



Little Suamico Town Board Supervisor Liz Paape explains the rationale for talking with owners of the former BMO Harris Bank building about purchasing the vacant structure for a library and county offices during a Jan. 24 informational meeting.

WARREN BLUHM | NEW MEDIA

Empty bank building considered for new library, county offices

By WARREN BLUHM
News Editor

A special meeting at the Little Suamico Fire Station on Jan. 30 may have an impact on how Oconto County tax dollars are spent on library services in the future.

Town residents of voting age were asked to give the Town Board permission to pursue the purchase of the long-vacant former BMO Harris Bank building at 1288 East Frontage Road, with an eye toward converting the structure into a public library and having the county lease space for a sheriff's department substation and Health and Human Services programs.

The meeting at the Little Suamico Fire Station in Sobieski took place after press time; see newmedia-wi.com for updates.

The board held two informational meetings for electors prior to the vote, and a third session was canceled because of a Jan. 9 snowstorm. At the final information meeting Jan. 24, Town Board Supervisor Elizabeth Paape explained that the board proposes to buy the vacant building for an estimated \$499,900 and remodel it for about \$370,000, for a total



The building at the corner of County Road S and East Frontage Road in Little Suamico was originally built as a BMO Harris Bank branch that was closed about a decade ago. The Town of Little Suamico is considering purchasing the structure, opening a library and leasing office space to Oconto County.

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cost of \$869,900.

According to figures shared at the informational session, Oconto County would contribute \$494,597 toward the project, including \$154,431 in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds

that were allocated to local municipalities to make up for losses incurred during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Grants and donations — including a

LIBRARY, CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Motion hearing held in officer shooting case

Prosecutors challenge whether testimony would be relevant at trial

By WARREN BLUHM
News Editor

As the trial of an Oconto Falls woman for shooting and wounding a police officer approaches, the first of two scheduled motion hearings Jan. 25 featured a showdown between the defense attorney and a psychologist he wants to call as a witness.

Alisha Kocken, 31, has already pleaded no contest to attempted first-degree intentional homicide, resisting a police officer with the consequence of great bodily harm, battery or threat to a law officer and disarming a police officer. A jury trial is scheduled April 1-5 on the second half of Kocken's plea — not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect.

During a struggle outside Kocken's apartment Aug. 6, 2021, Kocken grabbed Officer Nicole Blaskowski's gun and shot her in the head and chest. The officer was wearing a bulletproof vest, and the first shot grazed her forehead. A third shot missed.

Prosecutors had challenged defense attorney John Miller Carroll's plan to call psychologist Dr. Kevin Miller to testify about a brief examination he gave Kocken later in the month of August 2021 at Winnebago Mental Health Institute, where she was being treated after deputies expressed concern about some of her behavior in the Oconto County Jail.

The pre-trial hearing is known as a Daubert hearing, in which one or the other questions whether a potential expert witness' testimony is relevant to the case. Miller had resisted Carroll's efforts to bring him in as a witness and seemed to agree with prosecutors during his testimony at the hearing, which he presented over the Zoom teleconferencing software.

Prosecutor Mark Williams argued that Miller's examination was conducted under the rules of Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 51, specifically to determine whether Kocken could be considered dangerous to herself or others, while the trial is to determine whether she was legally responsible for her actions when she shot Blaskowski, under the rules of Chapter 971.15 and 971.16.

Williams — and Oconto County Circuit Court Judge Michael Judge — objected when, during his questioning of Miller, Carroll described the prosecutors' motion as questioning the psychologist's reputa-

SHOOTING, CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

INSIDE
Lakewood library expansion on track for a July opening. **PAGE 10**



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Open Studio exists to support artists in practicing and perfecting their craft without an instructor present.



Children play in the water during a Sunset Concert Series performance at East Side Beach in Oconto Falls. The city is considering ways to maintain lifeguard service and other park amenities at the beach and around the city.

FILE | NEW MEDIA

City seeks input for beach, parks improvements

The Oconto Falls Park and Recreation Committee is not giving up on East Side Beach. The city has been coping with a social media outcry since it passed the 2024 budget with a note that there would be no lifeguards at the beach this summer, mainly because of ongoing staffing shortages, and the popular swimming raft will probably not be launched because of the

need for costly repairs. Officials announced last week that they are preparing a grant application for a project of up to \$175,000 and are seeking residents' input on what recreation improvements would like to see at city parks or beaches. Examples include playground improvements and bathroom upgrades. Ideas can be sent by Feb. 23 to info@ci.ocontofalls.wi.us or mail

to City of Oconto Falls, Attention Park and Rec, P.O. Box 70, Oconto Falls, WI 54154. Ideas can also be dropped at City Hall. The committee plans to discuss and review ideas when it meets in March. The city also continues to seek staffing help at Eastside Beach for the summer of 2024. After the January city council meeting, the city posted openings to serve as seasonal

beach supervisor, head lifeguard and lifeguards. Lifeguards must be 15 and have current lifeguard certification. For training reimbursement details, call 920-846-4505. Candidates should complete the City of Oconto Falls employee application located at City Hall, 500 N. Chestnut Ave., or Oconto Falls Library 251 N. Main St. Oconto Falls, or www.cityofocontofalls.com.

Student strip search measure passes

A bill that prohibits strip searches of students conducted by school personnel is on its way to the governor's desk for his signature. State Rep. David Steffen, R-Howard, and state Sen. Eric Wimberger, R-Green Bay, introduced Senate Bill 111 in response to an incident at the Suring School District involving six teenage girls being ordered to strip down to their underwear by then-superintendent Kelly Casper. The search was allegedly conducted to find a nicotine vape pen. All four state lawmakers serving Oconto County signed on as sponsors to the bill, including Wimberger, state Sen. Mary Felzkowski, R-Tomahawk, state Rep. Jeffrey Mursau, R-Crivitz, and state Rep. Elijah Behnke, R-Oconto. Under current law, strip searching a student is a Class B misdemeanor. However, Wisconsin's definition of "strip search" is a search that would expose a student's private areas. Because of this limited definition, prosecutors decided Casper

could not be charged with this offense. The new bill extends the definition of "strip search" to include searches that would require a student to strip down to their underwear, making this a chargeable offense moving forward. "The incident that occurred at Suring revealed a statutory loophole that needs to be closed in order to protect our students from such humiliating and intrusive searches," Steffen said. "We expect that our kids are being treated with dignity and basic privacy when at school — this bill helps to ensure that." The bill does not affect existing laws regarding strip searches by law enforcement. Casper was charged in February 2022 with false imprisonment, but a Brown County judge ruled the alleged facts in the case did not fit that charge, either. The Suring School Board suspended Casper with pay shortly after charges were filed, and it eventually approved a resignation/separation agreement with Casper.

LIBRARY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

\$100,000 grant pledged by the Leon H. And Clymene M. Bond Foundation — would reduce the town's commitment to \$15,673 for the building purchase and about \$159,630 for the remodeling. "The ARPA funds are only available through 2024," Paape said. "This opportunity for the Town of Little Suamico has an expiration date." County Board Chairman Al Sleeter told the audience of about 100 that the proposal is similar to the project underway in the Town of Riverview, where the county is helping to build a community center, in part with ARPA money, that includes a wing for county offices. The Little Suamico library would be the seventh local library in Oconto County, and establishing the facility would prevent town dollars from migrating not only to the other six libraries but also Brown County, said Sleeter, Paape and other town board members. A little-known law, passed in the 1990s with the support of urban legislators, allows counties with consolidated library systems to charge neighboring counties that don't have county libraries when residents

borrow books from the consolidated libraries. Brown County has been able to use that law to charge Oconto County hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years. In 2022, the latest year for which statistics are available, Oconto County residents took out 37,108 books and other items from Brown County library branches, with a majority of that circulation — 21,480 items — coming from Little Suamico residents borrowing from the library branches in Howard and Pulaski. "The Brown County bill that's due in May 2024 is \$157,048," Paape said. "Little Suamico over the last 10 years has spent \$1.2 million that left this town for library circulations and supporting other Oconto County libraries. Wouldn't it have been nice if it could have stayed here?" Supervisor Tracey Krumrei emphasized that the proposal would prevent the migration of tax dollars away from Little Suamico. "If we have our own library, we don't have to pay that tax to Brown County. You can still go to those libraries and use them, but we're not taxed at that point," Krumrei said. "So, if



Little Suamico residents gather at their Town Hall for a Jan. 24 informational meeting about plans for a library and county sub-station at the former BMO Harris Bank building.

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you're in Green Bay and you think, 'Jeez, I have to go all the way to Little Suamico to get my books,' no, you can still go to (Howard), you can still go to Pulaski and use them, but they can't tax us." Town Chairman Dale Mohr said the availability of the one-time federal dollars means the window is closing for the town to act without a much larger influx of local dollars. "The opportunity before us now probably won't present itself again because the ARPA money from the county won't be there," Mohr said.

He added that a yes vote only opens the door to talks. "We're asking you is this a good idea, and if so we'll take it to the next step, meaning we can negotiate with the sellers of the property ... We don't have to buy the property. We can just walk away. But we cannot even make offers, we can't get into contracts or anything like that, without the electors saying to do it." Mohr acknowledged that a townwide reassessment last fall has already raised local property taxes, but the unique opportunity could allow future tax dollars to stay in Little Suamico.

RESULTS ONLINE

The Little Suamico town meeting regarding a potential library occurred after the print edition of the Oconto County Times Herald went to press. Find updated coverage at newmedia-wi.com and the Feb. 9 print edition. "Because we have 5,500 people in the town right now, we're automatically paying the county for library services," he said. "It's based on population, so we pay about \$185,000 a year to the county, even though we don't have a library service." The proposal was presented at a sparsely attended electors meeting in November, when a resolution failed by a 37-31 vote, Mohr said. The town board considered holding a referendum but were told it can't do a mandatory referendum, so supervisors decided on a second electors meeting, this time with two informational meetings and information posted on the town website. Town resident Frank Nowak objected to holding a second electors meeting. "We did vote on this Nov. 7," Nowak said. "We voted no, but they weren't happy so we're going to keep voting and keep voting until they say yes, period. That's what's going to happen." Nowak interrupted several speakers, at times describing the board's explanations as lies, until Mohr had him removed from the meeting as disruptive. Resident Steve Daniels expressed skepticism that the town would save money in the long run. "I just feel you're trying to paint a really, really rosy picture, and we've had rosy pictures painted before that have come back to bite us in the butt," Daniels said. He added that the county is already looking into establishing a southern branch library, but Sleeter pointed out that the proposed southern library and the Little Suamico project are one and the same. Resident Mike Verba said his college-age sons frequently use the Howard library and were excited to learn a local library might be established seven minutes from the family home. "In 10 years \$1.2 million left our community, plus we have the possibility of losing this COVID money," Verba said. "I would rather all that stay in this little community. My family will adamantly vote yes for this."

OCONTO
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SHOOTING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tion and methodology.

“The basis for the Daubert hearing is that certainly this is an eminently qualified psychologist, but the methodology that he used in conducting this examination was not a methodology that is relevant for a 971.15 or 971.16 opinion,” Williams said. “His opinion is for a Chapter 51 diagnosis, and certainly that is not relevant in a 971.16 and a 971.15 examination. He did not examine this defendant under an NGI (not guilty because insane) standard.”

Miller agreed with the prosecution argument, and repeatedly told Carroll that he has no specific memory of meeting with Kocken.

“That year according to my records, beginning May 1 until the end of the year, I conducted approximately 178 exams,” he said. “I do not have independent recollection of this case, this report, what I reviewed, etc.”

Reviewing his report from that session, Miller confirmed that he checked boxes on a form indicating Kocken is mentally ill and on the schizophrenia scale. The report indicates he saw her for five to 10 minutes, tried to explain her rights, and the session ended when she said “I’m done talking with you” and left.

Miller said he agreed with Williams’ assertion that it would not be proper for him to testify in an NGI trial based on the August 2021 exam.

“Once I give a patient informed consent regarding the nature and purpose of the evaluation, I can’t then bait and switch or change horses in the middle of the stream. Otherwise I have committed an ethical violation,” Miller said. “I apparently produced a report that I have no independent recollection of, and since I did not inform her of the nature of the evaluation to include a 971

case; therefore, I have no opinion on this case.”

Carroll argued that he does not want Miller to testify as an expert witness but to acknowledge that psychologists treated Kocken for mental illness while she was in custody. A second psychologist is due to testify at a followup motion hearing Feb. 22.

“I’d like to brief the issue and order a transcript of this hearing,” Carroll said. “It’s that important to us that we get this right.”

“To be quite frank, I’m ready to rule from the bench but ... I’ll give attorney Carroll till Feb. 2 to file his brief,” Judge said.

Williams said prosecutors have already filed briefs on the issue and have nothing further. Judge said he will file a written decision prior to the next hearing.

wbluhm@newmedia-wi.com



Oconto County Court spectators and defendant Alisha Kocken watch psychologist Kevin Miller testify Jan. 25 during a hearing to determine whether Miller can be subpoenaed to appear at Kocken’s trial for the attempted homicide of an Oconto Falls police officer.

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OCONTO COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

Proceedings of Jan. 26

- After a preliminary hearing Randy L. BremPELL, 52, Lena, was bound over and pleaded not guilty to theft of movable property valued between \$10,000 and \$100,000, in connection with an incident that allegedly occurred Nov. 3. Judge Michael Judge scheduled a pre-trial conference for March 14.

Proceedings of Jan. 25

- After a preliminary hearing Sara Lee Ducat, 35, Oconto, was bound over on charges of battery or threat to a law officer, misdemeanor disorderly conduct, in connection with an incident that allegedly occurred Nov. 19. Judge Jay Conley scheduled arraignment for Feb. 15.
- After a preliminary hearing, Angela D. Hawkins, 37, Abrams, was bound over on charges of child abuse and substantial battery, in connection with an incident that allegedly occurred Dec. 22.

Conley scheduled arraignment for Feb. 15.

Proceedings of Jan. 23

- Carolyn Marie Moore, 45, Appleton, pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge of possession of THC, in connection with an incident that occurred March 26, 2023. The charge was amended from a felony in a plea agreement. Judge withheld sentencing and placed her on probation for one year with conditions.

Proceedings of Jan. 22

- Shawn C. Saeger Jr., 35, Oconto, pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge of theft of movable property, in connection with an incident that occurred July 27, 2022. Conley ordered that Saeger pay restitution to the victim as well as fines, court costs and attorney fees.
- David Lawrence Vanness, 58, Luxemburg, waived his right to a preliminary hearing and pleaded not guilty to operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated (sixth offense) and operating with a prohibited blood-alcohol content, in connection with a crash that occurred Sept. 30. Judge scheduled a pre-trial conference for May 7.
- Ashley R. Degroot, 37, formerly of Gillett, waived her right to a preliminary hearing and was bound over on charges of possession of narcotic drugs, possession of methamphetamine, and misdemeanor possession of drug paraphernalia, in connection with an incident that allegedly occurred Aug. 1. Conley scheduled arraignment for Feb. 15.
- Rhonda R. Shampo, 61, Oconto, waived her right to a preliminary hearing and was bound over on charges of second-degree recklessly endangering safety and misdemeanor disorderly conduct, in connection with an incident that allegedly occurred Oct. 29. Arraignment was scheduled for March 5.

OCONTO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Jan. 25

Deputies responded to 36 incidents, including suspected activity on East Frontage Road in the Town of Abrams, three traffic stops, five citizen assists, one miscellaneous traffic incident, three welfare checks; two 911 hangups and one open line; five crashes, four involving deer.

Jan. 24

Deputies responded to 36 incidents, including theft near Goatsville and North Porcupine Lake roads in the Town of Spruce, criminal damage on County Road HH in the Town of Underhill, child neglect at an undisclosed location, theft on Logtown Road in the Town of Oconto, harassment on Horseshoe Drive in the Town of Brazeau, a wanted person on Birch Avenue in Oconto Falls, two traffic stops, two citizen assists, one miscellaneous traffic incident; three open-line calls; three ambulance calls; four crashes, two involving deer.

Jan. 23

Deputies responded to 62 incidents, including property damage on County Road N in the Town of Oconto, fraud on Arbutus Avenue in Oconto, a snowmobile accident near Smyth Road and County Road F in the Town of Lakewood, suspicious activity on East

Brook Street in Suring, suspicious activity on West Shore Drive in the Town of Mountain, 10 traffic stops, two traffic hazards, two traffic offenses, two citizen assists, three miscellaneous traffic incidents, two welfare checks; two 911 hangups and six open lines; two ambulance calls; six crashes, one involving deer.

Jan. 22

Deputies responded to 60 incidents, including property damage on County Road NN in the Town of Oconto, a disturbance on Claywood Road in the Town of Maple Valley, child enticement in the Town of Lakewood, squad damage near Bismark Lane and County Road T in the Town of Doty, fire on South White Potato Lake Road in the Town of Brazeau, 11 traffic stops, one traffic offense, one citizen assist, one miscellaneous traffic incident, two welfare checks; five open-line 911 calls; one crash involving deer.

Jan. 21

Deputies responded to 17 incidents, including a death investigation in Oconto Falls, suspicious activity on Pine Avenue in the Town of Oconto, one traffic stop, one traffic hazard, two welfare checks; one open-line 911 call; one crash.

Jan. 20

Deputies responded to 23 incidents, including a disturbance on Green Bay Avenue in Oconto Falls, suspicious activity near Saint Johns and Hayes roads in the Town of How, a snowmobile accident on Old 32 Road in the Town of Lakewood, suspicious activity on Valley Line Road in the Town of Spruce, four traffic stops, one traffic hazard, one citizen assist, one miscellaneous traffic incident; four open-line 911 calls; one ambulance call; two crashes.

Jan. 19

Deputies responded to 44 incidents, including a disturbance on Hayes Road in the Town of How, a snowmobile accident on Bonita Road in the Town of Mountain, a structure fire on County Road G in the Town of Spruce, suspicious activity on East Frontage Road in the Town of Little Suamico, suspicious activity near state Highway 32-64 and South Green Lake Lane in the Town of Mountain, four traffic stops, one traffic hazard, three traffic offenses, one citizen assist, one miscellaneous traffic incident, one welfare check; two 911 hangups and two open lines; two ambulance calls; four crashes, three involving deer.

OBITUARIES

John “J.P.” Paige, 33, Oconto Falls, died suddenly Sunday morning, Jan. 21, 2024, at home.

He was born Jan. 8, 1991, at Landstuhl Army Hospital in Germany. Because of his mother’s career in the U.S. Air Force, John moved back to the U.S. at the age of 2 years to Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina. He also lived at Air Force bases in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina and Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. J.P. then moved with his family to Crystal Falls, Michigan, and graduated from Forest Park High School with the class of 2010.

John was employed at

Grady Foundry in Kingsford, managed fast food restaurants and was a welder at Marinette Marine. He then moved to Walton Beach, Florida, where he worked at the Crab Trap. John returned to Wisconsin and was employed at ST Paper in Oconto Falls.

As someone who liked to cook, he enjoyed food and being the life of the party. J.P. will be fondly remembered for his free spirit, kind heart, making others laugh and willingness to help others.



Survivors are his mother, Donelle (Kevin) Lefebvre, Oconto Falls; his son, Alaric Wesson Paige; four siblings, C.J. (Austen) Greene, Florida, Billy Paige, Oconto Falls, Samantha (Brad) Zima, Green Bay, and Ben Paige, Michigan; his nieces and nephews of whom he was so fond of, Audrina, Carter and Gunner Greene, and River Zima.

He was preceded in death by his maternal grandmother, Dolores McMullen; and special uncle, Jeff Craig.

Visitation was held after noon Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2024, at Jones Funeral Service in Oconto Falls until the time of service at 3 p.m. Tuesday.

NEWS CORRESPONDENT

On any given day, there are countless stories just waiting to be told. Our staff reporters can only cover so much, so we count on correspondents to help out when the need arises.

NEW Media is looking for help in covering meetings and events in Oconto County, Menominee County and western Shawano County. Anyone with a curious mind, a photographer’s eye and the skill to turn a phrase can apply.

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Cecil woman killed in Oconto County crash

A Cecil woman died Jan. 28 after the car she was driving collided with a semitrailer truck in the Town of Oconto Falls. Oconto County Sheriff Todd Skarban said the emergency dispatch center was notified at 8:18 a.m. about a two-vehicle crash on state Highway 32 near the intersection with County Road CC. Responding deputies found an overturned semi in the west ditch and a passenger car in the northbound lane, both with extensive damage. A preliminary investi-

gation revealed a 76-year-old woman was traveling west on County Road CC when the car failed to stop at the intersection and was struck by the southbound truck operated by a 39-year-old man from Krakow, Skarban said. The woman, who was the lone occupant of the passenger car, was taken by ambulance to a Green Bay hospital and later died as a result of injuries sustained in the crash. The truck driver also was transported to a hospital in Green Bay and treated for his injuries. The sheriff said an ongoing investigation is

being conducted by the Oconto County Sheriff's Office and the Brown County Medical Examiner's Office. No other information is being released at this time. The Oconto County Sheriff's Office was assisted by the Wisconsin State Patrol, Gillett Police Department, Town of Gillett Fire Department, Oconto Falls Fire Department, Gillett Area Ambulance Service, Oconto Falls Ambulance Service, Eagle III, Oconto County Emergency Management and the Brown County Medical Examiner's Office.

Legals WNAXLP

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01/19/24, 01/26/24, 02/02/24
STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT
OCONTO COUNTY
CIVIL DIVISION
WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.
NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE
Plaintiff Case No.
2023CV000059

Vs.

KRISTOPHER M. WIRTS; SARAH M. WIRTS; CAPITAL ONE BANK (USA)

Defendants

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that by virtue of a judgment of foreclosure entered on August 8, 2023, in the amount of \$133,240.89, the Sheriff, or Designee, will sell the described premises at public auction as follows:

TIME: February 13, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.
TERMS: 1. 10% down in cash, cashier's check or certified funds at the time of sale; balance due within 10 days of confirmation of sale; failure to pay balance due will result in forfeit of deposit to plaintiff.
2. Sold "as is" and subject to all legal liens and encumbrances.
3. Buyer to pay applicable Wisconsin Real Estate Transfer Tax in addition to the purchase price.
4. Bidders not a party to this action are subject to the requirements of Wisconsin Statute Section 846.155.
PLACE: Lobby of the Oconto County Courthouse, Treasurer's Office, 301 Washington Street, Oconto, WI 54153
Property description: LOT TWENTY (20), ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT OF WILDFLOWER ACRES, A COUNTY PLAT, IN THE TOWN OF LITTLE SUAMICO, OCONTO COUNTY, WISCONSIN.

Tax Key No.: 024-19250251220

Property Address: 804 Poppy Lane, Little Suamico, WI 54141

Shannon K Cummings
State Bar No. 1033710
Attorney for Plaintiff
633 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 408
Milwaukee, WI, 53203
Phone: 312-541-9710
Mailing Address:
30 N. LaSalle St., Suite 3650
Chicago, Illinois, 60602

Johnson, Blumberg & Associates, LLC. is the creditor's attorney and is attempting to collect a debt on its behalf. Any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

WNAXLP

Greg & Kathy Jones would like to welcome James & Alexis Stephens, along with their 3 sons, Weston, Jack and Calvin to Oconto Falls. James, a WI licensed funeral director, will be employed full-time at Jones Funeral Service in Oconto Falls.



An Ashwaubenon native, James brings over 8 years of professional experience in both Wisconsin and Utah.

Please help us welcome the Stephens family to the Oconto Falls area where they've chosen to live and call home.

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FUSSIE CAT FORMULAS BUY 3 CANS, GET 1 FREE FREE ITEM MUST BE OF EQUAL OR LESSER VALUE No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		FROMM'S GOLD & FOUR STAR FORMULAS FOR DOGS \$5.00 OFF Each 12 Lb. bag or larger No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		EARTHBORN HOLISTIC CAT FORMULAS \$3.00 OFF EACH 5 LB. BAG \$5.00 OFF EACH 14 LB. BAG No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		BLUE BUFFALO CANS AND POUCHES \$1.00 OFF Each 12 oz. Dog Formula \$1.00 OFF Each 5.5 oz. Cat Formula No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		RED BARN DOG FORMULAS \$10.00 OFF 4 LB. BAGS No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24	
ZIGNATURE DOG FORMULAS \$2.00 OFF Each 4 Lb. Bag \$4.00 OFF Each 12.5 Lb. Bag \$7.00 OFF Each 27 Lb. Bag No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		CANIDAE DOG FORMULAS \$10.00 OFF All Size bags 4lb-40lb Bags No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		EARTHBORN HOLISTIC DOG FORMULAS INCLUDING GRAIN FREE \$3.00 OFF EACH 4 LB. BAG \$4.00 OFF EACH 12.5 LB. BAG \$5.00 OFF EACH 25 LB. BAG No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		ACANA DOG FORMULAS \$10.00 OFF EACH 25 LB. BAG No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		VITAL ESSENTIALS FREEZE DRIED OR FROZEN DOG AND CAT FORMULAS \$5.00 OFF EACH 14 OZ. OR LARGER No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24	
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Chicken Soup for the Soul Dog Food \$12.00 Off Each 25-28 Lb. Bag All Formulas No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		TASTE OF THE WILD DOG & CAT FORMULAS \$3.00 OFF EACH 14 LB. CAT BAG \$5.00 OFF EACH 25-28 LB. DOG BAG No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		NUTRI SOURCE FREEZE DRIED RAW BITES AND SLIDERS BUY 1 BAG GET 1 BAG FREE FREE Bag item must be of equal or lesser value No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		DR. GARY'S BEST BREED DOG AND CAT FORMULAS \$3.00 OFF EACH 4 LB. \$5.00 OFF EACH 12-13 LB. \$7.00 OFF EACH 26-28 LB. No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		AMERICAN NATURAL PREMIUM DOG FORMULAS \$5.00 OFF EACH 30-40 LB. BAG No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24	
Chicken Soup for the Soul Dog & Cat Cans & Dog Treats BUY 3, GET 1 FREE FREE PRODUCT MUST BE EQUAL OR LESSER VALUE No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		FARMINA N&D TOPICAL SELECTION DOG FORMULAS \$5.00 OFF ANY SIZE BAG No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		NUTRI SOURCE DOG FORMULA ALL VARIETIES INCLUDING GRAIN FREE \$5.00 OFF EACH 26LB TO 40LB BAG No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		PURE VITA DOG FORMULAS \$5.00 OFF EACH 25 LB. BAG ALL VARIETIES INCLUDING GRAIN FREE No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		STELLA & CHEWY'S DOG KIBBLE (RAW COATED, RAW BLEND, ESSENTIALS) \$5.00 OFF 22 Lb. or Larger No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24	
				NUTRI SOURCE CAT FORMULA \$5.00 OFF EACH 15 TO 16 LB. BAG, ALL VARIETIES TO CHOOSE FROM No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		PURE VITA CAT FORMULAS \$5.00 OFF EACH 15 LB. BAG ALL VARIETIES No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24		ROYAL CANIN CAT FORMULAS \$3.00 OFF Each 6 lb. or 7 lb. Bag No limit. Must present coupon. Coupon valid at Family Pet Food Center or Pulaski Warehouse. Coupon Expires 2/29/24	



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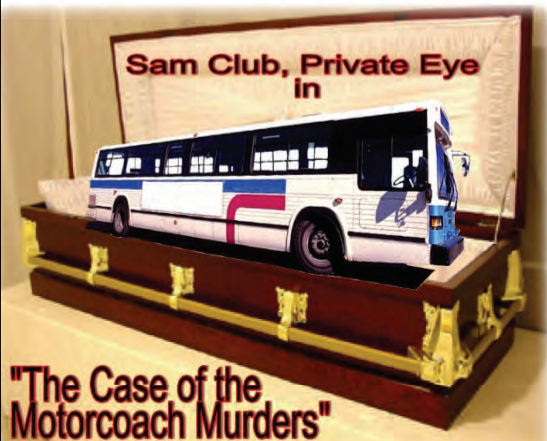
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Trees in winter reveal what's beneath the leaves

One of my favorite things about the winter season is visiting the trees found in our backyards, parks and woodlands. The winter trees, though we often think of them as skeletons of their summer selves, possess a beauty, elegance and otherworldly presence.

Even in your own backyard, take a walk among the trees and give them a closer look.

Look at the bark, the perfect textures and imperfections and colors. Look at the lichens and mosses that may grow upon them. Look for the tiny cocoons or chrysalises of insects, moths and butterflies.

As you walk among your backyard trees, take a close look at the tips of each branch and twig. The leaf buds for the coming spring are already there. They are ready to burst open when the sap begins to rise with the warmth of spring.



The winter trees are waiting. Explore them in the backyard, a park or wildlife area and give them a closer look.

ROB ZIMMER



Rob Zimmer
Columnist

As you walk among the trees of the forests and parks, make special note of different textures and coloration. These will help you identify many of the

trees of the forest. There are the birches, with their ruffled, feathery bark in pristine white, metallic gold, or salmon and orange. There are the shagbark hickories, with their long shards of curved and pliable bark in slate gray with black streaks. There are the beeches, with their elephant-skin bark, smooth and un-



Inspect the bark and the tree trunks more closely to discover miracles like these feathery lichens.

ROB ZIMMER

blemished, except for the telltale eyes that are always keeping watch in the forest. There are the red pines, with their flaky, reddish bark, as well as white pines with deeper, richer bark in thick, chunky segments. One of my favorites, the hackberry, features sculpted ridges and veins of three-dimensional beauty.

Of course, there are the conifers, the spruces, pines, fir, hemlock, white-cedar and juniper. Many of these are now tufted in snow, as we have finally received our first measurable snows of the season. The wildlife of winter can often be found among these trees — squirrels, songbirds, ruffed grouse, woodpeckers, owls, por-

cupines, whitetails and others that consider these sacred trees their life-blood during the long, cold winter. As winter lingers, become one with the trees and enjoy their winter magic. Rob Zimmer is a nature and garden author, public speaker and radio show host on WHBY. Readers can find him on Facebook at www.facebook.com/RobZimmerOutdoors.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

FRIDAY, FEB. 2

NAVARINO: Light Up the Night - Torchlight Ski/Snowshoe, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Navarino Nature Center, W5646 Lindsten Road. Free with nonperishable food item. Does not include rentals. Without food donation, \$5 members, \$10 non-members, \$20 family. Register by calling 715-758-6999 or visit www.navarino.org.

SATURDAY, FEB. 3

SHAWANO: Second annual Give Kids a Smile, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., Walsh Dental, 657 N. Main St. Free dental evaluation and same-day treatment for children ages 6-14. No appointment needed. First come, first served basis. For information, contact Dr. Scarlett Young at 715-524-2581 at Walsh Dental Group.

SHAWANO: Snake Slayer Fishing Tournament and Meat Raffle, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bamboo Bar and Grill, W5884 Cedar Court. Must fish Shawano Lake only. Info and complete rules at Bamboo Bar Facebook page or 715-201-1158.

WITTENBERG: "The Art of the Quilter X - Sew Bee It," 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., WOWSPACE, 114 Vinal St. More than 40 quilts on display; People's Choice awards and Award of Excellence to be given.

BONDUEL: Doubles Cribbage Tournament, noon to 4 p.m., Gehm's Club 117, 117 N. Cecil St. 24 spots available. \$30 per team. Pre-register by phone 715-758-2164 or stop in.

TOWNSEND: Far From Snoozin' Bed Races, 1 p.m., Wendt's Sandbar Resort, 16688 Nicolet Road. Five-person teams, \$25 per team, 100% payout, bed is provided. Registration begins at noon,

meat raffle during races, 50/50 raffle, DJ, food and beverages.

SUNDAY, FEB. 4

WITTENBERG: "The Art of the Quilter X - Sew Bee It," 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., WOWSPACE, 114 Vinal St. More than 40 quilts on display; People's Choice awards and Award of Excellence to be given.

ABRAMS: Machickanee Forest Meet and Greet, noon to 3 p.m., Trailhead Machickanee Cross-Country Ski Club, 6625 Timberline Road. Meet club members and find out more about the trails and the club. Fires for warming and cooking.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 7

SHAWANO: Coffee Connections, 8-9 a.m., Shawano Country Chamber of Commerce, 1263 S. Main St. Guest speaker from Shawano School District.

THURSDAY, FEB. 8

OCONTO: American Legion Post 74, 6 p.m., Crivello's Restaurant, 818 Main St., Oconto. Come early for social time and remain after for light buffet.

SHAWANO: "Hello Dolly," 7 p.m., Shawano Community High School, 220 County Road B. Tickets at www.shawanotheater.ludus.com. Information: 715-526-2175.

FRIDAY, FEB. 9

KESHENA: Winter Farmers Market, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., College of Menominee Nation Cultural Learning Center, N188 State Highway 47-55, biweekly through April 19. Artisan Native crafts, hot food, baked goods and more. Sponsored by the college's Sustainable Development Institute.

OCONTO FALLS: Special

Education Awareness Night, 7 p.m., Oconto Falls High School Fieldhouse, 210 N. Farm Road, presented by OFHS Student Council and girls basketball team.

SHAWANO: "Hello Dolly," 7 p.m., Shawano Community High School, 220 County Road B. Tickets at www.shawanotheater.ludus.com. Information: 715-526-2175.

OCONTO: Machickanee Players Theatre presents "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein," 7 p.m., Park Avenue Playhouse, 408 Park Ave. Tickets at www.MachickaneePlayers.com.

PULASKI: "Sister Act: The Musical," 7 p.m., Pulaski High School, 1040 St. Augustine St. Tickets \$9 at pulaskihs.ludus.com.

SATURDAY, FEB. 10

PULASKI: "Sister Act: The Musical," 2 p.m., Pulaski High School, 1040 St. Augustine St. Tickets \$9 at pulaskihs.ludus.com.

CECIL: Lunds Snowbirds Sweethearts Dance and Raffle, 7-11 p.m., Golden Sands Golf Course, 300 Nabor Road. Raffle ticket for entry or \$5 at the door. Music by Spark, Bang.

OCONTO: Machickanee Players Theatre presents "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein," 7 p.m., Park Avenue Playhouse, 408 Park Ave. Tickets at www.MachickaneePlayers.com.

SHAWANO: "Hello Dolly," 7 p.m., Shawano Community High School, 220 County Road B. Tickets at www.shawanotheater.ludus.com. Information: 715-526-2175.

PULASKI: "Sister Act," 7 p.m., Pulaski High School, Ripley Performing Arts Center, 1040 S. St. Augustine St. Tickets \$9, available at www.pulaskihs.ludus.com.

Giving and loving one another brings blessings

Running through the list of open dates, I was pleased at how many were already taken.

My heart, just before Christmas, was tender for those that didn't have food, much less a home to serve it in. So I was checking for needs at our local homeless shelter, Shawano Area Matthew 25, based on the scripture in Matthew 25:40 "...whatever you do for the least of these..." They're located at 105 E. Richmond St., Shawano, and open from November through April. For more information, check their website at www.sam25.org.

I noticed Jan. 8 was open to bring a meal in to the approximately 12 guests housed there. Signing up, I felt an immediate rush of peace over me, and love for those I would be serving. Excited, I began to plan my menu.

I feel incredibly grateful to God. We have enough. We always have enough. Of everything. We are not rich financially, oh no, but rich in the blessings received straight from our Father God. So because of that, I look for ways to love on others.

Our daughter is on staff with Youth With A Mission, and within the organization, she's had the amazing opportunity to serve people worldwide. We can't physically do this, but she and her staff and students are willing, so we thankfully support them financially, allowing them full attention to the task at hand ... serving the least of these in Jesus' name.

Twice our daughter had the privilege of traveling to Africa and twice came back suffering culture shock; not from their poverty but from re-entry to the affluence of the United States.

"We live in a mansion, Mom! Compared to them, we live in a mansion!" she said.

Years ago, I cried out to my older sister, gone now close to eight months with the Lord, "Beth. Why weren't we born in a thatch roof hut, dirt poor



Fernanda, an adopted child with the Reminger family through Compassion International, sends drawings regularly showing her appreciation for the Remingers' help with the organization.



Kay Reminger
Columnist

and scrounging for food and water every day?"

I'll never forget her quiet, yet fierce reply: "So we can help those who were, Kay."

It resonated so well with me that immediately I signed up to sponsor a

child through Compassion International. This was over 20 years ago. According to their website, www.compassion.com, Compassion International is a "child-advocacy ministry pairing compassionate people with children living in extreme poverty to release the children from spiritual, economic, social and physical poverty."

Currently, we sponsor a little girl named Fernanda from Mexico, who writes letters through an

interpreter. Included are her hand-drawn pictures of brilliant yellow suns with glad faces, green leafy trees and smiling stick people. I pour over them in wonderment. I know I'm helping plus making her happy. Her pictures reflect her heart.

Always, a grateful note is tucked along. Her economically challenged family receives food and support, and she attends classes teaching her how beloved she is and secure

is her hope for the future through the saving grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, through the cross and his resurrection. All of this for a modest monthly sponsorship.

When we serve, we never look down on those who do not have; asking no questions. It reminds me of the Bible verse Luke 14:7-14, where Jesus taught when we give a feast, invite those that cannot repay and blessings will be great, for God will reward us at the time when all godly people rise from death.

The night my husband and I took supper to the homeless shelter, it was misty, foggy, and we didn't know if it was going to freeze or not. We pulled up to the door and, ringing the bell, there was no answer. Immediately, I felt a sense of dread and self-doubt. Did I get the wrong night?

Quickly checking their website, I was directed to a cell phone number and calling, let the gal know who I was and had the night meal outside their door. We found out the doorbell didn't work.

Getting inside, we brought in our meal and, placing it on the counter, began to uncover the food. In the meantime, the attendant was placing my chocolate chip cookies

onto a large, ornate floral platter. Tears pricked behind my eyes and threatened to spill over. That simple act of dignity and special treatment profoundly touched my heart. She had ultimate compassion for these guests who were simply down on their luck at the moment, but all of us are God's children and deserve to be treated with respect.

We spoke to a few gathered there. One fella especially had such a look of gratefulness, and again, my tears surfaced. I wanted to hug him. We mentioned we were farmers and pretty much everything we brought was homegrown. His hungry smile lit up the room.

Loving your neighbor as yourself shows how much we love Jesus. Kindness, respect, help and dignity given to our fellow earth-dwellers blesses him.

("Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 12:30-31)

Kay Reminger was born and raised on a dairy farm, and she married her high school sweetheart, who happened to farm for a living in Leopold. Writing for quite a few years, she remains focused on the blessings of living the ups and downs of rural life from a farm wife's perspective.

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EOE

Expansion on track for July opening



Expansion and renovation of Lakes Country Public Library in Lakewood is moving full-speed ahead to an anticipated July ribboncutting. Jeff Musson, Rhinelander, is the project architect. RJM Construction, Black Creek, is the general contractor using local subcontractors LumberJake's Painting, Smith Concrete, DAMA Plumbing, and Chimney Mechanix.

CONTRIBUTED

Applications open for Tri-County United Way Community Impact grants

Tri-County United Way (TCUW) has opened the application for its 2024 Community Impact grant process.

This year, TCUW invites new and existing partners to apply for funding focused on basic needs in their communities. TCUW serves Oconto County, among others.

Community Impact funding is open to any registered 501(c)(3) health and human services nonprofit organizations that align with TCUW's mission and funding priorities. The application is at <https://www.tcunitedway.org/apply>. The grant cycle will close at 5 p.m. March 4. All TCUW grant awards will be capped at \$5,000.

TCUW funded programs are chosen from a competitive application process. Approval will be based on the merits of the program, community need and available funds. Funding is made possible by the financial contributions of community investors through TCUW's annual campaign.

For information, go to www.tcunitedway.org.

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Kassler scores eight goals in two games

Shawano hosted the Northwest Icemen co-op team Jan. 27 and lost the battle 5-2.

Antigo 7, Waupun 1

Eli Kassler and Owen Dickman each scored a hat trick as the Antigo/Wittenberg-Birnamwood co-op team defeated Waupun 7-1 on Jan. 25.

Dickman assisted Kassler on Antigo's first goal at 15:30 in the first period to give the hosts a 1-0 lead.

It was all Antigo in the second period. Kassler scored at 3:28 with help from Liam Burt and Jack Siegman. Dickman scored at 10:47 with help from Kassler, and Kassler scored third goal at 13:42 with Burt assisting.

Waupun scored its only goal at 2:06 in the third period. And, Antigo responded with three more goals.

Kassler assisted Dickman at 5:41, Parker Chaney assisted Burt at 11:46, and Dickman nabbed his third goal at 13:35.

Each team was penalized once for two minutes.

The Red Robins had 28 shots on goal, while the visiting Warriors had 33. Nolan Bunnell notched the 32 saves for the Red Robins.

Shawano 8, Medford 5

Shawano/Bonduel had three more shots on goal than Medford and also ended up with three more goals as the Hawks beat the Raiders 8-5 on Jan. 25.

Shawano held a 2-1 lead after the first period as they jumped out to an early 2-0 lead. Max Huntington scored at 5:11 with a Byrcen Madison assist. Then, at 8:36, Cam Schroeder scored with a Karson Stoss assist.

Shawano went up 3-1 after Blake Knope scored at 4:27 in the second period. A Medford goal made it 3-2, but Shawano score three unanswered goals.

Knope assisted on a Josh Fisksen goal at 7:08. Aidan Beaulieu assisted on a Stoss goal at 9:21, and Stoss scored again at 13:22 with help from Cam and Wyatt Schroeder.

Medford scored toward the end of the second period and at the start of the third to make it 6-4. But, Shawano answered with two third-period goals. First, Knope scored at 2:40. Then, Beaulieu was assisted by Stoss for a goal at 8:29. Medford scored one last time at 12:19.

Shawano had 34 shots on goal, compared to 31 for Medford.

The Raiders spent 29 minutes in the penalty box on 10 infractions. Shawano was called for eight penalties and served 16 minutes.

Kaiden Thornborrow recorded 29 saves for the Hawks.

Antigo 7 Rhinelander 3

Antigo broke the game open with four goals in the third period to defeat Rhinelander 7-3 on Jan. 23.

Eli Kassler scored five goals for the Red Robins, including a pair in the first period. The first one was unassisted, while Owen Dickman and Jack Siegman assisted on the second to give Antigo a 2-1 lead.

Each team scored once in the second period, with Dickman lending a stick to Kassler for his third goal of the game.

The Hodags scored once in the final period, but Antigo's four goals proved to be enough for the win.

Liam Burt scored at 22:31 with assists from Kassler and Dickman. Dickman and Ian Brittenham assisted Kassler for this fourth goal, and then Kassler added his fifth with an assist from Burt. Finally, Dickman scored on an assist from Kassler.

The Hodags were called for eight penalties for 16 minutes, while Antigo was called six times for 12 minutes.

Rhinelander notched 40 shots on goal compared to Antigo's 27. Nolan Bunnell had 37 saves for the Red Robins.

Saturday, Jan. 20 Shawano 6 Chequamegon 1

Chequamegon/Phillips/Butternut led Shawano/Bonduel 1-0 for about 10



Players from both team scramble for control of the puck in front of the Shawano goal Jan. 27 at the Crawford Center. Shawano lost 5-2 to the Northwest Icemen.

KEVIN PASSON | NEW MEDIA

minutes in the first period, but that would be the only score for the visitors. Shawano bounced back with three goals within one minute toward the end of the period and added another three goals in the game to capture a 6-1 win.

Trailing 1-0, Shawano's Josh Fisksen scored at 14:42 with help from Aidan Beaulieu and Cam Schroeder. At 15:21, Blake Knope put Shawano on top 2-1 with a goal and assists from Fisksen and Beaulieu. Just 21 seconds later, Hunter Jones scored with an assist from Jeremy Helmuth, and Shawano held a 3-1 lead at the end of the period.

Knope scored at 12:50 in the third period, with help from Gavin Hundt, to put Shawano up 4-1.

Waylon Snider and Fisksen assisted Jones for

a goal at 7:05 in the third period to put the Hawks up 5-1. Beaulieu scored Shawano's final goal at 15:50.

Shawano managed to come up with the win despite being shorthanded quite often as the team was penalized 15 times for 30 minutes. Chequamegon was called for six infractions for 12 minutes.

Shawano skaters placed 35 shots on goal, while Chequamegon had 22. Tyson Lyons had 21 saves for the Hawks.

Viroqua 8, Antigo 4

Owen Dickman recorded a hat trick, but Viroqua's five-goal second period spelled defeat for the Antigo/Wittenberg-Birnamwood co-op team in its 8-4 loss.

Dickman scored first with an Eli Kassler assist at 4:01 in the first period to give the visitors a 1-0 lead.

Just four minutes later, Antigo trailed 2-1, but a second goal by Dickman tied the game at 2-2 going into the second period.

Viroqua rattled off three goals in the second period before Dickman's third goal was notched at 7:49. Two more goals by the Blackhawks gave them a 7-3 at the end of the period.

Viroqua added its eighth goal early in the third period. Antigo's final push came at 14:05 with a goal by Liam Burt and an assist by Ian Brittenham.

Antigo had 17 shots on goal. Nolan Bunnell recorded 45 saves as Viroqua had 53 shots on goal.

Antigo was penalized five times for 12 minutes, while Viroqua was called for four infractions for eight minutes.

Friday, Jan. 19 Antigo 7 West Salem 5

Eli Kassler scored five goals, including a hat trick in the third period, to lead Antigo over West Salem 7-5.

In a back-and-forth first period, Kassler score twice, and the team were knotted at 2-2. Richie Veriha assisted Kassler on his second goal.

No scoring happened in the second period, but the final period was wild with eight goals scored.

It was back-and-forth again for the first 13 minutes, as the Panthers took a 3-2 lead only to have Liam Burt score with a Kassler

assist to tie the game at 3-3. West Salem regained the lead, and Kassler tied it with help from Owen Dickman.

Once again, West Salem retook the lead, only to have Kassler tie it at 5-5 at 13:15.

Antigo would pull out the win with a Veriha goal at 14:46 with help from Kassler and Dickman. The final goal, an unassisted score by Kassler, came at 16:49.

In all Antigo notched 34 shots on goal, while West Salem had 20. Nolan Bunnell had 15 saves for the Red Robins.

Thursday, Jan. 18 Shawano 3 Waupaca JV 1

Shawano/Bonduel traveled to the Waupaca Expo Center and returned home with a 3-1 victory.

After a scoreless first period, Shawano scored a pair of goals in the second period. Hunter Jones scored at 2:12 with help from Jeremy Helmuth and Max Huntington. Then, at 13:44, Karson Stoss scored with assists from Cam Schroeder and Blake Knope.

Waupaca scored just 51 seconds into the third period to make it 2-1, but Stoss' goal at 14:49, with an assist from Schroeder, sealed the win.

Kaiden Thornborrow saved all 27 shots that came his way, while Shawano's players recorded 34 shots on goal.



Shawano's Blake Knope (8) battles Cameron Janz (24) of the Northwest Icemen on Jan. 27 at the Crawford Center.

KEVIN PASSON | NEW MEDIA

Shawano's valiant effort comes up short

Bonduel, Gresham, Lena play to perfection in their respective conferences

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

Shawano stayed within striking distance of Xavier on Jan. 27 but couldn't quite strike as the Hawks lost 62-52 in the Bay Conference matchup.

Abby Bystol and Leah Nordin each scored 13 points for Shawano, which trailed 30-24 at the break. Xavier added another four points to its margin of victory with a 32-28 second half.

The Hawks dropped to 2-6 in conference action and 12-7 overall.

Friday, Jan. 26

Bonduel

Bonduel can do no wrong as the Bears stayed perfect at 10-0 in the Central Wisconsin East Conference after beating Amherst 52-28. The Bears are 17-2 overall.

Gillett

The Tigers scratched their way to a 42-35 win over Niagara and improved to 7-5 in the Marinette & Oconto Conference.

Cilena Guns led Gillett with 17 points. Joining her on the scoreboard were Audrey Pate and Maggie Kaczmarek with eight points each, Emily Soper with six and Clara Shaal with three.

Gillett led 19-18 at the break and extended their lead with a 23-17 second half.

Gresham pounds Marion

Gresham sits at 5-0 at in first place in the Central Wisconsin North Conference after a 64-10 rout of Marion. The Mustangs are 2-5 in conference action.

Menominee Indian

Ayanna Smith scored 21 points and Urijih Reeves added 16 to lead Menominee Indian to a 45-42 come-from-behind victory over Manawa.

Anisa Peters scored seven points and Natalie Peters had one to make up the points for the Eagles.

Trailing 24-19 at the half, Menominee Indian battled back after the break to a 26-18 second-half score and three-point win.

The Eagles improved to 4-5 in the Central Wisconsin East Conference.

Oconto Falls

Oconto Falls went up against Marinette & Oconto Conference leader Marinette and returned home with a 50-34 loss.

The Panthers are 7-5 in conference action. The team trailed 19-12 after the first half and lost the score after the break 31-22.

Wittenberg-Birnamwood

Wittenberg-Birnamwood is on a three-game winning streak with its 62-25 pounding of Iola-Scandinavia.

The Chargers wasted little time in jumping out



Brie Ladika (10), Melaina Granquist (42) and Rory Salvesen (20) spread out to play defense against Shiocton on Jan. 23. Wittenberg-Birnamwood won 65-26, with the team in second place in the Central Wisconsin East Conference.

TINA BACON

to a 36-11 first-half lead. A 26-14 second half only compounded the misery for the hosts.

Wittenberg-Birnamwood improved to 8-2, good enough for second place in the Central Wisconsin East Conference.

Thursday, Jan. 25

Bowler

A non-conference loss to Pittsville dropped Bowler to 9-7 overall. Pittsville controlled the first half 29-14 and ran away with it in the second half with a 41-17 score to give them a 70-31 victory.

Gillett

Gillett doubled up on Wausaukee for a 48-24 Marinette & Oconto Conference win. At 6-5, Gillett is in a three-way tie for second place along with Niagara and Oneida Nation.

Lena

It's now 11 games in the Marinette & Oconto Conference and 18 games overall for Lena, as the team remained perfect in 2023-24 with a 76-64 win over Crivitz.

Leading 38-25 at the break, Lena let up a little in the second half as Crivitz outscored the Wildcats 39-38.

Eva Brooks set the pace for Lena with 23 points. Madilyn Thomson scored another 19, and Whitney Potter added 17. The other points came from Hannah Thomson with five and Maddy Kushner its two.

Brooks grabbed 15 boards, with Madilyn Thomson pulling down eight more and Potter getting seven. Madilyn Thomson led with eight assists, and Brooks had six. Brooks also led with three steals, with Hannah Thomson collecting two and Madilyn Thomson getting one.

Menominee Indian

The Eagles bounced



Rory Salvesen (20) battled a pair of Shiocton players as she shoots in the Jan. 25 game. Salvesen led the Chargers with 18 points in the 65-26 win.

TINA BACON

back from a loss to Bonduel to defeat Shiocton 55-53.

Menominee Indian is now 3-5 in the Central Wisconsin East Conference and 6-10 overall.

Pulaski

Pulaski scored 12 points in each half against Green Bay Southwest, and although that resulted in a close first half, it was nowhere for the second half.

Green Bay Southwest held a 16-12 lead at the break and outscored the

Red Raiders 31-12 after intermission to notch the 47-24 Fox River Classic Conference win.

All seven Pulaski players scored, and they were led by Ellie Mangold's five points.

Pulaski fell to 7-5 in conference action.

Tuesday, Jan. 23

Bears beat Eagles

Bonduel's winning ways continued with a 67-37 win inn Central Wisconsin East Conference action.

Bowler tops Marion

Bowler dumped on Marion 60-16 in a Central Wisconsin North Conference game. Bowler improved to 4-1, while Marion fell to 2-4.

Gresham

Gresham maintained its first-place hold in the Central Wisconsin North Conference with a 58-40 win over Northland Lutheran.

The Wildcats are 4-0 in league play and 12-4 overall.

Lena

Lena stifled Niagara 20-8 in the second half to capture a 22-point win, 44-22, over Niagara.

The Wildcats sit atop the Marinette & Oconto Conference with an 8-0 mark. The team is also undefeated overall with a 17-0 record.

Lena held a 24-14 first-half lead that only got bigger as the clocked ticked away in the second half.

Oconto Falls

Oconto Falls defeated Fox Valley Lutheran 43-38 in a North Eastern Conference matchup. The Panthers improved to 7-4 in conference action and 11-5 overall.

Pulaski

Maggie Lardinois and Olivia Sprangers each scored 13 points to lead Pulaski over Sheboygan North 47-40 in a Fox River Classic Conference matchup.

Lily Urban added nine points, Ashley Servais had eight, and Ellie Mangold scored four as all five girls added to the victory.

Pulaski led 24-16 at the break, which was enough of a lead as Sheboygan North outscored the Red Raiders by one point in the second half.

Pulaski improved to 7-4 in the conference.

Shawano

Shawano dropped to 2-5

in the Bay Conference and 12-6 overall with its 38-36 loss to Menasha.

"Got to play as a team to win close ball games," coach Ryan Koenig said. "Defense was superb tonight."

Wittenberg-Birnamwood

The Chargers returned to their winning ways with a 65-26 win over Shiocton. Wittenberg-Birnamwood improved to 6-2 in the Central Wisconsin East Conference, good enough for second place.

Rory Salvesen led the Chargers with 18 points. Harper Rogowski added another 17, and Faith Resch scored 13.

Melaina Granquist led with 10 rebounds, Nora Bushman had three assists, and Resch nabbed 10 steals.

Monday, Jan. 22

Bonduel

The Bears improved to 8-0 in the Central Wisconsin East Conference and 15-2 overall with a 71-16 dominating win over conference cellar dweller Iola-Scandinavia.

Bonduel held a commanding 29-2 lead at the break and outscored their guests 42-14 after the intermission.

Gillett

Gillett is back at .500 with a 5-5 Marinette & Oconto Conference mark after beating Oneida Nation 40-32. Gillett is also 8-8 overall.

Suring

Suring's losing streak extended to six games with a 41-31 loss at Wausaukee in Marinette & Oconto Conference action.

Suring trailed 18-15 at the break and was outscored 23-16 in the second half.

Bunny Cramer led the Eagles, 2-8 in conference action, with 13 points.

Bears hit triple digits in win over Kewaunee

Sipple scores 34 points, including five 3-pointers, in Shawano's loss to West De Pere

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

**Friday, Jan. 26
Bonduel**

In a high scoring affair, Bonduel hit triple digits as the Bears defeated Kewaunee 101-75.

Noah Weier led Bonduel with 35 points, just one more than Ryan Westrich's 34. Race Anvelink scored 13, with Cade Johnson sinking 10 and Colin Margelofsky getting nine.

The non-conference win improved Bonduel's overall mark to 15-1.

Gillett

After losing earlier in the week to conference leader Crivitz, Gillett bounced back with a 68-44 win over Oneida Nation.

Jesse DeBauch led the Wildcats with 24 points, including a pair of triples. Aydin Franti scored 14, and Ben Matczak contributed 13. Each of them scored one 3-pointer.

Bradin Bjelland and DeBauch each recorded six rebounds, and Franti had eight assists and five steals.

Gillett, 9-2 in the Marinette & Oconto Conference, led 24-15 at the half and continued their dominance with a 44-29 second-half performance.

Lena

Lena suffered through another disappointing loss to end their week. This time it was a 71-26 defeat at the hands of Niagara.

Lena is now 1-9 in the Marinette & Oconto Conference and 4-11 overall.

Oconto Falls

Jameson Beaman scored 17 points, including a pair of triples, and Alex Haines scored 13, but Oconto Falls failed to come out on top, losing 67-48 to Marinette in a North Eastern Conference game.

Marinette led 27-19 after the first half and extended their lead with a 40-29 second half.

Haines led the Panthers with nine rebounds. He and Evan Yuma each had two assists, while Chase Carriveau, JJ Pytleski, Grayson Cahak and Isaac Bramer each had one steal.

Oconto Falls dropped to 1-11 in conference action.

Pulaski

Three Red Raiders scored in double digits as Pulaski triumphed 63-28 over Green Bay Southwest.

Dixon Holewinski led the team with 13 points, followed by Colin Schultz with 12 and Joseph Mijal with 10.

Holewinski also led Pulaski with eight rebounds, Bryce Wotruba led with four assists, and Dylan Dorn and Bohdan Schmidt each had four steals.

Pulaski was up 30-18 at halftime, and they executed a 33-10 second half to more than double up on their hosts.

Pulaski improved to 6-6 in the Fox River Classic

Conference.

Shawano

Logan Sipple scored 34 points and Shawano gave its all against Bay Conference leader West De Pere but still came up short 71-63.

Sipple's point total included five 3-point plays. Anderson Schmidt added 10 points for Shawano.

The Hawks, 3-6 in the conference, were beaten in each half, by three points before the break and by five after the break.

Sipple and Ryan Shanty each had six rebounds, and Will Verkuilen had four assists and just as many steals.

Suring

Trent VanDenElzen scored 23 points to lead Suring over Wausaukee 64-53.

Taylor Booth Stoffregen scored another 17 points, with Michael Bailey adding 14. Trent Thomson sacred six, and Quinn Thomson scored four.

Suring, 2-9 in the Marinette & Oconto Conference, led 30-27 at halftime and added eight points to its margin of victory with a 34-26 second half.

Wittenberg-Birnhamwood

Wittenberg-Birnhamwood snapped a three-game losing streak with a 56-46 win over Iola-Scandinavia.

"We played with great energy tonight," coach Garrett Rogowski said. "Got up early and executed well on both ends of the floor."

Jett Rogowski led the Chargers with 13 points, and Casey Kielman scored 10, including a pair of triples.

Oliver Fraaza and Boone Schairer each pulled down five boards, and Jaden Clark and Marshall Fraaza each had three assists and two steals.

Wittenberg-Birnhamwood, 5-4 in Central Wisconsin East Conference action, posted a commanding 35-17 lead at the half. Iola-Scandinavia outscored their hosts 29-21 after the break, but the victory was never really in doubt.

**Thursday, Jan. 25
Bonduel**

Four Bonduel players scored in double digits and all 10 players found the basket in the Bears 68-45 win over Amherst.

Race Anvelink led the attack with 15 points, followed by Ryan Westrich with 13, and Quinn Wensenberg and Cade Johnson each with 10. Also scoring were Colin Margelofsky with six points, Noah Weier with five, Sam Roberts with four, Owen Springborn and Charlie Tauchen each with two, and Carter Moesch with one.

Bonduel held a five-point lead at the half, then broke things open in the



Jett Rogowski led the Chargers with 13 points, as Wittenberg-Birnhamwood snapped a three-game losing streak with a 56-46 win over Iola-Scandinavia.

TINA BACON

second half with a 37-19 advantage.

The Bears improved to 9-0 in the Central Wisconsin East Conference and 14-1 overall.

Marion beats Gresham

Marion remained tied for the conference lead while Gresham is still without a Central Wisconsin North Conference win, after the Mustangs topped the Wildcats 77-55.

Marion held a commanding 49-28 first half lead, and although the second half was much closer, 28-27 in favor of the Mustangs, Marion improved to 5-2 in league play, and Gresham dropped to 0-5.

Marion was led by Ryan Malueg with 28 points, including seven triples. Sam Gueths and Parker Miller each scored 18.

Miller led the Mustangs with 15 rebounds, and Malueg

snagged 11. Miller also led with six assists. Gueths and Enea Turrini each recorded two steals.

Menominee Indian

The Eagles pulled out a three-point over Manawa to improve to 2-7 in the Central Wisconsin East Conference. Menominee Indian's 62-59 win was the third overall the season.

Tigerton

Tigerton stayed tied with Marion for the lead in the Central Wisconsin North Conference after the Tigers defeated White Lake 50-29.

James Brady led Tigerton with 11 points, followed by Joey Zimdars with 10. Sam Anheuser scored nine points, Maverick Maas and Cameron Carlson each scored eight, and Loghan Wanta connected for four points.

Wanta led with six rebounds, Anheuser had

six assists, and Carlson and Anheuser each had three steals.

Tigerton controlled the game with a 27-16 first half and 23-13 second half.

Wittenberg-Birnhamwood

A strong second half propelled Wittenberg-Birnhamwood to a 67-36 Central Wisconsin East Conference win Weyauwega-Fremont.

"We got off to a slow start tonight but found a way to go up five in the first half," coach Nick Mechelke said. "We made a handful of adjustments for the second half and played almost a perfect second half."

The Chargers led 25-20 at the break, but after finding their groove in the second half, outscored their hosts 42-16 for the win.

Every player scored for Wittenberg-Birnhamwood,

with Rory Salvesen leading the way with 26, and Melaina Granquist connecting for another 16. Kit Stewart contributed eight more, Brie Ladika scored six, Harper Rogowski and Faith Resch each had four, and Avia Brie had three.

The victory put the Chargers at 7-2 in conference action and 14-2 overall.

**Tuesday, Jan. 23
Bowler**

In a non-conference matchup, Bowler was on the losing end, dropping a 79-48 decision to Pittsville.

Pittsville more than doubled up on the Panthers, 43-21 in the first half, and extended their winning margin with a 36-27 second half.

Gillett

Jesse DeBauch led all scorers with 27 points, but Gillett came up just short in its 73-68 loss to Crivitz.

Aydin Franti added 16 more for Gillett, and Ben Matczak scored 12. Thomas Carmody scored six, Bradin Bjelland had four, and Brandon DeBauch scored three.

Crivitz' five-point first half of 35-30 was the margin of victory as each team scored 38 points in the second half.

Gillett fell to second place with an 8-2 mark in the Marinette & Oconto Conference, while Crivitz improved to 9-1 and sits atop the standings.

Gresham

A 61-47 non-conference loss to Rosholt left Gresham at 0-14 overall.

Lena

Lena remains winless in 2024 after its sixth consecutive loss, a 44-32 defeat at the hands of White Lake. The non-conference loss left Lena with a 4-10 overall record.

Oconto Falls

The Panthers' boys basketball wasn't as successful as the girls team against Fox Valley Lutheran as they boys lost 63-41.

Oconto Falls was dominated in the first half and trailed 40-14 at the break. A 27-23 second half scoring advantage wasn't anywhere close enough to be a comeback.

While seven players scored, Jameson Beaman was the only one to hit double digits as he scored 11, including three triples.

Beaman also led the team with three rebounds, while Grayson Cahak and Easton Engel each had two assists, and Alex Haines had two steals.

Oconto Falls fell to 1-10 in conference action and 4-12 overall.

Pulaski

Sheboygan North scored an even 100 points in its 100-64 win over Pulaski.

Pulaski fell to 5-6 in the Fox River Classic

BOYS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

Hawks take third at home wrestling invite

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

Shawano placed third out of more than 30 teams at its home wrestling invite on Jan. 26.

“They did a great job battling tonight,” coach Mike Homan said. “Most brackets had 16 girls in them. It was good just to place in the top eight. We had all girls but one finish in the top eight. The girls really battled hard tonight.”

Onna Hermann placed second. Caitlyn Moede, Courtney Schenk and Lily Tomas all placed third. Maddie Moesch took fifth, and Adalyn Barkley finished in sixth place.

“Maddie did a great job to place fifth,” Homan said. “Onna wrestled well

in her finals match and just came up short to a tough opponent. Caitlyn did well to place third in a tough bracket. Adalyn continues to improve and get better with each match. Her sixth-place finish was a good improvement.

“Courtney lost a match in round two that she should have won, but she kept on advancing, and in the third-place match, she wrestled a state tournament champion from Bayport and came away with a fall in the first period. Lily Tomas did a great job placing third as she continues to improve and learn.

Wittenberg-Birnhamwood placed 12th.

Brooke Huffman finished in first in her class,

and Brenna Marsh placed fifth in hers. Megan Bresnahan went 0-2.

Shawano 18, Green Bay United 0

There were not enough matches for a full dual, but for the Shawano girls who did wrestle, they came out on top 18-0 over Green Bay United at Green Bay West on Jan. 25.

Jenna Moede started off with a pin.

“She took a nice single leg attack and then found a tight half-nelson early into the first period,” coach Mike Homan said.

Caitlyn Moede wrestled two matches. She won both of them by fall.

“She continues to do a great job and works hard in practice,” Homan said.



Shawano's Lily Tomas was one of three teammates to place third at the Shawano invite Jan. 26.

CONTRIBUTED

“Caitlyn is wrestling well as we move into the end of the season.”

Adalyn Barkley at 138 also had two matches and

earned one decision and one fall.

“She has just started wrestling this year and continues to improve all of the

time,” the coach said. “She keeps getting better and works to improve her skills. We are excited to see what she can do in the future.”

Shawano boys defeat Green Bay United

By NEW MEDIA STAFF

Shawano's boys wrestlers continue to score big and are gearing up for a conference title this year.

On Jan. 25, Shawano defeated Green Bay United 63-15 at Green Bay West. At 5-0 in the conference and 12-4 overall, the Hawks are on the brink of notching their sixth straight conference title. The team was scheduled to play against Xavier on Feb. 1.

The Jan. 25 meet started with forfeits and 106 and 113

pounds, then at 120, Alex Montour won a tight match 10-9.

Austin Stickney earned a fall at 126. Owen Montour, Kody Popelka and Drake Herm all earned forfeits from 132-144.

At 150, Marcus Cicero was pinned, at 1:57. Carsen Herm earned a fall, at 165, Drew Chelberg earned a fall in the first period with a near side cradle.

“We dropped a close decision 9-7 by Mason Theis at 175,” coach Mike Homan said.

At 190, Connor Chelberg earned a fall; At 215, Shawano dropped another match by fall, and at 285, Brayen Boivin earned a fall.

“The team did everything they needed to do to come away with a win,” Homan said. “I thought we wrestled some good matches tonight. Brayen Boivin was able to earn his first varsity win. He stepped in at 285 tonight due to an injury and did a good job. I like the way he has been working in practice the last few weeks.”

BOYS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

ence and 8-7 overall.

Shawano

The Hawks won their third Bay Conference game with a 75-55 victory over Menasha.

Logan Sipple scored almost half of Shawano's points, as he dropped in 37 on the night. Crew Weisnicht added 19, and Will Verkuilen scored 11.

Shawano held a slim 36-33 lead at the half but then turned up the heat, outscoring their guests 39-22 in the second half.

Shawano improved to 3-5 in league play and 5-11 overall.

Suring

Suring's 1-9 Marinette & Oconto Conference record puts them in last place. The latest loss is a 89-47 defeat at the hands of Oneida Nation.

Tigerton

Loghan Wanta and Joey Zimdars each scored nine points, but it was nowhere near enough as Tigerton lost 60-36 to Northeast Wisconsin Christian Homeschoolers Athletic Association (NEWCHAA) in a non-conference game.

NEWCHAA held a slim 29-25 lead going into half-time but then exploded for a huge 31-11 second half to seal the win.

Monday, Jan. 22

Pulaski

Ashwaubenon proved to be too much for Pulaski in its 72-52 win over the Red Raiders.

Colin Schultz and Bohdan Schmidt each scored 10 points for Pulaski, and each had a pair of 3-pointers as part of their total.

Schultz also led the team with six boards. Nathan Josie led with five assists and two steals.

Pulaski, trailed 37-21 at the half and was outscored 35-31 after the break.

Friday, Jan. 19

Tigerton trounces Bowler

James Brady scored 19 points in Tigerton's



Boone Schairer scored four points as Wittenberg-Birnhamwood topped Iola-Scandinavia 56-46 in a Central Wisconsin East Conference matchup.

TINA BACON

dominating 69-9 win over Bowler.

Maverick Maas scored another 12 for the Tigers, and Cameron Carlson added 10.

Tigerton led from the beginning and held a commanding 37-6 lead at the break. A 32-3 second half cemented what was already a blowout win.

100 wins and counting



Oconto Falls senior wrestler Garrett Ganter earned his 100th varsity win Jan. 5 at The Duffy Invitational in Port Washington. Ganter beat Lodi wrestler Drew Lochner in sudden victory overtime to collect his 100th win. Ganter is the son of Jason and Jamie Ganter, of Abrams.

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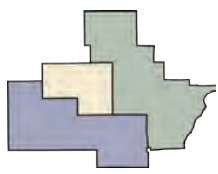
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What about the children — when the parents work?

It used to be that one person in the family could work to put food on the table and a roof over the family's head. Those days are long gone, however, and both parents have to work to afford mortgage payments, trips to the grocery store, electricity and more.

With both parents working their tushies off, it often creates a conundrum when school is done for the day. It's not always possible for parents to work different schedules so that at least one of them is home at the same time the school bus drops the children off. That means sending kids to a child care facility until one of the parents gets off from work.

That'd be a good thing — if there were enough facilities. There aren't, though, and that makes it very difficult for the working class when they're required to be at a job eight or more hours per day. Not everybody works from home now that the pandemic's over — except for farmers, of course — and not every workplace is cool with letting the rugrats hang out until the five o'clock that's somewhere actually gets here.

Growing up, I had to watch my younger sister when my mother went back to work full-time, because one paycheck was not enough to keep us solvent. However, society today frowns on children ages 10 and 11 being left to handle the younger kids while the parents are at work. Thus, the need for child care.

The need is so great that the schools are trying to fill that void, too. The Shawano School District is proposing having part of Hillcrest Primary School be dedicated to child care as part of its spring referendum. The Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District is also looking at developing a child care facility as it grapples with the issue of keeping staff in western Shawano County and not losing people to places where child care is more abundant.

So how do we fix the situation? Unfortunately, adjusting our economy so both parents aren't required to work to afford a home, food and more doesn't seem likely or even feasible. Therefore, things need to shift to providing more child care facilities.



Lee Pulaski
City editor

Of course, things look bleak, according to Gov. Tony Evers' latest State of the State address. He noted that the Child Care Counts program is coming to a close in terms of federal funding, and without continued investments, more than 2,100 child care programs will come to a close, leaving over 87,000 children without someone to watch over them.

Evers took \$170 million in emergency state funding to keep the program up and running for a while longer, but that money will eventually run out, which means the ball is in the Wisconsin Legislature's court to find a solution.

In the meantime, the schools are picking up the slack when they already have the enormous task of educating children for seven or eight hours a day, and then having to watch over them in the early mornings or late afternoons. That works for school districts that can afford it, but what about the districts that can't?

Where does the ultimate solution lie? Do we storm our municipal governments and task them with finding a solution? Do we hope that the state government can put aside party politics and come up with a plan? Do we get desperate and ask the federal government to resolve the issue?

Then there's the question of what the solution will be. Should the schools be the solution? Should we send the kids to the area libraries, which would be a good idea if the libraries could afford to be open every day that parents are working? Should there be a recruitment effort to get more people into the child care business and maybe make it simpler for them to get the training they need to handle a dozen or so hyperactive munchkins?

It's clear we've got a problem. The solution is not so clear. Hopefully someone more qualified than I can take this problem and help it to evaporate.

Lee Pulaski is the city editor for NEW Media. Readers can contact him at lpulaski@newmedia-wi.com.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Anonymous letter writers are cowards

To the editor:

I received my third anonymous cowardly letter in the mail a couple of weeks ago.

What makes this one different is instead of addressing just me, the coward also asked that my freedom of speech be stopped and that the Oconto County Times Herald be denied their freedom of the press, asking them to stop printing my letters to the editor.

My letters are timely, of local interest and different from the cowards they are signed. I stand by every

word I have printed. I challenge the writer of this letter to do the same. Come out of the shadows and write a letter and sign your name to it.

In the second from last line in this two-page letter, the author writes this gem: "We hope someone on the board this spring has the stones to propose dual sports to learn from this and make better guidelines and allow dual sports again." This is incredible.

Are they saying now that the Suring Public School District should have dual sports? I also am calling on the school board to allow for dual sports, but not in spring, but now so a deserving student can finish his

career out. Who would be hurt if Trent was allowed to compete?

They have called me to be banned from the school. They have called my son, Trent, lazy for going over and above. It is incredible the attacks on our character.

Dual sports started in Suring in 2000 when Isaiah Houska was in track and WIAA-sanctioned golf. I believe the multiple years of participating in dual sports gave Isaiah the skills to run one of the larger employers in Oconto County. Also, Klint Hischke when he participated in track and qualified for sectionals in golf. There are some very ambitious girls that play

varsity basketball and club volleyball.

Trent has won many awards in both wrestling and basketball during his time as a dual sport athlete. Yet the writer of this bogus letter says he couldn't have because Suring sports are on bottom of the conference. Proving they need change. Writer also states other schools don't allow wrestling and basketball to happen at the same time. This is false. I know of Coleman and Bay Port athletes that have. Is it rare? Yes. Is it something to be applauded? Yes. Not harassed or limited. Remember it is for the children.

Mike Van Den Elzen, Suring

GUEST COLUMN

Domestic violence increases, funding drops

In 2022, domestic violence claimed 96 lives in Wisconsin. That's one death every 3.8 days, and an increase of 20% from 2021. This is unacceptable and completely avoidable. We have the power to protect survivors and prevent domestic violence.

As a champion for survivors of domestic violence, I know we can do more to aid in the prevention of horrific abuse toward women, children and other marginalized groups in our community. While our state sits on a nearly \$4 billion surplus, we have the funds to make violence against women and others preventable, treatable and prosecutable. Most importantly, we know that we will save lives.

While no piece of legislation can ever erase the trauma of violence, no one should experience barriers to justice and support during the most difficult times of their lives. It is the role of the government to step up and provide for a safer, more compassionate path so that people can heal. So that victims become



Melissa Agard
Guest columnist

survivors.

Together with Sen. Jesse James, Rep. Sun Conley and Rep. Patrick Synder, I introduced legislation to fund victim services and domestic violence services in Wisconsin at the level previously proposed by Gov. Tony Evers, giving the Wisconsin Legislature one more opportunity to do the right thing. The legislation would also provide grants to Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) that provide multidisciplinary approaches to investigating child abuse while also working with law enforcement to interview child victims in a friendly manner and environment.

Concerns about funding for services that address domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and neglect, and sexual abuse for children are prevalent in the discussions that I've had

with local law enforcement. They rely on these essential survivor and victim services to assist in providing care and compassion to those affected.

Most service providers historically obtained their funding through the federal Victims of Crime Act Fund (VOCA). This fund receives the fees and fines from victims' federal court cases. However, the U.S. Department of Justice recently announced that Wisconsin could expect a nearly 40% drop in funding in 2024. This is unacceptable to the victims of terrible crimes who need help in our state.

Wisconsin's Office of Crime Victim Services said the drop in funding this year would only allow for 52 of the current 135 VOCA programs statewide to receive necessary support. Decreasing access to victim services will lead our state backwards and harm those dealing with the trauma of domestic or sexual abuse.

This is why it is so important that we increase funding for the Wisconsin Department of Justice to

award grants to organizations that provide services to victims of sexual assault. It will also increase grants awarded from the Department of Children and Families to organizations that provide domestic violence services and increase funding contracts to CACs. The bill provides funding for a new CAC in Ozaukee County to increase access to support for survivors of child abuse.

Conversations about domestic and sexual violence are difficult, but we must take meaningful steps to protect Wisconsin's victims and survivors, while preventing future violence. With comprehensive legislation, we can create a safer Wisconsin, where violators and assailants are held accountable, services are available for victims to become survivors and where every survivor is heard and believed.

Wisconsin's victims and survivors deserve better.

Melissa Agard is a state senator representing Madison and former Senate Democratic leader.

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
THE MASTERS: They know what they're doing
by Fred Piscop

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67 "Rules __ rules"

68 *Pravda* cofounder

69 Former SeaWorld

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70 Flurry of activity

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103 Wise Men's origin

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106 Shade close to almond

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108 Was first on a trail

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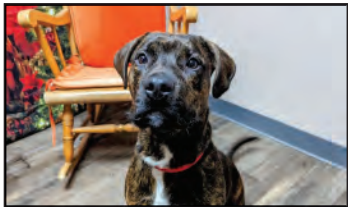
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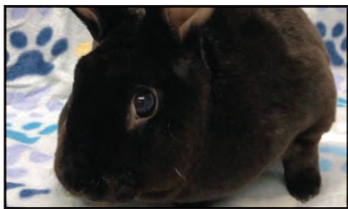
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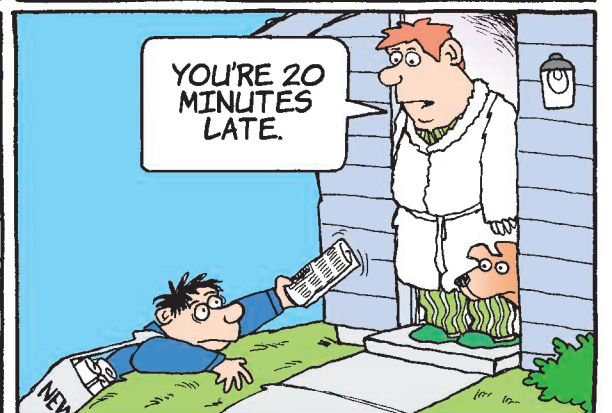
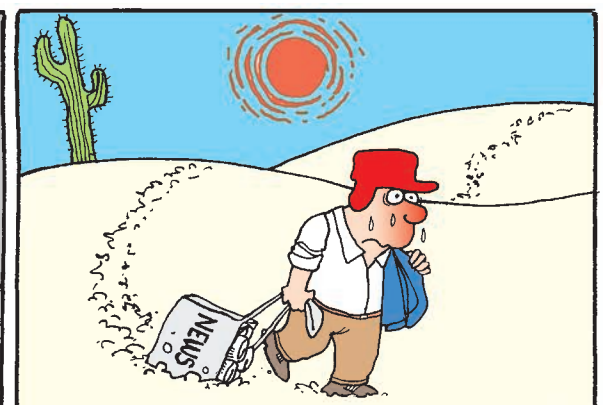
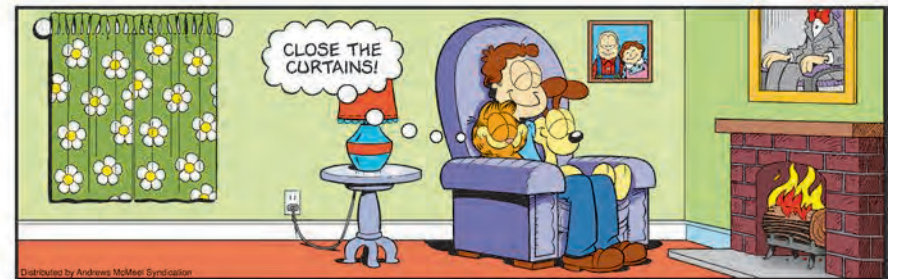
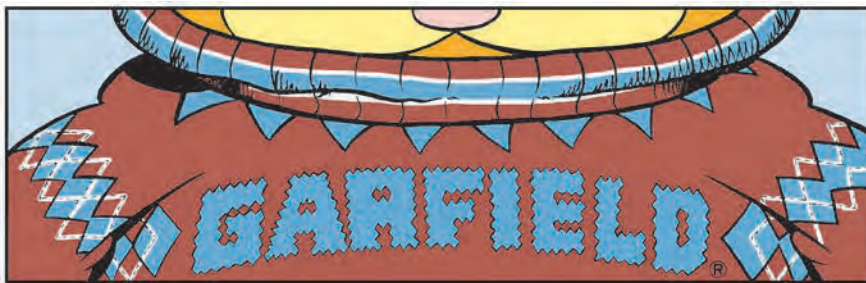


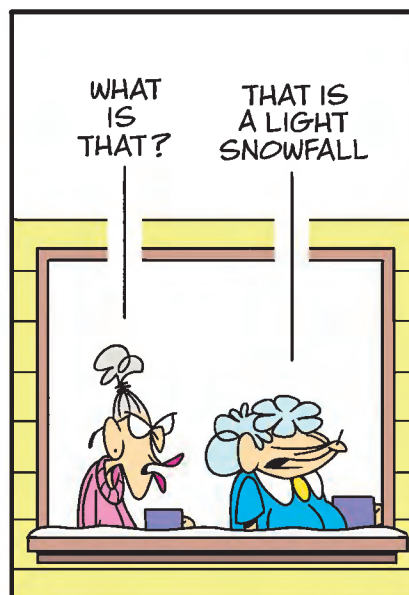
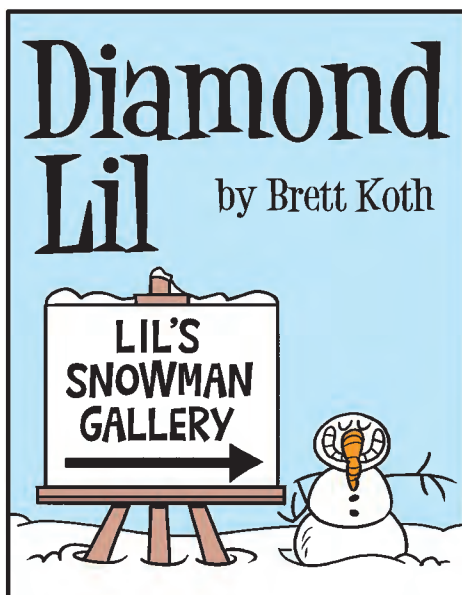
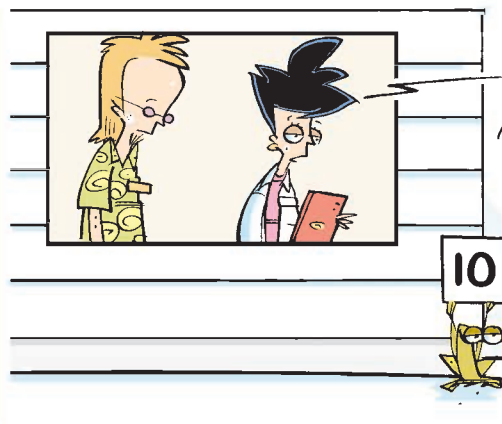
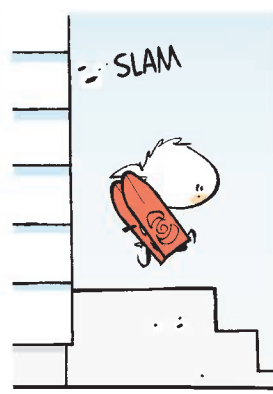
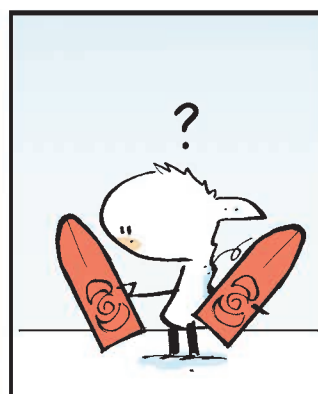
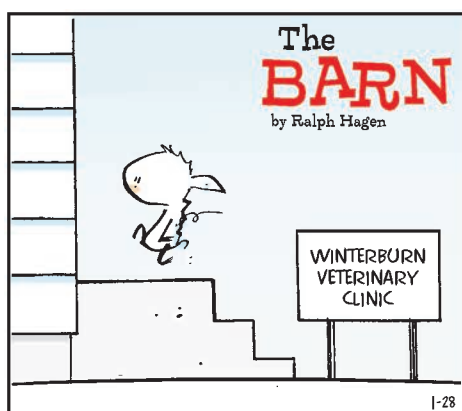
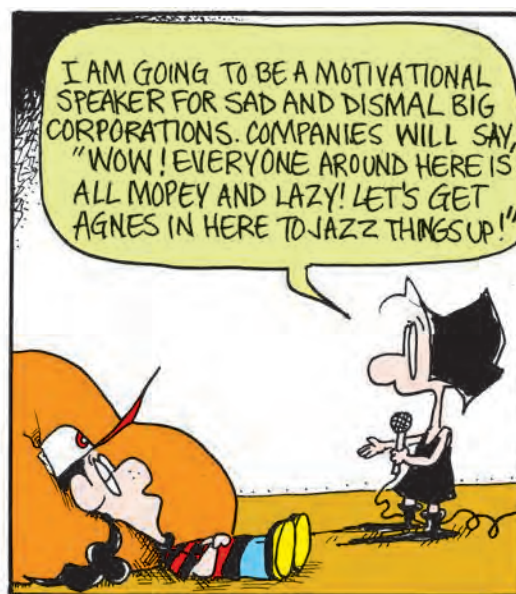
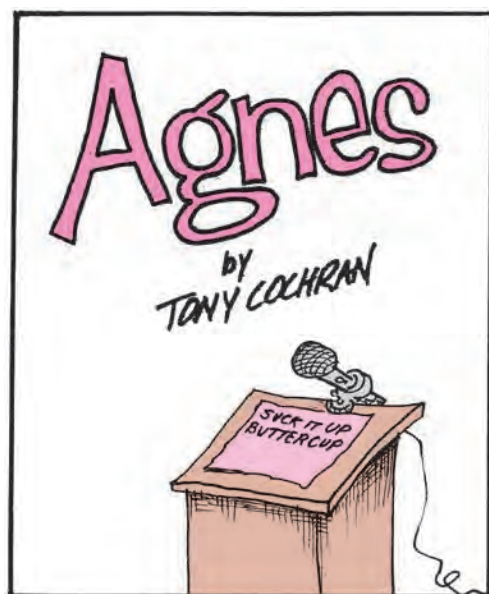
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