we will cherish the memories forever. Thank you to Steve, his family, and their employees for helping make our day perfect. I would give 10/5 stars if I could!



Lori Hoelzel Sam's Mom

Yesterday 9:14 PM

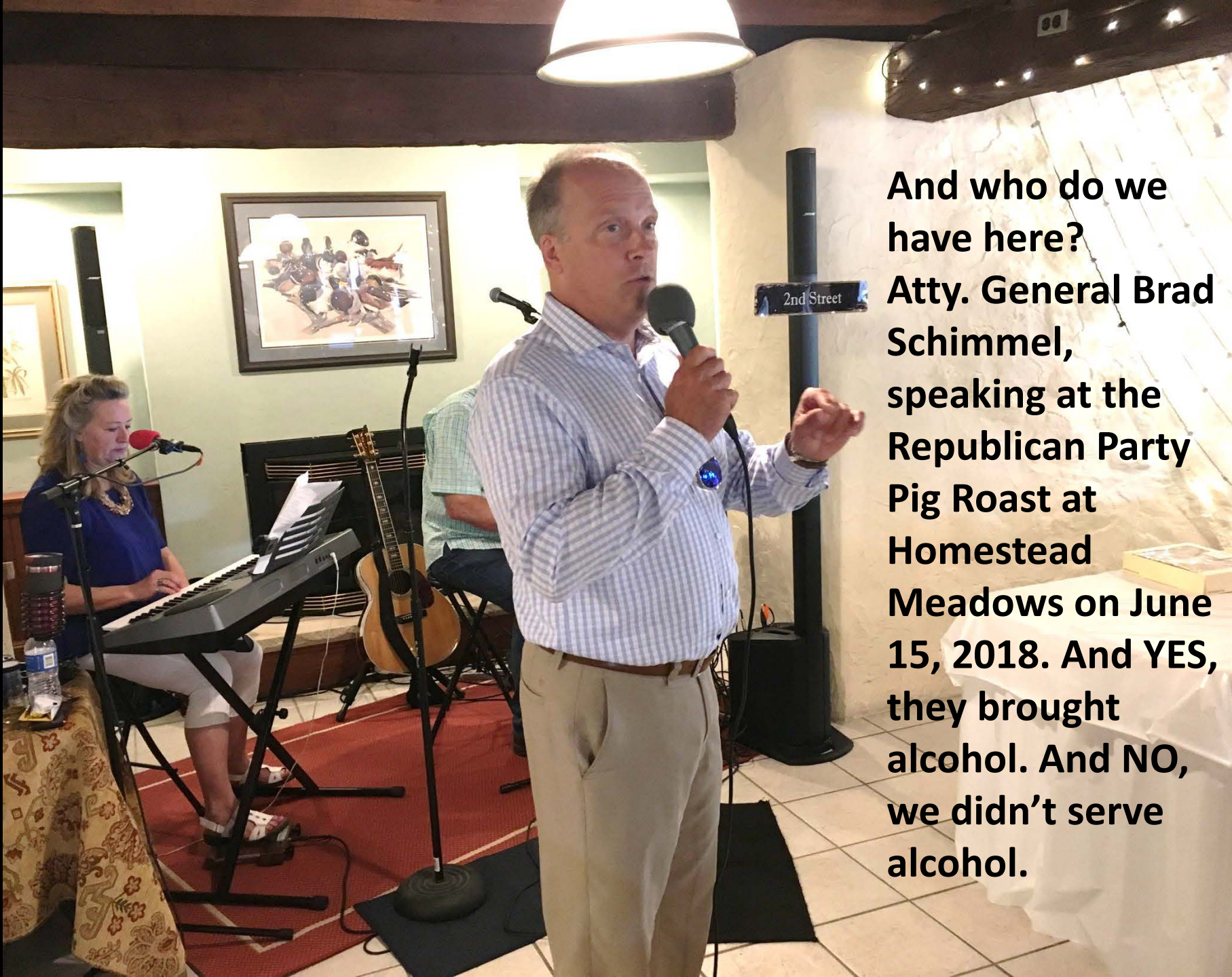
Hello Steve, it truly was a wonderful day! We love your venue. Thank you for putting up with me and working with us. We could not be happier! We were flooded with comments on the beauty and flexibility of the venue. Farmer Steve, you are the best! 🥰

< 4 Lori Hoelzel Sam's Mom

Yesterday 9:14 PM

Hello Steve was a wonderful day! We were at the venue. Thank you for putting me and wife with us. We were not here had we were flooded with comments on the beauty of the venue. Steve, you are the best! 🥰





**And who do we have here?
Atty. General Brad Schimmel, speaking at the Republican Party Pig Roast at Homestead Meadows on June 15, 2018. And YES, they brought alcohol. And NO, we didn't serve alcohol.**

36 YEARS OF OPERATION



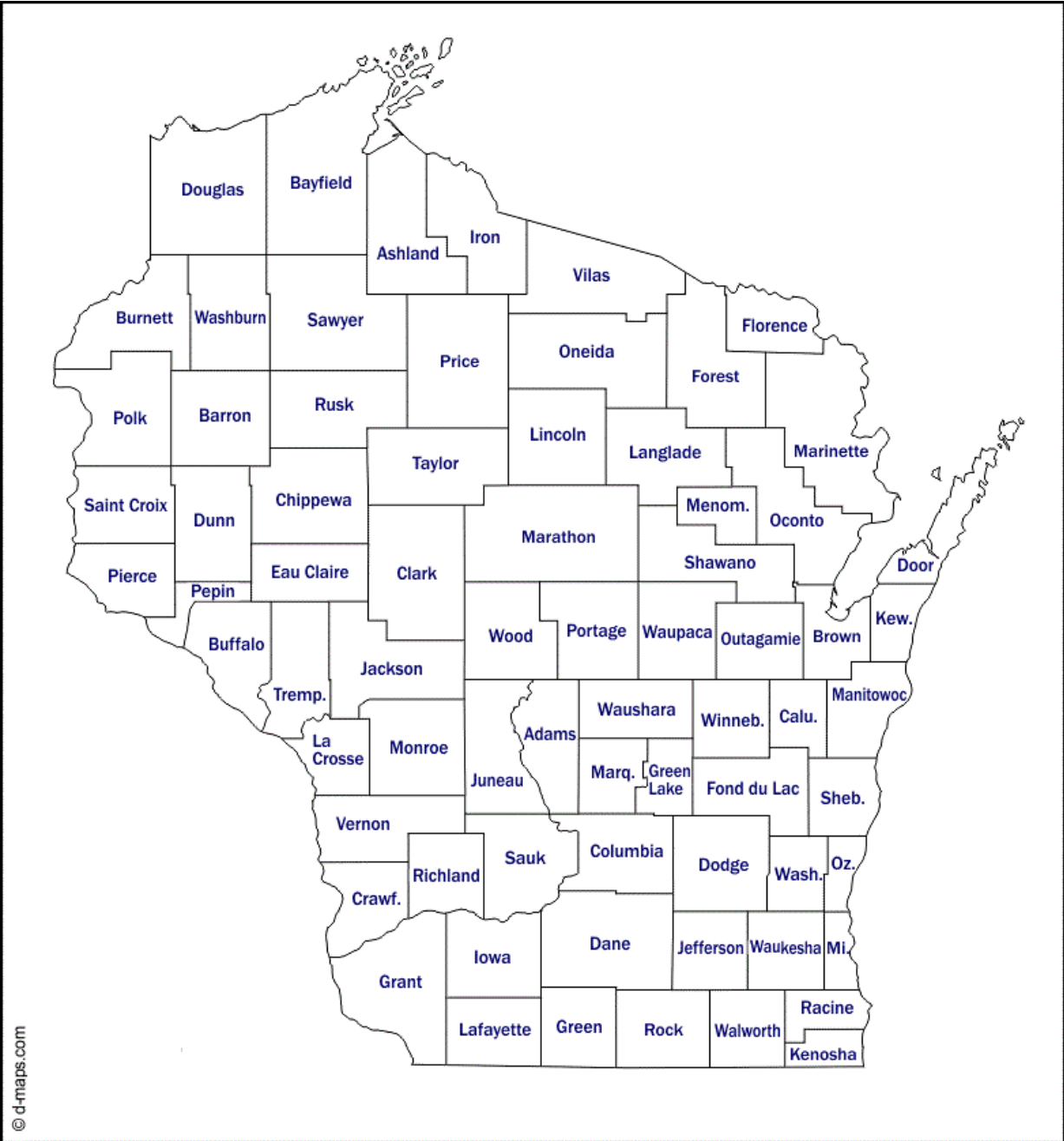
6,000+ events, 2,200 with alcohol; 1,489 Weddings
No problems; not a single incident in 36 years of operation.



Your County

Your location

Place your star





Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

August 22, 2018

Wisconsin Legislative Council

**Valley Liquor Presentation
Concerns and Discussion of Wisconsin's Alcohol Beverage Laws
(2017 Assembly Bill 433)**





Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

Valley Liquor Started 22 years ago

- Started with 4 trailers and little or no equipment.
- Employ 5 full-time employees and up to 10 part-time employees during peak wedding season (June-October)



- We have grown our business and now own 18 refrigerated event trailers and enough equipment to cater several large events any given day.



Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

August 22, 2018

Wisconsin Legislative Council

**Valley Liquor Presentation
Concerns and Discussion of Wisconsin's Alcohol Beverage Laws
(2017 Assembly Bill 433)**





Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

Since grocery stores started
selling alcohol liquor stores
had to find a niche to
survive!



Our Shared Success:

15 Event Partners

- Homestead Meadows
- Mulberry Lane
- Outer Edge
- Van Abel's
- Cedar Hill Barn
- Givens Farm
- Banquets & Catering
- The Reserve
- Willow Pond
- Cedar Creek
- Fortune Talent
- Carstens Mill
- Village Hearthstone
- Badger State Brewing
- A-mazing Events
- Pioneer Creek Farm



Valley Liquor's niche is
beverage catering!



Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

~40% of our annual gross revenue is
from beverage catering.

We cater to all non-licensed
(alcohol & Non-alcohol) events:

- Weddings
- Company picnics
- Open houses
- Graduation parties
- Retirement parties
- Tail gate parties
- Back yard rentals
- Et. el.

”

“Thank you for all you did to make our wedding day possible. The liquor trailer worked perfectly. It was nice not have to worry about running out of anything for the evening. Your services will always come highly recommended by us.”

”

“Courtney and David's wedding was fabulous and it would not have been possible without your help. We are so grateful to you for coming to our rescue at the last minute to supply us with the beer trailer and necessary essentials for the bartenders. Thank you for your patience you showed me and the reassurance given during a hectic decision making process.”

”

“We wanted to say thank you for the amazing job you did at our wedding! Everything from the preparation, delivery, set up, to the service was second to none. We could not be more pleased with your professionalism, knowledge, and attention to detail. We received many compliments and are so thankful we had you to add to the joy of our day and make our guests happy! Thank you again – we appreciate everything!”





Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

Wedding barn, special event locations are extremely popular:

- To celebrate Wisconsin's rich agricultural history.
- To enjoy Wisconsin's natural resources and local park amenities.
- To provide outdoor opportunities for all guests young and old alike can enjoy.





Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

State of Wisconsin
Department of Revenue

Wisconsin Alcohol Beverage and Tobacco Laws for Retailers

Changes to Wisconsin's Alcohol Beverage laws:

- Would cripple Wisconsin's Beverage catering businesses.
- Would force special event locations to get a Class B Licensed (which in some areas are limited)
- Would force event owners to run events like taverns or wedding halls;
- And force these owners to purchase from a wholesaler.





Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

State of Wisconsin
Department of Revenue

Wisconsin Alcohol Beverage and Tobacco Laws for Retailers

Changes to Wisconsin's Alcohol Beverage laws:

Impacts on local economies:

- Wisconsin's Towns and urban areas will be impacted with loss of economic spending.
- Local hotels, gas stations, convenient stores, and restaurants will be impacted.
- Even local taverns will be impacted by loss of patronage when wedding celebrations end at these locations, but continue into the night.





Northeast Wisconsin's Largest Beverage Caterer

Thank you for your time and consideration to our concerns related to our livelihood.

We ask that you consider Valley Liquor and our partners should proposals to change Wisconsin's Alcohol Beverage Laws surface in the future.



**Ray Pethan
Paul Cummings
Todd Verboomen**



SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

So, let's wrap it up. What have we learned?

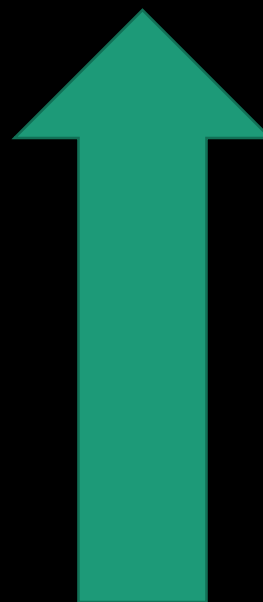
The speed of change is dizzying.





To thrive **or even survive**, we must be vigilant and proactive.

















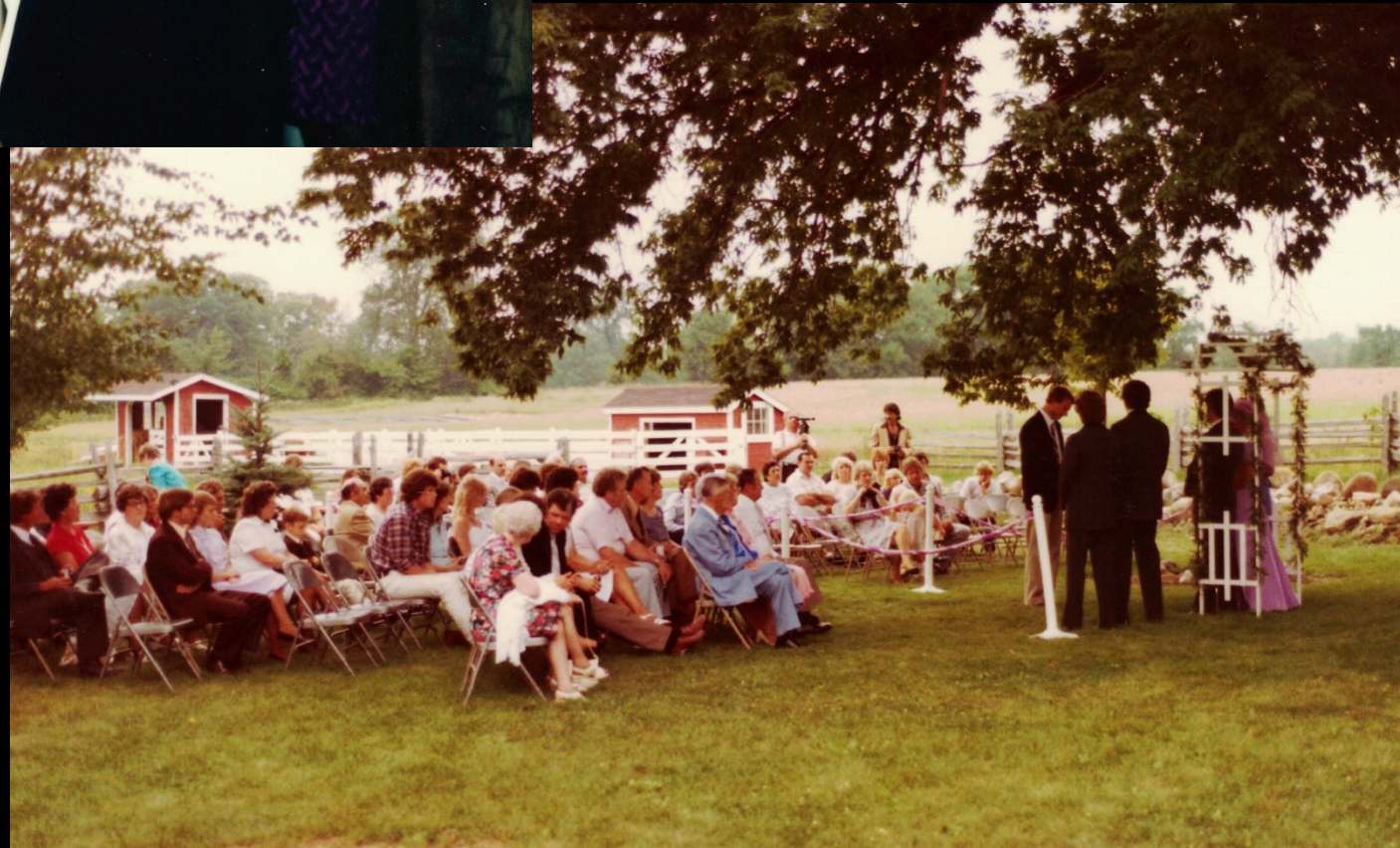






1983

First there were two.





1989

Then there were five.



Plumbing replaced the outhouse and air conditioning replaced the five wood burners. Then there were 20.

1997



It didn't happen overnight. It happened over 35 years.



One of our early weddings was the oldest daughter of this fancy resort, and a few other hotels in NE Wisconsin.

Sometimes young people can get to the essence of a thing because their thinking is not fettered by a lot of baggage.

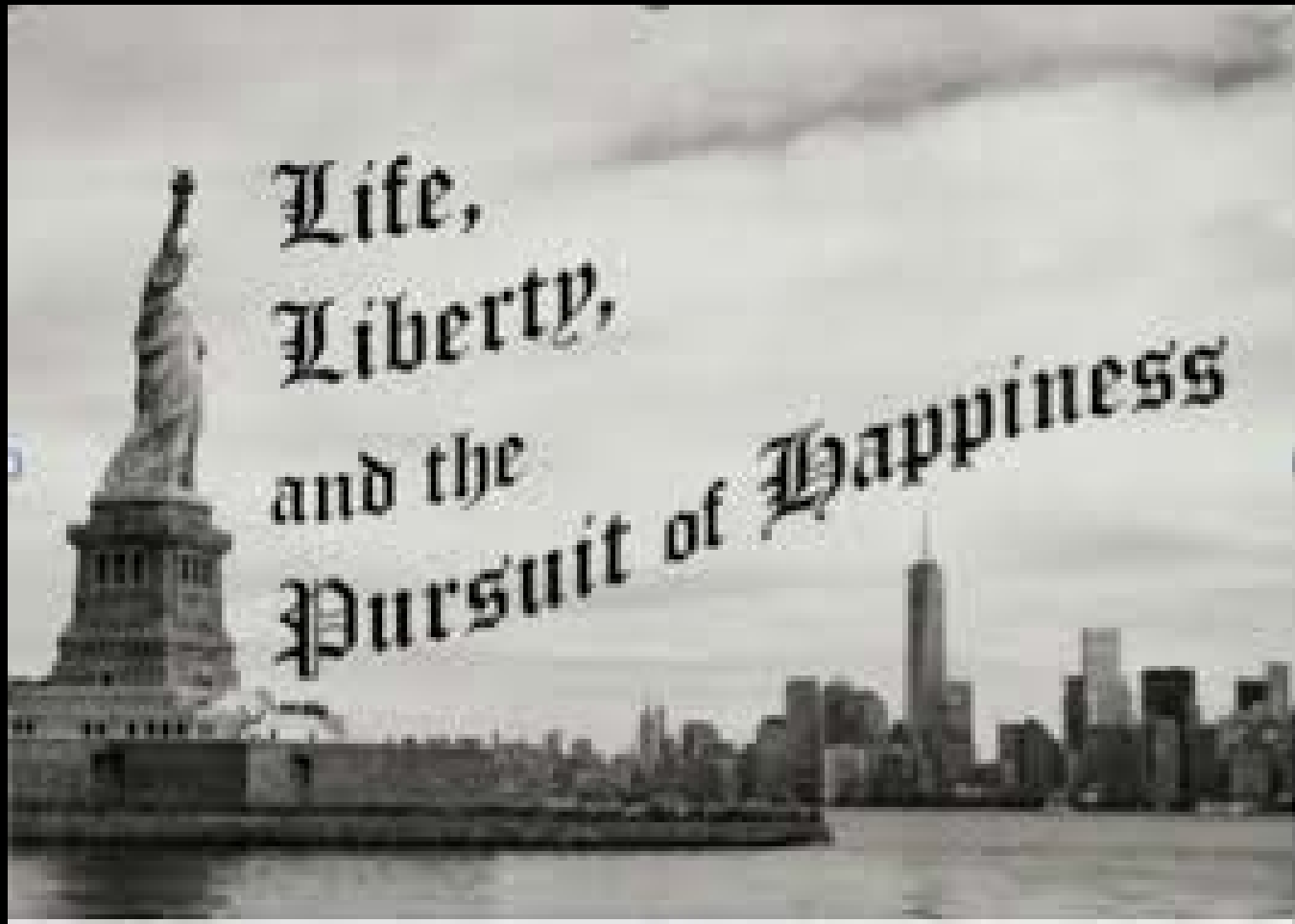


Don't these people realize that the
'Jeanie is out of the bottle on farm weddings?'
To put it another way, *'The train has left the station.'*

Back to the Constitution



Back to the Constitution



Happiness is...



To upcycle an obsolete old barn to create a new way to serve celebrants.



Happiness is...

To add a new source of income to a struggling family's budget, to help nudge the family's personal economy over into sustainability.



Happiness is...

Not to be bullied by powerful competitors who **bemoan** having missed a trend.



Please **stop harassing** the Department of Revenue **for enforcing the clear intent of the Legislature** regarding the enjoyment of beverages at private events.



Implementing Chapter 125 as written.



And please stop using political influence to advance the interests of a powerful lobby.



Striving to be Superior

In business, it is better to strive to compete than to try to limit competition. That is a losing formula, because it dilutes focus and wastes time.

Time *is* the *ultimate non-renewable resource*.

AEVs are 100% compliant with Chapter 125 WI Stats.
No demonstrated need for change in either the law or
our AEV business model.

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LUV R AG

Ag-ventures in America's Dairyland

wiagtourism.com

WATA
Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association

We appreciate the chance to participate in your Committee's important work. We are sure you will do the right thing to support the diligent business people who **make up the backbone of Wisconsin's Agricultural Tourism industry.**

THANK YOU.

