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February 8th 2026



Fondly
“Six Pack”
Weekly
SERIES

I LOVE FDL

Weekly news, inspiration, updates and happenings

The Fondy Frontline

A&W on Winnebago Drive delivers classic comfort with hand-breaded chicken that's crispy, juicy, and perfectly seasoned—no trends, just consistency done right. Paired with fries and a frosty mug of root beer, it's the kind of meal locals return to because it tastes exactly how they expect, every time.

Faces Of Our Future

Ice cream season is returning to the Fond du Lac area, signaling longer days, warmer weather, and the simple joys that come with it. From Cowlicks reopening with seasonal treats to Kelley's Country Creamery preparing for its March opening, local favorites are once again bringing people together through shared traditions and sweet moments.

Finding Balance

The Fond du Lac County Tavern League helps keep local roads safe by offering free rides home for patrons, completing 1,100 safe rides in 2025 alone. This service will also be available at the Fishing Has No Boundaries Annual Bash on February 13–14, ensuring attendees can enjoy the event responsibly and get home safely.

Hometown Heroes

The Fond du Lac County Tavern League raised \$1,427 through a community fundraising campaign to support the Veterans Park remodel, inviting patrons to contribute by purchasing and signing display flags at local taverns. With many members being veterans themselves, the organization proudly continues its mission of giving back and supporting veterans throughout the county.

Creative Corner

Sturgeon Spectacular returns to downtown Fond du Lac February 13–15, 2026, bringing art, food, music, and winter fun together for a beloved community weekend. From the Wisconsin Snow Sculpting Championship to chili crawls, wagon rides, and live entertainment, the festival showcases how winter shines when the community comes together.

Play Explore Repeat

Fond du Lac is proud to host the 14th Wisconsin State Tournament, the largest state bowling tournament in the United States, welcoming over 11,000 competitors from across Wisconsin. Running from January 17 through May 3, events take place at Ledgeview Lanes and Rev's Bowl Bar and Grill, bringing high-level competition and excitement to the area.

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THE FONDY FRONTLINE

Fond du Lac Comfort Food: A&W's Chicken Worth the Detour

In a city full of classic Wisconsin drive-ins and family diners, A&W Restaurant on Winnebago Drive holds a special kind of nostalgia. You don't just stop here to eat — you stop to slow down. The smell of fry oil, the sound of the drive-thru speaker crackling to life, and that unmistakable sweetness of fresh root beer in a frosty mug all signal the same thing: uncomplicated comfort food done right. While A&W is famous for its burgers and floats, locals know there's another menu category quietly carrying the experience — the chicken.

The Chicken That Keeps Regulars Coming Back

A&W's chicken isn't positioned as trendy Nashville-hot or artisan-buttermilk gourmet. It succeeds for the opposite reason: consistency and texture engineering. The kitchen uses hand-breaded preparation, which produces a crust that fractures rather than flakes — a key difference. Instead of shattering crumbs everywhere, the coating adheres tightly to the meat, so each bite delivers crunch and moisture simultaneously.

What stands out immediately:

- Audible crisp exterior
- Juicy interior (not steam-soft)
- Pepper-forward seasoning instead of heavy salt
- Balanced fry oil flavor — present, not greasy

The tenders, especially, hit a sweet spot between fast-food convenience and supper-club familiarity. They taste closer to bar-basket chicken than freezer-to-fryer product — which explains why families order them as meals, not just sides for kids.

Why It Works in Wisconsin

Fond du Lac diners have high standards for fried foods — Friday fish fries and tavern baskets set the baseline. Personally, I am VERY picky when it comes to chicken and fish. A&W's chicken fits that regional palate: hearty, straightforward, and filling rather than novelty-driven. Pair it with fries and a mug of root beer and you get a meal that feels halfway between a drive-thru stop and a casual local hangout.

That's the brand's strength. Since 1919 the chain has leaned into simple Americana — burgers, floats, and hand-breaded chicken — rather than chasing trends, and the Fond du Lac location keeps that identity intact.

Written by: Darren Goodpaster

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THE FONDY FRONTLINE

Fond du Lac Comfort Food: A&W's Chicken Worth the Detour - CONTINUE

The Ideal Order

If you want the full experience locals gravitate toward:

- Chicken tenders basket
- Fries
- Ranch or BBQ (Ranch cuts the pepper best)
- Frosty mug root beer

It's the kind of meal you eat in the parking lot once... and then somehow keep repeating.

The Takeaway

A&W in Fond du Lac isn't trying to reinvent fried chicken – and that's precisely why it works. The tenders deliver reliable crunch, real seasoning, and nostalgic comfort in a town that appreciates food you don't have to overthink.

Sometimes the best meal in town isn't the newest one. It's the one that tastes exactly how you expected – every single time.





Faces of our future

LOCAL ICE CREAM SHOPS BEGIN OPENING FOR THE SEASON!

As the days slowly get longer and winter starts to fade, one of the best signs of the season changing around Fond du Lac is the return of ice cream shops. Ice cream has a way of bringing people together, whether it's families piling into the car after dinner, kids celebrating the end of a long school week, or friends taking a walk with a cone in hand. Every year, these openings remind us that warmer days are coming and that the simple things still matter.

Cowlicks reopened for the season last Thursday, February 5th, and locals were more than ready. Located at 248 South Park Ave in Fond du Lac, Cowlicks is one of those places that feels tied to memories. Right now, they are offering Valentine's Day themed drinks, adding a little extra fun to the heart of winter. They are also serving hot soups and chili, making it an easy stop whether you're craving something sweet, something warm, or both. It's the kind of place where you can slow down, catch up, and just enjoy the moment.

Another favorite getting ready to open soon is Kelley's Country Creamery, which welcomes customers starting March 1st. Located at W5215 County Road B in Eden, Wisconsin, Kelley's has become a tradition for many families in the area. The short drive, the quiet setting, and the farm-fresh ice cream all make it feel like a small escape and a true sign that spring has arrived.

A few other familiar spots have also opened their doors, including Gilles Frozen Custard, which reopened on January 29th, and A&W. Together, these openings bring back routines people look forward to every year. Ice cream season is about more than dessert. It's about shared memories, local traditions, and enjoying the simple happiness that comes with a scoop on a cone.





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Fond du Lac Tavern League Steps Up to Support Veterans Park Project

The Fond du Lac Tavern League is an organization of numerous tavern owners from throughout FDL County. The membership is passionate about giving back to Veterans in any way possible. When they heard about the Veteran's Park remodel, they wanted to do something to contribute to the project. They came up with a flag which they printed out and then made available to their patrons to purchase for whatever the patron wanted to contribute to the remodel project. The patron's name was then written on the flag and displayed at their establishments.

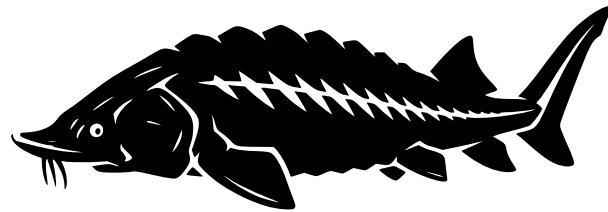
They began this fundraising campaign in August 2025 and it went thru October 2025. In January, David Tollefson, FDL County Veteran Services liaison, was invited to speak at their District meeting about services available thru County Veteran Services.

AT that meeting, the FDL County Tavern League presented him with a check for \$1427.00, which was the amount they had altogether raised thru their fundraising campaign.

The FDL County Tavern League has many members who are Veterans themselves and were honored to help this project, and will continue to help Veterans in any way they can.



Author: Cindy Immel



A Fond du Lac Winter Tradition Returns: Sturgeon Spectacular 2026

Every February, winter in Fond du Lac comes alive in the best possible way with the return of Sturgeon Spectacular, a signature downtown festival that celebrates everything we love about the season. Always held the second weekend of February, this year's event runs February 13-15, 2026, bringing locals and visitors together for a weekend packed with art, food, music, and community fun. It's one of those weekends where cold temps don't slow anyone down, they just give us another reason to gather.

One of the biggest highlights of Sturgeon Spectacular is the Wisconsin Snow Sculpting Championship, presented by Grande Cheese Company. Massive blocks of snow are transformed into detailed works of art right in the heart of downtown, drawing crowds all weekend long. Alongside the main competition, the High School Snow Sculpting Competition adds another layer of creativity and excitement, showing off the talent and imagination of local students.



Beyond the sculptures, Sturgeon Spectacular turns downtown Fond du Lac into a full winter playground. Visitors can enjoy ice carvings scattered throughout downtown, horse-drawn wagon rides, live music and entertainment at the Thelma Sadoff Center for the Arts, and a lineup of beloved events like the Chili Crawl, Sweet Stroll, Bloody Mary Contest, and outdoor floor curling at Fond du Lac Beer Company. Local businesses also join in with special promotions, making it a great weekend to shop, eat, and explore.

Whether you're coming for family-friendly activities, downtown vibes, sturgeon spearing season, or just an excuse to get out and enjoy winter together, Sturgeon Spectacular delivers. Made possible through the support of community partners like the Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership, Destination Lake Winnebago Region, and the City of Fond du Lac, this one-of-a-kind festival continues to be a reminder of how special winter can be when a community comes together.

PLAY. EXPLORE. REPEAT.

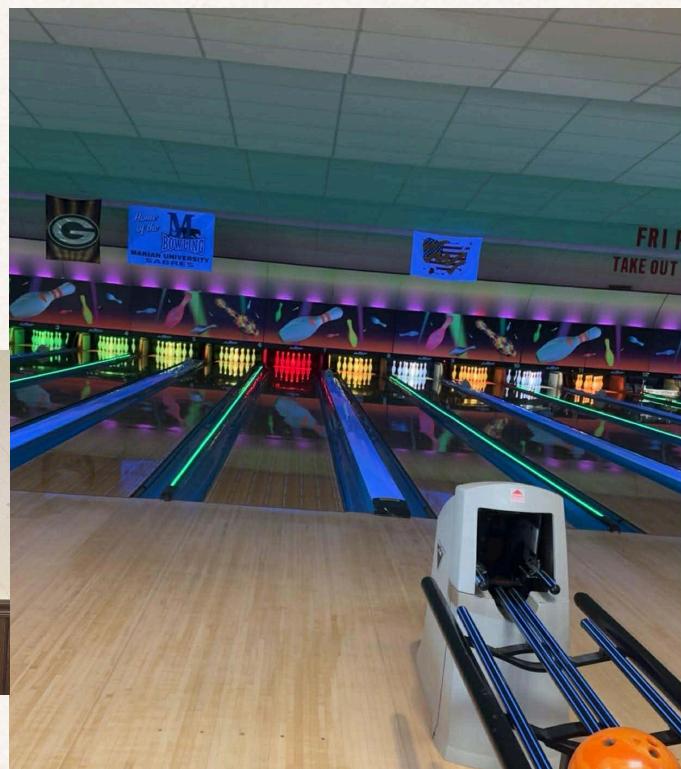


Fond du Lac Hosts One of the Largest Bowling Tournaments in the U.S.

Fond du Lac has the honor of hosting the 14th Wisconsin State Tournament. It is the biggest state tournament in the United States.

The Wisconsin State Open Championship started on January 17th and will run every weekend Friday, Saturday until May 3rd. Over 11,000 men and women from every part of the state will compete in the tournament. Ledgeview Lanes is the site for the doubles and singles event, with Rev's Bowl Bar and Grill in Oshkosh hosting the team event.

Stop by Ledgeview Lanes in Fond du Lac, and check out the bowling and stop in the tournament office check out the great merchandise for sale.



Finding Balance

I Love FDL

FHNB Annual Bash Brings Music, Community, and Safe Rides to Fond du Lac

A healthy lifestyle is sometimes about just being safe, which is why the Fond du Lac County Tavern League offers free safe rides home for patrons. In 2025 alone, the Fond du Lac County Tavern League completed 1,100 safe rides, helping reduce impaired driving and keep local roads safer.

Looking for something to do next week? Be sure to checkout Fishing Has No Boundaries (FHNB) Annual Bash at Sunset on the Water Friday 2/13 through Saturday 2/14. Sunset on the Water is located at N7364 Winnebago Dr, Fond du Lac, WI 54935.

What's FHNB? It's a non-profit chapter of a statewide program that offers opportunities for all anglers with disabilities regardless of their sex, race, gender, or disability. They hold their annual event at Ouen Island inside Lakeside Park in Fond du Lac.

This year, Cherry Pie will play on Friday night, and Driftwood will play on Saturday night. So get out those dancing shoes, and come support a great cause!

New this year, the Fond du Lac County Tavern League will be offering safe rides home for any of the patrons attending the FHNB event. If you're interested in taking advantage of this, stop at the hostess station inside Sunset to secure your ride with one of the volunteers.

Did you know, any Tavern League bar offers this for their patrons (if available) in order to eliminate the number of drunk drivings on Wisconsin's roadways. Rides can be requested by asking your bartender at any Tavern League location. Rides are completed through Uber, local cab companies, and good samaritans. Uber was recently added as a tool in order to increase the availability of safe rides. The only caveat is you have to be taken to your home, hotel, or residence. Safe ride does not take patrons to other bars, gas stations, etc.

So, if you end up having a few too many next weekend, be sure to stop in at the hostess stand inside Sunset to request your free ride home.



This week is PACKED with awesome deals from some of Fond du Lac's favorite small businesses!  If you've been needing a sign to shop local... this is it.  Dive into the specials below, show love to the shops that make our city feel like home, and have an amazing week, Fondy! 

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