

KC

Kane County Magazine

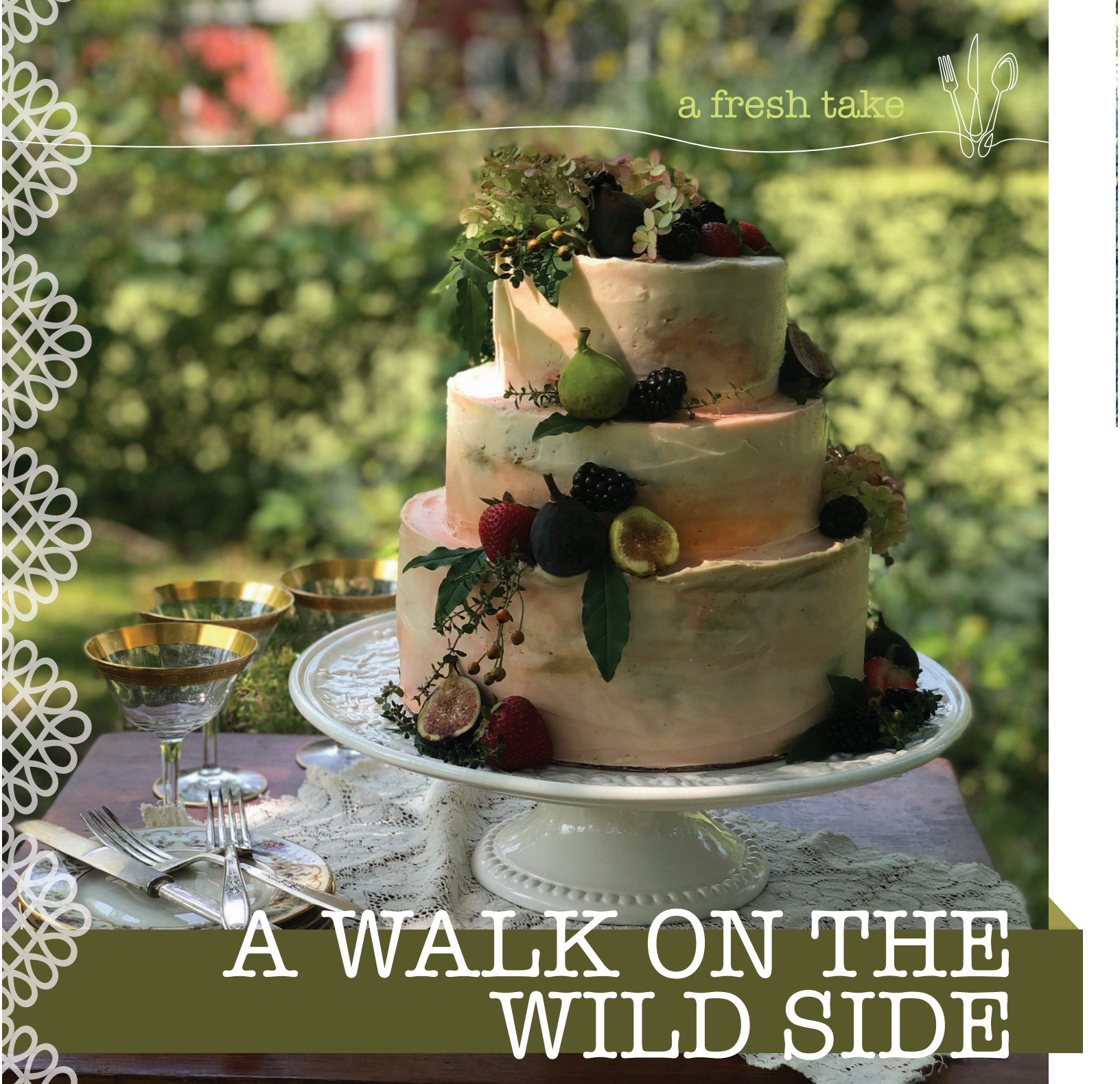
JUNE 2021



Plus
Ideas for a terrific
summer, from
outdoor dining spots
to a towering art
exhibit

Setting up Shop

10 new Batavia Boardwalk Shops offer handcrafted, local goods — page 15



A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

CELEBRATING A LIFETIME OF INSPIRATION FROM MY CHILDHOOD HOME

With Katie McCall,
owner of Two Wild Seeds bakery

Over the years, I've been asked where the unique moniker for our bakery — Two Wild Seeds — originated. Lacking the buzzwords for a bakery (read: sugar, sweet) we've even been mistaken for a birdseed retailer.

The short answer is it began as a lifestyle blog my sister and I (aka the "Two Wild Seeds") created as a means to stay connected when our lives took us to opposite ends of the country. The name later transferred to our bakery when my mom and I opened the brick-and-mortar location in 2016. But

the long answer digs a bit deeper ...

Ever since I was a little girl, I've felt an innate connection to nature. For some, being outdoors is a mere pastime or specially planned trip. For me, it's a constant, essential way of life.

My two older siblings and I were raised on the same four acres of rural, wooded property in Yorkville where my mom grew up, originally purchased by my grandparents in 1950. Aside from the house itself, the sprawling yard boasts two large ponds, a small



cottage, gardens, a chicken coop, a big red barn (once home to my mom's horse, Goldie) and decades of memories.

From a young age, our parents taught us to care for the land, plants, animals and all of its bounty. We spent countless hours hiking through the meadow along the neighboring creek, building tree forts in the woods, picking wild black raspberries for my mom's coveted jam, camping, destringing beans from the garden, catching bugs, fishing with our dad, building bonfires, and perhaps the most anticipated annual tradition: foraging for morel mushrooms.

Every spring we'd retreat to our secret spots with hopes of unearthing the elusive fungi, which reveal themselves a mere two to three weeks each year. Outfitted in boots and brimmed hats, we'd scour the tick-infested, poison ivy-laden forests, eyes peeled like snipers, searching for these natural treasures.

As the years clicked on, school, work and relationships picked up my family like seeds in the wind and scattered us, at times, thousands of miles apart. But one thing remained constant: knowing we could always return to our wild roots right where it all started — at home.

Today we take pride in and care for our own homes, gardens and families, yet we're continually drawn back to the sanctuary where we grew up. The time-honored traditions are now passed down to our children, and with hearts full, we watch them explore the same paths, pick from the same berry bushes and learn the same life skills we once developed.

This deep-seated connection to nature and the memories of our childhood served as the inspiration for Two Wild Seeds, and anyone familiar with our bakery knows it's much more than a sweet shop. Our tried-and-true family recipes often feature locally grown produce, and the retail items, such as our custom-label "Mom's Garden" candle and ceramic camp-style mugs, nod to our upbringing.

With that, I hope that after reading this, you, too, feel a spark inside to lace up your boots and head outside. Shelve the day's to-do list, silence your phone and take a walk to unleash your wild side ... listen to the echo of birds chirping, inhale the sweet scent of prairie grass humming in the breeze or savor a warm, juicy, just-picked berry. I promise you won't regret it.

■ Katie McCall is a bona fide Midwestern girl. Raised on four acres of rural property in Yorkville, she was taught to respect nature and all of its bounty. From foraging morel mushrooms in the woods to picking wild raspberries for homemade jam, Katie feels most at home when in nature and preparing food for others. When she's not running the downtown St. Charles bakery Two Wild Seeds, she can be found nose-deep in cookbooks, exploring the outdoors with her family — and eating ... always eating. Photo by Victoria C Photos.

