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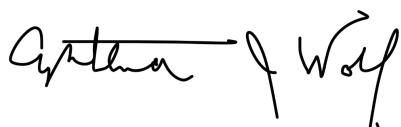
## **The Wolf Wordsmithing Way**

When it comes to persuading news editors that a press release or story pitch will resonate with audiences, it helps to employ someone with first-hand knowledge of what news editors need and want. I started Wolf Wordsmithing after decades of working as a reporter and news editor for a variety of weekly and daily news outlets, including nearly 20 years with the Crystal Lake-based Northwest Herald.

Who knows better what will and won't work than someone whose former job it was to elevate, shelve or deflect those very pitches?

As shown in the work samples/results included on latter pages, nonprofit and for-profit entities have turned to Wolf Wordsmithing for superbly crafted press releases since 2012. Current clients include the McHenry Outdoor Theater, Richardson Farm, the McHenry Music Festival and Art for Adrienne. Add your organization's name to the list, and enjoy proven results.

With thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cynthia Wolf". The "C" and "W" are capitalized and have decorative loops. The "a" in "Wolf" has a small tail extending downwards.

The following press release samples are provided for your review. Links to release outcomes are included on a latter page.

For immediate release

**Contact:**

Joe Cicero, President of Marketing and Promotions  
McHenry Outdoor Theater – Golden Age Cinemas  
[joecicero827@gmail.com](mailto:joecicero827@gmail.com); 815-529-5201

## McHenry Outdoor launches Sensory-Friendly Wednesdays

*Families with sound-sensitive children encouraged to enjoy the drive-in experience*

LAKEMOOR — Finding entertainment options suitable for a special-needs child was a challenge as Angela Krambeer and her husband, Chris Krambeer, were raising their youngest son, Dylan, now 23.

Dylan has Prader-Willi Syndrome, a genetic disorder characterized by low muscle tone, feeding difficulties, developmental delays, sometimes sensory challenges and other effects.

“We couldn’t go out and enjoy the same things,” the Crystal Lake mother said. “We didn’t have access to play groups that would accommodate his needs. Libraries didn’t have sensory story times for kids who couldn’t sit still ... there wasn’t a whole lot out there that we were comfortable with, so we were a little more isolated.”

An offering like the McHenry Outdoor Theater’s new Sensory-Friendly Wednesdays will be a godsend for families like hers, said Krambeer, now a longtime employee of Options & Advocacy for McHenry County, where Dylan received services and now volunteers.

“Having a local business with such an influence in the community stepping up like this is a great show of support that hopefully will spill out into more community partners being aware and taking on the same stance for this population,” Krambeer said. “It’s a fantastic idea. I really respect that they’re doing this.”

Options & Advocacy’s mission of inclusivity is something that Joe Cicero — who met Dylan when Dylan was a boy — has long admired. The Crystal Lake-based nonprofit offers programs and support services for autistic and neurodivergent individuals, infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities, and caregivers navigating unique life circumstances from pregnancy to age 3.

So when Cicero, the McHenry Outdoor’s president of marketing and promotions, decided to add Sensory-Friendly Wednesdays to the theater’s lineup, he enlisted Options & Advocacy leaders to help.

“We are so excited to offer this inclusive movie night for neurodivergent individuals and anyone with sensitivity to loud, busy environments,” Cicero said. “Options & Advocacy offered fantastic input into making this comfortable, engaging and fun for these families.”

Winter Noe is executive director of Options & Advocacy. She applauded the theater’s accommodations, which she and Cicero said will include low-volume music before movies begin, closed captioning during films so that audio can be kept to a minimum, and predictable, softly amplified announcement times.

Additionally, maps will show the quietest zones within the parking area, as well as best parking near grassy areas for those with children requiring to freely move their bodies, and for those who’d like a spot most accessible to the exit.

"It's wonderful to be invited to do this with the drive-in movie theater," Noe said. "I think a lot of people will lean into this opportunity."

Cicero noted that because of the closed-captioning, Wednesdays also are especially well-suited for those with hearing impairments to enjoy the drive-in experience. Movies shown will be the same as those on the screen for the rest of that same week.

The McHenry Outdoor Theater is located at 1510 Chapel Hill Road, Lakemoor. It is open seven days a week throughout the summer. Regular admission is \$15 per adult and \$10 per child ages 4 through 12. Those 3 and younger are admitted free.

View the updated movie schedule and family-friendly budget night options at [goldenagecinemas.com](http://goldenagecinemas.com).

For more about Options & Advocacy for McHenry County, visit [optionsandadvocacy.org](http://optionsandadvocacy.org).

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For immediate release

**Contacts:**

George and Wendy Richardson  
[georgeandwendy@richardsonfarm.com](mailto:georgeandwendy@richardsonfarm.com)  
815-675-9729

## **Richardson Adventure Farm travels back to 1985 with this fall's corn maze**

*Fall fun set for Sept. 6-Oct. 26 at Spring Grove farm*

SPRING GROVE — If you know what 88 mph in a flux capacitor-equipped DeLorean brings, you are going to love this year's Richardson "World's Largest" Corn Maze.

It's a celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "Back to the Future," of course, with depictions of a guitar-wielding and a hover-board riding Marty McFly, the legendary time-traveling DeLorean complete with fire-topped tire tracks, a lightning-struck clock tower, and a Doc Brown portrait all mapped out in 28 acres of corn.

"We always have a tremendous time selecting our maze design," said George Richardson, who operates the farm along with his wife, Wendy, brother, Robert, Robert's wife, Carol, George's son, Ryan, and Ryan's wife, Kristen. "When we realized that this summer marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this iconic film, well ... who didn't love it?"

Those who want to check out the maze — and all of the other great family fun to be had at the farm — should set their car's circuits for Sept. 6-Oct. 26, 2025, at Richardson Adventure Farm, 909 English Prairie Road, Spring Grove.

While the MazePlay creation and its 10.4 miles of trail are a chief draw, plenty of other reasons exist to travel to the adventure farm. There are the sunflower fields (typically open throughout September; included with admission), the carousel, train rides, Zorbing, pedal karts, giant jumping pillows, food trucks, a craft-beer serving Barrel House featuring 9th Hour Brewing Co. drafts, a wine bar, 50-foot-tall observation tower overlooking the maze, giant slides, a zip line, gift shop, fresh, cinnamon donuts, pumpkins and fall décor — and the always entertaining pig races that occur every couple of hours.

"We do have so much fun," said Wendy Richardson of emceeing the pig races with her husband, George.

“We use miniature, pot-bellied pigs,” George Richardson added. “They’re great to work with. Like regular pigs, they’re smart animals — easy to train, and they have a nice disposition. And by the end of October, they aren’t pushing 100 pounds while stepping on our toes.”

New amenities for visitors to enjoy this year include the addition of gelato to the Dairy Depot, with flavors like Sea Salt Caramello, Eli’s Strawberry Cheesecake, Frutti di Bosco and Cookies ‘n’ Cream, plus a new soft-serve machine that will add chocolate to the formerly vanilla-only option.

A koi pond with a unique feature — the front-end of a rustic, 1967 Ford F250 with water spilling from its grill — has been built just east of the train station. And a low ropes course also is new at the farm.

“This year we’re expanding our offerings for climbing adventures and family fun to include a 12-station activity pod,” Ryan Richardson said of the course.

George and Wendy Richardson added that an extra draw this year will be an adjacent haunted trail with a midway operated by Jason Wright and his son, Tristan, with their own parking area and corn trails near the Richardson Tulip Fields. While the entry off English Prairie Road will be the same, admission to the American Nightmare Scream Park will be separate.

“It’s the only haunted corn trail in the Midwest,” George Richardson said. “We think it’s going to be an exceptional haunt.”

The Richardson Adventure Farm will be open Fridays through Sundays starting Saturday, Sept. 6, with Thursdays added in October. September hours are 3 to 11 p.m. Fridays, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturdays and noon to 9 p.m. Sundays. October hours are 3 to 9 p.m. Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fridays and same as September for Saturdays and Sundays. Maze ‘til Midnight will be Saturday, Oct. 4. The adventure farm also will be open on Columbus Day, Monday, Oct. 13, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

For other details, tickets and pricing, visit [richardsonfarm.com](http://richardsonfarm.com).

Richardson Farm also is home to the Richardson Tulip Festival in the spring, and a cut-your-own Christmas Tree Farm in the winter. Professional, compensated photographers should view the Photography & Filming page at [richardsonfarm.com](http://richardsonfarm.com) before visiting.

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For immediate release

**Contact:** Wayne Jett, Co-founder/Coordinator  
McHenry Music Festival  
[info@mchenrymusicfest.com](mailto:info@mchenrymusicfest.com); 815-529-3447

**If you go**

**What:** McHenry Music Festival

**Where:** Petersen Park, 4300 Petersen Park Road, McHenry

**When:** Friday to Sunday, Sept. 12-14; gates open 3:30 p.m. daily

**Featuring:** Numerous national acts, including Sam Hunt, Slightly Stoopid, Flo Rida

**Tickets:** [mchenrymusicfest.com/tickets](http://mchenrymusicfest.com/tickets)

## **McHenry Music Festival stage location, size shifting to enhance audience experience**

*Fest is set for Sept. 12-14 at Petersen Park; tickets selling fast*

McHENRY — Those who don't already have their tickets for the McHenry Music Festival taking place Sept. 12-14 at Petersen Park may want to start clicking those keyboards.

This year's lineup of more than a dozen national acts has proven highly popular, said Wayne Jett, co-founder and president of the foundation that gave rise to the McHenry Music Festival. This year's headlining acts include MCA Nashville artist Sam Hunt Friday night, reggae-rock band Slightly Stoopid Saturday night and fast-rising country music singer-songwriter Bailey Zimmerman Sunday night.

Other performers in the lineups include Zach Miller, Ingrid Andress, Redferrin and Dustin Lynch Friday night; The Expendables, The Elovaters and Dirty Heads Saturday night; and Bella Cain, Bryan Martin and Flo Rida Sunday night. Ticket prices start at \$49. Full details are available at [mchenrymusicfest.com](http://mchenrymusicfest.com).

As of mid-August, tickets for Saturday's reggae, rock, funk, hip hop, ska and surf rock performances were nearly sold out, Jett said. And tickets for the Friday and Sunday acts also were selling briskly.

"Honestly, our lineup is equivalent to that of major festivals around the country," said Jett, who is also mayor of McHenry. "Bringing in the reggae night is something different that people can't find much in Illinois, and, according to our ticket sales, it's proving to be a hit."

The McHenry Music Festival, formerly RISE Up, first started bringing national acts to Petersen Park in 2020, with proceeds earmarked for desired community projects. It has drawn crowds of 22,000 to 30,000 people annually, with the exception of 2021, when the fest took a one-year hiatus. Upgrades to the stage's size and location this year should prove exceptionally popular with both musicians and audiences, Jett said.

"Our old stage was roughly 25 feet by 50 feet," he said. "This year's stage with platforms is roughly 120 feet by 60 feet. We've added video walls to the sides of the stage with live cameras for better viewing."

Also enhancing viewing will be the stage's new location in the area where the Fiesta Days carnival takes place, north of the railroad tracks and west of Petersen Park Road.

"It's going to cost an additional \$100,000 for us to enclose the area, but we will be able to accommodate more people more comfortably and with better line of sight," he said. "It's wider. It's just going to be an all-around better experience."

Both Jett and Mike Mrachek, a McHenry fest volunteer heavyweight, said the countless hours that they and about 498 other volunteers put into the McHenry Music Festival is well worth it.

"Yes, it's a lot of work," Mrachek said. "But I think the biggest part is the result. It brings our community together."

Jett said the fest has raised almost \$1.4 million to date, with proceeds used to fund the Fort McHenry splash pad, the amphitheater at Miller Point and a special needs playground at Veterans Memorial Park. Proceeds from this year's fest are earmarked for a bike park pump track east of the existing skate park, west of city hall.

Generous sponsor support — to the tune of about \$400,000 annually — has combined with volunteer, performer and fan support to make the McHenry Music Festival what it has become, Jett said.

“It’s a \$3 million show this year,” he said. “We started with small national acts and a small stage. Now we’ve grown to where we’ve changed the location, leased property for additional parking, added bigger-name acts, and now we’re renting the largest stage you can rent.

“McHenry is ready to shine,” Jett said, “and we look forward to greeting music fans once again at Petersen Park.”

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For immediate release

**Contact:**

Lauren Sharp, artist/owner

Art for Adrienne

[artforadrienne@gmail.com](mailto:artforadrienne@gmail.com); 815-403-7026

## **Johnsburg artist creates ornate hats in honor of late mom**

*Art for Adrienne owner to donate 10 percent of sales in May to mental health agency*

JOHNSBURG — Mere minutes after Lauren Sharp placed several of the wide-brimmed fedoras she hand-etches on a back table at a McHenry coffee shop, curious onlookers couldn’t help themselves.

“I love these!” exclaimed McHenry resident Dana Ferguson, who had stopped by Toast & Roast with her friend David Arroyo of Grayslake.

“I could tell when I saw her face she’s an artist,” added Arroyo. “I had to come ask about these hats.”

Over the next hour, between visits with others drawn to gaining a more up-close glimpse of her intricately crafted headgear, Sharp, of Johnsburg, explained the motivation behind the name of her home-based business, Art for Adrienne.

It is an homage to Sharp’s mother, a talented artist herself, who committed suicide in 2009 at age 47. Sharp was just 19. The death followed years of tumult, as Adrienne Paradise battled mental health and substance abuse struggles, said Sharp. This May, during National Mental Health Awareness Month, Sharp will dedicate 10 percent of all of her sales to the National Alliance on Mental Illness of McHenry County. She also is donating one of her ornate chapeau to NAMI for its May gala.

“Lauren’s hats are gorgeous and her talent and passion for her craft is evident in every single piece,” said Abbey Nicholas, executive director of NAMI McHenry County. “NAMI is so honored to feature a one-of-a-kind donated hat in our Sunset Gala auction ... Lauren’s personal story reminds us that we are all touched by mental health, and her generosity will help ensure that everyone in our community has access to free mental health services.”

Sharp said she is grateful to have formed a connection with Nicholas and NAMI.

“This is an opportunity to spread some positivity, turn some bad things that have happened in my life into good,” Sharp said. “I love seeing people wear my art, and I love helping women feel beautiful. I’m hoping that, in working with Abbey, it will also help to bring healing to others.”

Sharp, who turns 36 on May 7, takes blank, wide-brimmed, “vegan” fedoras of various hues and, using a wood-burning technique known as pyrography, engraves them with a range of free-handed, imaginative, feminine or fierce designs. A gallery may be viewed and orders placed at [artforadrienne.com](http://artforadrienne.com).

Ranging in price from about \$75 to \$110, some of her designs are subtle, featuring rose petals and vines, while on others, alligators lurk or a moon casts its shadow across a desolate landscape. Acrylic paints provide an extra pop of color to some. Others bear beading and lacy ribbon, while still others show off feathers, leather braids or ropes of rough-cut stone. Even the undersides of Sharp’s brims delight.

Between the visits from curious passers-by, Sharp spoke openly about both her own mental health challenges and the one that ultimately took her mother’s life.

As Sharp and her three siblings were growing up in McHenry and Wonder Lake, she said, their mother struggled off and on with alcohol abuse. “At times, I was mad at her,” Sharp said. “But when she was well, she had such a shining personality. She truly lit up a room. She was amazingly talented artistically. She’d take an old, dilapidated antique and give it a new life. Whether it was a rock or a piece of wood, she could paint it and make something truly beautiful out of it.

“She was also a muralist,” Sharp continued, adding that her mother served in the U.S. Army from 1984 to 1986, meeting her husband, John Paradise, while both were stationed in Germany. “She painted my whole bedroom wall this beautiful ocean theme with dolphins and fish and coral. My friends would come over and they were so jealous.”

About a year before Adrienne Paradise died, she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. She began treatment, and for the next 12 months, doctors tried to dial in an effective regimen, her daughter said.

However, one early morning in March 2009, John Paradise ran screaming into Lauren’s room. Adrienne Paradise had swallowed a bottle of Tylenol after a day-long bender. She was alive, but unconscious. A day later, her organs failing, Adrienne was removed from life support, and died.

The experience left Lauren Sharp — who fought mental health demons of her own — fearful. “I always struggled so bad,” said Sharp, “but I was scared to get help.”

Years later, after the birth of her second child, in 2022, Lauren Sharp suffered severe postpartum depression. Her husband, Landon Sharp, and his mother persuaded Lauren to see a mental health professional. And she is so grateful they did.

“For the past year, I have felt like a whole new person” she said. “I’m mad that I waited this long.”

Sharp said the grief that follows the suicide of a close family member is pitted with guilt. At the time of her mother’s death, Sharp and her sister were “just getting into trouble,” she said, tearing up as she wondered aloud whether she’d done anything by then to make her mother proud. Sharp also often wonders how her mother’s life might have progressed had the artist survived.

“She died before social media took off and before Etsy was a thing,” Sharp said. “I can just imagine what she could be doing today in a world where it is so much easier to have your art seen.”

Of at least one thing, Sharp has grown supremely assured.

“Getting help is the best thing I’ve ever done,” she said. “I don’t know if this feeling will ever go away that there’s a big piece of my heart missing. But now that I’m doing things to benefit my mental health, and making art that I know would make my mom proud, I feel like that hole is filling.”

*According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 49,000 Americans committed suicide and 1.5 million attempted it in 2023, the last year for which statistics are noted on the website. If you or someone you know is in crisis, call the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988. The lifeline offers judgment-free support for mental health crises, substance use and more. Text, call or chat 988.*

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## Selected Press Release Outcomes

<https://www.shawlocal.com/lake-county-journal/2025/06/26/mchenry-outdoor-launches-sensory-friendly-wednesdays/>

<https://patch.com/illinois/crystallake/mchenry-outdoor-theater-launches-sensory-friendly-days>

<https://www.lakecountynewsdispatch.com/2025/06/17/mchenry-outdoor-launches-sensory-friendly-wednesdays/>

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaU1i3ZDJ0A>

<https://www.shawlocal.com/thescene/2025/08/23/richardson-adventure-farm-travels-back-to-1985-with-new-corn-maze/>

<https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/richardson-adventure-farm-goes-back-to-the-future-with-2025-corn-maze-design/3813182/>

<https://www.dailyherald.com/20250821/submitted-content/richardson-adventure-farm-travels-back-to-1985-with-this-falls-corn-maze/>

<https://barringtonhillsobserver.com/2025/09/03/richardson-adventure-farm-travels-back-to-1985-with-this-falls-corn-maze/>

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<https://patch.com/illinois/crystallake/flo-rida-sam-hunt-among-musicians-coming-mchenry-music-festival>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QB6aCBnodQ>

<https://www.shawlocal.com/thescene/2025/08/19/tickets-going-fast-for-mchenry-music-festival-sept-12-14/>

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<https://www.mchenrycountyliving.com/aroundmchenrycounty/art-for-adrienne-fundraiser>

<https://patch.com/illinois/crystallake/johnsburg-artist-creates-ornate-hats-honor-late-mom>

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/553799930686414>

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1672711170116611>

