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Getting a real tree?

AAA offers tips for safe transport

AAA is reminding drivers this holiday season to properly secure and transport their real Christmas trees so everyone can safely enjoy the holidays.

"Real Christmas trees can become dangerous projectiles if not properly secured," said Nick Jarmusz, director of public affairs for AAA – The Auto Club Group. "Drivers who do not safely secure their tree risk damaging their vehicle and littering the roadway with dangerous debris."

According to AAA:
Previous research from AAA found that road debris — which could include objects like improperly secured Christmas trees that fly off cars, landing on the road or on other cars — caused more than 200,000 crashes during a four-year period, resulting in approximately 39,000 injuries and 500 deaths.

Vehicle damage that results from an improperly secured Christmas tree, such as scratched paint, torn door seals and distorted window frames, could cost up to \$1,500 to repair.

"It's best to transport a Christmas tree on top of a vehicle equipped with a roof rack, but a pickup truck, SUV, van or minivan can work just as well," the AAA news release said.

Safe shopping tips

- Do not visit a tree lot if you or anyone from your family has tested positive for COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-related symptoms.
- Call the lot ahead of time and ask about their policies for visiting. It is possible they may have reduced operating hours or are limiting the amount of people who can visit the lot at one time.

It is also a good idea to ask when they are slow and plan to visit then, when crowds may be smaller.

Although most lots are located outside, it is recommended to wear

a face covering and practice social distancing. Bring hand sanitizer and keep it nearby while shopping.

Transporting the tree

Transporting a real Christmas tree is the same as hauling any other kind of large object. Making sure the tree is properly secured will help prevent vehicle damage and lessen the chance of it coming loose and creating a potential hazard for other drivers.

- **Wrap and cover it:** Once you've found the perfect tree, have the lot wrap it in netting before loading it. Loose branches also can be secured with rope or twine to help protect the tree from damage. Also, prior to loading the tree, cover the roof with an old blanket to prevent scratches to the paint and protect the car from any damage.

- **Trunk first:** Place the tree on the roof rack or in the bed of the truck with the trunk facing the front of the car. If the vehicle does not have a roof rack and is large enough, place the tree inside.

- **Secure it:** Tie down the tree at its bottom, center and top using strong rope or nylon ratchet straps. Avoid using the nylon offered by many tree lots. Use fixed vehicle tie-down points and loop the rope or strap around the tree trunk above a branch to prevent any side-to-side or front-



COURTESY PHOTO Brodhead Independent-Register

Picking out a real Christmas tree can be great family fun, but AAA officials warn that it's important to properly secure the tree so it doesn't become a road hazard to your family or other drivers on the way home.

to-rear movement

- **Give it the tug test:** Once tied down, give the tree several strong tugs from various angles to make

sure it is secured in place and will not come loose.

- **Take it easy:** Drive slowly and take back roads if possible. Higher

speeds can create significant airflow that can damage your tree or challenge even the best tie-down methods.

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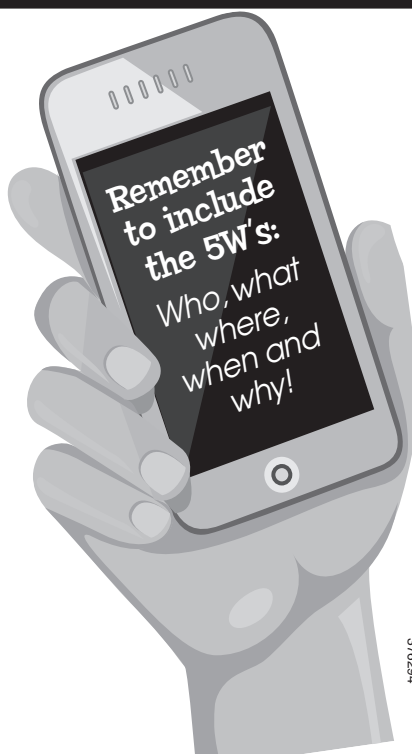
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Obituaries

ROBERT JASON MURRAY

Robert Jason Murray, age 42, passed away peacefully on Oct. 30, 2020, while at his mother's home in Florida while surrounded by family and friends after a lifelong courageous battle.

Robert was born Oct. 16, 1978, in Monroe, the son of Robert Murray and Linda Vesely.

Robert never let his limitations discourage him, instead gave love, humor and courage to all he met. Robert will be remembered as a true gift.

Robert is survived by his mother, Linda (Terry) Vesley of Homasasa Springs, Florida; his father, Robert A. Murray of Brodhead; a sister, Shelly (Nick) Brandt of Tampa Bay, Florida; nephews, Payton and Brook Brandt; a niece, Madison Brandt; grandparents, Gill (Darlene) Koch of Brodhead; sev-



en stepbrothers; one stepsister; and many aunts, uncles and other relatives and friends.

Robert was preceded in death by his grandparents, Lois (Vernon) Murray; and a nephew, Parker

Brandt.

Cremation rites were accorded in Florida and there will be a private burial next spring at the Greenwood Cemetery in Brodhead.

The DL Newcomer Funeral Home is assisting the family locally. Go online to dlnewcomerfuneralhome.com or call 608-897-2484 for more information.

ARLEEN HINTZMAN

Arleen Hintzman, age 88, of Brodhead, Wisconsin, died Sunday, Nov 22, 2020. She attended Rockford, Illinois, schools, graduating from East High in 1950 and Swedish American Hospital School of Nursing in 1953.

Arleen married LaVerne Hintzman on April 9, 1954, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Rockford. They became the parents of three daughters, Judy Hintzman of Lawrence, Kansas, Sue Hintzman-Johnson (Bob Johnson) of Brodhead and Mary Hintzman (Chuck Williams) of Lake Zurich, Illinois.

Arleen is survived by her daughters and LaVerne. She also is sur-



vived by one grandson, Mitchell LaVerne Hintzman Johnson of Madison; two step grandchildren, Dean (Ruth) Williams of Hartford, Wisconsin, and Linda (Dan) Kunz of Waukesha, Wisconsin; and four great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Earl and Stella Young; her sister, LaDonna Baumann of Arizona; and brothers, Eugene Young of Florida and Richard Young of Indiana.

She was a member of the United Methodist Church of Brodhead, Green County Homemakers for over 66 years and the Decatur Young Ideas Homemakers. As a hobby she pressed flowers from home gardens and made floral sta-

tionary. She could be found on a nice summer day picking Queen Anne's Lace along the country roadside for her cards.

Early in her marriage she was employed at Swedish American Hospital in Rockford and the Stuessy Clinic in Brodhead. She returned to nursing after 32 years of helping on the family farm and raising her family. Arleen always loved nursing and was very happy to return to it in later years.

She most valued her closeness with her family and her nursing classmates.

There will be no services at this time. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Condolences may be sent to the Hintzman family at W1597 County Road F, Brodhead, WI 53520. A memorial fund will be established for New Glarus Home Activities Department. The family wishes to thank the entire staff of the New Glarus Home for their kind and compassionate care of their mother.

Everson Funeral Home is serving the family.



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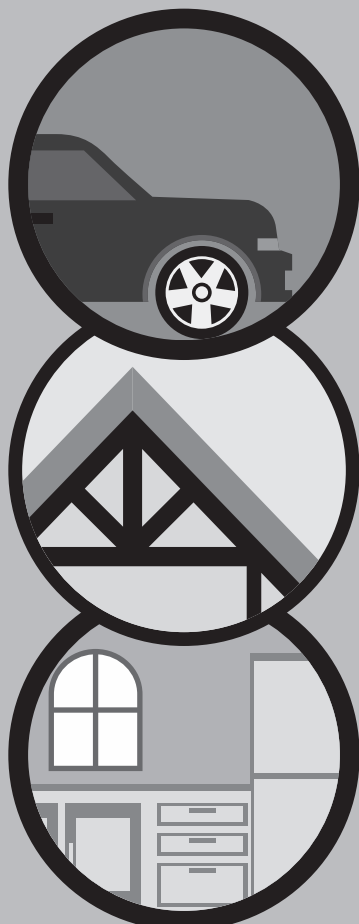
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Soil sampling pays off for farmers, environment

BY THE GREEN COUNTY LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

Have you been thinking about doing soil sampling on your farm? Now is the time to get it done.

Soil testing is a great thing to do in the fall to save time and money in the spring. A large amount can be learned in just a few hours of taking soil samples around the farm. The results will more than pay for themselves since without testing, it is a guess of how many nutrients are left from the previous crop.

Soil testing can help to make sure that you are getting the most bang for your buck when it comes to fertilizer. It can help to improve yields and profitability and increases consistency of nutrient availability across the field, which is important for a more uniform crop growth and maturity that helps with drying time and improves market quality.

Soil testing also can allow for fine-tuning of which nutrients are most needed, helping allocate your fertilizer dollars to those nutrients that will give you the greatest profit increase.

Not only can soil sampling help your bottom line but it can help the environment too. Efficient use of fertilizers means there is less leaching or runoff of nutrients into groundwater and streams. A healthier crop has more residue, which can protect and hold the soil in place after harvest.

Soil sampling can be done yourself and is simple to do. You will need a farm map, soil probe, small bucket or box and soil sample bags. One sample can cover about 5 acres of a uniform field. More samples may be needed if the field isn't uniform.

The probe should be pushed into the ground to 6 inches or to the depth of plowing. Take at least 10 cores per 5 acres, doing so in a "W" or zig zag pattern and put them in the bucket and mix thoroughly discarding any rocks or crop residue. Put about 2 cups from your bucket into the soil sample bag making one composite sample. Repeat this across each of your fields.

Soil sampling should be done at minimum every four years. The more frequently you can sample, the more you can see results from your management changes.

Soil sample analysis average around \$8 each. The Green County Land and Water Conservation Department has soil probes that can be borrowed and bags that can be used to take soil samples.

Samples are sent to the lab to be analyzed and results are typically returned within a week.

Just doing soil sampling isn't enough, though. You must use the information provided by the soil samples, learn from it and apply it to the fields to see full benefits.

The easiest way is to incorporate them into a nutrient management plan. This is a plan for your farm that helps guide what fields need more of certain nutrients or what fields might be losing nutrients due to the crop rotation and management or tillage. The Green County LWCD offers a free class every winter to teach farmers how to write their own nutrient management plan.

To get more information about soil sampling, borrow a soil probe or get more information about a nutrient management plan, call Tonya Gratz at 608-325-4195, extension 121.



SUBMITTED PHOTO *Brodhead Independent-Register*

Fall is a good time for farmers to do soil sampling in their fields, according to experts at the Green County Land and Water Conservation Department. Soil probes may be borrowed from the department.

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Albany Women's League steps up to help families in need

By Mary Hookham
CORRESPONDENT

The Empty Stocking program in Albany is just one way to bring joy to families who need it most during the holiday season. The Albany Women's League works hard every fall and winter to get clothing and other basic necessities to local families using this program.

"This community does not disappoint when giving to people in need," said Teresa Blumer, member of the Albany Women's League. "No one is going to go without if we can possibly help it."

In a regular year, the program is set up with three separate parts: the league uses the school district to learn which students and families need help with winter clothing, boots and other clothing items and also to obtain wish list items from families; a giving tree in the lobby of Town Bank is a great place to leave donations to fulfill those wish list requests; and finally, a food drive in cooperation with the local FFA provides some basic necessities for families in need. This year, the food drive isn't happening and the giving tree isn't set up.

"This has been a sad year for everyone," Blumer said.

Each league member purchases items for one or two families using money from a fund specifically developed for this program. Word-of-mouth donations come in each year from community members.

"I'm really happy with our community," Blumer said. "They really do help out and there is such a good feeling when we do this work."

The league advertises the program primarily through the school and is appreciative of the support of district administrators and teachers, she said. It's crucial to keep families in need anonymous.

Although she isn't sure why, Blumer said demand for items is down this year. In a typical year, there about 15 families who make requests with the program; this year there are about six families.

"No matter how many families we help each year, I am always impressed by what our small community can do," she said.

Albany Comet News

THURSDAY, DEC. 3

-Albertson Memorial Library curbside pickup for high-risk patrons, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

FRIDAY, DEC. 4

-Albertson Memorial Library full circulation and limited computer service, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, DEC. 5

-Albertson Memorial Library closed

SUNDAY, DEC. 6

No events scheduled

MONDAY, DEC. 7

-Albertson Memorial Library curbside pickup, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, DEC. 8

-Albertson Memorial Library curbside pickup for high-risk patrons, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 9

-Albertson Memorial Library full circulation and limited computer service, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

* Denotes Albany School program. For more information, please call 608-862-3225.

- Denotes an community event.

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Healthful hints

Try these tips for 12 ways to a healthy holiday

The holiday season is a busy time of year. Don't let this year be a COVID-19 "bah humbug." Below are 12 holiday tips to make this season the healthiest and merriest of them all:

1. Stay home and save lives. Plan virtual holiday celebrations and consider new holiday traditions. Limit contact to only those you live with.
2. Wash your hands often and use hand sanitizer. It is one of the most important steps to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.
3. Wear a face covering and keep 6 feet apart from others when out in public.
4. Get the flu vaccine and stay up to date on other recommended vaccines.
5. If you become sick, stay home and seek medical care if necessary.
6. Manage stress. Stay balanced with all of your commitments, holiday spending and self-care.
7. Avoid any unnecessary travel. If you need to make a trip, keep an



By
**ALISON
CHOUINARD**
Contributor

emergency kit in your car, watch the weather, wear a seatbelt and don't drink and drive.

8. Stay warm. Cold temperatures can cause health problems, so dress in warm layers and stay dry.
9. Watch kids. Keep an eye on children as they play with new toys and use electronics. Buy age-appropriate toys and develop rules for safe behaviors while surfing the internet.
10. Prevent injuries. Watch for fire hazards with candles, trees and fireplaces. Install and check batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
11. Handle and prepare food properly. As you prepare holiday

meals, keep your family safe from food-related illness. Make sure to wash hands and surfaces often. Avoid cross-contamination by keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs (including their juices) away from ready-to-eat foods and eating surfaces. Cook foods to the proper temperature and refrigerate food

promptly. Do not leave perishable foods out for more than two hours.

12. Eat healthy, move more and support local businesses. Find healthy holiday foods by trying new holiday recipes. Find fun ways to stay active. Try dancing to holiday music, play out in the snow or go for a walk after a meal.

Support local businesses by getting curbside pickup or delivery.

Safely enjoy all the festivities this season by following the "12 ways to a healthy holiday."

Alison Chouinard is the community health education coordinator at the Rock County Public Health Department.

Natural Resources Board sets virtual meeting

The Wisconsin Natural Resources Board will meet virtually for the December board meeting to consider several proposed emergency rules and donations.

The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, originating from the State Natural Resources Building in Madison.

The public is encouraged to participate. The deadline for remote public appearance requests and written comments is 11 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 2.

Due to public health advisories relating to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the public will not be allowed to attend the meeting in person. The December board meeting will be livestreamed at dnrmedia.wi.gov.

Members of the board will be considering:

- Proposed rules affecting chapters NR 130, 131, 132 and 182 related to nonferrous metallic mining activities;
- Proposed emergency rules affecting chapter NR 20 related to Minocqua Chain walleye harvest regulations;
- Proposed emergency rules affecting chapters NR 20 and 25, related to fish harvest in Lake Superior;
- Statement of scope and hearing notice approval affecting chapter NR 10 related to elk management and hunting regulations from the 2020-2030 elk management plan;
- Proposed sale of 0.07 acres of land from the 400 State Trail in the village of Reedsburg in Sauk County; and
- Approval of a board resolution regarding DNR budget and revenue sources.

View Wisconsin wildlife via Snapshots project

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Snapshot Wisconsin project recently reached a milestone of 50 million photos collected.

Since 2016, volunteers have submitted photos to the citizen science program that encourages members of the public to help monitor wildlife.

Volunteers host a network of trail cameras that take "snapshots" of wildlife as they pass by. Volunteers then classify the species from their trail cameras with help from the public using the Zooniverse crowdsourcing platform. The data helps the DNR understand where certain

animal populations are around the state and make wildlife management decisions.

More than 1,700 volunteers monitor more than 2,100 trail cameras across all 72 Wisconsin counties. The Snapshot program receives approximately 45,000 photos per day.

To celebrate the 50 millionth photo milestone, the Snapshot Wisconsin team selected some of their favorite photos and built an interactive map that can be found at wi-dnr.maps.arcgis.com. The map tool highlights each image and tells a short story about the photo or the species shown.

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**THURSDAY, DEC. 3;
MONDAY, DEC. 7,
TUESDAY, DEC. 6 &
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 9**

- Orfordville library open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, DEC. 4

- Orfordville library open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; storytime at 11 a.m.

SATURDAY, DEC. 5

- Orfordville library open 9 a.m. to noon

SUNDAY, DEC. 6

- Orfordville library closed

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Horse trails close in Rock County parks

Officials at the Rock County Parks Division announced that as of Nov. 30, all county park equestrian trails are closed. The trails include those at Gibbs Lake County Park, Happy Hollow Park, Magnolia Bluff County Park and the Pelishek-Tiffany Trail.

In addition, the gate to the Upper Bluff at Magnolia Bluff Park closed as of Nov. 30.

For more information, go online to co.rock.wi.us/parks or find the parks department on Facebook and Instagram.

The Rock County Parks Division is open 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays. Call 608-757-5450 for more information.

Village eyes April ATV/UTV advisory referendum

Members of the Orfordville Village Board voted Nov. 23 to move forward with having an advisory referendum on the April ballot regarding the use of ATVs and UTVs on village streets, according to the board meeting minutes.

The referendum would ask residents to designate that the Village Board would have the authority to decide on ATV/UTV use on village streets.

The spring election is set for April 6.

Wisconsin Farmers Union elects local board members

Members of the South Central Chapter of the Wisconsin Farmers Union held their first-ever virtual annual meeting on Nov. 16. More than two dozen members were in attendance, voting on additions to the chapter's bylaws, approving policy changes that the chapter will address at the upcoming Farmers Union state convention and electing new members to the chapter board.

Among the people joining the board are David Parr of Monticello, Hawthorn McCracken of Orfordville and Kriss Marion of Blanchardville. Matt Sheaffer was elected to a second term as chapter president.



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As the holiday season rapidly approaches, it is time to stop and think about the advantages of shopping locally. The money you spend today in your local economy helps to build your community tomorrow. Let's all do our best to keep local money at home where we can enjoy all the benefits all year long.

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Nursing assistant receives honor for quality care

Inpatient Services nursing assistant Shanaye Howard recently was named the newest recipient of Monroe Clinic’s BEE Award. Howard has been a member of the Monroe Clinic team for two years.

Howard was nominated by Inpatient Services nurse Janet Fenley.

In the nomination, Fenley wrote, “Shanaye and I were providing care for a patient who lived alone, and her out-of-town family were anxious about her lack of support system. Shanaye lives only five minutes from her, so with permission from the patient’s family, she gave the patient her personal phone number to call if she ever needed anything.

“The patient and her daughter were very grateful for Shanaye’s assistance and compassion while providing the

high level of care she always does.”

Howard received a second nomination from a thankful patient, which read, “As far as I’m concerned, Shanaye went above and beyond with the care she provided! She was friendly, helpful and explained everything as it happened.”

The BEE Award was created to recognize any non-nursing staff member who demonstrates excellent quality care, extraordinary compassion, focus on the patient and the patient’s needs and effective collaboration with other members on the patient-care team.

Monroe Clinic officials ask the community to help spotlight the contributions of their staff, like Howard, by nominating them for the BEE Award. Nomination forms are available at Monroe Clinic greeter’s desks and by going online to monroeclinic.org/beeaward.



SUBMITTED PHOTO *Brodhead Independent-Register*
Nursing assistant Shanaye Howard recently received the BEE Award from Monroe Clinic. The award recognizes extraordinary patient care given by non-nursing staff members.

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Legal Notices

**AGENDA
BRODHEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING
Wednesday, December 9, 2020
DISTRICT OFFICE BOARD
ROOM
7:00 P.M.
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I. CALL TO ORDER
II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
III. ROLL CALL
IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
VI. APPROVAL OF BILLS
VII. INFORMATION REPORTS
VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
[SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY]

AGENDA
IX. APPROVAL OF EARLY GRADUATION REQUESTS
X. APPROVAL OF HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES FOR 2021-22
XI. 1ST READING OF CHANGES TO POLICY JIJ [SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT]
XII. COVID-19 UPDATE
XIII. ACCEPT DONATION(S)
XIV. RESIGNATION(S)
XV. EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATION(S)
XVI. VOLUNTEER RECOMMENDATION(S)
XVII. FUTURE AGENDA
XVIII. ROLL CALL VOTE TO CONVENE IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO WI. STS. 19.85, (1), (c) (f)
a. Staffing
b. Administrative Contracts
XIX. ACTION ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS
XX. ADJOURNMENT

The Independent Register
12/2/2020
WNAXLP 386094

**Brodhead Water & Light
Brodhead, Wisconsin
Substation Structure and
Material Package
ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**
Sealed Bids for the Brodhead Municipal 4 Substation Structure and Material Package, Project B16-20A, will be received by Brodhead Water & Light, at the office of the

Forster Electrical Engineering at 550 N Burr Oak Ave, Oregon, WI 53575, until 1:00 PM local time on December 22, 2020 at which time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read. The Project consists of furnishing and delivering a structure and material package for the new Brodhead Municipal 4 Substation.

Bids will be received for a single Contract. Bids shall be on a lump sum basis, with additive alternate bid items as indicated in the Bid Form.

The Issuing Office for the Bidding Documents is: Forster Electrical Engineering, Inc. at 550 N Burr Oak Avenue Oregon, WI 53575. Prospective Bidders may obtain copies of the Bidding Documents from the Issuing Office as described below.

Printed copies of the Bidding Documents may be obtained from the Issuing Office upon payment of a deposit of \$50 for each set or \$20 for an electronic version. The date that the Bidding Documents are transmitted by the Issuing Office will be considered the Bidder’s date of receipt of the Bidding Documents. Partial sets of Bidding Documents will not be available from the Issuing Office. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for full or partial sets of Bidding Documents, including Addenda if any, obtained from sources other than the Issuing Office.

Bid security shall be furnished in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders.

Owner: **Brodhead Water & Light**
By: **Ed Hoff**
Title: **Superintendent**
Date: **November 24, 2020**
The Independent Register
12/2, 12/9/2020
WNAXLP 386175

**AGENDA
BRODHEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT
Finance Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 9, 2020
HIGH SCHOOL L.M.C.
6:30 P.M.**

AGENDA
I. REVIEW BILLS
II. REVIEW BUDGET UPDATE
III. ADJOURN
The Independent Register
12/2/2020
WNAXLP 386091

Family caregivers can access online resources

While virtual holiday gatherings will be the norm this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, health officials want families, and family caregivers, to know that many resources are available to help if you notice changes in a family member’s health, self-care routine, memory or overall behavior this holiday season, even if you don’t live close to your loved one.

“We know that 2020 has presented new challenges for family caregivers, who already are under enormous stress,” Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary-designee Andrea Palm said in a news release. “We want caregivers to know that there are many resources available to help them take care of themselves as they take care of their loved one.”

Health officials suggest that a good first step is to call your local Aging and Disability Resource Center. Staff know the resources available in the community, and can connect families to services that can keep older adults living at home safely. Most ADRCs also have dementia care specialists on staff who can answer questions in confidence if a person suspects that a relative or friend may be experiencing cognitive decline.

The National Family Caregiver Support Program and Wisconsin

Alzheimer’s Family Caregiver Support Program can help with caregiver support services that are available at no cost or low cost to most people caring for a Wisconsin resident age 60 or over. Services include:

- Help with home chores
- In-home personal care (bathing, grooming, etc.)
- Access to classes and conferences on how to provide safe in-home care
- Meal preparation services, home-delivered meals and grocery delivery
- Respite services that give caregivers a short break from responsibilities
- Adaptive equipment that makes caregiving easier and improves safety for the person receiving care
- Expert advice from dementia care specialists
- Support groups, classes, counseling and discussion groups
- Support for grandparents and other relatives age 55+ who have become the primary caregiver for a related child
- Access to legal and financial services related to caregiving
- Help paying for some goods associated with caregiving
- Knowledgeable and caring advice from professionals who understand the difficulties of caregiving

- Emergency overnight or short-term facility stays

New resource online

Wisconsin’s newest caregiver support tool is a free online learning and training resource called Trualta, sponsored by the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, the Dane County Area Agency on Aging and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Accessible 24/7, Trualta offers videos and articles from trusted professionals who teach caregivers how to perform personal care at home, communicate with individuals who have dementia, manage finances and medications and make their own health a priority.

Trualta focuses on the physical and emotional health of everyone in a caregiving household, because stress, fatigue and injury are real dangers for anyone providing care at home.

Whether you’re a caregiver for older adults or individuals with intellectual or physical disabilities, or a grandparent or other relative caring for children, it’s critical to stay connected with other caregivers. With many events canceled or postponed this year, the Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance (wisconsincaregiver.org) offers a list of virtual events for caregivers taking place around the state, including virtual caregiver cafes that provide emotional support, online classes and conferences, live events and a chance to talk with other caregivers. Most of the events are free or have a minimal registration fee, which is often covered by a program through the ADRC.

A few of the upcoming events include:

- “Managing Stress,” 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9. Originally part of a class for caregivers, this one-hour session will help anyone learn ways to manage stress, as well as meet others who are dealing with some of the same things. To register, call 920-386-3580.

- “Let’s Get Away Together,” Virtual Arm Chair Travel Series, 1 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9. This is part of six interactive virtual travel activity sessions. Each week will focus on a new part of the world while incorporating storytelling, music, poetry writing and/or a simple craft. There is no cost to attend. Participants must have a computer/tablet or smartphone with internet access.

To register, call the Rock County Council on Aging at 608-758-8455 or email caregiving@co.rock.wi.us

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BBB issues warning on police charity scams

The Better Business Bureau’s ScamTracker has received more than a dozen reports of a nonprofit organization using what consumers think are shady tactics to solicit donations. Potential donors should be aware. If an organization isn’t a charity, then

contributions are not “donations” and cannot be deducted from your taxes.

How the scam works

You receive an unsolicited call from someone who claims to be representing a nonprofit organization.

The “charity” has a name that includes a law enforcement word (“police,” “trooper,” etc.).

There are lots of variations on this scam. The caller explains that the goal of this nonprofit is to help keep police officers, their families, or even

police dogs safe.

The organization’s goals may seem noble, but do your research before making a pledge.

A previous BBB investigation revealed many red flags about one of these groups, including the fact that contributions are not tax-deductible, and no information is available on the organization’s president, board members and active chapters.

According to tax records, only a small fraction of donations made to the organization actually support law enforcement officers. This is just one example of how fundraisers can look and sound like a charity, but actually be lining the pockets of opportunists.

If you begin asking specific questions about the organization or how your money will be used, you may find the caller has no answers for you.

In other cases, you are told to call a different number where your questions will also be evaded. Callers often use intimidation tactics or try to make you feel guilty about not supporting their cause. Don’t fall for it. It’s all a way to get your credit card information and a donation.

How to avoid scams

• Do your research: If a nonprofit organization isn’t completely trans-

parent, it’s impossible to know for sure that your money will support a good cause.

Ask for documentation on how much of your contribution will be used for program services and how much will go for fundraising and management expenses.

• Don’t give into high-pressure tactics: If a caller makes you feel uncomfortable by making you feel guilty or telling you your donation is urgently needed right this minute, it’s best to simply hang up. Intimidation tactics are often used by scammer and are a red flag.

• Check the rating: Check the charity’s rating on Give.org. For a charity to receive BBB accreditation, it must meet 20 standards of accountability covering everything from governance to fundraising.

If the organization does not appear on BBB’s website, that does not mean they are not a real charity, but it can be a warning that you need to do more investigation before you give.

• Give locally: Contact your local or state law enforcement agency and ask how you can support them.

Most agencies have a non-profit “friends of” type organization and will be happy to refer you to a more worthwhile option.

Farmers Union hosts estate planning workshops

Wisconsin Farmers Union is presenting a webinar series, “Estate Planning: Creating Wills & Trusts.” The trio of December workshops will help farm families think through the estate planning process.

The sessions are set for noon on the first three Wednesdays in December. Each workshop will be led by attorney Anthony Schmoldt of Schmoldt Law Office in Chippewa Falls.

Session dates and topics include:
• Dec. 2 – “Introduction to the Documents”
• Dec. 9 – “Writing Wills and Trusts”
• Dec. 16 – “Advanced Trusts and LLCs”

Farmers looking to the future have many issues to consider. Succession planning includes analyzing the current farm finances, planning for the current generation’s later years, estate and tax planning, and, in some cases, developing management skills of the

successor. However, before these areas are addressed conversations should take place around the values and goals of involved family members or farming partners.

“Given the higher debt-to-asset ratio at which many farms are operating today compared to a generation ago, estate planning has become more complex,” said Wisconsin Farmers Union President Darin Von Ruden. “It’s important to start thinking through the future of your farm, and these workshops will help get the ball rolling.

Whether you’re thinking about passing the farm on to the next generation, considering other creative options or are pondering your livelihood in retirement, estate planning is an important process.”

Attendees will learn about the options available in estate planning and will start to develop a working plan. Register for the events wisconsinfarmersunion.com/events.

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