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SHOPPING NEWS

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WEDNESDAY, JAN. 1, 2025

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Vikings rout Panthers in non-conference matchup

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Parkview Vikings picked up their fourth victory of the 2024-2025 Wisconsin high school boys' basketball season when they dominated the Juda Panthers in mid-December.

It was a busy week for the Vikings, who opened the week with an away game against Williams Bay on Monday, Dec. 16. That day, the Vikings held an overall record of 2-1. Williams Bay came in with a winless record of 0-3. Despite their slow start, Williams Bay came in eager to erase the zero from their win column.

They came just seconds away from doing so. In the closing seconds of the game, Williams Bay found themselves holding a 70-69 lead over the Vikings. It was Parkview who held the ball on the final possession, however. Aiden Crane drew the

attention of the defense as he drove to the left side of the lane. With the Williams Bay defense focused on Crane, he dished it off to Mike Williams for an open lay in to beat the buzzer. The Vikings won by a score of 71-70 to improve to 3-1 on the season.

Crane led the Vikings with twenty-five points on the night, but his biggest play was the game winning pass. Mathias Treinen added twelve in the victory. Louis Nath was next up with eleven. Williams finished the game with seven points, all of which came in the second half, including the game winner.

Parkview found themselves in a similar situation just twenty-four hours later. On Dec. 17, the Vikings played host to the Juda Panthers. Juda came into the game with a disappointing record of just 1-3.

With the Vikings looking

to avoid another trap game, they showed up ready to play. Parkview's offense had their best performance of the young season in front of the home crowd. Specifically, it was Crane who had a season-high performance to help his team pull away from the Panthers.

Crane got his day started with a three-pointer and that told the story of the first half for him. Crane wound up sinking a trio of three-pointers in the first half as he put up twenty-one points in the opening half.

Nath quietly had himself a big opening half, as well. Five field goals from inside the arc allowed Nath to rack up ten first half points of his own. Treinen added six first half points as the Vikings jumped out to a 47-33 lead.

The Vikings relied on their big three to put the game away in the second half. Nath, Treinen, and

Crane combined for thirty-three points in the second half. Crane led the way with sixteen points of his own, including his fourth three-pointer of the night. Treinen added nine and Nath had eight, including a two-for-two trip to the line.

In the end, the Vikings improved to 4-1 with a big 81-65 victory over the Panthers. Crane led all scorers with thirty-seven points. Nath was next up for the Vikings with eighteen points. Treinen added fifteen in the victory.

The Vikings would drop their final game of the week, however. They fell 84-55 in a matchup against Deerfield on Friday, Dec. 20. The loss dropped Parkview's record to 4-2 before entering the Christmas break. They return to action on Saturday, Jan. 4, when they travel to take on Waterloo. Parkview returns home on Jan. 10 to host Madison Country Day.



PHOTO COURTESY AMANDA URISH, BTC Rock Valley Publishing

Trevor Boyle, nursing graduate, was a student speaker at the graduation on Dec. 17 at Blackhawk Technical College.

BTC honors graduates at December ceremony

Blackhawk Technical College celebrated its newest graduates on Tuesday evening, Dec. 17, during a commencement ceremony in the Conference Center at the Beloit-Janesville Campus.

A total of 87 credentials were awarded to the December graduates, including associate degrees, diplomas and certifications.

The ceremony featured student speaker Trevor Boyle, a graduate of the Associate Degree in Nursing program, who shared his reflections on the transformative journey of education at Blackhawk.

"When we first walked through these doors, we were filled with anticipation, eager to make new friends, to learn new things, and to carve our own paths," Boyle said. "Along the way, we encountered challenges, some big and small, but each one shaped us into who we are today. We learned the importance of resilience, the power of collaboration, and the value of persistence."

Boyle also expressed gratitude to Blackhawk's faculty. "You have given us more than just knowledge. You've given us the tools to navigate the world and make a difference," he said.

Patty Aronson, a Nursing instructor and the 2024 Faculty of the Year, also spoke.

"Life will continue to challenge you. But remember you made a decision to go to school to better yourself and you did it," said Aronson,

who also is a co-advisor to the Student Nurses Association.

Congratulations to all of Blackhawk's graduates.

ACCOUNTING – Associate Degree

- Angel M. Duval
- Baylie A. Wickingson*

ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT – One-Year Technical Diploma

- Danielle D. La Reau

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL – Associate Degree

- Deanna Lette*

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS – Associate Degree

- Chloe N. Fuchs

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE – Associate Degree

- Courtney J. Knox
- Anna M. Payson+*

AUTOMATION SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY – Associate Degree

- Alexander D. Flesch

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Gov. Evers highlights accomplishments of administration in 'Year of the Worker'

On Dec. 26, Gov. Tony Evers celebrated his administration's efforts to bolster Wisconsin's workforce throughout the Year of the Worker. In January, Gov. Evers delivered his sixth annual State of the State address and declared 2024 the Year of the Worker in Wisconsin. During the address, the governor announced new efforts by the Evers Administration to address the state's generational workforce challenges and build a workforce prepared to meet the needs of a 21st-century economy, including launching the state's first teacher apprenticeship pilot program and creating the Governor's Task Force on the Healthcare Workforce.

"I declared 2024 the Year of the Worker in Wisconsin to pursue every pathway and seek every avenue to address our long-standing workforce challenges that had long been neglected – with or without legislative action – just as we had since Day One. And it's clear my administration's efforts are paying off," said Gov. Evers. "Wisconsinites are working and working hard, and reducing barriers to work, expanding access to job training and education, and recruiting and retaining talented workers will continue to be a top priority for my administration even as we head into a new year. We must continue to build upon the successes we've had in 2024 to maintain our state's positive economic momentum and to recruit, train, and retain a workforce in Wisconsin that can meet the needs of the 21st Century."

Throughout the Year of the Worker, Gov. Evers and the Evers Administration:

- Created the Governor's Task Force on the Healthcare Workforce to find solutions to support the state's healthcare workforce;

- Launched the state's first-ever Teacher Apprenticeship Pilot Program aimed at bolstering the state's education workforce and the retention of teachers;

- Achieved seven consecutive months of historically high employment, continued historically low unemployment, and reported nine counties with the lowest rates of unemployment on record;

- Highlighted record-breaking enrollment in Wisconsin's Registered Apprenticeship Program for the third year in a row, with more than 17,089 registered apprentices enrolled;

- Celebrated record-high enrollment in the state's Youth Apprenticeship Program for the second year in a row with an all-time high of 9,932 youth apprentices enrolled during the 2023-24 school year, with a record 6,671 employers participating;

- Started new youth apprenticeship pathways, including early childhood education, school-age education, administration, human resources, law enforcement, fire protection, project management, and barbering/cosmetology;

- Launched the U.S. Climate Alliance's Climate-Ready Workforce Initiative;

- Secured the state's designation as a U.S. Regional Tech Hub, unlocking \$49 million to grow the state's personalized medicine and biohealth sector; and

- Welcomed billions of dollars in investments from global companies to create thousands

of jobs in Southeastern Wisconsin, including Microsoft, Eli Lilly and Company, Kikkoman, and more.

This is all in addition to celebrating a recent report from the Wisconsin Policy Forum, which shows Wisconsin's personal income tax burden has fallen to an all-time low thanks in part to tax cuts signed into law by Gov. Evers, putting more money back in working families' pockets, and continued efforts by the Evers Administration to reduce barriers to work, ensuring workers have affordable housing, transportation, and child care so they can get to work, and opportunities for education and job training. The governor also committed to making the largest biennial increase in state funding for the University of Wisconsin (UW) System in state history.

Additional background on Gov. Evers' and the Evers Administration's efforts to support and bolster Wisconsin's workforce is available below.

Bolstering high-need areas of workforce

To continue building upon his administration's efforts to address the state's healthcare workforce challenges and as previewed in his 2024 State of the State address, Gov. Evers signed Executive Order #220 to create the Governor's Task Force on the Healthcare Workforce. The Task Force was charged with studying the workforce challenges facing the state's healthcare system, including recruitment and retention, identifying ways to improve patient care and alleviate the burdens on the healthcare workforce, exploring educational and training pathways to

grow a sustainable healthcare workforce, and creating an action plan with solutions related to workforce development, industry innovation, education, and training for consideration in the governor's 2025-27 executive budget.

In August, after months of meetings and speaking with groups across the state, the governor announced that the Task Force had released its final report and advisory action plan providing solutions to address the state's long-standing healthcare workforce shortages. The Task Force adopted 10 recommendations with 26 action items representing a variety of policies and programs to address several industry issues, including education, training, recruitment, and retention of healthcare workers. The action plan represents a strategic set of policy and implementation approaches targeting the healthcare industry's chronic challenges.

To find the Governor's Task Force on the Healthcare Workforce Advisory Action Plan and learn more about the work of the Governor's Task Force on the Healthcare Workforce, visit the Wisconsin Department of Health Services' (DHS) website.

Supporting long-term care services in state

Since 2019, Gov. Evers has made investing in long-term care one of his administration's top priorities. In 2019, Gov. Evers was proud to create a Task Force on Caregiving to help support and strengthen the direct care workforce, increase access to care, and improve

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Inland trout early catch and release season

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds anglers that they will be able to target any of Wisconsin's inland trout species using artificial lures only starting Jan. 4 through May 2 on designated early season trout streams.

Any trout caught during this time will need to be immediately released. All anglers are encouraged to continue to practice responsible catch and release and reduce their reel and handling time with the fish as much as possible. Tips on how to release your catch responsibly can be found on the DNR's Responsible Release webpage.

Anglers will be able to keep the trout they catch once the general hook and line season opens on May 3, provided bag limits and length requirements are met. Check the Guide to Wisconsin's Trout Fishing Regulations for specifics.

Anyone wishing to participate in the season will need a 2024-2025 fishing license and an inland trout stamp, which are both good until March 31 and can



PHOTO COURTESY WISCONSIN DNR *Rock Valley Publishing*

Wisconsin's early catch and release season for inland trout opens Jan. 4.

be purchased online through Go Wild or at one of many license sales locations throughout the state. After April 1, anglers will need a 2025-2026 fishing license and inland trout stamp.

For a look at trout streams across the state, access the T.R.O.U.T. tool and additional trout fishing information on the DNR's Inland Trout Fishing webpage.

Study: Young people in state willing to work 60-hour weeks

Across the nation, people take varied paths in how they approach their work lives. For some, the focus is on striking a balance, ensuring their job supports a fulfilling life beyond the office. Others adopt a more relaxed 'work to live' philosophy, treating their careers as a means to fund their personal interests. At the other extreme, however, a growing group of ambitious young professionals is emerging. These individuals pour everything into their careers, prioritizing professional growth above all else. In their pursuit of success, they willingly forgo weekends, social gatherings, vacation time, and even put off major life events like starting a family.

Career.io, the all-in-one platform for career guidance and success, conducted a survey of 3,000 young professionals to pinpoint where America's most ambitious workers reside. A striking 73% of Wisconsinites under 25 reported they'd be willing to clock 60-hour work weeks to climb the career ladder. This figure surpasses the national average of 61%, meaning the Badger State's young professionals rank among the most ambitious in the nation.

More specifically by city, Wisconsin has 2 cities with the most ambitious young professionals in the country:

it an appealing destination for young professionals. The city's strengths in manufacturing, healthcare, and brewing, combined with its emerging tech and creative sectors, provide a diverse range of career opportunities. Milwaukee's revitalized downtown, affordable cost of living, and vibrant cultural scene create a welcoming environment for ambitious individuals.

"These cities represent more than just job opportunities; they embody the ambition and resilience of a new generation willing to put in long workweeks to achieve their goals," says Amanda Augustine, career expert at Career.io, "Each location fosters a unique environment where driven young professionals can thrive and redefine career success on their own terms. While we recognize the dedication of these professionals, working 60 or more hours a week is not necessarily a sustainable or healthy approach for the long term. A more balanced approach offers a better path to success."

Methodology

3,000 18-25 year old respondents were carefully chosen from a geographically representative online panel of double opt-in members. This selection was further tailored to meet the precise criteria required for each unique survey. Throughout the survey, we designed questions to carefully screen and authenticate respondents, guaranteeing the alignment of the survey with the ideal participants.

To ensure the integrity of the data collection, an array of data quality methods was employed. Alongside conventional measures like digital fingerprinting, bot checks, geo-verification, and speeding detection, etc., each response underwent a thorough review by a dedicated team member to ensure quality and contextual accuracy. The commitment extended to open-ended responses, subjecting them to scrutiny for gibberish answers and plagiarism detection.

#47 Madison

Madison's blend of academic excellence and a thriving tech scene makes it a standout destination for young professionals. Home to the University of Wisconsin, the city is a hub for research, healthcare, and technology, attracting talent from around the country. Madison's vibrant downtown, extensive bike paths, and picturesque lakes create a unique environment where professional ambition and quality of life go hand in hand.

#59 Milwaukee

Milwaukee's blend of Midwestern friendliness and economic dynamism makes

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WSA: Farmers appreciate Congress recognizing farm economy needs support

The Wisconsin Soybean Association (WSA) joins the American Soybean Association (ASA) in extending appreciation to Congress for passing a continuing resolution that includes provisions important to soy farmers, among them a Farm Bill extension and both disaster and economic assistance. Inflation, historically high input prices, a 40 percent drop in soybean prices and devastating storms have led to an extended rough patch for many Wisconsin and U.S. farmers.

"While this bill doesn't contain everything we sought - namely a new, five-year Farm Bill - we are grateful to lawmakers on both sides of the aisle for working together to bring critical relief to our family farms," said Prairie Farm grower Tanner Johnson, who sits on ASA's executive committee. "For many farmers, this economic and dis-

ter aid will help weather the storm as we continue to make plans for the 2025 growing season."

The bill, which passed through Congress and was signed by President Biden, will keep government funding in place through March 14 and extends the 2018 Farm Bill through Sept. 30. Additionally, the package includes approximately \$21 billion in disaster assistance and \$10 billion in economic assistance for farmers who have faced recent market challenges.

Wisconsin producers will gather to learn more about the state of the farm economy during 2025 Wisconsin Corn-Soy Expo. In the conference's final panel, trade policy experts including Virginia Houston, ASA's director of government affairs, will discuss the importance of preserving and growing trade partnerships across the globe.

State farmer earns a spot on ASA's executive committee

Tanner Johnson is going places.

The Prairie Farm grower was elected to serve on the nine-member American Soybean Association (ASA) executive committee during ASA's December board meeting in St. Louis.

"I'm proud to represent Wisconsin and American soybean farmers on the ASA executive board," said Johnson, who was elected to ASA in 2022. "There's no shortage of challenges that soybean farmers are facing, and I view it as my job to turn every one of those challenges into opportunities."

ASA is poised to address several policy issues in the coming year, including passing a new Farm Bill, advocating for continued farmer economic assistance following a 40% drop in soybean prices in the past two years, tax relief, protecting crop inputs, defending the soy checkoff, and promoting growth throughout the biofuels industry. Johnson currently serves on ASA's regulatory committee.

Wisconsin farmer Don Lutz, who serves alongside Johnson on ASA, said his colleague is up to the task.

"He's well adapted to what the challenges are and listens and is excited about what he's doing," Lutz said. "You've got to learn either through experience or listening to oth-



Tanner Johnson

ers, and that's what Tanner is doing."

Johnson is an at-large director with the Wisconsin Soybean Association (WSA).

first-generation farmer, Johnson is a past ASA Young Leader and grows soybeans, corn, winter wheat, alfalfa hay and cover crop species in a no-till environment. He also owns and operates a Pioneer Seed agency and agronomy consulting business. He married his wife, Brittany, in 2023.

Established in 1920, ASA advocates on behalf of the nation's nearly 500,000 soybean producers. George M. Briggs of Madison is the only Wisconsin farmer to have served as ASA president in the years of 1922-1923. Before he considers the possibility of becoming the second Wisconsin farmer to lead ASA, Johnson said he's focused on the policy dynamics in 2025.

"It's time to get to work!" he said.

Johnson and WSA's board will gather in February during the 2025 Wisconsin Corn-Soy Expo. The following month, Johnson will join ASA and WSA colleagues for ASA's D.C. Hill Visits and board meetings.



PHOTO SUBMITTED Rock Valley Publishing

A fiber workshop is one of many classes offered at Shake Rag Alley.

Arts and crafts classes help adults stay creative

Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts is preparing to launch its 2025 catalog on Jan. 7.

More than 250 adult arts and crafts workshops are scheduled this year in Fiber, Heritage Craft, Metal and Heat, Mixed Media, Painting and 2D, and Voice and Page. Teacher-artists come from the community of Mineral Point, across the country and beyond, returning to Shake Rag Alley as a sustained part of their practice.

From glassblowing to watercolor, altered apparel, mixed media, oil and cold wax, and much, much more, the 2025 catalog is sure to have something for everyone looking to get creative in the new year. The new catalog features more offerings in February, March, and November, as well as the traditional high summer season, ensuring more options for creativity and making throughout the year. Immersive retreats include Jewelry Boot Camp and Mining Your Stories Writing Retreat (featuring NEA Big Read author Kao Kalia Yang) in May, Woodlanders Gathering in July, Art Adventure in August, and the Rug Hooking Retreat in September.

Early registration is key to ensuring space with the more sought-after instructors and categories. Please visit www.ShakeRagAlley.org to join the e-newsletter list, or

request a print catalog. In addition to the adult workshops, the Youth Program continues to evolve with the Free Arts Camp, arts and crafts offerings, and scheduling planned with working families in mind. Youth Program offerings will be shared in spring.

Workshops at Shake Rag Alley range from half-day to multi-day experiences, with low-cost options including the Makers and Shakers Art Party from March to November, and free events like Fiber Faire. In addition to discounts for volunteers and instructors, college students are eligible for 15% workshop discounts. A general scholarship fund is available for assistance for adult workshop tuition and Youth Program fees. For the 2025 catalog, there are more half-day workshops offered to improve accessibility with cost and schedule.

As the non-profit arts organization heads into its 21st year, Shake Rag Alley will continue to cultivate the creativity that thrives in rural southwestern Wisconsin. This includes robust literary programming with the Alley Stage Reading Series (submission open until Jan. 31), the Where We Live anthology - a partnership with Little Creek Press and part of the NEA Big Read programming (submissions open until Jan. 15), and the 14th year of the Winter Writers Reading series.

The 2025 Winter Writers Reading Series is set to begin on Jan. 2 and will feature award-winning Wisconsin writers sharing their work from January to March. Shake Rag Alley is excited to partner with Mineral Point's independent bookstore, Republic of Letters Books, for the 2025 reading series. Unless noted, readings will be held Thursdays at the bookstore, 151 High St., in Mineral Point. Readings will be followed by discussion and Q&A with the authors. Since 2011 Shake Rag Alley has partnered with Wisconsin writing organizations to provide residencies to their annual writing contest winners. For 2025, these organizations include Wisconsin People and Ideas, the Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission through the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, and Arts + Literature Laboratory. A new partnership with the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets will bring a poet selected for the Swanson Emerging Poet Fellowship to Shake Rag Alley later in 2025.

Between the months of January through March, writers stay in Shake Rag Alley's inspiring lodging facilities surrounded by the nurturing environment of historic Mineral Point's artistic community. Visiting writers participate in community

outreach activities, including readings, workshops, and school visits. See the full schedule to enjoy the chance to meet award-winning authors during the upcoming free Winter Writers Reading Series.

For more information and to register, see www.ShakeRagAlley.org/writers-reading-series.

For more information and updates throughout the year, anyone interested may see www.ShakeRagAlley.org, call 608-987-3292, subscribe to twice-monthly e-newsletters and follow Shake Rag Alley on Facebook and Instagram.

A nonprofit school of arts and crafts founded in 2004 by local artists and community members, Shake Rag Alley's 2.5-acre campus at 18 Shake Rag St. in Mineral Point (population 2,500) is a national destination for participants of adult workshops, a robust summer youth program and a host of annual special events. In addition, Shake Rag offers on-site lodging and custom facility rentals for meetings, events and celebrations. For additional information about Shake Rag Alley's workshops and events, or to request a catalog and information about facility rentals and volunteer opportunities, see www.ShakeRagAlley.org or call 608-987-3292.

BBB tip: Holiday returns and exchanges

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Holiday returns aren't easy! And we don't mean the part where you explain to your mother why you returned the sweater she gave you.

Stores are not legally required to accept exchanges or give refunds unless the merchandise was defective or misrepresented. While most retailers do offer refund and exchange programs, policies vary greatly from one store to another. Be sure to double-check policies this holiday season, even if you are familiar with the brand, as stores can change their policies whenever they want.

The following tips should help to make your holiday returns run more smoothly.

- Research retailers beforehand. Look up the business on BBB.org to check its rating, reviews, and complaints before purchasing, especially if you are unfamiliar with the retailer. This can help avoid issues with returns later.
- Get to know store policies. Before you make a purchase,

find out if the store has a return policy and, if so, how it works. Understand that many retailers change their policies for the holiday season. If the store allows returns or exchanges, find out if you need to pay a restocking fee. Ask the seller if they offer cash refunds, exchanges, or only store credit. Store policies are usually posted at the check-out counter or printed on the back of receipts.

- Understand online store return policies. If you are shopping online, search for the seller's return policy and read it through before clicking "buy." Find out if they accept returns or exchanges and who pays for the shipping when an item is returned. In some cases, you can save on shipping fees by returning an online purchase to the local brick-and-mortar store. See more of our tips for hassle-free returns for online purchases at our website.
- Get the details on a product's warranty. Most electronics and home appliances come with warranties that are to be fulfilled by the manufacturer,

not the retailer. Find out how the store handles returns and repairs if an item stops working or needs replacement parts. Will the retailer ship the item to the manufacturer for you? Or will you need to deal with the manufacturer directly? Knowing the answers will leave you well-prepared for any future issues.

- Use credit cards for extra protection. Paying with a credit card may offer additional protections for returns or disputes, especially if there is an issue with the product or the retailer.
- Keep your receipt and packaging. Most stores will only accept returns and exchanges if you can present the item with its receipt and original packaging. Always include a gift receipt with items you give, and hold on to any gift receipts you receive.
- Know the rules for returning gifts without a receipt. Returning gifts without a receipt can be tricky. Without a receipt, most retailers offer store credit or an exchange rather

than a full refund to your original method of payment, especially if the item is marked down or on clearance.

- Bring your ID. Many stores ask to see your ID when you return an item to avoid holiday return scams. Sometimes retailers require you to bring your ID and the original form of payment. If this is the policy of the store where your gift is from, you may need the assistance of the gift-giver in order to be reimbursed.
- Make returns in a timely fashion. Almost all return policies are valid during a specific time period. Some stores modify their return period during the holidays, so don't risk missing your chance to make your return. Take the item back to the store without delay.
- Watch out for return scams. Be on the lookout for fraudulent return policies or suspicious third-party return services that promise to handle the process for you. Always follow official channels and platforms when returning items.

Check the property tax bill to receive lottery, gaming credit

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) is reminding Wisconsin residents to check their current property tax bill for the lottery and gaming credit. The credit provides direct property tax relief to qualifying taxpayers on their property tax bills displayed as a reduction of property taxes due. Lottery proceeds are paid into a separate segregated state fund. This year's estimated average lottery and gaming credit on property tax bills is \$213.

To qualify for the lottery and gaming credit, a person must be a Wisconsin resident, own a dwelling and use it as their primary residence as of the Jan. 1 certification date of the year the property taxes are levied - in this case Jan. 1, 2024. If an owner is temporarily absent, typically for a period no longer than six months (ex: hospital, vacation), the primary residence is the home where the owner returns. Principal dwelling means any dwelling

the owner uses as their primary residence. A person cannot claim the lottery and gaming credit on business property, rental units, vacant land, garages, or other property that is not the owner's primary residence.

If a property owner is eligible for the credit as of Jan. 1, 2024, they should use the online portal to apply for the lottery and gaming credit. DOR will send the information to the county treasurer where the property is located or to the city treasurer, if the property is located in a city that collects taxes under state law. A property owner only needs to apply for the credit one time; once applied, the credit will continue annually for that residence.

Lottery and gaming credit information, including the online application portal, walk-through videos and common questions are located on the Lottery and Gaming Credit Forms page on DOR's website.

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WSMB bites into the Big Apple's biodiesel industry during tour

In brief

It might be hard to connect agriculture to the hustle and bustle of New York City, but one stroll through downtown, and you'll be quickly reminded of its important role in reducing carbon emissions by powering buses, fire trucks and ferries as well as heating homes during the Northeast's cold, snowy winters.

Representatives of the Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board (WSMB) had the opportunity to make that connection firsthand during Clean Fuels Alliance America's Big Apple Tour Dec. 15 to 18.

"It was a great chance for our farmers to get out to the East Coast, see their investments in action and hear directly from the industry folks who are supporting the biodiesel, renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel market," said Adam Kask, WSMB executive director.

Participants in the Big Apple Tour, which also included WSMB District 1 Director Andy Bensed, kicked off the trip with a stop at the New York City administrative building, where they visited with fleet managers who use biodiesel wherever possible in their massive fleet of 900,000 city vehicles to reduce their carbon footprint.

"Their cop cars, their ambulances and fire trucks, their buses, all of their off-road equipment... they're running biodiesel in most of it," said Bensed, who farms in northwest Wisconsin. "Because of their sheer size, New York has become a leader in the biodiesel industry."

Next on the visit was a stop at the Na-



PHOTO COURTESY WISCONSIN SOYBEAN MARKETING BOARD *Rock Valley Publishing*
Bioheat has become a popular low carbon, safer option for people to heat their homes and businesses. One of the first suppliers of Bioheat, Hart Home Comfort, delivers on average between 125,000–250,000 gallons of Bioheat a day in blends of up to B50.

tional Oil Heat Research and Education Center (NORA) on Long Island, which was established to provide research and development, carbon reduction, professional education and consumer education to provide more efficient, more reliable and lower carbon home heating and hot water in the liquid fuel industry.

"They do a great job with quality testing and making sure that this biodiesel is performing the way it's supposed to be, as well as advocating and informing about the benefits of using biodiesel, or Bioheat, as a home heating source," Bensed said. "What we heard from their testing lab

was that soybeans were by far the premier feedstock for making a consistent, high performing product."

With limited heating options in the Northeast, Bioheat has become a popular low carbon, safer option for people to heat their homes and businesses. One of the first suppliers of Bioheat on Long Island, Hart Home Comfort, delivers on average between 125,000–250,000 gallons of Bioheat a day in blends of up to B50.

After seeing the impact of biodiesel in New York, as well as in neighboring

See TOUR, Back Page

Sex offender relocation in Janesville

According to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Michael L. Meyers will be relocating to Rock Valley Community Programs, 203 W. Sunny Lane, Janesville, on Dec. 30, 2024. Meyers was convicted on March 11, 1999, of three counts of First Degree Sexual Assault of a Child, Case #98CF14, in Monroe County.



Michael Meyers

While residing at 203 W. Sunny Lane, Janesville, WI, conditions of Meyers supervision include, but are not limited to: No unsupervised contact with minors; No contact with victim; Not to consume drugs; Comply with Standard Sex Offender Rules; Cooperate with Electronic Monitoring; Comply with all requirements and be a lifetime registrant of the Wisconsin Sex Offender Registration Program.

The Rock County Sheriff's Office is not responsible for the placement of this sex offender in any manner; however, by law, they are required to provide public notice. For further information regarding the placement of this offender, please contact the Department of Community Corrections at 608-758-6075 or refer to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections Sex Offender Registry website, www.wistaysafe.gov.

Orfordville bulk trash pickup coming soon

Trash and recycling will be Saturday due to the holidays in Orfordville. Bulk pickup will also be Saturday, Jan. 4. Please put bulk items to the curb in an orderly fashion; most of the time it is one person for bulk pickup. Large boxes do have to be broken down also.

Donation of aluminum cans celebrated

The members of the Juda Zion Community Church youth group located in Juda would like to thank everyone who donated their empty aluminum cans during 2024. A total of 4,600 pounds of cans were recycled this year.

A portion of the proceeds are used for group activities while the rest are donated to area groups and causes. This past year proceeds were donated to the Pleasant View Nursing Home Activities Fund, Monroe Clinic Hospice, Green County Child Advocacy Center, Grace Lutheran Church Loaves and Fishes, Operation Christmas Child, stained glass window repair fund at the church and purchasing of gifts for Juda children from the Angel Tree at the Bank of New Glarus-Juda. The collection cage is located in the corner of the parking lot at the Bank of New Glarus-Juda on Walnut Street in Juda and Jefferson Township residents can drop them off at the recycling

center located on Walnut Street.

Searching for owls on a silent winter night

The Rock County Conservationists are holding a hike to search for owls on Friday, Jan. 10, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Rock River Heritage Park, 5801 N. River Road, Janesville.

During this winter night hike, attendees will walk silently around the park listening for the calls of Wisconsin's three most common owls: the Great Horned owl, Eastern Screech owl and Barred owl. In order to achieve the silence needed to possibly hear their calls, the number of participants will be limited to 25 people. This walk is intended for dedicated bird-watchers, families with young children are discouraged from participating.

In order to participate, anyone interested must register in advance by contacting Amy Friend, Rock County Parks Community Coordinator, at 608-757-5473 or by email at amy.friend2co.rock.wi.us.

Blood drive will be at UWW of Rock County

A Red Cross blood drive will be held in the Fank Holt Gymnasium on UW-Whitewater at Rock County's campus on Jan. 3, 2025, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m.

This event is open to anyone who can donate blood. Donating blood allows the participants to claim a limited-quantity long sleeved T-shirt from the Red Cross. This promotion ends on Jan. 3, so URock's blood drive will be the last chance to claim one of these shirts.

To schedule an appointment go to www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zip-sponsor=UWWRock but walk-ins are welcome as well.

To save time, complete a pre-donation reading and health history at RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass or with the Blood Donor App before the appointment.

In-person job fair at Rock County Job Center

The first Job Fair for 2025 in Rock County will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 14 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Rock County Job Center located at 1717 Center Ave. in Janesville. The event will have 26 local employers in attendance and 300+ job openings.

Individuals may update and print their resumes in the Resource Room prior to the event. A list of employers can be found at: wisconsinjobcenter.org/events. Individuals having questions can email DETWDA11BusinessServices@dwd.wisconsin.gov.

Women's winter walking group starts in January

There will be a women's walking group that will start in January 2025. Those interested in joining in should meet at the Pearl Island Trail parking lot off Decatur Road at 4 p.m. at W464 Decatur Road, Brodhead. The group will walk for an hour.

The walking dates are

See BRIEFS, Back Page

LEGAL NOTICES

TOWN OF SPRING VALLEY 2021 CAUCUS

Monday January 13, 2025 at 6 PM
Orfordville Fire District Meeting Room
173 N. Wright St., Orfordville, WI

AGENDA
1. Call to order
2. Approval of agenda
3. Verification of proper notice
4. Appointment of Caucus Chair
5. Nominations
6. Adjournment to regular meeting

TOWN OF SPRING VALLEY REGULAR MEETING
1. Call to order
2. Approval of agenda
3. Verification of proper public notice
4. Secretary's Report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Reports
7. Audience communication
8. Old business
A. Rock County Public Works
B. Road work
9. New business
10. Future agenda items
11. Payment of bills
12. Adjournment

Recycling drop-off
2nd Saturday of the month
Rock Co. Public Works Bldg.
Hwy 213 Orfordville
9am-noon.
www.townofspringvalley.com

The Independent Register
1/1/2025
WNAXLP 465896

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

CITY OF BRODHEAD

RE: Vacancy, Abandonment and Discontinuance of a portion of a public street in the City of Brodhead, Green County, Wisconsin, described as follows:

That part of E 7th Avenue located within the Original Plat of the City of Brodhead, Green County, Wisconsin described as follows: bounded on the east by the west boundaries Dicksons Addition CSM 4305 (V17-P206) Lot 1 BNG PRT Lots 1 & 2 & All Lots 7 & 8, BLK 10 and Dicksons Addition Block 10 Lots 3-6, bounded on the north by 2nd St, bounded on the west by Dicksons Addition Block 26 Lots 1 & 2 and Dicksons Addition Block 26 Lots 3 & 4 and bounded on the south by 3rd St.
Reserving a permanent utility easement including for such

purpose the right to operate necessary equipment thereon, and the right of reasonable ingress and egress to maintain said utilities.

Notice is hereby given that there has been a preliminary resolution by the Common Council of the City of Brodhead on December 16, 2024, tentatively vacating and discontinuing the portion of the platted public street described above in the city.

1. This preliminary resolution is subject to the passage of the final resolution by the common council after the public hearing scheduled for such consideration to be held on January 20, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. in the Common Council Chambers of the City of Brodhead located at 1111 West 2nd Avenue, Brodhead, Wisconsin.

2. All persons, their agents or attorneys will be given an opportunity to be heard relative thereto.

Dated this 20th day of December 2024.

CITY OF BRODHEAD
Kristin Covert, City Clerk

The Independent Register
12/25/2024, 1/1, 1/8/2025
WNAXLP 466024

STATE OF WISCONSIN CIRCUIT COURT GREEN COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF CHARLES W. PAX

Notice to Creditors (Informal Administration) Case No. 24PR95

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

1. An application for informal administration was filed.
2. The decedent, with date of birth 01/08/1958 and date of death 12/18/2019 was domiciled in Green County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of W542 Myrt Lane, Brodhead, WI 53520.
3. All interested persons waived notice.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is March 26, 2025.
5. A claim may be filed at the Green County Justice Center County Courthouse, 2841 6th St., Monroe, Wisconsin, Room Probate Office.

Electronically signed by Jennifer Prien Probate Registrar

Michael A. Faust
Consigny Law Firm, S.C.
303 East Court Street,
Janesville, WI 53545
(608) 755-5050

Bar Number 1024665

The Independent Register
12/25/2024, 1/1, 1/8/2025
WNAXLP 466026

AGENDA BRODHEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT Finance Committee Meeting Wednesday, January 8, 2025 HIGH SCHOOL LMC 2501 West 5th Avenue, Brodhead, WI 6:30 P.M.

AGENDA
I. REVIEW BILLS
II. REVIEW BUDGET UPDATE
III. ADJOURN
The Independent Register
1/1/2025
WNAXLP 466155

AGENDA BRODHEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING Wednesday, January 8, 2025 DISTRICT OFFICE BOARD ROOM 2501 West 5th Avenue, Brodhead, WI 7:00 P.M.

This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Education in public for the purpose of conducting the School District's business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time for public participation during the meeting as indicated in the Agenda.

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- III. ROLL CALL
- IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- V. INFORMATION REPORTS
- VI. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
- AGENDA**
VII. CONSENT AGENDA
1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
2. APPROVAL OF BILLS
3. ACCEPT DONATION(S)
4. RESIGNATION(S)
5. EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATION(S)
6. VOLUNTEER RECOMMENDATION(S)
VIII. HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL SCOREBOARD UPDATE
IX. HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION - INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING COACH
X. SAFETY DRILL REPORTS
XI. AUDIT REPORT
XII. REVIEW WASB RESOLUTIONS
XIII. CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING SOURCE FOR THE JV SOFTBALL FIELD
XIV. APPROVAL OF POLICY UPDATES
XV. REFERENDUM UPDATE
XVI. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET TO EXCEED REVENUE LIMIT BY \$1,750,000 PER YEAR FOR THREE YEARS FOR NON-RECURRING PURPOSES

XVII. CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR A REFERENDUM ELECTION ON THE QUESTION OF THE APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET TO EXCEED REVENUE LIMIT BY \$1,750,000 PER YEAR FOR THREE YEARS FOR NON-RECURRING PURPOSES
XVIII. FUTURE AGENDA
XIX. ROLL CALL VOTE TO CONVEIN IN CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO WI. STS. 19.85 (1)(c)(f)
a. Administrative Contracts
b. Staffing Update
XX. ACTION ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS
XXI. ADJOURNMENT
Persons needing special accommodations should call (608) 897-2141 at least twenty-four [24] hours prior to the meeting.
JOIN WITH GOOGLE MEET: <https://meet.google.com/oiw-jiji-tn>
JOIN BY TELEPHONE:
+1 727-325-2066 (PIN: 996403637)
The Independent Register
1/1/2025
WNAXLP 466156

PUBLIC NOTICE

POOL & REC DIRECTOR CITY OF BRODHEAD

The position requires the ability to manage the recreation and pool functions, including the development of recreation programs, operational, and developmental phases of pool, recreation areas and facilities. This position offers a wage which is commensurate with experience and qualifications, plus an excellent fringe benefit package.

Preferred qualifications include an Associate's degree in physical education, recreation, or related fields. Knowledge of pool maintenance, ability to obtain pool & spa operators certification, CPR/First Aid certified, recreational knowledge to develop and maintain programs and develop staff.

For a job description visit: http://www.cityofbrodheadwi.us/employment_opportunities/index.php

To apply send a cover letter, resume, salary requirements, and three professional references by January 17, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. to: City Clerk; City of Brodhead, 1111 W. 2nd Ave., Brodhead, Wisconsin 53520 or email to cityclerk@cityofbrodheadwi.us.

The Independent Register
12/25/2024, 1/1, 1/8, 1/15/2025
WNAXLP 465988

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815.547.7111 | www.GoldSilverJewelryCoin.com
880 Belvidere Rd. (Logan Square), Belvidere, IL • bccoins60@yahoo.com
M-F 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Sat. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

• Worker

(Continued from front page)

the quality of caregiving in Wisconsin. Since 2019, Gov. Evers and his administration have secured increases totaling over \$1.2 billion for all areas of long-term care, including nursing homes, personal care services, home and community-based services, and more.

To date, Gov. Evers has signed three consecutive biennial budgets that have made critical investments in the direct care workforce, including in the most recent budget, which approved nearly \$500 million in increases for long-term care, including a five percent increase for home and community-based services (HCBS) rates.

To further his investments, in August, Gov. Evers announced that he would be directing DHS to invest \$258 million in funding already designated for HCBS to create and fund a minimum fee schedule, effectively raising wages for direct care workers and providers serving older adults and individuals with disabilities. With Gov. Evers' action, Wisconsin joined 20 other states that have a minimum fee schedule for HCBS providers, including neighboring Midwest states of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Michigan. DHS estimates this funding and the creation of the minimum fee schedule, together, will provide a 15 percent rate increase for most supportive home care services and a 40.5 percent rate increase for most of the services provided at residential facilities, among other rate increases.

Recruiting and retaining the education workforce

According to a 2023 report by the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the average annual teacher turnover rate from 2009 to 2023 was 11.5 percent, reaching an alarming 15.8 percent in the 2022-23 school year. The period studied included both the highest levels on record of teachers moving between districts and leaving the profession altogether. The report found that both rural and urban districts, districts with large populations of low-income students and students of color, and small school districts were the most impacted. Additionally, turnover was highest for teachers of color.

Having spent more than 30 years in public education himself, Gov. Evers has long supported and advocated for efforts to help recruit, retain, diversify, and bolster the state's education workforce. During Gov. Evers' 2024 State of the State address, he announced the creation of a pilot program for a new apprenticeship pathway in the field of education. Developed through a partnership of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD), this new pilot program helps address issues in turnover and retention while also bolstering and strengthening the state's educator pipeline by reducing barriers and encouraging more young people to enter the field. Traditional educator preparation programs can be expensive, as they often involve an unpaid internship (student teaching), which may be cost-prohibitive for low-income students, nontraditional students, or individuals looking to change careers. Additionally, providing mentorship opportunities to teachers beginning their

careers has been proven to help with retention. The apprenticeship model includes built-in mentorship during the program and helps new educators build networks of support and professional learning.

In November, during National Apprenticeship Week, Gov. Evers, together with DWD and DPI, visited Brookfield Elementary School to celebrate the first cohort of eight apprentices signing their official agreements to enter the new teacher apprenticeship pilot program.

Additionally, in November, to further his efforts to bolster Wisconsin's education workforce, Gov. Evers and DWD announced that \$1 million in grants were made available for the Teacher Training and Recruitment Grant program to train and recruit teachers where shortages are most prevalent in Wisconsin. The grants, which cover two years of program costs, are available through DWD's Expanded Wisconsin Fast Forward program.

Highlighting record-high employment in state

During Gov. Evers' tenure, Wisconsin's unemployment rate has hit record lows, reaching an all-time low of 2.4 percent in April 2023, and Wisconsin continues to have an unemployment rate well below the national average and a labor participation rate above the national average.

In fact, Gov. Evers announced Wisconsin achieved a new record high for employment during November 2024, according to preliminary estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Wisconsin's labor force increased by 7,200 over the month and 14,700 over the year. The number of people employed increased by 6,000 over the month to a record-high 3,073,900 employed. The new record for total employment breaks the record announced the previous month and marks the seventh consecutive monthly record for state employment, highlighting the unprecedented number of workers participating in Wisconsin's economy.

Further, in October, the governor announced nine counties across the state, including several counties in Northern Wisconsin, showed the lowest rates of unemployment on record. Counties with record-low unemployment include Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Door, Langlade, Oconto, Pepin, Rock, and Sawyer, with unemployment rates being as low as 1.9 percent and no higher than 2.7 percent in these counties.

Expanding paths to apprenticeship

Wisconsin created its registered apprenticeship program 112 years ago and was the first state in the nation to have a registered apprenticeship program as we know it today. Wisconsin's program is unique among the 50 states by requiring employers to pay their apprentices for both time worked and time spent in required classroom instruction. This recognizes the importance of a dual training system that combines skills obtained on the job site with technical knowledge in the classroom.

During "National Apprenticeship Week" in November, Gov. Evers announced that Wisconsin's Registered Apprenticeship Program had

reached an all-time record of 17,089 enrolled apprentices. This surpasses record-high participation in both 2022 and 2023 and marks the third consecutive year that the Registered Apprenticeship Program has reached an all-time record in the program's 112-year history. The state's record-high apprentice numbers further cement apprenticeship as a time-tested, proven solution to meet employers' needs for skilled workers in traditional and emerging industries.

Additionally, in May, DWD announced an all-time high of 9,932 youth apprentices enrolled during the 2023-24 school year, with a record 6,671 employers participating. Youth Apprenticeship, which started in Wisconsin as a first-of-its-kind program in 1991, is a strong connector to registered apprenticeship programs.

Throughout the year, Gov. Evers and DWD also announced eight new occupational pathways in Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program, including early childhood education, school-age education, administrative professional, human resources professional, law enforcement, fire protection, project management, and barbering/cosmetology. The new pathways, which combine on-the-job skill training with classroom learning, bring the total number of occupational pathways to 83 in 16 program areas. Youth Apprenticeship opportunities are offered locally by consortia composed of school districts, technical colleges, chambers of commerce, and other partners.

Further, Gov. Evers, together with his fellow governors of the U.S. Climate Alliance, announced the launch of the U.S. Climate Alliance Governors' Climate-Ready Workforce Initiative, which aims to expand the clean energy workforce nationwide and support job and apprenticeship training in innovative industries and technologies by training 1 million new registered apprentices by 2035 across the Alliance's member states and territories.

Boosting economy and family-supporting jobs

Earlier this year, Gov. Evers, together with U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin), announced that Wisconsin has officially been selected as a U.S. Regional Tech Hub, unlocking \$49 million to grow the state's personalized medicine and biohealth sector, including advancing research and innovation, growing the state's economy and creating jobs, and boosting American competitiveness in a cutting-edge industry. Wisconsin is a national leader in biohealth industries, and over the first 10 years, the Tech Hub is projected to create more than 30,000 jobs in the personalized medicine sector, over 111,000 indirect jobs attributable to the Tech Hub in Wisconsin, and \$9 billion worth of economic development.

In addition to Wisconsin's designation as a Tech Hub, Gov. Evers has also worked to secure multi-billion dollar investments from key industry leaders like Microsoft, Eli Lilly and Company, Nestlé Purina PetCare Company, Kikkoman Foods Inc., all of which are working to promote economic development and create thousands of local jobs, most especially in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Gov. Evers welcomed President Joe Biden to Wisconsin and joined Microsoft officials to celebrate Microsoft's investment of \$3.3 billion to expand its national cloud and AI infrastructure capacity through the development of a state-of-the-art datacenter campus in Mount Pleasant. The project is expected to bring 2,000 union construction jobs to the area by the end of this year, as well as provide long-term employment opportunities over the next several years.

Additionally, Gov. Evers announced that Nestlé Purina PetCare Company, which feeds more than 46 million dogs and 68 million cats every year, is expanding its production facility in Jefferson — a \$195 million project that is expected to bring an additional 100 jobs to the community it has called home since 1910.

Gov. Evers also joined a groundbreaking ceremony for Kikkoman Foods Inc.'s new state-of-the-art manufacturing and production facility in Jefferson. Kikkoman is investing more than \$560 million to build this new facility in Jefferson, and together with an additional nearly \$250 million expansion effort at the company's existing facility in Walworth, the projects are expected to create at least 83 new high-paying jobs in Wisconsin over the next 12 years.

In December, Gov. Evers joined Eli Lilly and Company officials to announce a \$3 billion expansion of the Kenosha County manufacturing facility that the company acquired earlier last year. Lilly expects to add 750 highly skilled jobs to the current 130-plus workforce at this location in Southeastern Wisconsin. The company plans to start construction on the expansion in 2025, creating an expected 2,000 construction jobs.

Additionally, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) announced Fermented Food Holdings Inc. is investing \$13 million to expand local production in Bear Creek and relocate its corporate headquarters to Madison, creating 60 high-paying jobs and supporting Wisconsin's agricultural economy. WEDC is supporting the expansion with \$500,000 in performance-based tax credits.

Finally, Gov. Tony Evers and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation announced an over \$1.5 million Transportation Economic Assistance (TEA) grant to the village of DeForest. The grant will help the village complete the road construction needed to serve the new Kwik Trip Inc. distribution center and assist in supporting 398 jobs in South Central Wisconsin. In addition, they also announced an \$885,000 TEA grant to the village of Pleasant Prairie this year. The grant will support a rail project to enable corrugated packaging company WestRock to open a new manufacturing facility and create 177 jobs in this growing Southeast Wisconsin community.

Ensuring Artificial Intelligence works

In August 2023, Gov. Evers signed Executive Order #211, creating the Governor's Task Force on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Administered by DWD in coordination with the Wisconsin Department of Administration and WEDC, the

Task Force brought together leaders from business, agriculture, education, technology, labor, workforce development, and government to identify policies and investments that will advance Wisconsin workers, employers, and job seekers through this technological transformation.

In July, Gov. Evers announced the final action plan of the Governor's Task Force on Workforce and AI, offering a positive path forward to connect more workers with AI skills, boost the competitive advantage of Wisconsin employers, and advance economic opportunity through a series of strategic principles and policies. The plan builds on Wisconsin's success in connecting underutilized talent pools with in-demand skills and strengthening the ability of employers throughout the state to attract and retain talent.

Expanding access to workforce housing

Access to safe, reliable, and affordable housing is a critical part of helping address the workforce challenges facing the state. For years, Gov. Evers has proposed robust provisions and investments in expanding access to housing statewide, including in his 2023-25 proposed budget, which provided one of the largest state investments in workforce housing — \$525 million — in state history.

Since signing the budget, Gov. Evers and the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority have so far announced the Infrastructure Access Loan program, the Restore Main Street, and the Vacancy-to-Vitality loan programs. These loan programs were created by bipartisan legislation and supported by the historic state funding provided by the 2023-25 biennial budget. Together, these programs help low- to moderate-income households to renovate or repair their current home and address hazards like lead and mold, support the creation of new affordable and senior housing, provide loans for the conversion of vacant commercial buildings to new residential developments of workforce or senior housing, and more. Over the course of the year, Gov. Evers awarded more than \$13 million in funding for the Infrastructure Access, Restore Main Street, and Vacancy-to-Vitality loan programs, which will support the development of more than 967 units of affordable housing statewide.

Investing in the state's next-generation workers

The UW System is a major economic driver and a critical resource for building the state's next-generation workforce. To support these efforts, earlier this year, Gov. Evers signed 2023 Wisconsin Act 95, requiring the Board of Regents at the UW System to establish a guaranteed admission program for certain Wisconsin high school students. According to the UW System, nearly 90 percent of in-state UW System graduates stay in Wisconsin five years after graduation.

Additionally, Gov. Evers believes that supporting and investing in Wisconsin's public education system at every level is critical in helping the state train, recruit, and retain highly skilled workers who will live and stay in Wisconsin. Earlier this year, Gov. Evers announced his plan to

request an over \$400 million increase in each year of the biennial in the state's next biennial budget — an over \$800 million increase over the two-year budget period in total, the largest biennial increase in state funding for the UW System in state history — a move aimed at preventing further staff and faculty layoffs, campus closures, and program cuts and consolidations.

The governor's announcement came as six UW branch campuses have announced closures, and several UW campuses have been forced to furlough and lay off employees, shift funding or make cuts, and restructure portions of campus operations, which the governor argued is largely due to Republican lawmakers' actions and inaction over the last decade, as highlighted in reporting by PolitiFact Wisconsin. According to the State Higher Education Finance Report, which is released by the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, Wisconsin ranked 42nd for public funding for four-year colleges based on 2022 data. A report released in April 2023 by the Wisconsin Policy Forum found that the UW System ranked 43rd nationally for per-student funding in 2021.

The Board of Regents ultimately answered the governor's call, approving an agency budget request that met the governor's request to make robust, ongoing state investments in the UW System.

Delivering targeted tax relief to working families

Over the course of his tenure, Gov. Evers has more than delivered on the promise he made before being elected governor in 2018 to provide a 10-percent, middle-class tax cut. Through the income tax cuts the governor has signed into law to date, Wisconsin taxpayers will see \$1.5 billion in tax relief annually, primarily targeted to the middle class. Additionally, each of the governor's three biennial budgets that he signed included tax cuts for Wisconsin.

Recently, Gov. Evers highlighted a report by the Wisconsin Policy Forum, which states Wisconsin's the state's tax burden, also known as the state's personal income tax or the amount Wisconsinites pay as a share of their personal income, has hit an all-time low in state history. According to the report, in 2022, driven by strong growth in incomes, tight property tax limits, and a \$1 billion state income tax cut signed into law by Gov. Evers in the 2021-23 biennial budget, Wisconsin's taxpayers saw a record-low personal income tax rate of 9.9 percent, down more than 10 percent from the previous year and bringing that state's tax ranking to the 35th lowest in the nation.

Further, this year, the governor was proud to sign 2023 Wisconsin Act 101, which expands the current child and dependent care tax credit from 50 percent to 100 percent of the federal credit, helping reduce the tax burden for families struggling to afford the high cost of child care and care for adult dependents. Act 101, similar to a proposal Gov. Evers recommended in his 2023-25 biennial budget proposal, provides tax relief to over 110,000 Wisconsin taxpayers at an average benefit of over \$656 per filer, totaling nearly \$73 million in annual tax relief.

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Streets & Parks Supervisor

The City of Brodhead is accepting applications for a full-time position as the **Streets & Parks Supervisor**. Applicant must have a valid driver's license and a willingness to obtain CDL license at the time of application. This position offers a wage which is commensurate with experience and qualifications, plus an excellent benefit package.

Essential duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following: Principles and practices of street and storm sewer maintenance, forestry maintenance, supervises maintenance of and improvements to all city parks, knowledge of electrical systems, supervision and training of staff. Required on-call time Monday through Sunday on a rotating schedule.

Complete job description is available on the city's website at www.cityofbrodheadwi.us, or may be picked up at City Hall. Please drop off your resume at Brodhead City Hall or mail to: City of Brodhead, PO Box 168, Brodhead, WI 53520-0168, or email to cityclerk@cityofbrodheadwi.us. Applications will be accepted through Monday, Jan. 17, 2025.

The City of Brodhead is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

465847

Wastewater Supervisor

The City of Brodhead is accepting applications for a full-time position as the **Wastewater Supervisor**. Applicant must have a valid driver's license at the time of application, with a willingness to obtain CDL license. This position offers a wage which is commensurate with experience and qualifications, plus an excellent fringe benefit package.

Essential duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following: Street maintenance, DNR certification with sub-classes, sanitary sewer maintenance, wastewater facility maintenance, principles of electrical systems, supervision and training of staff, and an ability to learn and understand plant operations and laboratory testing. Required on-call time Monday through Sunday on a rotating schedule.

Complete job description is available on the city's website at www.cityofbrodheadwi.us, or may be picked up at City Hall. Please drop off your resume at Brodhead City Hall or mail to: City of Brodhead, PO Box 168, Brodhead, WI 53520-0168, or email to cityclerk@cityofbrodheadwi.us. Applications will be accepted through Monday, Jan. 17, 2025.

The City of Brodhead is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

465848

Part Time Help Wanted

CLERK POSITION TOWN OF Spring Grove, Green County, Wisconsin. This newly appointed position will be effective April 15, 2025. Attendance at all scheduled Town Board meetings is required. The Clerk will provide statutory support and assistance to the Town Board, by performing tasks including, but not limited to: accounting tasks, property tax preparation, administration of elections, licensing, preparing minutes and agendas, record keeping. Strong computer skills are critical and should include proficiency in Microsoft Office (Excel and Word) and Google Docs. Experience with accounting software and website maintenance is necessary. Candidates should be comfortable with using and learning new technology, and be willing to attend training workshops. This position requires strong attention to detail, the ability to multitask, and the capacity to work independently. The position is approximately 20 hours per week. The level of responsibility and hours will vary, especially during elections and property tax preparation. Wages will be determined based on qualifications and experience. The deadline for applications is January 15, 2025 at noon. Please submit a resume, cover letter and three (3) references to: tsgrove.clerk@gmail.com or mail to: Town of Spring Grove Clerk Position, N2475 County Road GG, Brodhead, WI 53520.

business & service

Home Improvement

JACK OF ALL TRADES.US Snow removal, sidewalks, driveways, ice dams, roof snow raking - 15 miles from Brodhead. Handyman anywhere. 608-897-2410

Misc Services

ELIMINATE GUTTER CLEANING forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. Plus 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-855-948-3442

PREPARE FOR POWER outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-888-355-6955 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

Tree Service

HAILE TREE SERVICE licensed and insured, aerial bucket and stump removal. 24 hr. emergency service. 608-879-9014



transportation

Automobiles Wanted

CASH FOR YOUR FULL SIZE JUNK TRUCKS & SUV's. HAUL AWAY 7 DAYS A WEEK! CALL 262-758-1807.

Campers and RVs

2016 FLEETWOOD TERRA 34B MOTOR HOME 35' 27,000 Miles 3 Slideouts 2 New WI-FI TV's 5.5k Generator. \$79,000 262-206-4164.

FIND YOUR NEXT AUTO IN THE CLASSIFIEDS

Sports/Classic Cars

1952 CHEVY PICKUP Solid Nevada truck, runs great. \$19,750. (262) 949-6997.

Sport Utilities

2008 JEEP LIBERTY 4X4 125k. New battery, exhaust, water pump, AC compressor & brakes all around. AZ car. New low price \$5,600. Call 262-716-6180.

Trucks & Trailers

2002 FORD F-250 SUPER DUTY V-10, with 8' WERNER Plow, 37k miles, excellent cond., no rust, \$28,000. 262-497-3162.

for sale

Announcements

CLASSIFIED IN-COLUMN ADS cannot be credited or refunded after the ad has been placed. Ads canceled before deadline will be removed from the paper as a service to our customers, but no credit or refund will be issued to your account.

DISCLAIMER NOTICE This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance.

Burial Needs

7 CEMETERY PLOTS Willing to sell as a group or individually. Located at Roselawn Memory Gardens 3045 WI-67, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. **This is a private sale.** Contact Randy, the seller at randy@spublishers.com.

Misc. For Sale

DONATE YOUR CAR, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-888-425-2108 today!

real estate

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familiar/ status or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-900-669-9777. The toll-free tele phone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275. EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Are you selling a single item for LESS THAN \$100?

IF SO, WE WILL RUN YOUR AD IN THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER AND CLINTON TOPPER AT No Charge!

Private Party Only
Just fill out the coupon below and drop off or mail to:
Independent Register, FREE Ad,
917 W. Exchange St., Brodhead, WI 53520

Write your ad below, One Word Per Box, be sure to include your price

Ads will not be accepted without the following information. Only one free ad per month.

YOUR NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____

PARKS, POOL & REC DEPT. SUMMER APPLICATIONS

Applications will be available at the Brodhead Parks, Pool & Recreation Department beginning Thursday, Jan. 2 for summer 2025 employment.

- **14 years old, freshman in high school:** Basket window attendant, concessions cashier, playground instructor, and umpiring.
- **15 years old:** Lifeguarding.
- **16 years old:** Park maintenance.

Applicants must qualify for a work permit (14 years of age and in high school) to be considered. Applications are available at the Brodhead Pool & Recreation Department or on the City of Brodhead website (www.cityofbrodheadwi.us) and are due to the Pool & Recreation Director by Friday, Feb. 28. If you have any questions, please call the Brodhead Pool & Recreation Department at 608-897-2159.

466267

ADVERTISING SALES EXECUTIVE

Rock Valley Publishing is looking for a Part-Time Advertising Sales Executive. Approximately 20 hours per week.

We publish newspapers, shoppers, and niche publications throughout the stateline. You have the opportunity to sell into all Rock Valley Publishing. L.L.C. publications, making your paycheck much larger!

For immediate consideration send resume/job history to:
Vicki Vanderwerff, Director of Advertising
Email: vicki@southernlakesnewspapers.com
Fax: (262) 725-6844

444841

For details on placing an ad in our Classified Section Call 608-897-2193

Wisconsin Challenge Academy graduates 86 cadets

By Paul Gorman
WISCONSIN NATIONAL GUARD
The Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy held a graduation ceremony for 86 cadets from 32 counties Dec. 21 at Necedah High School.

The graduating cadets of class 53 each received their high school equivalency diploma during the ceremony and earned an additional seven to 10 college credits during the 22-week course.

"We have a great class of graduating cadets today," said retired Brig. Gen. Joni Matthews, the Challenge Academy director. "Eighty-six young men and women demonstrated the courage to make changes in their lives. They have developed post-residential action plans with goals and tasks to help guide them on their path, and aspirations to make their goals a reality."

To earn their high school equivalency diploma, each cadet spent over 234 hours in study hall, approximately 74 hours working on character development and about 45 hours

developing an action plan for the 12-month post-residential phase that begins when the graduates return home.

As part of the academy's physical fitness component, each cadet ran a total of more than 121 miles. Collectively they performed over 478,500 pushups and completed a 10-mile road march.

"Most of these cadets have done things, they've probably never imagined they could do or would do," Matthews said. "Our minds can sometimes be our worst enemy and may keep us from reaching our full potential, but these cadets have demonstrated their potential."

Brig. Gen. David May, interim adjutant general for the Wisconsin National Guard, visited the cadets midway through their residential phase and returned to present each with their graduation certificate.

"The Challenge Academy motto, courage to change, is not just a set of words, it's a call to action," May told the cadets. "It represents the will-



PHOTO SUBMITTED Rock Valley Publishing

A graduation ceremony was held for the Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy on Dec. 21 at Necedah High School.

ingness to embrace growth, to face challenges head-on and to pursue a path with strength and determination."

The graduating cadets began a two-week orientation phase in August, introducing them to the program's phys-

ical, mental and social discipline requirements. The following 20-week residential phase focused on developing their social, emotional, academic and basic life skills.

Midway through the residential phase, mentors were matched with each cadet to help continue their progress during the 12-month post-residential phase they have now entered.

"Congratulations graduates, today reflects the courage to change that you've already shown," said May. "We can't wait to see the amazing things that you will accomplish in the years to come."

In addition to receiving their diploma, several cadets were recognized for outstanding academic achievement and adherence to the program's core values.

The highest recognition, and title of distinguished honor graduate for the Challenge Academy's class 53, was awarded to cadet Jacob Kimmons.

"Here at the academy, we have discovered the true power of personal growth," said



PHOTO SUBMITTED Rock Valley Publishing

To earn their high school equivalency diploma, each cadet spent over 234 hours in study hall, approximately 74 hours working on character development and about 45 hours developing an action plan for the 12-month post-residential phase that begins when the graduates return home

Kimmons. "We faced moments of self-doubt and fear, but it is in facing these moments that we discovered our true strength."

With class 53, the Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy marked the graduation of 4852 cadets since 1998.

Mathews concluded her final speech to the graduat-

ing cadets with a quote from Douglas Pagels.

"Each new day is a blank page in the diary of your life. The secret of success is turning that diary into the best story you possibly can," she relayed. "Congratulations class 53, and thank you for letting us be a part of your life's journey."



PHOTO SUBMITTED Rock Valley Publishing

Brig. Gen. David May, interim adjutant general for the Wisconsin National Guard, presented each cadet with their graduation certificate on Dec. 21.

•Tour (Continued from page 4)

Minnesota over the years, Bensend says it's time Wisconsin starts following suit.

"One of the first things we need to do is reeducate our consumers and let them know biodiesel and renewable diesel are products that perform in every way equal to petroleum-based diesel fuel," Bensend said. "This trip was time well

spent because it allowed me to understand better what some of the challenges and opportunities are in the biofuels industry, and at the end of the day that's what these checkoff dollars are meant to do: to try to develop new uses, increase markets and communicate effectively with our farmers, whose money it really is, what

we're trying to accomplish in making the soybean industry more robust."

WSMB is a member of Clean Fuels, which is an organization aimed at advancing the interests of its members by supporting sustainable biodiesel, renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuel industry growth.

•Briefs (Continued from page 4)

Jan. 6, 13, 20, and 27. If there is enough interest they can continue through the winter.

Those with questions can contact Anne Corbit at 608-558-6882.

Grief support group coming on Mondays

The Aging and Disability Resource Centers of Rock and Marquette Counties are offering the 16-week grief and be-

reavement educational support group on Monday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m. beginning Jan. 13 and running through April 28. This is a virtual group. There is no cost to attend. Registration and screening are required.

Who is this group for? The group is for anyone who is or has cared for someone with dementia. Caring for someone with dementia presents a

constant series of losses and not just those related to death. Each session will cover a grief, loss and mourning topic followed by about 60 minutes of conventional support group discussion.

For more information or to register, please contact Rock County Dementia Care Specialist, Karen Tennyson at 608-921-7165 or karen.tennyson@co.rock.wi.us

•Grads (Continued from front page)

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNICIAN – Two-Year Technical Diploma
• Justin M. Johnson
• Adam R. Niedermeier

• Morgan C. McAllister
• Tyler Strickfaden*

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT – Associate Degree

• Bryce W. Biba
• Christine A. Bucsanyi
• Ashley S. Ritchey
• Cynthia Rodriguez
• Emely Vargas

DIGITAL MARKETING – Associate Degree

• Chawndell L. Hulon*
• Leigh Pierce*
• Bekka Reffett
• Irving S. Romero Villar

CHILD CARE SERVICES – Technical Diploma

• Sarah J. Hemerley

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION – Associate Degree

• Elianna Moreno
• Sierra K. Sherman

FIRE PROTECTION TECHNICIAN – Associate Degree

• Cole R. Jordan

HUMAN RESOURCES – Associate Degree

• Amanda C. Gilbertson
• Yolanda M. Robertson*
• Arberesha Saliu

HUMAN SERVICES – Associate Degree

• Crystal J. Brown*
• Alexandria L. Gambrel
• Sarai James

CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDIES – Associate Degree

• Kylie A. Bruner

• Hannah J. Mellem

HVAC/R – Associate Degree

• Harminder S. Bhatoya*
• Brandon C. Wassing

INDUSTRIAL MAINTENANCE MECHANIC – Two-Year Technical Diploma

• Ismael Cruz
• Charteshe T. Griffin
• Daniel Lopez-Martinez

IT - NETWORK SPECIALIST – Associate Degree

• Jeremiah E. Bales*
• Samuel H. Tews*
• Gavin T. Tobin

IT - WEB SOFTWARE DEVELOPER – Associate Degree

• Jessie Nightengale*
• Bekka Reffett*
• Caleb J. Rossetti

MEDICAL ADMINISTRATIVE CODER – Associate Degree

• Ashley K. Mahan*
• Rylee Richard

MEDICAL ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST – Associate Degree

• Denise Picicci*

MEDICAL ASSISTANT – One-Year Technical Diploma

• Trisha Butts
• Christina L. Elliott
• Kathleen N. Jeffers

NURSING – Associate Degree

• Mariah Broge*
• Heather Butler*
• Taqwona S. Caldwell
• Dakhia S. Crawford*
• Trevor R. Crawford Boyle
• Brittany N. Dahle
• Shelby A. Davis
• Robert C. DeLong*
• Ashlie E. Doolan
• Emilie Dray
• Michael S. Duran
• Garrett J. Fisher*
• Rachel J. Hagen
• Charisse D. Johnson*
• Samantha J. Laube*
• Angela Mathews-Bounds
• Lisa R. Mayo*
• Yazmine S. Mccrimmon

• Lasonya L. Monroe
• Nicole Neelans*
• Linda A. Nunley*
• Katelynn J. Payne*
• Sadie Perkins
• Jennifer Rackow
• Amanda A. Ritter
• Melinda S. Sawall
• Morgan K. Turner
• Emma H. Walters
• Meghan E. Woolsey

PARAMEDIC TECHNICIAN – Associate Degree

• Phil A. Ferrera+

SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION – Technical Diploma

• Katelyn D. Kufahl*

WELDING – One-Year Technical Diploma

• Kaden J. Fluckiger*
• Thomas Hawkins*
• Mekila Lindner

*Honor Cord Recipient (3.5 or Higher Program GPA)
+ Veteran