



14 standout girls soccer players from 2026 season

SPORTS, 1B

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W E E K E N D

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HIDDEN GEMS



Visitors to the Wild Rose Fish Hatchery can see the large tanks where Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources staff raise fish to release in Lake Michigan and some Wisconsin waters. PHOTOS BY KAREN MADDEN/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery offers fun & education for families

Karen Madden Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune | USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

WILD ROSE – Looking for a place to go that is relaxing, educational, fun for the kids and free? The Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery may just fit the bill.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources’ Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery has been growing fish to stock Lake Michigan and some of Wisconsin’s water bodies for 100 years, said Jesse Landwehr, hatchery manager. The current hatchery supplies between 2 and 3 million fish a year, trying to make sure anglers have enough targets.

The hatchery, located about 16 miles off of Interstate 39 in northcentral Waushara County, is a perfect “Hidden Gem” for the summer recreation series my fellow USA TODAY NETWORK reporters in central Wisconsin and I are writing.

What should I know before I visit the fish hatchery?

People heading to the fish hatchery, located at N5871 State 22 in Wild Rose, shouldn’t be in a hurry to get there. No matter which direction you come from, plan on driving through plenty of wooded areas, as well as farmlands.

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The Wild Rose Fish Hatchery Education Center features two large aquariums where visitors can get a closer look at a few of the fish raised at the facility.

Several states offer sales tax holidays

High costs continue to worry shoppers

Betty Lin-Fisher
USA TODAY

The kids won’t want to hear “Back to School” talk, but sales tax holidays in some states can help parents and caretakers save money on school supplies.

Some states even expand it further and offer tax-free shopping on a variety of items where shoppers of all ages can save.

Saving money is particularly important this year as shoppers continue to say they are stressed about finances and rising costs.

In July and August, there are more than a dozen states that have specific sales-tax holidays, when certain purchases made for school are tax-free.

Most of the tax-free shopping days give a break on sales tax for items related to school like clothing, shoes, electronics and supplies. One state, Massachusetts, extends the sales-tax holiday to include more than back-to-school items.

There are some changes from previous years.

Ohio is reverting to a three-day sales-tax holiday instead of a 14-day tax holiday that in 2025 included nearly all tangible property costing \$500 or less. Virginia’s sales tax holiday also includes items for hurricane and emergency preparation. New Jersey permanently repealed its sales tax holiday.

And this year, Illinois is bringing back a school-supply state sales tax holiday for the first time in 10 years.

More shoppers get earlier start

Back-to-school shopping has already begun.

More shoppers began their back-to-school shopping by early June than in past years, according to the National Retail Federation. About 32% of back-to-school shoppers said they had already started browsing and buying by early June – that is the highest percentage since the federation first started asking the question in 2018. In 2025, 26% of shoppers said they started shopping in June.

According to federation’s annual June survey, all age groups said they had begun the early shopping, but younger generations were leading the

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