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### Polaris to close Osceola manufacturing facility, affecting about 200 jobs

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### Extreme cold warning issued as temp drops to the lowest of the season



The thermostat at the MidWestOne Bank in St. Croix Falls read minus 25 degrees at 6:30 a.m. on Friday morning. – Photo by Robert Tabern

### Schools close; wind chills drop to minus 50 in some areas

By Robert Tabern | Editor, with information from Wisconsin DNR LEADER LAND – The National Weather Service issued an extreme cold warning for all of Northwest Wisconsin on Friday, Jan. 23, as wind chills dropped in some areas to as low as a mind-boggling minus 50 degrees. Actual temperatures reached below minus 20 degrees for several evenings, starting Friday and into the weekend. The extreme cold warning extended to the entire states of Wisconsin and Minnesota, as everyone in our area dealt with the latest bout of Arctic weather.

On Friday at about 6:30 a.m., the MidWestOne Bank thermostat in St. Croix Falls registered minus 25. Temperatures throughout most of Polk and Burnett counties, including in Frederic and Siren, hovered around minus 27 at that time. The coldest reading came from a weather station in Wolf Creek near the St. Croix River, which registered minus 30. That is the lowest temperature we have seen since it got down to minus 31 on Feb. 16, 2021. We came within just 13 degrees of tying the all-time record low of minus 43, set back in February 1996. Wind chills in far northwest Polk County were confirmed to be minus 50 on Friday morning.

Local schoolchildren were given a three-day weekend due to the cold weather, with school districts choosing to use another adverse-weather day. Closures were reported for Friday for the following area school districts: Barron, Birchwood, Cameron, Clayton, Clear Lake, Cumberland, Frederic, Grants-

burg, Luck, New Auburn, Northwood (Minong), Shell Lake, Siren, St. Croix Falls, Turtle Lake, Valley Christian and Webster. The Unity School District already had a teacher in-service scheduled for Friday. In addition to the cancellation of classes, the majority of extracurricular activities, including sports, were canceled on both Thursday, Jan. 22, and Friday.

As people brace for winter weather, some recent social media posts have warned of the risk of exploding trees. But experts say that's not entirely true. "A sudden drop in temperature can cause a break in a tree known as a frost crack," said Bill McNee, a forest health specialist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. "While frost cracks can be loud and cause branches to fall off, it would be extremely rare for a tree to fully explode because of it."

The extremely cold weather also caused Amtrak to cancel service to Northwest Wisconsin and Minnesota. The railroad's Chicago-Red Wing-St. Paul's train, called "The Borealis," was canceled in both directions on Friday and Saturday. Meanwhile, the railroad's long-distance "Empire Builder" service from Chicago to St. Paul to Seattle/Portland was canceled from Thursday through Sunday. Employees expressed concerns that water lines under the train car could freeze, potentially stranding passengers without drinking water.

While we have been dealing with extreme cold, other parts of the country are facing crippling snow and ice from what has been dubbed Winter Storm Fern. Portions of Arkansas and Tennessee could see up to two feet of snow in areas without plows or snow removal equipment. Other areas of Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi are clearing out from an ice storm.

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### Polk County Sheriff Brent Waak to not seek reelection

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### Three local high school dance teams appear at regionals in Schofield

SPORTS

### Pirates spoil Tigers' unbeaten record

Boys Basketball Roundup  
SPORTS

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### COMING UP NEXT WEEK IN THE LEADER



Siren holds auditions for variety show



## ICCPA FOUNDATION, INC. NEWSPAPER FOR KIDS



The ICCPA Foundation, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that produces a newspaper for kids in grades 2-6 during the school year to get into the habit of making reading fun.

To find out more about the foundation or to make a donation, contact: Richard Lee • 715-566-4704 • iccpafoundationinc@iccpaonline.com

# INTER-COUNTY Leader NEWS BRIEFS

## Grantsburg man pleads not guilty on drug charges

**By Robert Tabern | Editor**  
SIREN – A 48-year-old Grantsburg man appeared in Burnett County Circuit Court on Wednesday, Jan. 21, for his preliminary hearing on drug charges. Bradley Michael Belisle faces a felony charge of possession of methamphetamine, a misdemeanor charge of possession of drug paraphernalia, and two misdemeanor charges of neglecting a child. During the court appearance, Belisle pleaded not guilty to all charges. He is due back in court again on March

30 for a status conference in the case. Belisle was one of six people arrested when the Burnett County Sheriff's Office executed three drug warrants on Oct. 15, 2025.



Bradley Michael Belisle

## Grantsburg woman pleads not guilty on drug charges

**By Robert Tabern | Editor**  
SIREN – A 31-year-old Grantsburg woman appeared in Burnett County Circuit Court on Wednesday, Jan. 21, for her preliminary hearing on drug charges. Dominique Star Fleckner faces a felony charge of possession of methamphetamine, a felony charge of possession of THC (second+ offense), a misdemeanor charge of possession of drug paraphernalia, and two misdemeanor charges of neglecting a child. During the court appearance, Fleckner pleaded not guilty to

all charges. She is due back in court again on March 30 for a status conference in the case. Fleckner was one of six people arrested when the Burnett County Sheriff's Office executed three drug warrants on Oct. 15, 2025.



Dominique Star Fleckner

## Slippery roads blamed for rollover accident on U.S. Hwy. 8

**By Robert Tabern | Editor**  
TOWN OF APPLE RIVER – A late morning rollover crash on U.S. Hwy. 8 in the Town of Apple River, east of St. Croix Falls, is being blamed on slippery roads in the area. The call came in from the driver, shortly before 11:45 a.m., Monday, Jan. 19, of a single vehicle on its roof, on the Apple River Bridge, just

west of the State Hwy. 46 roundabout. The driver reported being trapped in the car and observed some smoke. The Polk County Sheriff's Office, Northwestern Ambulance - Amery, and Apple River Fire and Fire Responders also came to the scene. No serious injuries were reported, and a tow truck removed the overturned car by early afternoon.

## Cushing man pleads not guilty in child sex assault case

**By Robert Tabern | Editor**  
BALSAM LAKE – A 42-year-old Cushing man who is facing child sex assault charges was arraigned in Polk County Circuit Court on Wednesday, Jan. 22. During the hearing, Jason D. Bosak plead not guilty to one felony charge of first-degree child sex assault—sexual contact or sexual intercourse with person under age of 13—and a felony charge of incest with child by stepparent. According to the criminal complaint

obtained by the Inter-County Leader, Bosak was arrested in November of last year for allegations that he sexually assaulted a child.



Jason D. Bosak

## Accident shuts down State Hwy. 35 on January 21

School transport van involved; no injuries

**By Robert Tabern | Editor**  
TOWN OF LUCK – State Hwy. 35 was shut down both northbound and southbound between Luck and Frederic around 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 21, due to an accident. The crash involved a school transport van that flipped on its side. Witnesses on the scene told the Inter-County Leader that one child was inside at the time, but was not injured. The road had to be shut down to allow a tow truck to properly remove the vehicle. Witnesses also told us that black ice on the roadway in the area was quite treacherous and may have been the cause of the crash. The accident officially remains under investigation by the Polk



State Hwy. 35 was shut down between Luck and Frederic on Wednesday morning, Jan. 21, for a school transport van that flipped on its side. - Photo by Robert Tabern

County Sheriff's Office. Authorities have not confirmed what school the van was transporting a child to, nor the age or name of the victim involved.

## Long-standing sign error corrected on U.S. Hwy. 8

**By Robert Tabern | Editor**  
ST. CROIX FALLS – A long-standing error in highway signage on U.S. Hwy. 8, in St. Croix Falls, just before the St. Croix River Bridge, has finally been corrected by the Department of Transportation. Drivers with a keen eye might have noticed that the sign announcing the junction with State Hwy. 95 was replaced earlier this month. For years, the sign incorrectly indicated a junction with Wisconsin State Hwy. 95. It should have been for Minnesota State Hwy. 95. But rest assured, the proper signage is up now! By the way, there is a Wisconsin Hwy. 95. The 74-mile-long roadway runs from Fountain City to Neillsville, or essentially nowhere near St. Croix Falls.



The sign along U.S. Hwy. 8 in St. Croix Falls, announcing its junction with State Hwy. 95, was replaced with the proper state highway marker earlier this month. Minnesota State Hwy. 95 is correct; Wisconsin State Hwy. 95 was incorrect. - Photos by Robert Tabern

## Two people in St. Croix Falls arrested on drug charges

**By Robert Tabern | Editor**  
ST. CROIX FALLS – St. Croix Falls Police reported that two suspects from Minnesota were arrested on drug charges over the weekend. The arrests occurred in the early morning hours of Sunday, Jan. 25. Police stopped a vehicle traveling westbound on U.S. Hwy. 8 for suspicion of operating under the influence. K-9 Ikar was deployed and alerted to the presence of narcotics in the vehicle. Methamphetamine, cocaine, prescription pills, and drug paraphernalia were located. Contact was then made at a local motel where the driver of the vehicle was staying. Additional methamphetamine, cocaine, and drug paraphernalia were

located there. Angela Firkus of St. Cloud and Nicholas Heim of Sauk Rapids were arrested and will appear in Polk County Circuit Court.



K-9 Ikar was involved in a stop that led to two people arrested on drug charges on Sunday morning in St. Croix Falls. - Photo provided



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# Polaris to close Osceola manufacturing facility, affecting about 200 jobs

By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter

OSCEOLA – Polaris Inc. will close its Osceola manufacturing facility after it moves Indian Motorcycle powertrain production to Spirit Lake, Iowa, later this year, a company spokesperson said.

As a new standalone company, Indian Motorcycle's powertrain production transition will be complete by year-end. "Because of this move, we will no longer have the Polaris engine production volume at Osceola needed to maintain op-

erations there," the spokesperson said.

Polaris told employees last week, "We made the difficult decision to close the facility and will wind down operations over the next year." The company added, "It was important for our employees to hear the news from us, as well as to have ample notice of the decision."

Operations at the Osceola facility will gradually phase out over the coming year, with no anticipated job impacts before this summer. Production of re-

maining powertrains and components will transition to other Polaris plants at that time. The closure follows the recent separation of Indian Motorcycle from Polaris. Reports indicate the facility employs around 200 workers who produce engines and components for motorcycles, off-road vehicles, and other products.

"We recognize the difficulty this change will mean in the lives of employees, and we are committed to support-

ing them through this transition," the spokesperson added. "We will offer separation benefits and outplacement assistance to impacted employees, as well as support relocation opportunities." The facility's full wind down is expected to conclude by the end of 2026.

## Pamoja Project documentary premieres in St. Croix Falls

By Devon Christensen | Reporter

ST. CROIX FALLS – The Pamoja Project documentary premiered in the St. Croix Falls High School auditorium on Saturday, Jan. 17, at 2 p.m. The Pamoja Project, which launched in the U.S. one year ago in February, aims to "enlighten, educate, and enroll audience members to the importance of indigenous music to cultural identity." Before the event began, attendees explored the project-related items in the lobby outside the auditorium. More than 10 Ugandan instruments were available for community members to try out, including harps, drums, and pan pipes. There were two pieces of art on display, one of which was the Pamoja Project logo designed by the elementary school's art teacher. The logo is a butterfly adorned with Engoma drums, music notes, a bald eagle along with a grey crowned crane (the Ugandan national bird), and more. Several posters were hung with students' responses to the question, "Why is having a strong community important?" to fit the theme of the strong community that has been formed between the members of the Pamoja Project and their friends in Uganda. Sophomore Olivia Hoverman wrote, "Because the world can only be as strong as people. If the people don't have a strong sense of union/community, the world can't thrive." There were many items for sale,



Attendees browse the Ugandan instruments on display in the lobby.

such as various-sized drums, pan pipes, wooden giraffes, wooden salad utensils, woven baskets, and clothing. There were also baskets out for attendees to make donations before or after attending the free documentary screening.

Before the screening began, Shawn Gudmunsen, who is a leader of the project as well as a vocal music teacher for St. Croix Falls School District and a lecturer at UW-River Falls, shared the 30-year journey of the Pamoja Project. Gudmunsen met Okello Kelo Sam, the leader of the Mizizi Ensemble from Uganda, 30 years ago, and they have been friends ever since. "Northwestern Wisconsin has become a second home to our friend Mr. Okello Kelo Sam. This community especially has supported his ability to teach, educate, and expose audiences and stu-

dents alike to his culture. In addition, this community has also helped support a school founded by Sam to rehabilitate, provide quality education, and teach cultural arts to young children in need," said Gudmunsen. He shared that the St. Croix Falls community alone has donated \$25,000 to the school founded by Sam, called Hope North, which paid off the school's mortgage three years ago.

The documentary captures "just a snapshot of Ugandan culture and life, and it highlights the use of music's importance to each community's identity." Gudmunsen and Sam are featured in the documentary, along with other members of the Pamoja Project and Ugandan musicians. A professor at UW-Superior and a member of the Pamoja Project, Dr. Brett



Some of the items for sale at the documentary screening. - Photos by Devon Christensen

Jones says in the film, "One thing I really noticed as we've been traveling around Uganda to various villages and communities is that music plays a central role in daily life here, in a way that probably you could say isn't always the case where we're from in America. Music is a central thing that brings people together [in Uganda], and one of the most beautiful things that I've seen is that it's not limited by age group."

The documentary will also be screened at UW-Superior on Feb. 3 and again at UW-River Falls on a date still to be decided. The Pamoja Project has many new things in the works for the coming years and encourages community members to follow their Facebook page for updates.

## Frederic Library welcomes LWV for voting rights presentation

### Potential pitfalls of in-person documentation requirement discussed

By Zach Zelinski | Reporter

FREDERIC – The Frederic Public Library again welcomed the community for an informational presentation hosted by the St. Croix Valley League of Women Voters, this time on voting access. For the second of January's "Lunch and Learn" events with the SCVLWV, the library welcomed interested constituents on Tuesday, Jan. 20, for a free soup lunch and presentation on potential legislation restricting voter registration. With strong turnout for the presentation on gerrymandering the Tuesday prior, Library Director Heather Marek and SCVLWV Vice President Kris Surbaugh decided to serve lunch in the program room before moving to the back of the library for more space. About 20 community members showed up for the event.

The Safeguard American Voting Eligi-

bility Act, a bill passed by the House last April and pending Senate deliberation, served as the focus of the presentation. The bill would make in-person presentation of citizenship documentation, such as a birth certificate or passport, required by law for voter registration. SCVLWV members Kathy Straits and Katrina Larsen showed attendees a recorded presentation by Hudson-based attorney and Chief Elections Inspector Karrie Waver, who explained the SAVE Act's broad implications.

Waver noted that the law would effectively eliminate online and by-mail voter registration, creating long lines at overwhelmed election offices for those who can make it there. Moreover, millions of American citizens don't have their passports or birth certificates readily accessible in a given timeframe if they have them at all. One of the SAVE Act's stipulations would make documents made before name changes ineligible without further proof. This would pose complications for married women who have changed their last name and don't have

a passport reflecting this change. Waver noted that the bill's instructions for state and individual election officials in these cases are vague.

The LWV argues that these complicated efforts aim to solve a problem with little statistical basis, with state statistics suggesting exceedingly few suspected cases of noncitizen voter registration among millions-strong voter rolls. In Wisconsin, only four suspected cases were reported over nine years. Even so, the LWV noted the possibility of similar

efforts to the SAVE Act at the state level, especially in the form of state constitutional amendments.

Straits and Larsen took audience questions after the presentation, assuring that specific concerns about local effects were addressed. The library and SCVLWV was scheduled to host at least one more Lunch and Learn event on Jan. 27, featuring Polk County Clerk Shabana Lundeen presenting on local election security.



Attendees watched a recorded lecture from Hudson election official Karrie Waver after enjoying free soup at the Frederic Library's LWV event. - Photos by Zach Zelinski

## Lewis man captures fireball streaking over Northwest Wisconsin sky

By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter

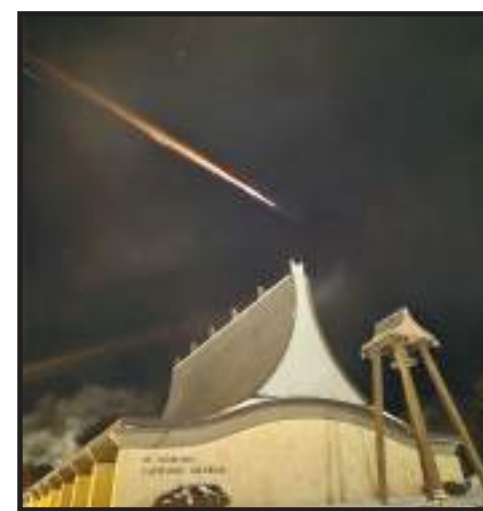
FREDERIC – A bright fireball lit up the predawn sky over Northwest Wisconsin early Saturday, Jan. 24, with dozens of witness reports from multiple states and provinces.

The American Meteor Society received 77 reports of the event, which occurred around 12:31 a.m., and was visible in Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ontario. Witnesses described a brilliant streak or long-lasting spark—typical of a bright meteor entering Earth's atmosphere at high speed.

Allen Jorgenson of Lewis saw the fireball while driving through Frederic around 12:30 a.m. He stopped to photograph it above St. Dominic's Catholic Church.

The sighting matches the AMS fireball event, initially thought to be space debris but confirmed as a meteor. Fireballs are sudden, streaking flashes—not the diffused, steady glow of comets, which were not visible then.

No injuries or damage resulted from



Allen Jorgenson photographed this bright fireball streaking above St. Dominic's Catholic Church in Frederic around 12:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 24. - Photo provided

the meteor. The AMS urges anyone who witnessed the event to submit details and photos to its website, amsmeteors.org for analysis.

# Burnett County Democrats welcome public for informal meeting

By Zach Zelinski | Reporter

WEBSTER – The Burnett County Democrats welcomed the public for an informal dinner meeting at the Round-A-Bout Bar & Grill on Thursday evening, Jan. 15. As the circle settled into the meeting, attendees enjoyed a largely social atmosphere, dining over conversation about recent and upcoming outreach activities.

The organization's chair, Brenda Vinall-Mogel, welcomed participants to the table and shared timely evening discussion. Among the weaknesses of party politics at a national level is the abandonment of its community aspects, which she hopes to rectify with events like these that encourage "coming together and not feeling isolated."

Even so, larger political happenings were often at the forefront of the dialogue. Ahead of this year's midterm elections, conversation touched on gerrymandering in Wisconsin and other states, as participants related the history and consequences of redistricting at a local level. Many attendees also expressed deep dismay at the intensified mobilization of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in Minneapolis, with the city experiencing deep unrest while embroiled in national tensions.

The group discussed the upcoming chili feed. See story in Currents.



Attendees enjoy dinner during the Burnett County Democrats' informal meeting at the Round-A-Bout Bar & Grill. - Photo by Zach Zelinski

# Polk County Sheriff Brent Waak to not seek reelection

Chief Deputy Don Burrows announces candidacy

By Robert Tabern | Editor

POLK COUNTY – The face of local law enforcement here in Leader Land is up for a major change come next year.

Polk County Sheriff Brent Waak announced last week that he would not seek a third term. The announcement came on Wednesday, Jan. 21. Waak says he is proud of achieving the goals he set for himself as head of the Polk County Sheriff's Office for the last eight years, and plans to spend more time with his family.

Waak said in a statement, "I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Citizens of Polk County for allowing me to serve as your Sheriff for the past eight years. It has been an honor and a privilege to be in this leadership role. I have 32 years of Law Enforcement experience. I would like to thank my family and friends for their support throughout this time. To the citizens of Polk County, I



Sheriff Brent Waak is sworn in to office on Jan. 7, 2019. – File photos

say thank you for the support you have given law enforcement and for the trust you have placed in me as your Sheriff. Polk County is a safe and special place to work and live. The future is bright for Polk County because of the men and women who dedicate their lives to providing the best public safety around. We have the highest standards, and we can

all sleep well knowing they are on the mission to serve this community."

Waak confirmed that he plans to endorse Chief Deputy Don Burrows as the next Polk County Sheriff.

Waak became Polk County Sheriff on Jan. 7, 2019, after Peter Johnson completed eight years as sheriff.

Sheriff Waak joins a growing list

of Leader Land sheriffs who have announced they will not run again in the Nov. 3 election. Two weeks ago, Sheriff Tracy Finch announced she would not be seeking reelection in Burnett



Chief Deputy Don Burrows announced his candidacy for Polk County Sheriff in the Nov. 3 election.

County, endorsing Detective Mikal Anton. Washburn County Sheriff Dennis Stuart confirmed earlier this month that he would not run again. Stuart endorsed Investigator Jason Bartholomew. Meanwhile, Barron County Sheriff Jodi Kummet has announced she will seek election to the office. Kummet was appointed sheriff by Gov. Tony Evers in July of 2025, succeeding Chris Fitzgerald, who resigned before finishing the current term to take a job in the private sector.

# Frederic group pushes for community-owned grocery cooperative as local store faces transition

By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter

FREDERIC – With the local grocery store facing transition as its owner nears retirement, members of the Frederic Grocery Cooperative steering committee met Thursday, Jan. 15, at the Frederic Public Library to advance plans for turning the business into a community-owned cooperative.

### Cooperative Formation and Outreach

Frederic Grocery Cooperative is moving to purchase and operate the store as a member-owned asset, preparing outreach materials like logos, websites, and pledge forms to support upcoming membership drives and public engagement.

Committee members promoted the initiative during a basketball game at Frederic High School on Tuesday, Jan. 20. A follow-up educational meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 27 at Frederic High School.

### Membership Structure and Payments

The committee discussed membership payment plans and agreed that a one-time membership payment would simplify bookkeeping, noting that online credit card payments would include a small processing fee. The cooperative's website is active at fredericgrocerycoop.org, where membership payments can currently be made via PayPal; a credit card option is coming soon.

### Financial planning and governance

The committee reviewed banking logistics and will hold more meetings to finalize procedures. The fundraising goal is \$700,000, with a minimum down payment of \$300,000 for the building. In-



(L to R): Frederic Grocery Cooperative's steering committee members: Amanda Blackmon, Nichole Bastyr, Ben Morris, Robin Peterson, Rich Potvin and Maria Potvin. Member Christine Strak not pictured. - Photo by Sarah Beth Radomsky

creased property taxes will be evaluated with an accountant. A board of five to 11 members will be formed once sufficient memberships are sold.

The endeavor was made possible by a \$50,000 grant from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, which covered legal and startup costs. "Without that startup funding, we would have never been able to get this project off the ground," shared committee member Amanda Blackmon.

### Mission and Community Impact

Incorporated in early December, the Frederic Grocery Cooperative aims to

keep food affordable and accessible, support the local economy, and prevent the community from becoming a food desert, especially for residents who must travel 10 miles or more for groceries. The store currently provides home-delivered groceries to homebound seniors, a service the cooperative plans to continue as part of its community mission.

### Slogans and Local Sourcing

Pamphlets highlight the slogan "Help Keep Food Affordable, Accessible, and in Local Hands" and describe the effort as "Nourishing Neighbors, Strengthening Community." Priorities include in-



Logo for the Frederic Grocery Cooperative. – Image provided

creasing the availability of local produce and products on shelves to support area farmers and small producers, keeping dollars circulating locally, and offering fresher options.

### Member Benefits and Participation

Anyone can shop at the cooperative, but membership offers additional benefits. A one-time \$100 fee per individual or household grants voting rights on key decisions. Members are also eligible to serve on the board and help shape and grow the organization. Members may receive a share of year-end profits as dividends and can participate in workshops, food education, and sustainability activities.

### How to Join and Get Involved

The cooperative seeks members, investors, and sponsors to support the purchase and renovation of the store. Interested individuals can email FredericGroceryCoop@gmail.com, visit fredericgrocerycoop.org, or soon access membership forms at the Frederic grocery store.

Be part of our Facebook community @ [Inter-County Leader](#)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The views and opinions expressed in the 'Letters to the Editor' segment are solely those of the individuals providing them, and do not reflect the opinions of the staff or management of the ICCPA. Letters are only accepted from readers who have purchased an annual membership to the Inter-County Leader. Letters to the editor may be edited for length, grammar and accuracy. Letters must include your full name, hometown, phone number and title of the letter. We do not print anonymous letters or letters written under a pseudonym. Please keep your letters 400 words or less. Rude, slanderous, etc. letters will not be published. Please include sources for your statements and disclose any personal or financial interest in the subject matter. If sending by email do not send attachments. Attachments will not be read. Writers are limited to one published letter every 30 days; exceptions will be considered to counter another LTE on the same topic. Send letters to Inter-County Leader, P.O. Box 490, Frederic, WI 54837 or email to editor@iccpaonline.com.

### ICE abuses 16-year-old U.S. citizen

A friend's 16-year-old grandson was recently abused by ICE. His boss sent him to Walmart to buy pizzas for lunch. Walking to get the pizzas, he was stopped and asked for identification by ICE agents. He told them he left it in the car and they could walk with him to get it. They said "NO." He then told them he had a picture of his license in his phone. That wasn't good enough either. He told them where he lived, where he was born, and what he was doing there. The ICE agents weren't satisfied. They threw

him to the ground injuring his leg. As if that wasn't enough—they zip-tied his hands behind his back and held him for twenty-five minutes!

I called Tom Tiffany's office and told a pleasant lady what happened. She said "This was handled poorly." I believe nothing will get done about the abuse ICE agents are inflicting, just like the investigation that was stopped about Renee Good's killing. Is this the same complacency that killed millions of Jews, Americans, English, French, Germans and many more in WWII?

Harold Halverson  
Webster

I am a retired RN who has worked at a VA hospital and I am a lesbian. I guess I fit all the criteria for being gunned down in the streets of Minneapolis by the Border Patrol, save for the fact that I was not there. I wish with all my heart that I had been there. I want to publicly express my outrage at the heavy-handed tactics that are being used against the citizens of Minnesota. I can only hope that those for whom the issue of border security was utmost in their minds as they voted in the last election were not imagining this outcome. This is not an immigration operation. This is an intimidation operation. This is un-American. The people being dragged out of homes and cars,

off the streets and out of stores, may (or may not be) immigrants, may or may not be illegal, may or may not be criminals, but are all people in a "Blue" state. This is their crime. This has to stop. And why is Attorney General Pam Bondi asking for the voting rolls?

With sorrow and anger,  
Helen Sullinger  
Frederic

## Burnett County Board looks at zoning changes, Eagle Lake restoration, tax deeds

**By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter**  
SIREN – The Burnett County Board of Supervisors met Jan. 22 at the Government Center, addressing zoning map changes, damage at Eagle Lake, and tax deed issues.

### Eagle Lake Weir Discussion

Eagle Lake residents, including Marcus Zbinden, spoke during public comments. They urged restoration of a weir in Loon Creek that was removed without authorization in 2019. The loss dropped lake levels by 18 inches, harming wild rice, increasing aquatic weeds, and negatively affecting habitat, access, recreation, and property values. In response, supervisors debated a resolution instructing county departments to work with the Eagle Lake District, DNR, and others on repairs, restoration and grants. Supervisor Duke Tucker objected to referring the issue to committee, but most wanted a financial review. The matter was ultimately referred to the Natural Resources Committee, with four opposed.

### Large Infrastructure Grant and Salt Concerns

Highway Commissioner Jeremy Burton reported the county received a \$920,000 Federal Lands Access Program grant for a \$1.1 million project to improve 2.5 miles of County Road F. Construction is set for 2027, with a possible extension toward Bloom Road. Shifting to winter operations, Burton assured the board that, despite rumors, the county has ample road salt. There are 2,500 tons incoming and 1,100 already delivered,

though the 5,000-ton shed was depleted by heavy winter use. Townships will continue to get materials as prices rise amid dock constraints.

### Reports

Board Chair Don Taylor announced a February meeting of committee chairs to review standing rules and possible changes, and highlighted opportunities to join state and national county steering committees.

The Administration Committee approved hires in communications, the deputy's office, and health/human services, and signed a union agreement for a new courthouse security guard.

Health and Human Services is preparing 2025 reports, grants, and staff development. Emergency detentions rose to 32 in 2025, up from 28 in prior years. Treatment Court has three participants and one referral. In January, respiratory illnesses increased. Officials urged sick residents to stay home.

Land Use reported 134 dwelling permits (up 31 from 2024), 265 sanitary permits, and 159 short-term rental licenses.

Natural Resources and Tourism noted slower winter tourism. Looking ahead, a February fishing guide and the annual tourism meeting at Crooked Lake Lodge are upcoming.

Forestry operations continue, with two active timber sales yielding \$1.46 million for 2025. An Eagle Lake erosion control permit was secured for spring and summer. Trails have stayed open since December. The Farm Service Agency ap-

proved nearly \$15,000 in wildlife damage claims, including a \$7,700 claim for bear gear damage and one severe crop loss.

The Infrastructure Committee reported airport, maintenance, and highway budgets are on track despite snow and ice. Runway cleaning avoids the use of salt or sand to protect aircraft. This leads to higher cleaning costs and ongoing pothole patching. A 2026 update to the airport warning system is planned, signaling improvements ahead.

### Administrator Report

Administrator Nate Ehalt praised staff for securing grants, including FLAP, and credited partnerships for donations supporting sheriff's equipment purchases. He thanked the board for encouraging creativity.

The west wing remodel at the courthouse progressed with state IT coordination. Engineering plans are expected by the summer for 2027 funding. More department head meetings are planned.

### In Other News

The board approved tax deeds on fewer delinquent properties than in prior years, including Voyager Village sites. Ashley Hinze was reappointed to the Larsen Family Library Board. Gary Hayak Sr. was reappointed to the Veterans Service Commission. Two zoning amendments in Roosevelt converted parcels to residential-recreational and commercial uses. More amendments are expected.

The Gandy Dancer Trail Commis-



Highway Commissioner Jeremy Burton shared about a recent grant that had been awarded to Burnett County, as well as addressing concerns about salt shortages. - Photo by Sarah Beth Radomsky

sion collected 2026 trail passes early for Christmas sales. Routine maintenance continued, but some Burnett bridges may need rehabilitation. Only 3% of budgeted trail funds have been received. Luck Bridge issues led to rerouting discussions.

The board authorized the county to apply for grant funds for snowmobile and ATV trail maintenance and improvements.

The next meeting of the Burnett County Board of Supervisors is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 19, at 9:30 a.m.

## Wisconsin Newspapers urge passage of legislation to protect free speech

### Submitted by Wisconsin Newspapers Association

MADISON – State Sen. Eric Wimberger (R-Oconto) and Rep. Jim Piwowarczyk (R-Hubertus) have introduced Wisconsin Senate Bill 666/Assembly Bill 701, which would adopt the Uniform Public Expression Protection Act, bringing long-overdue free speech protections for citizens and journalists in Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Newspaper Association and this newspaper applaud Wimberger and Piwowarczyk for introducing SB 666/AB 701 and enthusiastically urge its passage. Designed to protect free speech and the right to petition the government, SB 666/AB701, will allow the courts to quickly dismiss lawsuits that are filed not to win on the merits, but to intimidate, silence, or financially

exhaust critics.

So-called SLAPPs—Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation—are often used against individuals who speak out on matters of public concern, such as government accountability, tax and spending decisions, consumer protection, environmental impacts, or workplace conditions.

Even when these cases are weak or baseless, the cost and stress of litigation can be enough to deter people from speaking at all. Anti-SLAPP laws are intended to stop this abuse of the court system.

Under UPEPA legislation, which was developed by the nonpartisan Uniform Law Commission, a person who believes they are the target of a SLAPP lawsuit could ask the court to dismiss the case if

it arises from their exercise of free speech or their right to petition on a public issue. If the court agrees, the lawsuit would be dismissed, and the party who filed it could be required to pay the defendant's attorney fees and costs. The fee-shifting provision is critical, as it discourages the use of litigation as a weapon rather than a legitimate means of resolving disputes.

Wisconsin is currently behind much of the country in providing these protections. According to the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, 31 states have anti-SLAPP laws in place. As a result, journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens in Wisconsin are more vulnerable to retaliatory lawsuits than their counterparts in other states.

Passage of Senate Bill 666/Assembly Bill 701 will address this disparity.

SLAPP lawsuits are powerful tools for silencing dissent, not because they are likely to succeed in court, but because they impose crushing legal costs and risks. For many people, the mere threat of such a lawsuit is enough to discourage them from speaking out, even when their speech is lawful and important to the public.

The good news is both SB 666 and AB 701 have passed committee with unanimous, bipartisan support. We urge legislative leaders to ensure that SB 666/AB 701 receives votes in the full Assembly and Senate so that Wisconsinites can feel free to express their opinions on public issues without fear of costly lawsuits.

Contact your legislator and voice your support for the passage of Senate Bill 666/Assembly Bill 701.

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# Polk County Board weighs email policy, land sale, pay raises

**By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter**  
BALSAM LAKE – The Polk County Board of Supervisors met Tuesday, Jan. 20, to address several items: an email policy, a county land sale, financial policy updates, and salary changes for elected officials. The meeting started at 6 p.m. in the Board Room at the Polk County Government Center. No public comments were made.

## County Email Discussion

Supervisors discussed the policy prohibiting the use of personal devices for official email. This rule followed a security breach involving an employee's hacked cellphone and a fraudulent banking attempt. The aim is to prevent incidents and secure official devices. Officials noted legal risks, including mixing records, possible phone seizure in lawsuits, and open-records complications. They considered county-issued devices but stressed keeping personal and county work separate.

## Proposed Property Acquisition

The board approved selling the 0.8-acre parcel at public auction. Staff will

obtain an appraisal and survey, with these costs added to the minimum bid. The buyer pays all expenses. The motion calls for notifying neighbors and ensuring transparency. The sale was prompted by a neighbor's request, but the board rejected a private sale. Buyers must comply with all zoning ordinances.

## Pay Raises

Resolution 02-26 sets the salaries of the sheriff and the clerk of the circuit court for the 2027–2030 term. The sheriff's pay will increase from \$133,000 in 2027 to \$145,333 in 2030, and the clerk's from \$93,846 to \$103,544 by 2030. These salaries will apply to the officeholders elected for the 2027–2030 term, and will continue to pay half of their retirement contributions and receive standard county benefits. The increases reflect inflation, comparisons with neighboring counties, and the need to keep the sheriff's salary above that of chief deputies.

## Administrator's Report

December 2025 sales tax rose 12%, meeting the 2026 budget.

Other updates: the fair association

MOU is up for renewal; a new recycling center baler was installed; there were eight roadway fatalities in 2025 (down from 11 average); \$47,080 in 2026 County Forest payments went to seven towns; and the annual Land and Water tree sale is online, with some species sold out.

The Golden Age Manor is joining a yearlong study by Kansas State University on guest wellness and procedures. The administrator will give regular updates.

Negotiations with the Department of Natural Resources for Stower Seven Lakes Trail MOU are set for next week, with a report expected in February.

The administrator noted recent fluctuations in federal grants, including a \$2 million mental health services grant that was temporarily cut and later reinstated.

## In Other News

The board ratified the administrator's 2026 goals, focusing on safety policy updates, rebidding health benefits, balanced budgets, strong leadership, communication, policy review, and professional development. After Exec-

utive Committee revisions, the board approved the goals: Goal 1 now requires annual policy review; Goals 2 and 3 are unchanged; Goal 4 now emphasizes effective management.

The board considered Resolution 01-26, which updates Chapter 5 (Financial Policies) of the county ordinances. The revision would update the 2025 policy to match the Federal Micro Purchases Threshold change in 2026 from \$10,000 to \$15,000 for small purchases.

Supervisor Steve Warndahl raised concerns about a failing culvert on County Road M near Horse Creek, which could make the road unsafe this spring. Administrator Emil Norby said the county does not qualify for new state aid for small structures under 20 feet, so funding must come from other sources. Repairs are complicated by DNR stream alignment requirements. The structure may fail, possibly forcing a closure. No action was taken.

The next meeting for the Polk County Board of Supervisors will be Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 6 p.m.

# Six nominated in Siren Trustee race; officials discuss infrastructure bills, statue request

**By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter**  
SIREN – Siren Village officials nominated six candidates for trustee seats during a brief caucus ahead of the April 7 election, while a subsequent committee meeting addressed infrastructure costs, permit changes, and a proposed statue amid budget constraints.

## Caucus Nominates Trustee Candidates

Village President Steve Young convened the caucus on Tuesday. The meeting was brief, drawing nominations for incumbents Ed Johnson, Dave Doty Sr., and Kelly Gunderson. Challengers Aaron Bentley, Eileen Thiex, and Jedediah Butt were also nominated. All nominees have five days to submit paperwork for ballot inclusion.

## Committee Hears Administrative Updates

Immediately after, the Committee of the Whole approved an agenda. Clerk/Treasurer Ann L. Peterson then provided updates. The village received an initial 25 cent invoice for its share of the State Road 35/70 reconstruction project—a joint infrastructure improvement between the village and Wisconsin's Department of Transportation—which may total \$499,227.49; financing discussions are planned. Auditors completed their 2025 fieldwork, the on-site review of financial records, and a report is expected by mid-March.

## Department Reports

Public Works Director Jim Jaskolka reported progress on renewing the sewer

WPDES permit and on seeking a phosphorus variance. Police Chief Chris Thiex was absent.

## Building and Zoning Permit Discussions

Village members discussed potential changes to building and zoning permit procedures with Dawn Kegley of REM Inspecting. Key points included exploring fees for "normal" permits currently handled in-house. If outsourced to REM, the village would retain the responsibility for setback checks by Dale Dornburg or Public Works staff. Most current fees are \$75, covering application review, setbacks, paperwork organization, and assessor notifications.

The village ordinance requires inspections for construction beyond new

one- or two-family dwellings. The board debated expanding REM's role to other projects, setting inspection parameters, and updating fees. Discussions will continue to determine fees, project scope for outsourcing, and ordinance revisions to align with practices. No decisions were made.

## Resident's Statue Proposal Addressed

In response to a request from resident Joan Daniels for a Gandy Dancer statue, the committee cited a lack of funds but offered to assist with site selection if she fundraises. They voted to return her check with an explanatory letter.

# Five decisions that matter most in rural extreme cold

**Submitted by Mike Judy | Barron County Director of Emergency Management**

BARRON COUNTY – When temperatures drop to minus 20, this isn't simply "cold weather." For rural communities, it's a stress test—on homes, vehicles, infrastructure, and people. At these temperatures, small problems can escalate into real emergencies faster than most expect. Frozen pipes turn into flooding. Dead batteries become roadside emergencies. And short delays can turn into serious situations. Rural residents are resilient and self-reliant by nature. But extreme cold demands deliberate decisions. What you do—or choose not to do—during these temperature matters.

## 1. Travel only when it's truly necessary

In rural areas, help is often farther away. Response times increase during extreme cold, especially when roads are icy or visibility is limited. Vehicles are more likely to fail due to dead batteries, gelled fuel, or frozen components. If something goes wrong, exposure becomes the real danger.

Before heading out into minus 20 or

minus 30 degrees, ask a simple question: Is this trip worth the risk? If the answer is no, staying put is often the safest decision. If travel is unavoidable, make sure someone knows your route and expected arrival time, keep your fuel tank above half full, and carry winter survival items such as blankets, extra clothing, food, and a charged phone.

## 2. Protect heat, water and power first

In extreme cold, homes lose heat quickly. Even a small drop in indoor temperature can lead to frozen pipes, especially in older homes, farmhouses, or buildings with crawl spaces and exterior plumbing.

Keep thermostats set consistently, even overnight. Open cabinet doors under sinks on exterior walls to allow warm air to circulate. Let faucets drip slightly to keep water moving. The cost of these small actions are much cheaper than paying for an emergency plumber.

If you use supplemental heat, ensure it's designed for indoor use and never leave it unattended. Fire risk increases during extreme cold when alternative

heating is used improperly.

## 3. Prepare for power outages before they happen

Power outages during extreme cold are different than outages in other seasons. Without electricity, furnaces shut down, well pumps stop working, and homes cool rapidly. In rural areas, restoration can take longer due to distance and accessibility.

If you rely on electricity for heat, water, or medical equipment, you need a backup plan. That may include a generator, a secondary heat source, or a plan to relocate temporarily if conditions become unsafe. Generators should always be operated outdoors, far from doors and windows. A simple rule applies: if your plan depends entirely on electricity, it's incomplete.

## 4. Carbon monoxide is a silent winter hazard

Every winter, carbon monoxide incidents increase—often without warning. Generators, propane heaters, and grills must never be used indoors or in garages, even with doors open. Exhaust gases can build up quickly and invisibly.

Make sure vents and exhaust pipes are clear of snow and ice. Test carbon monoxide detectors and ensure they have fresh batteries. If a detector alarms, get outside immediately and call for help.

Carbon monoxide doesn't smell, doesn't irritate the lungs, and doesn't give second chances.

## 5. Check on neighbors who may be at risk

Rural communities are strongest when neighbors look out for one another. During extreme cold, some people may be hesitant to ask for help or may not recognize when conditions are becoming dangerous.

Take time to check on elderly neighbors, people living alone, families with young children, and anyone with mobility or medical challenges. A quick phone call or knock on the door can identify issues early—before they become emergencies.

Preparedness isn't just about supplies. It's about awareness and connection.

# St. Croix National Scenic Riverway seeks final input on River Management Plan

## Story submitted

ST. CROIX FALLS – The National Park Service invites public participation in the final draft of the Comprehensive River Management Plan for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.

This draft plan outlines the long-term management approach for protecting and enhancing the outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values that led to the riverway's designation as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system and as one of America's 430-plus parks in the National Park Service. Once

finalized, the plan will guide NPS decision-making on the lands it manages within the riverway.

Over the course of this multi-year planning process, the NPS has engaged the public through two previous rounds of outreach. In summer 2023 and fall 2024, Riverway staff hosted nine public engagement sessions across the region. Each session included presentations on the planning process, followed by opportunities for attendees to speak directly with NPS staff, ask questions and share feedback. Comments were also ac-

cepted online.

The current comment period marks the third and final opportunity for public input. At this stage, the focus is on reviewing a detailed 146-page draft document. The National Park Service encourages the public to read the full draft online and share their feedback through the official comment portal. This is a key opportunity to provide input directly on the proposed content before the plan is finalized.

Comments can be submitted online at [parkplanning.nps.gov/sacnriverplan](https://parkplanning.nps.gov/sacnriverplan)

from Jan. 20 to Feb. 21. While online comments are preferred, written comments may also be mailed to St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, Attn: Superintendent, 401 N. Hamilton St., St. Croix Falls, WI 54024.

Additional information can be found at the "Comprehensive River Management Plan" link on [nps.gov/sacn](https://nps.gov/sacn) or by calling the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway Headquarters at 715-483-2274.

# LEADER SPORTS

## Webster's win streak continues despite Pirates' efforts

### Girls Basketball Roundup

**Above The Fold Media | For the Leader**  
**GRANTSBURG** – It tied as the closest game the Webster girls basketball team has played this season but still ended as a win for the Tigers and another loss for the opponent on Jan. 20.

The undefeated Tigers went to Grantsburg with a 14-0 record on the season, with its closest game being a nine-point victory over Shell Lake in mid-December. The Pirates managed to match that but couldn't spoil Webster's undefeated season as the Tigers claimed a 54-45 win.

Grantsburg kept pace with Webster through the first half, going into the break with a 21-21 tie, but the Tigers' scoring trio of Brooke Wolf, Avery Hetfeld and Elle Treague gave them the second-half advantage.

Wolf led the Tigers with 16 points, eight rebounds, two steals and an assist; Hetfeld had 15 points, five rebounds and four assists; Treague had 13 points, six rebounds, four assists and two steals.

Webster hosts Turtle Lake this Saturday and plays a rescheduled game at Cadott on Monday.

#### Amery 58, Unity 26

The Warriors limited the Eagles to eight second-half points on Monday.

Amery held a seven-point lead entering halftime but outscored Unity by 25 points in the second half.

Madison Wilhelm led Unity with 13 points; Andrea Erickson had six points.

#### Ladysmith 67, SCF 52

Ladysmith capitalized on a 39-22 rebounding advantage in a home win on Jan. 22.

Catherine Williams led St. Croix Falls with 16 points, four rebounds, three assists and a steal; Faith Allram had nine points, four rebounds and a steal; Lexi Arneson had seven points, a rebound and a steal.

#### Frederic 47, Siren 26

The Vikings allowed only nine second-half points in securing a home win on Jan. 20.

Taylor Hansford led all scorers with 22 points, 16 rebounds, eight steals and two assists for Frederic; KaeAnn Gringas had 10 points, seven rebounds, two assists and a steal.

#### Shell Lake 84, Luck 22

Shell Lake didn't allow a Luck scorer to reach double digits in a road win on Jan. 20.

Sophie Eder led the Cardinals with eight points and two steals; Kaylee Evenson and Teya Hinkel had four points each.

#### Northwestern 71, Unity 41

The Tigers limited the Eagles to 14 makes from the floor on Jan. 19.

Northwestern outscored Unity 18-6 from 3-point range and held a 32-26 rebounding advantage.

Andrea Erickson led the Eagles with 17 points, six steals, five rebounds and a block; Hayden Severson-Vlasnik had eight points, three rebounds, three assists and two steals.

#### Hayward 49, SCF 25

The Hurricanes outscored the Saints 25-11 at the free-throw line and 3-point line combined on Jan. 19.

Hayward also limited St. Croix Falls to nine makes from the floor.

Catherine Williams led the Saints with 10 points, three steals, two rebounds and an assist; Faith Allram and Olivia Shimon each had five points.



Frederic freshman Palynn Phillips on defense against Siren junior Lucy Peterson.



Siren junior Donna Plaster takes the ball down the court for an offensive play against Frederic.



SCF's Jocelyn Shimon attempts to dribble past Hayward's Holly Froemel at the Jan. 19 game. - Photo by Jackie Libis



Siren junior Hannah Rightman aims the ball for a pass. - Photos by Zach Zelinski unless otherwise noted



Frederic junior Kenna Chenal goes on defense against Siren junior Donna Plaster.



SCF's Sam Miron pivots around Hayward's Charley Christian during the Jan. 19 game. - Photo by Jackie Libis



Lexi Arneson of St. Croix Falls faces off with Holly Froemel of Hayward on Jan. 19. - Photo by Jackie Libis

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# LEADER SPORTS

## McCurdy, Warhawks can play spoiler

### College Roundup

**Above The Fold Media** | *For the Leader*

WHITEWATER – A win tonight would have multiple benefits for Bri McCurdy (St. Croix Falls) and the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater women's basketball team.

The Warhawks—tied for second in the WIAC standings—host conference-leading UW-Oshkosh. Not only would they cut their two-game deficit in half with a victory, but also would extend their win streak to four games while spoiling the Titans' unblemished 18-0 record.

UW-Whitewater hosted UW-Platteville for a 63-49 win on Jan. 21, breaking open a close game with a 20-8 scoring advantage in the fourth quarter. McCurdy had a point, two rebounds, two assists and two steals for the Warhawks, who outscored the Pioneers 11-3 at the free-throw line.

McCurdy then scored a game-high 16 points for UW-Whitewater in its 65-48 win over UW-Eau Claire on Saturday. The Warhawks erased an early deficit with a 23-14 advantage in the second quarter and maintained a late lead by limiting the Blugolds to eight fourth-quarter points.

McCurdy also had two steals, two assists and a rebound in the win.

### Men's Basketball

Jayden Brown (Grantsburg) and St. Scholastica will try to break a two-game skid tonight when they host Augsburg. The Saints had their two-game win streak snapped with losses to Gustavus Adolphus and Carleton College last week.

On Jan. 21, the Saints took a 92-56 loss at home to Gustavus Adolphus, being outscored 48-24 from 3-point range. Brown had 13 points, five rebounds and two assists in the loss.

The Saints went on the road Saturday for a 74-63 loss to Carleton; they were outscored 16-6 at the free-throw line. Brown had seven points, six rebounds, two assists and a steal.

St. Scholastica dropped to 6-12 with the loss and they host Saint John's this Saturday.

### Women's Basketball

UW-Superior hosts Crown tonight, trying to avoid a second consecutive loss.

The Yellowjackets split two decisions last week, starting with a 61-42 win over Northwestern-St. Paul on Jan. 21. They allowed only 17 first-half points and held a scoring advantage in all four quarters.

Colleen Claude (Unity) had six points, five rebounds and a steal for the Yellowjackets, while Megan Schafer (Grantsburg) had four points, six rebounds, three assists and a steal.

But Minnesota-Morris denied UW-Superior a third consecutive win, claiming a 59-48 decision at home Saturday.

urday. The Yellowjackets led by six points after the first quarter but entered halftime with a 27-27 tie, then were limited to just one point in the third quarter.

Schafer had seven points, six rebounds and two assists while Claude had two rebounds.

The Yellowjackets also host North Central this Saturday.

### Women's Hockey

Coach Molly Engstrom (Siren) and Maine snapped a five-game winless streak on Saturday.

After winning their first game of 2026—a 2-1 decision over Holy Cross, the Bears took four losses and a tie. But they ended the skid with a 4-2 win over Merrimack.

They entered the third period trailing 1-0 but scored all four of their goals over an 11-minute span in the third.

The Bears improved to 9-15-3 overall on the season and go to Boston College for two games this weekend.



Bri McCurdy and the UW-Whitewater women's basketball team can spoil UW-Oshkosh's perfect season with a win tonight. - *Courtesy photo*

## Pirates spoil Tigers' unbeaten record

### Boys Basketball Roundup

**Above The Fold Media** | *For the Leader*

GRANTSBURG – The undefeated run came to an end for the Webster boys basketball team on Jan. 20.

After 12 consecutive wins to start the season, the Tigers went to Grantsburg, which allowed them just 19 first-half points and took a nine-point lead into halftime.

Webster increased its scoring in the second half but not enough for a win, taking a 59-51 loss and dropping to 12-1 overall on the season.

Caleb Rombach led all scorers with 26 points, 10 rebounds, two steals, an assist and a block. He went 6-for-9 from 3-point range, where the Pirates outscored the Tigers 30-18. Dexter Schultz had 15 points, nine rebounds, three assists and two steals.

Quinn Widiker led Webster with 14 points, five rebounds, two assists and a steal; Hunter Sears had nine points, five rebounds, an assist, a steal and a block.

The Pirates, who started the season with three consecutive losses, also defeated Frederic 60-41 on Monday, giving them wins in four of their previous five games. They host St. Croix Falls this Friday, face Ellsworth on Saturday and host Siren on Tuesday.

The Tigers go to Drummond this Thursday and to Luck on Tuesday.

### Shell Lake 93, Luck 37

The Lakers held a 33-9 scoring advantage from 3-point range and had a 45-16 rebounding advantage on Jan. 20.

Gabe Renfro led the Cardinals with 16 points, three rebounds, one assist and one block; Joe Tolan had five points and a rebound.



Jared DeSmith prepped for a pass in the game against Barron. - *Photo by Jackie Libis*



St. Croix Falls Saint Carson Marks makes a basket during the game against Barron. - *Photo by Jackie Libis*

### CF 78, Spooner 31

St. Croix Falls earned a fourth consecutive win, trouncing Spooner at home Thursday.

The Saints outscored the Rails 27-9 from 3-point range and 9-0 at the free-throw line.

Carson Marks had 19 points, six steals, five rebounds and four assists; Justin Wynne had 13 points, four rebounds, a steal and a block; Elliot Wilson had 12 points, eight rebounds, five steals and two assists; Trysten Hanson had 10 points, four rebounds, two assists and two steals.

### SCF 48, Barron 45

The Saints extended their win streak to three games on Jan. 20.

Brett Sladky led St. Croix Falls with 21 points, six rebounds, two steals and an assist; Elliot Wilson had 15 points, 10 rebounds and five steals; Carson Marks had eight points, seven assists and five steals.

### Frederic 80, Siren 41

The Vikings first-half total was more than the Dragons' game total on Jan. 20.

Frederic scored 50 first-half points and took a 32-point lead into halftime.

Sawyer Dahl led all scorers with 21 points, six rebounds, four assists and four steals for Frederic; Carson Anderson had 16 points, four assists, two steals, two blocks and a rebound; Brett Bartlett had 14 points, nine rebounds and three assists.



Siren sophomore Parker Fingerson keeps the ball away from Frederic's Oliver Slather and Austin Schmidt. - *Photo by Zach Zelinski*



Frederic sophomore Zikani Gondwe takes the ball down the court for a play against Siren. - *Photo by Zach Zelinski*

# LEADER SPORTS

## Three local high school dance teams appear at regionals in Schofield



Dozens of schools ventured to D.C. Everest High School on Saturday, Jan. 24, to compete in WACPC Northern Dance Regionals, all vying for a chance to compete at state. The events began at 8:30 a.m. and ran until past 9 p.m. Area schools participating included Grantsburg, Osceola, and St. Croix Falls. Kenadie Points of Osceola, pictured here with her family, advanced to the state competition in La Crosse on Saturday, Feb. 7. - Photos by Robert Tabern



Members of the Grantsburg Pirates performed a wonderful set for the crowd.



The St. Croix Falls Saints dance team gave an outstanding performance in Schofield.



LEFT: The Osceola Chieftains got a great response from the crowd on Saturday morning.

## SCF JV competes at New Richmond powerlifting meet



St. Croix Falls' seventh-grader Zariah Braund competed at the JV meet in New Richmond on Jan. 16 in the 123-pound weight class. Her lifts were as follows: 150 squat, 90 bench, 185 deadlift, total 425 pounds. - Photos provided



St. Croix Falls' seventh-grader Frankie Hering competed at the JV meet in New Richmond on Jan. 16 in the 114-pound weight class. Her lifts were as follows: 145 squat, 85 bench, 155 deadlift, total 385 pounds.



(L to R): Zariah Braund and Franki Hering with their medals at the New Richmond JV powerlifting competition on Jan. 16.

## Spartans start new win streak

**Above The Fold Media** | For the Leader

**SOMERET** – The Somerset/St. Croix Falls boys hockey team entered the week with a two-game win streak.

After having their three-game win streak end on Jan. 16, the Spartans followed with wins over Regis-Altoona-McDonnell and Menomonie last week, making them 5-1 in January.

Players from St. Croix Falls totaled four points in a 7-2 win over RAM on Jan. 20. The Spartans held a 41-24 advantage in shots for the game and scored all three goals of the first period.

Wyatt Olson scored on a power play with assists from Ryland Lathe and Josh Albert near the 10-minute

mark and Vincent Henton scored four minutes later with assists from Devin Richardson (St. Croix Falls) and Marshall Haukom.

Lathe made it a 3-0 lead with a goal in the final minute of the first period, assisted by Finn McDonough (St. Croix Falls) and Dominic Warner (St. Croix Falls).

Lathe scored his second goal, in the second period, to answer the first goal from RAM, assisted by Olson and Jackson Doyle. Henton added another goal, assisted by Haukom and Albert, before Blake Thiel ended scoring in the second with a goal assisted by Henton and Braden Steines, giving the Spartans a 6-2 lead entering the third.

Haukom scored the lone goal of the third, assisted by

Richardson and Layne Pinska.

Carson Belisle made 22 saves for the Spartans.

They hosted Menomonie on Saturday for a 4-1 win with Richardson opening the scoring in the first period, assisted by Haukom and Michael Linder. He also scored a second-period goal, as did Olson, putting the Spartans up 3-0. McDonough, Lathe, Pinska and Haukom had second-period assists.

Lathe added a third-period goal with assists from Olson and McDonough.

The Spartans host Mora-Milaca this Saturday and Hayward on Tuesday.

## Amery takes loss to Baldwin-Woodville



Rylee Reese looks for an open teammate to pass to in the game against Baldwin-Woodville.



LEFT: Amery's Miley Brotzel looks to make a play in the game against Baldwin-Woodville on Jan. 20. Amery went on to lose 50-30. - Photos by Devon Christensen

# LEADER SPORTS

## Saints third in Interstate Classic

### Girls Wrestling Roundup

**Above The Fold Media | For the Leader**

ST. CROIX FALLS – The St. Croix Falls girls wrestling team earned a third-place finish in the Interstate Classic it hosted Friday, while Unity was eighth in the 21-team tournament.

The Saints ended with 81 points, putting them behind only Eau Claire Memorial (98) and Hudson (87). The Eagles had 58 points, 10.5 points away from a top-five finish.

Piper Ray – 114, Lily Kne – 126, and Julianna Johnson – 132, earned third-place finishes for the Saints. Ray earned two wins to reach the third-place match where she defeated Superior's Ana Johnson in a 2-1 decision. Kne won a match by technical fall before defeating Eau Claire Memorial's Maya Tawa in 55 seconds in the third-place match. Johnson earned a pin in 30 seconds, then defeated Eau Claire Memorial's Abigail Strayer in the third-place match.

Trinity Krueger – 100, and Willow Stenberg – 145, also reached their given third-place match for the Saints but were defeated and finished fourth.

Evelyn Fugate – 165, earned a first-place finish for Unity, winning a match by pin in 33 seconds, then

defeating Chicago Lakes' Ruby Schlender in 5:27. Isabelle Holden – 138, and Natasha Tait – 165, added fourth-place finishes for Unity.

#### Legacy Tournament

Spooner/Webster earned a runner-up finish with 107.5 points in Saturday's nine-team event.

Paisley Imme led Spooner/Webster by going undefeated at 165, winning all five of her matches by pin. Her final two wins were in less than 35 seconds, including her final match—a 28-second win over Superior's Adrienne Johnson.



Spooner/Webster wrestler Paisley Imme with a pin over her Shell Lake opponent, Aria Hershey. Imme took first place and Hershey earned second place at the Shell Lake tournament. – Photos by Larry Samson



Spooner/Webster wrestler Gracelyn Piske with a pin against her Superior opponent. She earned a second-place finish at the Shell Lake tournament.

#### Lakeland Invite

Brooklyn D'Jock led the LFGS girls wrestling team by providing a first-place finish in her division of the Lakeland Invite on Jan. 20.

D'Jock won the 132 division by pinning Cornell/Gilman/Lake Holcombe's Aspen Person in 5:16 to earn the team's lone division win. Sawyer Olson went 1-1 at 235.

## Unity, LFGS finish top five at Shell Lake

### Boys Wrestling Roundup

**Above The Fold Media | For the Leader**

SHELL LAKE – Two area boys wrestling teams earned top-five finishes in Saturday's 16-team Shell Lake Legacy Tournament.

While Spring Valley-Elmwood earned the top spot with 201.5 points, Unity (153) claimed fourth ahead of LFGS (140.5). Spooner/Webster (58.5) was 12th.

The Eagles had four wrestlers reach the first-place match in their given division, and two of those earned top finishes. Uriah Fugate – 144 earned two wins by pin, technical fall and major decision to reach the first-place match where he defeated Clear Lake's Brennon Colbeth in a 16-10 decision. Tanner Freer – 190 earned two wins by pin and then defeated Eau Claire Memorial's Caysen Martinek in three minutes in the first-place match.

Adrien Olson – 157, and Carlos Pouliot – 215, earned second-place finishes for the Eagles; Easton Baxter added a fourth-place finish.

Riley Cummings led LFGS with a first-place finish at 132. He earned two wins by pin to reach the first-place match, where he defeated Ladysmith's Alex Mikunda in a 15-9 decision.

Randon Fickbohm – 138, and Travis Rockensock – 285, earned third-place finishes for LFGS. Fickbohm defeated Bloomer's Mason Smith 3-0 in their third-place match while Rockensock won by pin in 4 minutes, 30 seconds over Thorp/Owen-Withee's Jordon Wulff.

Wyatt Christianson – 113 led Spooner-Webster with a fourth-place finish; he won a match by pin and another by decision.

#### Interstate Classic

St. Croix Falls earned a runner-up finish in the Interstate Classic it hosted Saturday, finishing with 222 points and behind only St. Michael-Albertville (267).

Two Saints earned first-place finishes. Drake Petersen – 175 won two matches by pin and the first-place match by an 8-5 sudden victory over Joe Scully (St. Michael-Albertville). Garrett Dagestad – 285 won two matches by pin and followed with a 6-1 decision over Ian Asplund (Forest Lake) in the first-place match.

Kaiden Hahn – 113, Dominic Viebrock – 150, and Chase Steffen – 157, had runner-up finishes for St. Croix Falls. Brock Sladky – 126, Kaden Clark – 132, Connor Weber – 144, Isaac Briggs – 165, and Alex Hoff – 215, earned third-place finishes.

#### Lakeland Invite

Jaxon Finch led LFGS in the invitational hosted by Turtle Lake on Jan. 20.

Finch had a runner-up finish in the 150 division; he won matches by technical fall and pin to reach the first-place match, which he lost in 2:38 to Dax Steinbach



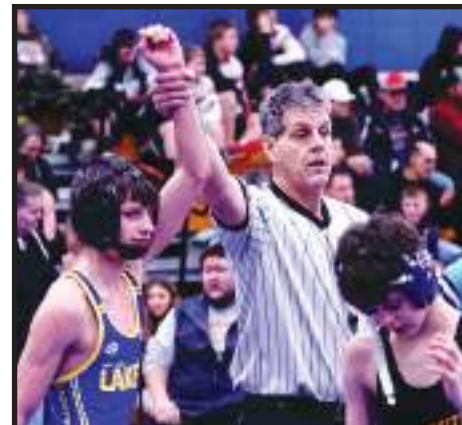
SCF's Jamison Berg faces a wrestler from Baldwin-Woodville. - Photo by Devon Christensen



SCF's Miles Kelly goes against an opponent from Princeton, Minn. - Photo by Devon Christensen

(Cornell/Gilman/Lake Holcombe).

Eric Currie added a third-place finish at 165, while Rile Hochstetler – 285, and Preston Kelley – 138, had fourth-place finishes for LFGS.



Shell Lake's Asher Trudell takes second place in the 105-pound weight class at the Shell Lake tournament. - Photo by Larry Samson

## Gymnasts prep for home meet

**Above The Fold Media | For the Leader**

RICE LAKE – The Grantsburg girls gymnastics team finished Saturday's Icicle Invitational less than two points from a third-place finish and landed fifth in the team standings.

Grantsburg had 112.9 points, while Stevens Point won the event with 139 points.

Avery Kwolek had Grantsburg's best finish of the invitational, placing third on the vault with an 8.6, while Rice Lake's Bristene Becker won it with an 8.75.

Kwolek also had a seventh-place finish on the floor exercise with an 8.45. Stevens Point's Riley Mueller won the event with a 9.35.

Abby Rombach had a pair of top-10 finishes for Grantsburg, placing sixth in all-around scoring with a 31.775, and teammate Kwolek in seventh with a 30.85. Mueller topped the scoring with a 34.825. Rombach also was seventh on the bars with a 7.9, just over a point behind Cheyenne Cornell, 8.975, of Stevens Point in first.

Grantsburg has a rare home event this Friday at the Grantsburg Community Center.



Avery Kwolek led Grantsburg with a third-place finish on the vault at last weekend's Icicle Invitational. - Photo by April Kramer

## Kya Krenz named to women's track and field team at UW-Whitewater

**Submitted by UW-Whitewater**

WHITEWATER – Kya Krenz, Osceola, who is studying accounting at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, has earned a roster spot on the Warhawk women's track and field team for the 2026 season.

The Warhawks finished fifth in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference at both the indoor and outdoor championship meets in 2025. The team placed 56th at the NCAA Indoor Championships and tied for 22nd at the NCAA Outdoor Championships.

Head coach Mike Johnson enters his 15th season leading the women's program. The Warhawk women have finished among the top 10 at four national meets (two indoor, two outdoor) during Johnson's tenure.

The Warhawks began the 2026 season on Jan. 17 at Carthage's Firebird First Invitational. The team competed in its first regular season home meet of the season on Saturday, Jan. 24, the Karl Schlender Invitational at Kachel Fieldhouse. For the full 2026 schedule, visit [uwwsports.com](http://uwwsports.com).

# SPORTS SNAPSHOTS

By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter

Thanks for checking out this week's Sports Snapshots section where we feature various sports photographs taken across the area in the past week or so. We welcome our member readers to submit their own photos for consideration. Please email

them to us directly at editor@iccpaonline.com, with the subject line "Sports Snapshots." Be sure to include your name and where your photo was taken. We are also looking for videos that you take that are no more than 20 seconds in length from local sporting events for posting on our website, leadericcpa.com.



Frederic's ice fishing team competed over the weekend of Jan. 10 and 11 on Big Butternut Lake, aiming to catch 300 inches of fish, including 13 panfish and seven game fish. - Photos courtesy of Frederic School District

ACE BBQ Night at Unity High School raised \$1,557 for the Unity School Booster Club. - Photo courtesy of Balsam Lake Hardware and Rentals



Unity's ice fishing team competed in Chequamegon Bay on Lake Superior, where Berkley Tourville took first place by catching the largest perch and coho salmon. - Photos courtesy of Unity Eagles Athletics



Amery Warriors wrestling faced teams in three meets the week of Jan. 12: the Cameron quad on Jan. 13, the Prescott triangular on Jan. 15, and the Hutch Invite in Hutchinson, Minn., on Jan. 17. Samuel Deems claimed the JV title at 121 pounds. In varsity action, Tony Sowell-139 placed fourth, Westin Ingham-152 took second, and Gio Sowell-175 competed. - Photo courtesy of Amery Warrior Wrestling

The St. Croix Falls dance team performed during halftime on Jan. 20 for Senior Night, honoring seniors Jazmyan Adams and Josie Dye and expressing thanks to parents. - Photo courtesy of SCF Athletics



LEFT: Amery's varsity powerlifting team set personal records in squat, bench press, and deadlift at the Osceola meet, demonstrating strong teamwork and effort. - Photo courtesy of Amery Powerlifting

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# OBITUARIES

## Wanell Hansen

Wanell Hansen, born on Feb. 16, 1929, in Mallard, Iowa, passed away peacefully from natural causes on Jan. 12, 2026. She graduated from high school in Mallard, where she played basketball and was known as the "snatcher." She moved with her family to Frederic, Wisconsin, in 1946 where she met the love of her life, Earl Hansen, and married him in 1949.



A cherished matriarch, she dedicated her life to her family, creating a nurturing home as a devoted homemaker. Wanell will be profoundly missed by her children, Ronald Hansen, Diane Pettis, Jill Paulson, and Jerry Hansen; and brother, Alan Bohn, who all carry forward her legacy of love and warmth.

Throughout her life, Wanell had a passion for cooking, often gathering family and friends around her table to share meals infused with love. She was also an avid reader and greatly enjoyed playing cards, hobbies that brought joy and connection to those around her. Wanell had a deep affection for music and spent many years participating in church choirs, where her beautiful voice graced many gatherings. She enjoyed traveling, a retirement home in Arizona in the winter, and summers at the family cabin on North Sand Lake. She loved to entertain, bringing friends and family together for laughter and celebration.

One of Wanell's most memorable loves was dancing, especially the Lindy, with her favorite partner, Earl. Their joyful performances were a highlight for many, showcasing their deep bond and shared love for the rhythm of life. Wanell's spirit and zest for life will remain in the hearts of all who knew her, serving as a reminder of her vibrant personality and the love she shared.

Wanell was preceded in death by her parents, Roy Bohn and Hazel Bohn; her husband of 65 years, Earl Hansen; and brothers, Dennis Bohn and Gary Bohn.

Following her wishes, Wanell's remains will be cremated. Her family plans to honor her memory with a celebration of her life on Friday, May 1, 2026, from 1 to 4 p.m., at Mitchell's Cocktail Company in New Richmond, Wisconsin.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be directed to Tutapona (tutapona.com) or the James 1:27 Fund at Faith Community Church (fccnr.org/onlinegiving).

Cremation provided by Bakken-Young Funeral & Cremation Services.

## Aaron J. Linski

Aaron John Linski passed away Sunday, Jan. 18, 2026. He was born June 22, 1979, in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, welcomed by his parents, Roger and Rebecca Linski, and brother, Jamin. He graduated from Unity High School and completed Auto Tech classes in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. Aaron worked as a mechanic in Maplewood, Minnesota, close to his home of 20 years that he shared with Kim. Together they enjoyed traveling, caring for their dogs Jim and PJ, Packer games, and time with family and friends. Aaron enjoyed fishing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, biking, gardening, and cooking amazing meals. He is forever in our hearts, deeply cherished for his laughter, hospitality, and willingness to listen and help with his quiet, reflective ways, as well as his positive, grateful, and forgiving spirit.



Virtual service and gathering will be held Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, at 3 p.m. Call 715-553-1305 for details.

A Celebration of Life is being held Sunday, Feb. 1, 2026, from 1 to 3 p.m., at the Braham Event Center, 655 8th St. SW, Braham, Minnesota.

## Rona S. Hedrick

Rona Sue Hedrick passed away on Jan. 16, 2026, surrounded by loving family after a short battle with cancer. She is finally at peace.

Rona was born on Dec. 10, 1966, in Alexandria, Louisiana, and moved to St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, at the age of three. She participated in gymnastics, cheerleading, music and forensics at St. Croix Falls High School, where she graduated in 1985. She babysat for neighbors, helped wherever she could, and was known for her generous spirit.



Rona tended bar and served tables for more than thirty years. She was a fantastic server—authentic, fun, and believed in treating everyone right, saints and sinners alike. She befriended everyone she met, young and old. This was a skill she brought with her, working as nursing assistant and caregiver at a handful of local nursing homes.

Rona was a devoted single mother to Chase (St. Paul) and Tess (Green Bay). She was involved, supportive, and present—not just for her kids, but for their friends as well, who all remember her as one of the cool, fun moms. She was immensely proud of Chase and Tess, often bragging of their accomplishments, travels, and experiences. She took great delight in the lives they built. She was also a warm and welcoming mother-in-law to Charlotte, loved her grand "fur babies," and cared deeply for her niece, Brooke, and nephews, Cooper and Tate.

Over the years, Rona dealt with various health issues, including surgeries and long recoveries. They had recently caused her life to grow quieter, and she spent her time painting beautiful watercolors of flowers and nature. She took great joy in spoiling her little white rescue dog, Rowdy. He was her constant companion in her last years.

Rona is survived by her mother, Penny Meyer (Lloyd); children, Chase Hedrick (Charlotte) and Tess Hedrick; her siblings, Lori Parks (Scott Olson) and Chad Hall (wife, Kim); nephews, Cooper and Tate; niece, Brooke Briggs (Randy); her aunt and best friend Molly Stainbrook; her dear pup, Rowdy; and many other family members and friends.

She was preceded in death by her father, Randy Hall; and brother, Todd Hall.

Taken too soon, she will be dearly missed, but we find solace knowing she is no longer in pain and can finally rest peacefully.

Go, Pack, Go!

A visitation will be held from 2 to 4 p.m., Friday, Jan. 30, 2026, at the Grandstrand Funeral Home, Osceola, Wisconsin, followed by a memorial service at 4 p.m., at the Grandstrand Funeral Home.

Arrangements are with the Grandstrand Funeral Home. Condolences may be expressed online at grandstrandfh.com.

## Patrick H. Stuart

Patrick H. Stuart, born April 12, 1950, died on Jan. 22, 2026, at his home in Webster, Wisconsin. He had been a resident there since 1989, where he and his wife purchased Stuart's Leisure Acres campground.



The family all worked hard together to make the resort into what it is today. They all enjoyed meeting campers and providing them with what they needed to enjoy and make memories with family and friends.

In 1975, Patrick married Betty, and together they raised four children, Dawn, Nathan, Patrick, and Matt.

Pat was preceded in death by his parents, Herbert and Mildred Stuart; his sisters, Carolyn and Mary Kay; and his son, Nathan.

There will be a private ceremony for immediate family at home.

## Franklin G. McCurdy

In loving memory of Franklin (Red) G. McCurdy, age 86, who passed away on Jan. 24, 2026, surrounded by his beloved family. Red was born on Nov. 13, 1939, in Frederic, Wisconsin, to George and Margaret McCurdy.



Red graduated from Unity High School in May of 1959. In his high school years, he played on the football team and also helped his parents with farm work. In 1960, he started working at Patterson Dental in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for 15 years. Red met Betty Zahurones in 1964 and got married on Jan. 9, 1965. Together they raised their three children, Lynda, Julie, and Diane, in Coon Rapids, Minnesota. In 1976, they moved to Centuria, Wisconsin, and bought the Eagle Lounge with a co-owner. They sold the Eagle Lounge in the early '80s and bought the McCurdy Sewer Service and had that for 20 years before selling. Red and Betty also co-owned Wise Guys Bar in Milltown.

His hobbies were fishing, gardening, hunting, reading western books, watching western TV shows, watching football, going on trips and camping with friends and family.

He is survived by his loving wife, Betty McCurdy; his loving children, Lynda, Julie (Dale), Diane (Dan); his grandchildren, Melissa, Michelle (Jimmy), Heidi (Andy), Jessica, Amy (Adrial), and Megan (Jake); and two great-grandchildren, Mei and Declan; as well as many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Margaret McCurdy; his brothers, Robert and Donald; and his sister, Hazel. A special thanks to St. Croix Hospice for their care.

A celebration of Red's life will be held on Feb. 7, 2026, from noon to 5 p.m. at the VFW 1503, 200th Ave, Milltown, WI 54858.

The Kolstad Family Funeral Home of Centuria has been entrusted with funeral arrangements.

## Nancie Naughton

Nancie Naughton (Ebert), age 78, passed away peacefully on Jan. 21, 2026. Born and raised on the east side of St. Paul, Minnesota, she spent the last 22 years of her life in Luck, Wisconsin.



Nancie was a force! She was known for her grit, compassion, and unwavering love for her family. She shared over four decades with her beloved life partner, John Welch, building a beautiful life together in their dream home, where they remained side by side through her final days.

After 30 years with St. Paul Companies, Nancie retired and went on to open an antique shop in Webster, Wisconsin, with John, embracing her entrepreneurial spirit.

She is survived by her partner, John Welch; daughter, Jennifer; daughter-of-the-heart, Mykayla Rose; six grandchildren, Lysandra, Isaiah, Mariah, Aleonna, Jynessa, and Joseph; seven great-grandchildren; siblings, Robert Ebert (Diana), Jill Christensen, Richard Ebert (Kelly), Kim Colella (Niko), and Kari Doroff (Greg); and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jane Ebert (Oman) and Harold Ebert; sister and brother-in-law, Susan and Roger Mroszak; and brother, Joel Ebert.

In her final years, Nancie was lovingly cared for by her granddaughter Jynessa. We are so grateful for her tenderness and dedication. We would also like to thank Nicole of Adoray Hospice, her brother Richard, and the Baillargeon family who were always ready at a moment's notice.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring. You are invited to leave condolences, memories, and photos at rowefh.com. Arrangements are entrusted to Rowe Funeral Home in Luck, 715-472-2444, and the Northwest Wisconsin Cremation Center in Milltown, nwwicremationcenter.com.

Obituaries can be emailed to:  
ads@iccpawi.com



# OBITUARIES

## Bruce W. Taylor

Bruce William Taylor (aka Doc Tiny), age 75, of Somerset, Wisconsin, passed away on Nov. 18, 2025, at 6:47 p.m., after a courageous battle with cancer with complications of chemical-induced Parkinson's. He was surrounded in love by his family and friends.



Bruce was born April 21, 1950, in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, to Bill and Darlene Taylor.

Bruce grew up in rural country environment, working hard and stepping in hand-in-hand with neighbors. This man had such great knowledge on farming, gardening, and animals to just name a few. He had an amazing work ethic and was proud with the success and handwork he put into all he did. Bruce was a good man, who persevered through many of life's trials and walked with humble pride through life's delights. He was the most selfless person you could ever encounter, raising his daughter and granddaughters the same way. He passed on his love of the Lord and self-service. He leaves behind a beautiful legacy, a mindset that is hard to find. One that sees people as people, deserving of love and kindness.

Bruce graduated from Osceola High School in 1968. He served his country in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War and was a member of the VFW Post #10818 serving on the honor squad. He married Patsy Jo Stewart in 1973 and moved to Lynwood, California, in 1975. They had two children, Christopher and Kathleen. By this time, Bruce was studying management at Fullerton College, Class of 1979. He then studied nursing at Cypress College, Class of 1981. By 1985 the family moved back to East Farmington, Wisconsin, and lived on the hobby farm, until they moved to Somerset on Nov. 1, 2013, till the current time.

Along the way, they acquired other kids throughout the years that were taken into their home at the farm, totaling 12-plus, not including their offspring. The (Walton's) table was always crowded and full of laughter and love, and the house was never quiet or empty. Through all the weeks, months, and years that they stayed or lived with Patty and Bruce, they always shared experiences, common sense, advice, and nurturing with an unconditional love and guidance he gave to us all. His family was always his first concern and that was his unconditional loving attitude toward everyone. But in a heartbeat, he would give the shirt off his back or give the last he had to help anyone he could.

Bruce had a passion for gardening, woodworking, fishing, computers, genealogy, cribbage and card games. Bruce had driven ambulances for multiple locations, along with teaching at Indianhead College and Holy Family Hospital. Bruce was also a First Responder and was amongst the founding members of County Line First Responders.

While Bruce may not be a physical protecting force for us now, he is a spiritual one who watches over his family now here on Earth.

Bruce is survived by his daughter, Kathleen Taylor; granddaughters, Taylor June Clark and Willow Rose Taylor; and grandson, Cyler Nelson; his sister, Peg Taylor; sister-in-law, Bonnie Taylor; nephews, Justin Taylor and Nathan Taylor; and many extended family and friends.

A Celebration of Life visitation will be held from 5-8 p.m., on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026, at Bakken-Young Funeral and Cremation Services, 728 S. Knowles Avenue, New Richmond, Wisconsin, with a brief service at 5:30 p.m., concluding with military honors provided by VFW Post #10818 and meal to follow.

An enormous thank you to Lakeview Home Care and Hospice for their wonderful, loving care during Bruce's last days. Along with a huge thank you to Jen and Jim Bucklew, Josh and Brandi Bell, Monica and Eric, Sarita and Brad, Chantelle and Jacob, Natasha and Tony, Dan Bontu and Badria, and Nick. And a huge thanks to those not listed that humbly came alongside us in support and love during this time. Arrangements are with Bakken-Young Funeral and Cremation Services.

He dedicated, served and sacrificed for the stars and stripes! Memorials may be directed to VFW Post #10818, Freedom Park.

## Robert W. Pearson

Robert (Bob) Wayne Pearson, 72, of Lewis, Wisconsin, died peacefully in his sleep at home on Jan. 8, 2026, with his partner, Debbie, at his side.



Bob was born on July 12, 1953, in Siren, Wisconsin, to Arvid and Inez Pearson. He was the middle of three boys growing up on the family farm in Lewis, Wisconsin. From his father, Bob gained respect for the soil, a habit of fixing and tinkering, and a lifelong instinct to document everything with a camera. From his mother, he absorbed a strong sense of family, compassion, and loyalty to others. These values quietly guided him throughout his life.

Bob attended the Lewis Grade School, graduated from Frederic High School in 1971, and earned his pilot's license at an aviation school in Greeley, Colorado.

He operated Pearson's Flying Service out of the Burnett County Airport, providing flying lessons and short trips by prop plane. During this time, he became a father to his daughter, Jessica, a role he cherished deeply. Bob's days at the airport led him to work as a pilot for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, tracking wildlife and assisting with fire patrol. Flying was his passion, but Bob was never defined by a single job or title. What mattered most to him was the process of learning something new.

Known to many as "Dr. Bob," he could mend just about anything. He was always modifying, customizing, and improving things until they worked exactly the way he thought they should. Bob thrived on problem-solving and explaining how things worked. He was an excellent storyteller and story maker, animated and funny as heck. A regular, imperfect guy who made friends easily and kept them for life.

Community was a common thread in Bob's life. He was a sportsman and active in local gun clubs for decades. He enjoyed bowling leagues, snowmobile racing, playing chess, golfing, jet skis, happy hour, and gardening. Bob was a legendary pig roaster, a master chicken cooker, and eager to fire up the grill. He loved a pocket tee, a mug of beer, and good company.

Bob is survived by his daughter, Jessica Pearson; partner, Debbie Deal; brother, James (Verlene) Pearson; sister-in-law, Terri Pearson (widow to Lonny); two nieces and one nephew; and many extended family and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Arvid and Inez Pearson; and his brother, Lonny Pearson.

Bob was commended in prayer alongside his brother, Lonny, on Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026, at Bethany Lutheran Church in Grantsburg, Wisconsin. A memorial celebration honoring Bob's life will be held in May, with details to follow.

You are invited to leave condolences, memories, and photos at rowefh.com. Arrangements are entrusted to the Rowe Funeral Home in Frederic, Wisconsin, 715-327-4475.

## LaVonne K. Schultz

LaVonne Katherine Schultz, of Balsam Lake, Wisconsin, passed away with family by her side, on Jan. 26, 2026.



LaVonne was born on April 28, 1941, to Martha and George Faldersack in Plainview, Minnesota.

She had spent 68 cherished years married to Spencer Schultz. Together they raised their children, who survive her: sons, Dale Schultz, Brian Schultz, and Dean (Gina) Schultz; and daughters, Kathy (Dan) Tuttle, and Tamie Schultz. She is also survived by 13 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, friends and family.

LaVonne preceded in death by her son, Gene Schultz; her two great-granddaughters, Brylee and Allison; and her very special dog, Sadie.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Kolstad Family Funeral Home on Friday, Jan. 30, 2026, at 1 p.m. Visitation one hour prior. A reception to follow at the Milltown VFW.

Kolstad Family Funeral home has been entrusted with the arrangements.



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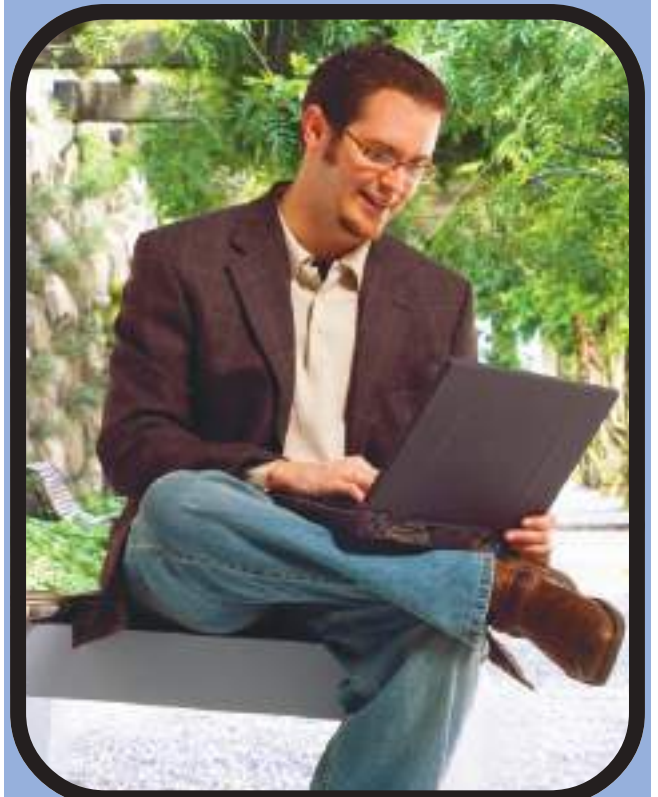
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**NORTHWOOD TECHNICAL COLLEGE BOARD PROCEEDINGS  
DECEMBER 10, 2025**

The Northwood Technical College Board meeting was held on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., at the Northwood Tech Health Education Center, located at 505 Pine Ridge Drive, Shell Lake, WI 54871. The use of technology to access the meeting was available to Board members as needed.

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

Chairperson Pete Vrieze called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Board members Craig Fowler, Brett Gerber, Janelle Gruetzmacher, Neil Kline, Lori Laberee, Amber Richardson, Tim Widiker and Pete Vrieze were in attendance for the meeting. A quorum was established. Joe Simonich provided advance notice he would be absent.

Northwood Tech employees Steve Bitzer, McKenzie Buehler, Aliesha Crowe, Amanda Gohde, Cara Greene, Deanna Lapacinski, Susan Yohnk Lockwood, Sara Nick, Kim Pearson, Jena Vogtman, and John Will were in attendance during the meeting at the Northwood Tech Health Education Center.

Rob Ganschow and Emily Tomlinson of Wipfli, LLP were in attendance for a portion of the meeting.

**OPEN MEETING STATEMENT**

Deanna Lapacinski, Executive Assistant to the President and Board, read the following open-meeting statement: "The December 10, 2025, meeting of the Northwood Technical College Board, and all other meetings of this Board, are open to the public and in compliance with state statutes. Notice of the meeting was sent to the press on December 5, 2025, in an attempt to make the general public of Wisconsin aware of the time, place, and agenda of the meeting."

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND AUTHORIZATION OF ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES**

Chairperson Vrieze reserved the right to modify the order of the agenda to accommodate persons making presentations, live or via technology, and requested approval to authorize the use of electronic signatures for all Board documents.

Amber Richardson moved, seconded by Brett Gerber, to approve the agenda and authorize the use of electronic signatures for all Board documents. Upon a unanimous yes vote of all members present, motion carried.

**AUDIENCE RECOGNITION ANNOUNCEMENT**

Time was reserved for Chairperson Vrieze to recognize people in the audience if needed. The Audience Recognition Board policy (II.L.) was included in the Board book as a reference.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Board Chairperson Vrieze requested a motion for the Board to convene into Executive Session under the provisions of Wisconsin Statutes §19.85(1)(c)(e)(g) to consider personnel, employment, performance evaluation, and compensation matters and deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session period.

Amber Richardson moved, seconded by Neil Kline, to convene into Executive Session in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes §19.85(1)(c)(e)(g) for the purposes noted in the preceding paragraph. Board Chairperson Vrieze announced the motion. Upon a roll-call vote, all members present voted yes; motion carried (7-0).

Board Chairperson Vrieze called the executive session to order at 9:31 a.m. Board members Craig Fowler, Brett Gerber, Janelle Gruetzmacher, Neil Kline, Lori Laberee, Amber Richardson, Tim Widiker and Pete Vrieze were in attendance for the meeting. A quorum was established.

Northwood Tech employees Amanda Gohde, Deanna Lapacinski, and John Will, were in attendance during the Executive Session.

*Janelle Gruetzmacher joined the meeting at 9:32 a.m.*

**1. Approval of October 15, 2025, Executive Meeting Minutes**

Craig Fowler moved, seconded by Tim Widiker, to approve the executive meeting minutes as printed. Upon a unanimous yes vote of all members present, motion carried.

**2. Motion to Reconvene into Open Session**

A motion was needed to reconvene in open session. Any action to be taken on matters discussed in Executive Session will be considered in open session under "Other Items Requiring Board Action."

Amber Richardson moved, seconded by Craig Fowler, to adjourn the Executive Session and reconvene back into the regular Board meeting. Upon a roll-call vote, all members present voted yes; motion carried (8-0) and the executive session adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

**OPEN SESSION RECONVENED**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Approval of the October 15, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes**

Amber Richardson moved, seconded by Tim Widiker, to approve the regular meeting minutes as printed. Upon a unanimous yes vote of all members present, motion carried. The signed contract listing and resolutions from the October meeting will be attached to the official minutes. Ms. Lapacinski will forward the approved minutes (without attachments) to the newspaper of record per Wisconsin Statutes §38.12(4) and §985.01(4)(6).

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairperson Vrieze asked if there were any items to be pulled off the Consent Agenda and acted on separately; however, there were none.

Tim Widiker moved, seconded by Amber Richardson, to approve the Consent Agenda. Upon a roll-call vote, all members present voted yes; motion carried (8-0).

**1. Personnel:**

- A. **New Hire:** Paula Anich, Learning Technology Technician; Staff; Ashland, \$21.31/hour, effective December 9, 2025.
- B. **New Hire:** Rayna Case, Custodian; Staff; Rice Lake, \$18.99/hour, effective November 10, 2025.
- C. **New Hire:** Jamie Coleman, Service Desk Technician II; Staff; Ashland, \$24.48/hour, effective October 20, 2025. *Note: Mr. Coleman is currently a Learning Technology Technician at the Ashland Campus.*
- D. **New Hire:** Diane Hofsteadt, Career Planner – WIOA Services; Staff; Rice Lake, \$23.79/hour, effective November 11, 2025.
- E. **New Hire:** Lisa Lee, Nursing Assistant Instructor; Faculty; Superior, annual salary \$63,485, effective November 3, 2025.
- F. **New Hire:** Allison Musolf, Career Planner – WIOA Services; Staff, Rice Lake, \$23.79/hour, effective November 24, 2025.
- G. **New Hire:** Andrew Rubino, Mechatronics Basics Instructor; Faculty; Rice Lake, annual salary \$63,485, effective November 26, 2025.
- H. **Resignation:** Evan Barshack, Accounting Instructor; New Richmond, effective December 31, 2025.
- I. **Resignation:** Yvonne Bretting, Event Scheduling Technician; Ashland, effective June 30, 2026.
- J. **Resignation:** Jamie Coleman, Learning Technology Technician; Ashland, effective October 19, 2025.
- K. **Resignation:** Jean Engebretson, Cosmetology Instructor; Superior, effective June 30, 2026.
- L. **Resignation:** Tessa Feeney, Associate Degree Nursing Instructor; New Richmond, effective December 31, 2025.
- M. **Resignation:** Tim McRath, Dean, Academic Programs; Rice Lake, effective May 22, 2026.
- N. **Resignation:** Brenda Rouzer, Distance Learning Network Technician; Rice Lake, effective December 31, 2025.
- O. **Resignation:** Kim Terry, Financial Aid Coordinator; Ashland, effective April 30, 2026.
- P. **Resignation:** Frank Vidas, HVAC/R Instructor; Superior, effective June 30, 2026.

**2. Contracts**

The contract listing was approved (see attached list).

**3. Financial/Cash Position Report**

The College's Financial and Cash Position Report, as of last month, was approved.

**4. Approval of Bills**

Administration recommends, per WI Statute 38.12(2), approval of the vendor and payroll related expenditures totaling \$3,152,892.95 for October 2025 and \$2,245,007.51 for November 2025.

**5. Bids/Purchases**

- A. **Network Infrastructure – Collegewide:** Administration recommended awarding a contract under RFP 26-96100-CW-NETWORK-INFRASTRUCTURE for the installation of a scalable, updated infrastructure at all campuses to Mosaic Technologies of Cameron, WI. This project will be completed in phases over the next several years as budget allows.

**OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION**

**1. Approval of Annual Financial Audit Report**

The annual financial audit report for year ending June 30, 2025, was presented by Rob Ganschow and Emily Tomlinson of Wipfli, LLP. The report was posted on the Board Connection page and included the following items requiring Board approval: General Audit and Letter of Necessary Disclosures, and Financial Statement. Mr. Ganschow stated that in his opinion the College is in a good financial position. The audit opinion was "unmodified," which means the

financial statements are presented accurately. The Single Audit Report, once complete, will come back to the Board for approval.

Amber Richardson moved, seconded by Brett Gerber, to approve the Annual Financial Audit Report as presented. Upon a roll-call vote, all members present voted yes; motion carried (8-0).

The Board and President Will provided gratitude to Sara Nick, Zach Decker, and the Business Services Department for their work on the audit report.

**2. Approval of Resolution 26-04, Petition to the Wisconsin Technical College System Board Requesting Approval for Remodeling at the Northwood Technical College Ashland Campus**

Administration requested Board approval to submit a Request for Approval to the WTCS Board for the Ashland Campus Student Services, Administration Area, and Conference Center Remodel Projects. The projects include renovation of the student services, administration office area, Duplication/Mail area, and Conference Center Room. The remodel will affect 6,560 total interior square footage and will include new interior finishes and LED lighting. The project includes the addition of a Welcome Center which will better serve our students and community to help with traffic flow and informational services. Service rooms will be added to provide them with specialized remote services access from the district. Furthermore, the overall space will be right sized to accommodate administrative and student services staff. WTCS Board approval is required per Wisconsin statutes. The Northwood Tech Board is authorized to act on bids after the WTCS Board acts on the Request for Approval.

**3. Approval of Resolution 26-05, Petition to the Wisconsin Technical College System Board Requesting Approval for Remodeling at the Northwood Technical College New Richmond Campus - Medical Laboratory Education Center**

Administration requested Board approval to submit a Request for Approval to the WTCS Board for the New Richmond Campus exterior building and parking lot project. The project includes replacement of the building exterior siding, window replacement, and revisions and replacement of the parking lot. The exterior remodel will replace end of life wall cladding materials and includes replacement of existing exterior single pane 30+ year old windows and upgrading to energy efficient windows on the 8,000 square foot existing building. The site improvements include an improved site layout on the 1.7 acre site that will reduce asphalt pavement by 16,000 square feet and be replaced by both native and manicured landscaping. The pavement reduction will reduce on-site parking from 80 existing stalls down to 46 parking stalls. Other site improvements are energy efficient site lighting, and pavement restoration and resurfacing. WTCS Board approval is required per Wisconsin statutes. The Northwood Tech Board is authorized to act on bids after the WTCS Board acts on the Request for Approval.

**4. Approval of Resolution 26-06, Petition to the Wisconsin Technical College System Board Requesting Approval for Remodeling at the Northwood Technical College Rice Lake Campus**

Administration requested Board approval to submit a Request for Approval to the WTCS Board for the Rice Lake Campus conference center project. The project will affect 6,983 total interior square footage. Updated finishes in the lobby, restrooms, and conference rooms will better serve students and the community by providing a modern space for learning and engagement. The remodel will include new interior finishes and LED lighting, replacement of outdoor air handling equipment and converting from pneumatic to direct digital control (DDC) system. Additionally, the project includes converting the underutilized space into a preparation kitchen, meeting, mail room, and storage. WTCS Board approval is required per Wisconsin statutes. The Northwood Tech Board is authorized to act on bids after the WTCS Board acts on the Request for Approval.

**5. Approval of Resolution 26-07, Petition to the Wisconsin Technical College System Board Requesting Approval for Remodeling at the Northwood Technical College Superior Campus**

Administration requested Board approval to submit a Request for Approval to the WTCS Board for the Rice Lake Campus conference center project. The project includes renovation to the Student Services and Innovative Teaching and Learning Center. The remodel will affect 11,632 total interior square footage. The student services project will include new interior finishes and LED lighting. The project includes the addition of a welcome center which will better serve our students and community to help with traffic flow and informational services. A new Student Life area will be incorporated for student engagement events, event planning, and student group meeting space. Service rooms will be added to provide them specialized remote services access from the district. Furthermore, the overall space will be right sized to accommodate student services staff. The Innovative Teaching & Learning Center remodel will include new interior finishes and LED lighting. The project includes the addition of testing/study rooms and small group meeting rooms as well as open study areas. The Learning Technology Center will be right sized and centralized to help with traffic flow and informational services for students. The Academic Success Center will have increased office areas, meeting, and testing rooms to accommodate student testing and specialized learning needs. Larger meeting spaces were incorporated outside of the innovation Technology Learning Center so that labs and meeting spaces can be utilized by faculty and staff for classes and meetings as needed. WTCS Board approval is required per Wisconsin statutes. The Northwood Tech Board is authorized to act on bids after the WTCS Board acts on the Request for Approval.

Amber Richardson moved, seconded by Craig Fowler, to approve Resolutions 26-04, 26-05, 26-06 and 26-07 as presented. Upon a roll-call vote, all members present voted yes; motion carried (8-0).

**CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION**

**1. Meeting Information Sharing**

Time was reserved for Board members to report on any meetings they attended.

**A. ACCT Congress**

Time was reserved for the attendees to report out on sessions they attended.

**B. DBA Newsletters**

The District Boards Association monthly newsletters for November and December 2025 were shared.

**2. Travel Sign Up**

**A. Board Events Schedule**

Time was reserved for Board members to update administration on their plans for upcoming Board events. A copy of the *Board Events Schedule* was included in the Board book.

**B. National Legislative Summit**

Time was reserved for Board members to discuss travel plans for the upcoming National Legislative Summit which will take place February 8 – 11, 2026, in Washington, D.C. Board members, Neil Kline, Lori Laberee, and Pete Vrieze, are registered to attend. Additionally, President Will plans to attend.

**3. Monitoring Schedule Review and Updates**

**A. Monitoring Schedule**

Time was reserved to review and update the *Board Monitoring Schedule* as needed. There were no recommended updates from Administration.

**4. President's Updates:**

**A. Enrollment Update**

President Will provided a brief update on the most recent enrollment information.

**B. Program Advisory Committee Information Update**

Dr. Crowe informed the Board that there are currently 71 advisory committees representing all associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs, as well as Federal project service areas. Advisory committee members represent business and industry, community-based organizations, and other educational institutions. During AY25-26, all advisory committees engaged in conversations regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI). Committees have been asked to discuss current AI use in industry, anticipated industry impact of AI, and knowledge, skill, & ability expectations related to AI for program graduates. Advisory committee input is used in planning technology incorporation and relevant curriculum changes for all programs.

**C. Assurance of Compliance-Civil Rights Certificate Update**

President Will updated the Board on the annual required submission of the Assurance of Compliance-Civil Rights Certificate. The updated certificate replaces all Assurance of Compliance Certificates previously submitted to the Office of Civil Rights by the District in the past.

**D. Master Facility Plan Update**

President Will shared the 2026-2036 Master Facility Plan Executive Summary with the Board. Additionally, President Will reviewed the Master Facility Plan project sequencing and engaged in Q&A with the Board.

**E. Strategic Planning Timeline**

President Will shared the new strategic planning timeline.

**5. Legislative Updates**

Representative Rob Kreibich joined the meeting at 11:00 a.m. and provided legislative updates to the Board.

**6. Board Leadership Scholarship**

President Will and Board Chair Vrieze provided an overview of the Board Leadership Scholarship.

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### VILLAGE OF MILLTOWN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In accordance with the provisions of Section 19.84, Wisconsin Statutes, public notice is hereby given to all residents in the Village of Milltown that the Milltown Plan Commission will hold a public hearing on Monday, February 9, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Programming Room of the Milltown Public Library, 61 Main Street West, Milltown, WI 54858. The purpose of the hearing is to consider public input on the proposed text amendment to Section 13-1-12 Site Regulations in Title 13, Chapter 1, Zoning Code of the Village of Milltown Code of Ordinances, allowing a waiver option to the street dedication requirement by the Village Board, and to Section 13-1-82 Existing Nonconforming Structures in Title 13, Chapter 1, Zoning Code of the Village of Milltown Code of Ordinances, allowing flexibility for additions and reconstruction of nonconforming structures.

Interested parties may give oral testimony. Written testimony will be accepted by the Village prior to the public hearing. Anonymous testimony will not be accepted.

Please contact the Village Clerk to see the full version of the text or if you have any questions regarding the proposed change: Village of Milltown Hall, 89 Main Street Milltown, WI 54858, or by phone at 715-825-3258.

Amy Foeller  
Village of Milltown Clerk

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#### 7. Northwood Tech Board Appointment Update

Administration provided information on the 2026 Northwood Technical College Board Appointment process. Wisconsin Statute §38.08(1)(a)1 states that a District Board shall administer the district and shall be composed of **nine (9)** members who are *residents of the district*, including:

- **two (2)** employers
- **two (2)** employees
- **three (3)** additional members
- **one (1)** school district administrator (SDA), as defined under §115.001(8)
- **one (1)** elected official who holds a state or local office, as defined in §5.02

In accordance with the Northwood Tech Plan of Representation, no **region** will have less than two (2) members and no more than three (3) members on the district Board. The Plan of Representation is provided and includes a district map as well as population estimates.

The Board Appointment Committee consists of the County Board Chairs who represent the 11 counties in Northwood Tech's district. St. Croix County Board Chair, Bob Long, is designated as the chair of the Northwood Tech Board Appointment Committee since St. Croix County has the largest population in the 11-county Northwood Tech district [Wisconsin Statutes §38.10(2)(b)]. The committee is required to give equal consideration to the general population distribution within the district and the distribution of women and minorities within the district. According to the Wisconsin Technical College System, this has been interpreted to mean the following:

- a) **Male/Female Representation** – members of each gender (male/female) must hold at least **three (3)** positions on the district Board.
- b) **Minority Representation** – must reflect the distribution of minorities within a district. While all districts are encouraged to have minority representation on their District Boards, if the total percentage of minorities within the district exceeds 6.5%, at least **one (1) minority** must hold a position on the District Board. *Note: Northwood Tech's most recent estimated minority population is 11.5%.*

There will be three (3) open Board positions as the terms for Board members holding those positions will expire on June 30, 2026. The spring 2026 Board openings are for 3-year terms beginning July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2029. Incumbents may reapply if qualifications haven't changed since taking the Oath of Office.

The Board Appointment hearing/committee meeting date has been scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2026, at 2 p.m., at the Northwood Tech Health Education Center in Shell Lake, WI. Candidates and committee members are allowed to join the meeting virtually. The application deadline is Wednesday, February 4, 2026.

President Will informed the Board that member, Brett Gerber, submitted his resignation, effective June 30, 2026. Therefore, the "Additional" Board position currently held by Mr. Gerber will also be included in the 2026 Board Appointment process.

#### Current 2025-2026 Board Composition Chart

No.	Region that Board member lives	Categories	Members	Gender	Term Expires
1.	<b>Region 1:</b> Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, and Iron	Additional	Lorraine Laberee	Female	2026
2.	<b>Region 1:</b> Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, and Iron	Additional	Joe Simonich	Male	2026
3.	<b>Region 2:</b> Barron, Rusk, and Sawyer	Elected Official	Craig Fowler	Male	2026
4.	<b>Region 2:</b> Barron, Rusk, and Sawyer	Employee	Janelle Gruetzmacher	Female	2028
5.	<b>Region 2:</b> Barron, Rusk, and Sawyer	Additional	Brett Gerber	Male	2028
6.	<b>Region 3:</b> Burnett, Polk, and Washburn	Employee	Amber Richardson	Female	2027
8.	<b>Region 3:</b> Burnett, Polk, and Washburn	Employer	Neil Kline	Male	2028
9.	<b>Region 4:</b> St. Croix	School District Administrator	Tim Widiiker	Male	2027
10.	<b>Region 4:</b> St. Croix	Employer	Pete Vrieze	Male	2027

#### 8. 2026A Bond Sale Results

Sara Nick, Vice President, Business Services and Chief Financial Officer, shared results from the recent 2026A Bond Sale.

#### 9. Student Updates and News

Time was reserved for the following items:

##### A. Northwood Tech Cuts Ribbon for New State-of-the-Art Mobile Dental Lab

- Oct. 15, 2025 – Northern News Now
- Oct. 15, 2025 – WDIO
- Oct. 16, 2025 – Superior Telegram
- Oct. 20, 2025 – Civic Media
- Oct. 21, 2025 – The Chronotype
- Oct. 22, 2025 – KDAL Northland News Radio
- Oct. 23, 2025 – Drydenwire, Spectrum News 1
- Oct. 29, 2025 – Tribune Press Reporter, Mellen Weekly Record
- Nov. 12, 2025 – The Connection

Northwood Technical College celebrated the ribbon cutting of its new Mobile Dental Lab at the Superior campus. The unit—modeled after the Rice Lake dental lab—provides three dental operatories, radiography, sterilization space, and hands-on clinical training for Dental Assistant students. It addresses rising regional workforce demand, with projected growth of about 3.4% in dental assistant positions.

The lab will also support future EFDA certification programming. The \$349,919 project was funded through WTCS and Delta Dental grants and strengthens Northwood Tech's ability to deliver flexible, high-quality dental training across northwestern Wisconsin.

##### B. Northwood Tech Student Receives \$2.6K P.E.O. Grant

Nov. 10, 2025 – Newsbreak via The Chronotype  
Northwood Technical College student Meriah Galatowitsch of Cumberland received a \$2,600 Philanthropic Educational Organization (P.E.O.) Program for Continuing Education grant. Sponsored by P.E.O. Chapter Z in Rice Lake, the grant supports women whose postsecondary education was interrupted and who have returned to complete their studies. Galatowitsch is in her final term of the Medical Assistant program at the Rice Lake campus and plans to work in area medical facilities.

##### C. Northwood Tech Named Among Top 200 U.S. Community Colleges by the Aspen Institute

Nov. 17, 2025 – Drydenwire, Newsbreak via Drydenwire  
Nov. 20, 2025 – The Times, Woodville Leader  
Northwood Technical College has again been named among the top 200 U.S. community colleges by the Aspen Institute and is eligible to apply for the 2027 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. This recognition highlights strong student success, workforce outcomes, and equitable results. Northwood Tech has previously earned this designation in 2021, 2023, and 2025, reflecting its continued commitment to innovation and a student-first mission.

##### D. Northwood Technical College 2025 Gold Vets Ready Employer

Nov. 24, 2025 – Business North  
Nov. 26, 2025 – Barron News-Shield, The Times, Drydenwire  
Dec. 1, 2025 – The Gazette/GazetteXtra, The Chronotype  
Northwood Technical College has been named a 2025 Gold Vets Ready Employer by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development—one of only 25 employers statewide to receive the honor. The recognition highlights the college's strong support for veterans, service members, and military-connected families through hiring practices, campus resources, mentorship, and transition support. This designation reflects Northwood Tech's ongoing commitment to helping veterans succeed as students and employees.

##### E. Northwood Tech Showcases EMS Immersive Training Room Through Lights, Sirens, and Simulation

Nov. 28, 2025 – Drydenwire  
Northwood Technical College hosted Lights, Sirens, Simulation., a community open house showcasing its new EMS Immersive Training Room at the Rice Lake campus. The \$247,050 simulation space—funded through the U.S. Department of Labor's EduSTAT in Rural Healthcare Grant—provides 360-degree projection, sound, wind, and scent effects to replicate high-pressure emergency scenes for EMT and paramedic training. The immersive environment strengthens hands-on skill development for students preparing to serve communities across the college's 11-county region.

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION

##### 1. Business Services Report

Sara Nick, Vice President Business Services & Chief Financial Officer, provided an overview of the Business Service Division team, its service areas, and current projects. A PowerPoint was shared and was included for the Board's review.

Janelle Gruetzmacher left the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

##### 2. Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)

Strategy, Innovation, and Technology prepared a report showing the results of the 2025 Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). This survey was administered to Northwood Tech students in the spring of 2025, with 371 responses. The SSI, a nationally recognized student priority and satisfaction survey, provides academic institutions the ability to measure and benchmark student satisfaction, the level of importance as well as identify gaps and trends of specific college attributes across 11 key areas. A full report of the study's findings, including a profile of respondents, was available for the Board's review.

Amber Richardson moved, seconded by Neil Kline, to accept the Business Services Report and Student Satisfaction Inventory Report as it related to the interpretation of the ENDS statement for the President's annual evaluation. Upon a unanimous yes vote of all members present, motion carried.

#### ESTABLISH BOARD AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

##### 1. Review Meeting Dates, Locations, and Start Times

Time is reserved for the Board to confirm its plans for a regular meeting scheduled on **Wednesday, January 21, 2026**, beginning at 8:30 a.m., at the **Northwood Tech Health Education Center** in Shell Lake. The expected end time for the January Board meeting is 10:30 a.m.

##### 2. Review/Add Agenda Items

Time was reserved for the Board to add or review agenda items for the next Board meeting. Board agenda items for the next meeting were listed on the Board's Monitoring Schedule. Additional agenda items for this meeting were discussed.

Chairperson Vrieze plans to add "Board Meeting policy" to the January Board agenda.

*Note: Board members may add additional items to next month's Board agenda by contacting the Chair before **Friday, December 26, 2025**. This request does not obligate the Chair to include these items on the agenda. The Chair will notify administration of agenda items before the Board book is prepared.*

#### MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Craig Fowler moved, seconded by Amber Richardson, to adjourn the meeting. Chairperson Vrieze adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Board Secretary

47745\_1 26L WNAXLP

# LEGAL NOTICES

## PUBLIC NOTICE

On February 4, 2026, the Polk County Environmental Services Committee will hold consecutive public hearings beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Polk County Government Center in Balsam Lake, WI, to solicit comments on the proposed amendments to the Polk County Code of Ordinances regarding shoreland protection and subdivision provisions.

The proposed shoreland amendments include updating the current ordinance to align with the DNR model ordinance language which includes removing language that exempts towns with their own zoning from certain general provisions. The addition of definitions and boathouse requirements are to provide clarity to the public regarding permissible structures. Amending the sideyard and rear setbacks to be consistent throughout the unincorporated areas of Polk County and adding additional mitigation options to provide property owners with additional opportunities to improve their lakefront properties.

The subdivision amendments include revisions to the definitions, survey exemptions, survey required, minimum lot size requirements, and clarification on the process for variances to the subdivision ordinance.

A copy of the existing and the proposed ordinance amendments along with a map of the properties affected are accessible in the office of County Clerk, 100 Polk County Plaza, Suite 110, Balsam Lake, WI 54810, and on the County website at: <https://www.polkcountywi.gov>. All interested parties have a right to either support or oppose the request(s) by appearing in person at time of hearing or by writing a letter to the Land Information Department, 100 Polk County Plaza, Suite 130, Balsam Lake, WI 54810.

## TOWN OF MILLTOWN ROADWORK BID

### Official Notice-Advertisement for Bids

Pursuant to Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 985, notice is hereby given that the Town of Milltown, Polk County, Wisconsin, is accepting sealed bids for the following projects in 2026 until 7:00 p.m. local time on February 16, 2026. Bids will be publicly opened at the town board meeting at the Milltown Town Hall, 1502 200th Ave., Milltown, WI 54858 on February 18, 2026. Bids marked "roadwork bid" can be mailed to the Town of Milltown, P.O. Box 475, Milltown, WI 54858.

- 190th Ave. from 191st Ave. to 130th St. 5,420' x 22'. Pulverize existing asphalt and knock down. Fine grade base course to drain, water, and compact. Pave 2.5" average compacted depth hot mix asphalt, and 2' driveway kickouts.
- 170th St. from 190th Ave to 200 Ave. - 5,299' x 22'. Pulverize existing asphalt and knockdown, fine grade base course to drain water and compact. Pave 2.5" average compacted depth hot mix asphalt and 2' driveway kickouts.
- 188th Ave. from 145th St. to 18th Ave. - 4,459' x 20'. Fine grade base course to drain, water, and compact. Pave 2.5" average compacted depth asphalt in one lift. 2' driveway kickouts.

The Town of Milltown reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informality in the bidding process or accept bids which best serves the interest of the town. Proof of insurance is required. Any questions or details needed, contact Frank Rau, Maintenance Supervisor at 715-553-8644.

47723\_1 26-27L 16-17a,d

Cheryl Kloehn, Clerk

## TOWN OF MILLTOWN ROADWORK BID

### Official Notice-Advertisement for Bids

Pursuant to Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 985, notice is hereby given that the Chairman of the Town of Milltown, Polk County, Wisconsin, will receive sealed bids for the following projects until 7:00 p.m. local time on Thursday, March 5, 2026. Bids will be publicly opened at the town board meeting on March 16, 2026, at Milltown Town Hall, 1502 200th Ave., Milltown, WI 54858. Bids marked "roadwork bid" can be mailed to Cheryl Kloehn, Town Clerk, P.O. Box 475, Milltown, WI 54858. The Town of Milltown reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informality in the bidding process or accept bids which best serve the interest of the town. Proof of insurance is required. For more information, please contact Frank Rau, Maintenance Supervisor, at 715-553-8644.

#### Project C: Rout and Crack fill

- 210th Ave. from 160th St. to Hwy. 35
- 170th from Town Limit to 240th Ave.
- 230th Ave. from Hwy. 35 to 150th St.
- 145th St. from 230th Ave. to 235th Ave.
- 230th Ave. from 145th St. to Gravel
- 195th Ave. from 155th St. to Hwy 46
- 185th Ave. from 145th St. to Corner South
- 180th St. from 180th Ave. to Hwy.
- 170th St. from 200th Ave. to Hwy.
- 230th Ave. from 180th to 170th St.
- 180th St. from 220th Ave. to 230th Ave.

#### Project D: Chip Seal

- 210th Ave. from 160th St. to Hwy. 35
- 145th St. from 230th Ave. to 235th Ave.
- 230th Ave. from 145th St. to Gravel
- 195th Ave. from 155th St. to Hwy 46
- 185th Ave. from 145th St. to Corner South
- 180th St. from 180th Ave. to Hwy.
- 170th St. from 200th Ave. to Hwy.
- 230th Ave. from 180th to 170th St.
- 180th St. from 220th Ave. to 230th Ave.

Project E: FA-2 Trap Rock will be purchased by Town of Milltown and stored at Town Shop.

47724\_1 26-27L 16-17a,d

Cheryl Kloehn, Clerk

(Jan. 14, 21, 28)  
STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CIRCUIT COURT  
POLK COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ESTATE OF  
THE GREENER FAMILY  
TRUST

Notice of Hearing (Probate)  
Case No. 25 PR 115

NOTICE OF HEARING:  
Date: March 10, 2026  
Time: 1:00 p.m.  
Circuit Court Judge/Circuit Court Commissioner: Judge Daniel J. Tolan.

Location: Polk County Circuit Court, 1005 W. Main St., #300, Balsam Lake, WI 54810

Hearing on Petition for Review of Trust and Declaratory Judgment.

Daniel J. Tolan Circuit Court Judge  
Dated: January 12, 2026

Leah E. Boeve, Eckberg Lammers, P.C.  
1809 Northwestern Avenue  
Stillwater, MN 55082  
651-439-2878  
Bar No.: 1081407

47509\_1  
WNAXLP

(Jan. 14, 21, 28)

Our File #W196714

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CIRCUIT COURT  
POLK COUNTY

CAPITAL ONE, N.A.,  
SUCCESSOR BY MERGER TO  
DISCOVER BANK

Plaintiff,

vs.

JOHN M. MOORE

Defendant.

AMENDED SUMMONS

THE STATE OF WISCONSIN  
TO:

JOHN M. MOORE  
309 238TH ST.  
OSCEOLA, WI 54020-5947

You are hereby notified that the Plaintiff named above has filed a lawsuit or other legal action against you. The Complaint, which is also served on you, states the nature and basis of the legal action.

Within Forty (40) days after January 14, 2026, you must respond with a written answer, as that term is used in Chapter 802 of the Wisconsin Statutes, to the Complaint. The court may reject or disregard an answer that does not follow the requirements of the statutes. The answer must be sent or delivered to the court, whose address is Clerk of Circuit Court, Polk County, 1005 W. Main St., Ste. 300, Balsam Lake, WI 54810 and the Kohn Law Firm, Plaintiff's attorneys, whose address is 735 N. Water St., Suite 1300, Milwaukee, WI 53202. You may have an attorney help or represent you.

If no Complaint accompanies this Summons you must respond within the said 40-day period with a written demand for a copy of the Complaint by mailing or delivering said written demand to the court and to the Plaintiff's attorneys at their respective addresses listed above.

If you do not provide a proper answer to the Complaint or provide a written demand for said complaint within the 40-day period, the court may grant judgment against you for the award of money or other legal action requested in the Complaint, and you may lose your right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in the Complaint. A judgment may be enforced as provided by law. A judgment awarding money may become a lien against any real estate you own now or in the future, and may be enforced by garnishment or seizure of property.

Dated at Milwaukee, Wisconsin December 30, 2025.

KOHN LAW FIRM S.C.  
Electronically signed by  
JOHN H. DANNER IV  
State Bar No. 1125953  
Attorney for Plaintiff

47413\_1  
WNAXLP

## Webster Police Department

Webster Police Department recorded the following incident for the report period of Jan. 18 to Jan. 24: one animal problem.

(Jan. 14, 21, 28)

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CIRCUIT COURT  
POLK COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ESTATE OF  
Rudolph L. Nalipinski

Notice to Creditors  
(Informal Administration)

Case No. 25 PR 116

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

1. An application for informal administration was filed.
2. The decedent, with date of birth September 5, 1942, and date of death May 6, 2025, was domiciled in Polk County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 54 206th St., New Richmond, WI 54017.
3. All interested persons waived notice.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is April 21, 2026.
5. A claim may be filed at the Polk County Courthouse, 1005 W. Main St., Balsam Lake, Wisconsin, Room 500.

Date Signed: Jan. 6, 2026.  
Cheryl Winberg  
Probate Registrar

Christine A. Rasmussen  
Valley Crossing Law, LLC  
940 7th Avenue, P.O. Box 34  
Baldwin, WI 54002  
715-688-4045

Bar No. 1048961

47414\_1  
WNAXLP

(Jan. 14, 21, 28)

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CIRCUIT COURT  
POLK COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ESTATE OF  
Barbara A. Taylor

Order Setting Time to Hear  
Petition for Administration and  
Deadline for Filing Claims  
(Formal Administration)

Case No. 25PR113  
A Petition for Formal Administration was filed.

THE COURT FINDS:  
The decedent, with date of birth August 29, 1944, and date of death October 8, 2025, was domiciled in Polk County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 2034 135th Street, Milltown, WI 54858.

THE COURT ORDERS:

1. The Petition be heard at the Polk County Courthouse, 1005 W. Main St., Balsam Lake, WI, Room 2, before Circuit Court Judge Hon. Jeffery L. Anderson, on Feb. 23, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.
- You do not need to appear unless you object. The petition may be granted if there is no objection.
2. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is April 21, 2026.
3. A claim may be filed at the Polk County Courthouse, Balsam Lake, Wis., Room 500.
4. Heirship will be determined at the hearing on petition for final judgment.
5. Publication of this notice is notice to any persons whose names or addresses are unknown.

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 715-485-9238 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

DATE SIGNED: Jan. 8, 2026.

Jeffery L. Anderson  
Circuit Court Judge  
This is a final order for the purpose of appeal.

Joel D. Schlitz  
Mudge, Porter, Lundeen & Seguin, S.C.  
110 Second Street  
Hudson, WI 54016  
715-386-3200  
Bar Number 1050236

47517\_1  
WNAXLP

## Burnett County Dispatch

Burnett County Dispatch recorded the following incidents for the report period of Jan. 19 to Jan. 26: thirteen 911 hang-ups, three motor vehicle accidents involving deer, nine motor vehicle accidents with property damage, one motor vehicle accident with personal injury, 15 alarms, one fire alarm, 11 animal problems, four warrant/probation/arrests, one agency assist, 11 citizen assists, one death, four disabled vehicles, four disturbances, seven erratic drivers, one wildland fire, one structure/vehicle fire, three harassment complaints, four juvenile problems, five medical emergencies, four paper service/writes, two door checks, five snow complaints/accidents, six suspicious people/circumstances, four tests, one theft/shoplifting report, 18 traffic stops, and five welfare/abuse/neglect checks.

(Jan. 21, 28, Feb. 4)

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CIRCUIT COURT  
POLK COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ESTATE OF  
Marcus S. Catlin

Notice to Creditors  
(Informal Administration)

Case No. 26 PR 01

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

1. An application for informal administration was filed.
2. The decedent, with date of birth February 2, 1979, and date of death December 22, 2025, was domiciled in Polk County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 312 North Washington Street, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024.
3. All interested persons waived notice.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is April 22, 2026.
5. A claim may be filed at the Polk County Courthouse, 1005 W. Main St., Balsam Lake, Wisconsin, Room 500.

Date Signed: January 7, 2026.  
Cheryl Winberg  
Probate Registrar

Ronald L. Siler  
Williamson & Siler, S.C.  
201 S. Knowles Avenue  
New Richmond, WI 54017  
715-246-6806

Bar No. 1022083

47551\_1  
WNAXLP

(Jan. 14, 21, 28)

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CIRCUIT COURT  
POLK COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ESTATE OF  
FLORENCE L. GREENER

Order Setting Time to Hear  
Petition for Administration and  
Deadline for Filing Claims  
(Formal Administration)

Case No. 25 PR 114  
A Petition for Formal Administration was filed.

THE COURT FINDS:  
The decedent, with date of birth January 3, 1935, and date of death July 6, 2018, was domiciled in Polk County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 733 330th Avenue, Frederic, WI 54837.

THE COURT ORDERS:

1. The Petition be heard at the Polk County Courthouse, 1005 W. Main St., Balsam Lake, Wis., Room 1, before Circuit Court Judge Daniel J. Tolan, on March 10, 2026, at 1 p.m.
- You do not need to appear unless you object. The petition may be granted if there is no objection.
2. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is April 21, 2026.
3. A claim may be filed at the Polk County Courthouse, 1005 W. Main St., Balsam Lake, Wisconsin, Room 500.
4. Heirship will be determined at the hearing on petition for final judgment.
5. Publication of this notice is notice to any persons whose names or addresses are unknown.

The names or addresses of the following interested persons if any are not known or reasonably ascertainable, Keith R. Greener.

Please check with person named below for exact time and date.

Leah E. Boeve, Eckberg Lammers, P.C.  
1809 Northwestern Avenue  
Stillwater, MN 55082  
651-439-2878  
Bar No.: 1081407

47468\_1  
WNAXLP

(Jan. 28, Feb. 4, 11)

STATE OF WISCONSIN  
CIRCUIT COURT  
POLK COUNTY

Wells Fargo USA Holdings, Inc.  
successor by merger to Wells  
Fargo Financial Wisconsin, Inc.  
11625 N. Community House Rd.  
Charlotte, NC 28277

Plaintiff,

vs.

Richard H. Aeziman  
1691 White Ash Way  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810-2641

Jane Doe Aeziman  
1691 White Ash Way  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810-2641

LEAF Capital Funding LLC  
c/o Corporation Serve  
Company, Registered Agent  
33 E. Main St., Ste. 610  
Madison, WI 53703-4655

Midland Credit Management, Inc.  
c/o Corporation Serve  
Company, Registered Agent  
33 E. Main St., Ste. 610  
Madison, WI 98203-3646

Defendants.

PUBLICATION SUMMONS

Foreclosure of Mortgage  
The amount claimed exceeds  
\$10,000.000

The Honorable Daniel J. Tolan

Case No. 25-CV-000351

Case Code: 30404

THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

To each person named above  
as a defendant:

You are hereby notified that the plaintiff named above has filed a lawsuit or other legal action against you.

Within 40 days after January 28, 2026 you must respond with a written demand for a copy of the complaint. The demand must be sent or delivered to the court, whose address is 1005 W. Main Street, Suite 300, Balsam Lake, WI 54810 and to Gray & Associates, L.L.P., plaintiff's attorney, whose address is 16345 West Glendale Drive, New Berlin, WI 53151-2841. You may have an attorney help or represent you.

If you do not demand a copy of the complaint within 40 days, the court may grant judgment against you for the award of money or other legal action requested in the complaint, and you may lose your right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in the complaint. A judgment may be enforced as provided by law. A judgment awarding money may become a lien against any real estate you own now or in the future, and may also be enforced by garnishment or seizure of property.  
Dated this 22nd day of January, 2026.

Gray & Associates, L.L.P.  
Attorneys for Plaintiff  
Robert M. Piette  
State Bar No. 1018058  
Case No. 25-CV-000351  
16345 West Glendale Drive  
New Berlin, WI 53151-2841  
414-224-8404

Please go to [www.gray-law.com](http://www.gray-law.com) to obtain the bid for this sale.

Gray & Associates, L.L.P. is attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. If you have previously received a discharge in a chapter 7 bankruptcy case, this communication should not be construed as an attempt to hold you personally liable for the debt.

47710\_1  
WNAXLP

# LEGAL NOTICES

## CLASSIFIED NETWORK OF WISCONSIN



### Miscellaneous

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!

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.

Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, waiving ALL installation costs! (Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. Offer ends 12/27/26.) Call 1-844-260-2934

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## Burnett County Circuit Court

Burnett County Circuit Court criminal and traffic dispositions recorded the following charges for the report date of Jan. 27:  
**Brett A. Goepfert**, 45, Luck, disorderly conduct, \$250.  
**Carson E. Johannes**, 25, Robbinsdale, Minn., speeding, \$175.30.  
**Anthony B. Lafontaine**, 22, Waupun, battery, \$200, local jail.  
**Brian K. Roseland Sr.**, 55, Sandstone, Minn., possession of methamphetamine, \$518, local jail, firearms/weapons restrict.  
**David F. Scott**, 42, White Bear Township, Minn., speeding, \$225.70.  
**Tyler R. Stevens**, 25, Siren, OWI, \$937.50, DOT license revoked six months, alcohol assessment.  
**Alec O. Taylor**, 30, Frederic, violate harassment restraining order, \$443.

## Burnett County bookings

Burnett County Sheriff's Department booked the following people the week of Jan. 20:  
**David A. Strenke**, 37, probation violation.  
**Teahjay B. Lightfeather**, 20, OWI, possession of drug paraphernalia.  
**Dallas S. Schiernbeck**, 41, probation violation.  
**Jesse L. Janssen**, 34, OWI, operating with prohibited alcohol concentration.  
**Anna M. Ganley**, 36, probation violation.  
**Louis R. Oiyotte**, 42, warrant offense.  
**Kenneth W. Deroy**, 51, OWI.

## Burnett County warrants

Burnett County Circuit Court issued the following warrants for the report date of Jan. 27:  
**Commitment**  
**James D. Mustache**, 60.  
**Jeffrey W. Foshay**, 53.  
**Tristen O. Salminen**, 28.  
**Benjamin J. Katzke**, 28.  
**Tyriq J. Ranum**, 25.  
**Brandon E. Belloso-Flores**, 20.  
**Failure to appear:**  
**Charles Robinson**, 65.  
**Matthew J. Richards**, 35.  
**Jason A. Tacheny**, 32.

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**79¢** each

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## Inter-County Cooperative Publishing Association

Frederic, Wis.

## THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WEBSTER NOTICE OF SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD RATING FROM 2024-2025

The table below contains information on the District's most recent school accountability reports, as issued by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction under section 115.385 of the state statutes.

The School District of Webster had a report card rating of 61.4, which Meets Expectations.

School	Grades Served	Recent Rating 2022-2023
Webster School District	4K-12	61.4 Meets Expectations
Webster Elementary School	4K-4	52.4 Meets Few Expectations
Webster Middle School	5-8	67.1 Meets Expectations
Webster High School	9-12	58.6 Meets Few Expectations

Complete reports, including the most recent school accountability report cards for 2024-2025, and a list of Webster School District educational options can be found on the District website at:

<https://www.webster.k12.wi.us/families-community/districtnoticetopublic.cfm>

[DPI recommends careful review of the detailed report card data on all pages. Multiple years of data are used throughout the report card in most of the priority area scores]



## SHELL LAKE STATE BANK

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## Reading



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**Frederic**  
**715-327-4236**  
[memberships@leadericcpa.com](mailto:memberships@leadericcpa.com)

## ICCPA THE YELLOW ADVERTISER IS NOW OFFERING STATEWIDE ADS & CLASSIFIEDS!

Call 715-327-4236 to find out how to place your ad or classified.

303 Wisconsin Ave. N., P.O. Box 490 • Frederic, WI 54837

[iccpaonline.com](http://iccpaonline.com) • [signsolutions4u.com](http://signsolutions4u.com)

One stop to reach over 1.17 million people in the Wisconsin Community Ad Network! Choose a statewide audience or by region.

**2x2**  
 Statewide.....\$1,150  
 Per Zone.....\$395  
 Ad dimensions needed (3.792"x2") & (3.22" x 2)

**2x4**  
 Statewide.....\$2,300  
 Per Zone.....\$780  
 Ad dimensions needed (3.792"x 4") & (3.22" x 4")

**Deadline** - Ad copy, insertion order and payment must be received by Tuesday at 10 a.m. CST, the week prior to the week of publication. Day of publication varies by newspaper; ICCPA cannot guarantee a specific publication day. Black and white only.

**Classified Line Ad**  
 Statewide 25 words .....\$300  
 Per additional word.....\$10  
 Per region 25 words .....\$100  
 Per additional word.....\$5



North Zone	Central Zone	South Zone
Merrill Foto News Iron River Iron County Reporter Shoppers Guide Antigo Times Shopper Ashland Northwoods Shopper Marshfield Hub City Times/Buyers Guide Rhinelander Northwoods Star Journal Shawano Market Messenger Wittenberg Northerner Black River Falls The Shopper Clintonville Shoppers Guide Eagle River North Woods Trader Frederic Indianhead Advertiser Frederic Tri-County Advertiser North Frederic Tri-County Advertiser South Frederic Wild Rivers Advertiser North Frederic Wild Rivers Advertiser South TMC-Peshigo Times Saver TMC-St. Croix Valley Advertiser Stevens Point City Times/Buyers Guide Wausau Times/Buyers Guide Wisconsin Rapids City Times/Buyers Guide <b>Circulation: 503,991</b>	Brillion Lake To Lake Shopper Hartford-Slinger Express News Seymour Advertiser Sheboygan Sun Beaver Dam Badgerland Values Dodge Co. Beaver Dam Badgerland Values Juneau Co. Algoma Kewaunee County Star News Kiel Tempo New London Buyers Guide Ripon Express Waupaca Buyers Guide Wautoma Central Wisconsin Resorter <b>Circulation: 216,288</b>	Beloit Stateline Messenger Elkhorn Walworth County SmartShop Germantown Express News Janesville Messenger Menomonee Falls Express News Monroe Shopping News Platteville Grant, Iowa, Lafayette Shopping News Sussex Express News Baraboo Badgerland Values Sauk Co. Burlington Hi-Liter Columbus Shopping Reminder Madison Badgerland Values Dane Co. Portage Badgerland Values Columbia Co. Richland Center Shopping News <b>Circulation: 455,267</b>

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Polk County Board of Adjustment will hold the following public hearings starting at 9:00 a.m. on February 17, 2026, in the East Conference room at the Government Center in Balsam Lake, WI. At that time, the applicants must appear before the Board and inform the Board of their request. Please send any written public comments regarding these requests to the Polk County Board of Adjustment, c/o: Mr. Logan Hacker, Zoning Administrator, 100 Polk County Plaza, Suite #130, Balsam Lake, WI 54810 or by email at [logan.hacker@polkcountywi.gov](mailto:logan.hacker@polkcountywi.gov).

Amy L. Fischer requests a variance to construct an accessory building within 25' of the side yard and rear yard setbacks pursuant to Sec. 42-241(e) of the Polk County Code of Ordinances. Property affected is 2011 Long Lake Lane, Sec. 26/T35N/R15W, Town of Johnstown, Parcel #028-00668-0000 1.08 acres.

Patrick and Christine Leopold request a variance to convert an accessory building to a dwelling within the 10' side yard setback pursuant to Sec. 42-301(c)(1) of the Polk County Code of Ordinances. Property affected is 1125 Sandy Hook Lane, Sec. 6/T35N/R16W, Town of Georgetown, Parcel #026-01440-0000 0.87 acres.

The Board may, upon motion, second and a favorable majority roll call vote of the members present, convene in closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes Section 19.85(1)(a) for the purpose of deliberating concerning a case which was the subject of any judicial or quasi-judicial trial or hearing before the governmental body. Thereafter, the Board may reconvene in open session for the purpose of reporting, issuing, and voting upon the determination of the case which was the subject of their deliberations.

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# The Heartbeat of Local Information: Why Trusted Local Journalism Still Matters

Article #2 in a Series of 8 | By Alan Miklofsky

## Why Local Journalism Endures

In an era dominated by breaking alerts, algorithmic feeds, and a relentless national news cycle, it has become easy to overlook the quiet, methodical work of local journalism. National headlines move fast and loud, while local reporting often unfolds slowly, deliberately, and without fanfare. Yet it is precisely this steady presence that makes local journalism indispensable.

Local journalism endures because communities still need a reliable source of shared understanding. While national media explains what is happening across the country or the world, local journalism explains what is happening here. It covers school board decisions, zoning changes, public safety issues, infrastructure projects, and community debates that rarely attract outside attention but shape daily life in profound ways.

Without local journalism, communities lose continuity. Institutional memory fades. Context disappears. Decisions begin to feel disconnected from history, and citizens are left reacting rather than understanding. Local journalism provides the connective tissue that links past decisions to present outcomes and future consequences.

## Fairness as a Community Obligation

Fairness is the first obligation of trusted local journalism, and it carries a unique weight at the community level. Unlike national reporting, local stories often involve people who know one another, work together, and share common spaces. The proximity between reporter, subject, and reader demands care, balance, and restraint.

Fair reporting means approaching issues without pre-judgment and resisting the temptation to frame stories for outrage or engagement metrics. It requires listening carefully to multiple perspectives, even when those perspectives conflict. Fairness does not mean avoiding hard truths. It means presenting them honestly, without exaggeration or distortion.

When fairness is practiced consistently, readers may disagree with conclusions or outcomes, but they trust the process. That trust is earned over time and lost quickly. Once lost, it is difficult to restore. Fairness is not simply an ethical preference; it is a strategic necessity for journalism that hopes to serve a community over the long term.

## Accuracy Over Speed

Accuracy is the second pillar of trusted journalism, and it is under constant pressure in a digital environment that rewards immediacy. Speed has become the currency of modern media. Being first often matters more than being correct, and errors spread faster than corrections.

Local journalism must actively push back against this impulse. Accuracy requires verification, context, and discipline. It means checking public records, confirming sources, and understanding the background behind decisions and disputes. It also means being willing to delay publication until the facts are clear.

In a community setting, inaccuracies do not disappear after a news cycle. They linger, shaping perceptions and damaging reputations. Local journalists understand that being right matters far more than being first, because the consequences of error are personal and long-lasting.

## Journalism and Civic Responsibility

Local journalism is not merely descriptive; it is explanatory. One of its most important roles is helping citizens understand how civic systems function. Budgets, ordinances, court rulings, and administrative decisions are often complex and inaccessible to the average resident.

Journalists act as translators, turning technical language into clear explanations and highlighting why decisions matter. This role strengthens accountability. When public officials know their actions will be examined and explained, transparency improves. When citizens understand how decisions are made, participation increases.

Civic responsibility in journalism is not advocacy. It is illumination. It provides the information citizens need to engage thoughtfully, ask better questions, and hold institutions accountable without inflaming division.

## Strengthening Local Economic and Cultural Life

Local journalism also plays a vital role in supporting economic and cultural life. It highlights small businesses, profiles entrepreneurs, covers community events, and recognizes volunteer efforts that would otherwise go unnoticed.

These stories reinforce local identity. They remind residents that their community is not simply a collection of addresses, but a living network of people, ideas, and shared experiences. Economic ecosystems depend on visibility, and small enterprises rely on local media to tell their stories.

Cultural coverage fosters pride and continuity. It preserves traditions, celebrates milestones, and documents the evolving character of a community. Without local journalism, much of this cultural record is lost.

## The Cost of Losing Local News

The decline of local journalism is not theoretical. Across the country, communities have become news deserts where local coverage has vanished or been se-

verely reduced. The consequences are measurable and troubling.

Research consistently shows that when local journalism disappears, civic engagement declines, voter participation drops, and misinformation rises. Municipal borrowing costs increase as oversight weakens. Trust in institutions erodes.

In the absence of reliable local information, rumor and social media speculation rush in to fill the void. Without a shared factual foundation, civic discourse fractures, and communities become more vulnerable to polarization and manipulation.

## Values-Driven Journalism for the Future

Values-driven journalism is not nostalgic. It is forward-looking and adaptive. It embraces digital platforms while maintaining editorial independence. It separates reporting from advertising and opinion from fact.

Organizations committed to journalistic integrity invest in training, transparency, and ethical standards. They issue corrections openly, scrutinize sources carefully, and resist pressure to sacrifice credibility for short-term attention.

These practices are not obstacles to growth. They are prerequisites for trust in a crowded and noisy information environment.

## Why This Mission Matters

Trusted local journalism matters because democracy is local before it is national. Civic life begins in neighborhoods, schools, and town halls. When local journalism thrives, communities are better informed, more engaged, and more resilient.

Supporting local journalism is not charity. It is an investment in civic infrastructure. Just as roads, utilities, and schools sustain daily life, so does reliable information.

Protecting the heartbeat of local information protects the health of the community itself.

**Alan Miklofsky has been a business owner for over 40 years, including operating and selling a successful retail shoe chain.** He served on the board of the



National Shoe Retailers Association (NSRA) from 1993 to 2022, serving two terms as Chairperson and once as interim CEO. *Today, he works as a business consultant helping independent retailers strengthen operations, refine marketing strategies, and thrive in an increasingly competitive retail environment.*  
www.alanmiklofsky.com

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## ~~~~~ TESTIMONIALS ~~~~~

### "IF IT DIDN'T WORK WE WOULDN'T DO IT!"

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- Jeff Donica, Country View Greenhouse, Barron, WI

### "IT ISN'T A COST. IT'S A REVENUE STREAM."

We have been using the Advertisers every week for over 40 years to promote our products and service. We have found that investing weekly into the Advertiser delivers big returns. Running ads isn't free and everyone has a budget, but when you make more than you spend, it isn't a cost. It's a revenue stream.

- Spooner Mercantile Company, Spooner, WI

### "ADVERTISING DELIVERS BIG RETURNS"

We have been using the Advertisers every week for more than 20 years to promote our dealership. We have found that investing weekly into the Advertiser delivers big returns. Running ads isn't free and everyone has a budget but when you make more than you spend, it isn't a cost. It's an investment.

"If it didn't work, we wouldn't do it."

- Dennis Sandman, General Manager, Swant Graber, Barron, WI

### "IT TOTALLY WORKS FOR US"

You know, it's pretty amazing how much we've benefitted from placing ads in the yellow paper! We've landed a majority of our customers through the newspaper ads, which honestly feels a bit old school, but totally works for us.

- A-Z Unlimited Trees & More LLC, Robert & Laurie Anez, Owners, St. Croix Falls, WI

### "WE'VE HAD GREAT RESULTS"

We've had great results from our advertising in the "Wild Rivers" papers. Our sales rep is so helpful by gathering our ad details and it makes the process a lot smoother for us.

- Caleb Ramer, Ramer Small Engine, Hayward, WI

### "THE YELLOW ADVERTISERS WORK FOR US"

The Yellow Advertisers work for us - people of this area clearly read the papers!

- Michael Stair, Dave's Heating & Air Conditioning, Rice Lake, WI

### "OUR ADS PRODUCE RESULTS EVERY TIME!"

Our ads produce results every time! So many people contacting us said "we didn't know you were here in our backyard."

- Lucas Olson, Olson's Upholstery & Tint, Rice Lake, WI

### "NEW CUSTOMERS"

Our ads have brought new customers every season!

- Bob and Lynn Smith, Smith Apple Farm, Shell Lake, WI

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INTER-COUNTY LEADER SECTION B

# NORTHERN CURRENTS

*Stories from the Northwest Wisconsin Community*

## Winter Farmers Market: Piano & Produce

By Jackie Libis | Reporter

OSCEOLA – The gentle sound of piano greeted locals who wandered in from the cold for the St. Croix Valley Food Alliance Winter Farmers Market on Sunday, Jan. 18, at The Acreage. The smell of coffee and rolls lingered in the warm building. The event was from noon to 3 p.m. but the Fiddlehead cinnamon rolls were sold out by 2 p.m. There were stands selling honey, elderberry jam, carrots, squash, and cheeses to sample.

Near the entrance to the greenhouse, Power of Produce offered \$6 tokens for children to purchase produce. Jaime DeSmit, of Power of Produce, said that The Acreage works with SCVFA to focus on food economy. She says the majority of vendors are local growers and these winter farmers markets prolong the economic opportunity for them. This gives the community members the opportunity to “Meet more of our neighbors and support each other; warm up with community.”

Children danced to the music played by Steven Hobert, a local musician who

entertained the shoppers with his singing and piano playing. His hands moved swiftly emitting uplifting melodies from the keyboard. He also played at last year’s Winter Farmers Market. His next public performance is scheduled for the Berlin Jazz Club in Minneapolis on Feb 5 and 6.

Alana Cuellar, a local potter based out of Shafer, Minnesota, showcased her works. Her earthenware was already being put to use by folks sipping coffee from Jewelltown Roastery. She started learning pottery practices in 2012 and now sells her wares at events and online. She returns this year as part of the St. Croix Valley Pottery Tour that takes place Mother’s Day weekend, May 8-10.

Fiddlehead Kitchen displayed their cookies and pastries for sale. Their savory and flaky sausage rolls are unique to the Winter Farmers Market, and are not available in their restaurant. Construction of their St. Croix Falls location is estimated to begin in the middle of next month. They are projecting to be open around July of this year. Their

chicken pot pies are available for pre-order for all SCVFA Winter Farmers Markets at [fiddleheadkitchenwi.com](http://fiddleheadkitchenwi.com)

Another delicious smelling stand held A Wandering Fire: Artisan Pizza and Catering, where newlyweds Sean Kinney and Maaran Spears sold dough and sauce kits and handed out samples to folks passing by. AWF is a full-service catering company specializing in house-made pizza dough and sauce. For the event they used an electric oven to make the dough, which enabled them to cook pizza indoors at over 700 degrees. When asked what the secret ingredient is, Kinney replied, “It’s either love or a small amount of wheat flour, it depends on what you need.” AWF will return to The Acreage on Sunday, Feb. 22, for the next Winters Farmers Market. Their five-star artisan pizza dough can be preordered from [awfpizzadough.com](http://awfpizzadough.com).



Winter squash, purple daikon, and watermelon radish for sale as part of the Power of Produce at the Winter Farmers Market.



Fiddlehead Kitchen’s sausage rolls, a limited-time delicacy at the Winter Farmers Market. - Photos by Jackie Libis



Foxtail Farm’s organic vegetable stand at the Winter Farmers Market at The Acreage.



Newlyweds Maaran Spears and Sean Kinney make pizza for visitors to sample.



Alex Felt and Scot Cummings pose behind the Community Homestead stand at the Winter Farmers Market.



Alana Cuellar’s original pottery on display for sale at The Acreage.



Ryan Engelgau, Wendy Tremblay and Owen Anderson of Wild Rivers Conservancy provide a newsletter sign-up, stickers, brochures and volunteer information to visitors.

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## Tech Savvy

For the most part, I congratulate myself on being relatively competent at managing technology. I don't have an overwhelming fear of learning new apps or platforms and have even caught myself feeling a little smug when others profess terror at the prospect of updating their website or mastering a new program.

All smugness disappeared this week.

I got caught in a technology black hole over a \$20 bill. I owed a company \$20 for forwarding my email to me. This is something that should have taken less than a minute to resolve. Three days later, I was still battling.

The company was based in India. I won't bore you with the details of why it was based in India or how this company was chosen (I had plenty of opportunity to question the choice over the last three days), but it has provided excellent service, and I had had no reason to believe it wasn't a good choice. Until this week.

I couldn't log in to my account. That was the only problem. They did not have my phone number on record, and the only other means of verifying my account involved changing information in the directory of my website, and I knew—before I even tried—I was in over my head.

(I realize there are tech-savvy folks reading this right now and saying, "How hard could that be?" and I'm sure they are right; it was probably much easier than I imagined, but that does not mean it was not far more difficult than I could manage.)

So I wrote an email. The response I received provided an entirely new set of instructions for how to verify the account. I wrote back asking for clarification. A different tech person replied with an answer that appeared to bear no relation to the question I had asked.

I wrote back with more questions; they dutifully provided replies. Every email was signed by a different employee of this very large tech company in India. Every letter was exceedingly polite—and made not one bit of sense.

I parsed the letters carefully. I read them aloud. I looked for similar phrases as if I were looking for clues to find a buried treasure—although in this case, my treasure was the privilege of paying them \$20 and not having my email shut off.

Twenty emails later (this is not an exaggeration), I began to despair. I realized I had accomplished almost nothing in the last two days other than write emails to India. I had visions of an endless line of Indian technicians—stretching as far as the eye could see—ready to write pleasant replies to a witless woman in the U.S. As I exhausted the patience of one technician, another would step into his place, producing an infinite supply of unfailingly polite and utterly incomprehensible technical jargon.

I caved.

I hired someone on Fiverr from Bangladesh to serve as an intermediary. With my permission, he took over my computer, figured out how to get into my account, arranged a Zoom call with the company and—after a scheduled Zoom call and yet one more phone conversation—I was able to pay the \$20.

"I don't suppose I could pay for more than a year?" I asked at the end of the final phone call.

"No, but this will take you all the way to the end of 2026!" the exceedingly cheerful company spokesman told me.

I have many wonderful expectations for 2026, but I am already working up a little dread for the year's end.

Till next time,  
Carrie

To see photos, check out CarrieClassonAuthor on Facebook or visit CarrieClasson.com.



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The Postscript

## Ski Jumps, Part I

On Feb. 7 the ski jumping competitions of the Winter Olympics begin. Ski jumping has been included in the modern Winter Olympics since 1924.

Ski jumping originated in the Telemark Province of Norway in the 1700s. Farmers used skis to get around in the winter months, sometimes jumping down the smaller slopes instead of skiing down. Gradually, this turned into a fun pastime, first by skiing down and jumping off the roofs of houses or barns, then building snow mounds to ski down and jump.

When Norwegians moved to North America in the 1800s, they brought the sport with them. In the late 1880s, ski jumping tournaments were taking place in St. Paul and Red Wing, Minnesota, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. It was only a matter of time before Burnett County wanted to join in the fun.

Webster resident Martin Johnson, at the age of 18, had jumped 94 feet in an 1898 competition in Michigan. It was thought to be the longest distance jumped in competition at that time. His love of ski jumping never faded.

Albert Johnson (no relation) caught the fever. Around 1930, he built a 20-foot-high ski slide on his farm on County Road D northeast of Grantsburg. Local teenagers and young men enjoyed the challenge of learning to ski down the slide and jump off the end to the hill below. Martin was more than willing to provide instruction and critiques of their efforts.

On Sunday, Feb. 5, 1933, people were invited to watch several local residents, led by Martin Johnson, put on a ski jump exhibition at Johnson's slide.

The interest in ski jumping was strong enough that in October 1933, brush was cleared and a 35-foot ski slide was built on a hill overlooking Wood River north of Grantsburg, southeast of the Oak Street and Harrison Avenue East intersection.

The first ski jumping exhibition on the new slide was at the end of December. Martin Johnson was given the honor of being the first man to use the slide. Locals and several Minneapolis ski jumpers also made jumps. Though many of the younger jumpers fell, the crowd still appreciated their efforts.

For the rest of the winter, exhibitions of ski jumping alternated between Albert Johnson's slide and the Grantsburg slide with up to 700 spectators watching.

The Jan. 18, 1934, Journal of Burnett County noted, "Special mention should be made of the small sons of Elmer Peterson and Albert C. Johnson, both about 9 years of age, who shot down the incline and stood the jump like veterans."

The longest jumps made that winter in competition were 30 feet, but the jumpers were learning fast and were ready to try a higher ski slide.

In the fall of 1934, Albert Johnson built a new, higher ski slide. The Webster men built a 45-foot ski slide north of Webster by the Yellow River. And, the Soderbeck family, who operated the Soderbeck ferry on the St. Croix River near the mouth of the Snake River, built a 40-foot ski slide on the Minnesota side of the river so they could enjoy this new sport without having to travel into town.

Exhibitions and competitions in the

## FROM THE FORTS



Burnett County History & Legends  
By Joanie McKeown

winter of 1934-1935 rotated between the Grantsburg, Johnson, and Webster slides with up to 40 "riders," as the ski jumpers were called, participating. The first exhibition of the season took place in Grantsburg on Sunday, Dec. 16, 1934. On Dec. 30, a record jump in Burnett County of 51 feet was made in Webster; two weeks later a 52-foot jump was made there.

Some of the ski jumpers started participating in ski jumping tournaments in other towns. In February 1935, 16-year-old Alfred Guldwick of Grantsburg took first place in his age group at Cameron. The Inter-County Leader, Feb. 28, 1935, said, "Fine stride, easy poise, good balance are his outstanding qualifications." Not bad, for someone who had skied for the first time the previous winter.

The ski jump tournament in Grantsburg on March 2 drew 1,000 spectators. A few weeks later, the Grantsburg Community Club decided to finance the building of a new, higher, ski slide.

fect landings.

The new slide had been initiated and was ready for the winter exhibitions and competitions.

The first ski jumping tournament of the 1935-1936 winter season was held on Jan. 5, 1936. The Grantsburg Ski Club had joined the Central U.S. Ski Association, so ski jumpers from over 100 miles away came to Grantsburg to participate and official Ski Association judges rated each jump.

The experienced ski jumpers said that the hill they would be jumping onto wasn't long enough to accommodate the length of their jumps, so instead of starting from the top of the 85-foot slide, everyone started at a secondary platform at 61 feet.

Even with this disappointment, the crowd of 1,000 people thoroughly enjoyed the thrills and spills of the competition. The local ski jumpers showcased their increasing skill, but all the winners were experienced jumpers from Duluth, Cloquet, Minneapolis and Cameron.

Ski jump exhibitions and competitions continued every weekend until the end of March, alternating between the Grantsburg and Webster ski slides. When only the local men and boys were competing, the full length of the Grantsburg ski slide was used, since the locals weren't as proficient, yet, as the experienced ski jumpers, so there was



Grantsburg Ski Slide, completed in August 1935, was 85 feet high. - Photo on file with the Grantsburg Area Historical Society

It was completed by the end of August.

A smart marketing decision was made: Invite people to inspect the completed ski slide and climb to the top to get a bird's eye view of Grantsburg and see what it will be like for the ski jumpers to stare down that long expanse of the slide to the hill far below. Then, hold a pancake supper fundraiser to help pay for the slide.

Almost 1,500 people enjoyed the pancakes made by two chefs from Pillsbury along with farm-fresh butter, local maple syrup, and bacon.

On Dec. 1, 1935, 17-year-old Alfred Guldwick took the daring and dangerous first run down the new 85-foot ski slide. Daring—because no one in the Grantsburg area, except Martin Johnson, had ever skied from that height before. Dangerous—because there wasn't sufficient snow on the slide and hill below and there was no snow at the hill's swampy bottom. Nevertheless, four times he leaned into the wind, rode the slide, jumped, and made per-

no danger of them over-jumping the hill.

In the fall of 1936, the height of the Webster ski slide was increased to 56 feet. In the first practice jumps in Webster on Sunday, Dec. 13, no one took a tumble. Competitions and exhibitions took place every weekend when the weather cooperated.

A unique exhibition called "the falling stars" took place in Webster on March 11, 1937, during the last competition of the season. Seven jumpers, including Martin Johnson and Aubrey Reineccius of Webster and Albert and Bob Soderbeck of Grantsburg, followed each other down the slide in rapid succession so that they were all in the air at the same time. Aubrey and Albert had just won second and third place, respectively, in their ski jump categories before performing this trick jump.

It was a unique ending to the jumping season.

Part II of this article will continue the story.



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# REGIONAL ROUNDUP

Duane's sister, Cheryl, and her son, daughter-in-law and grandson, Joe, Suzy and Wilder, drove over from St. Michael, Minnesota, on Friday to visit with us. Wilder is four, and was a joy to visit with. Well, it was great to visit with the adults too, but four-year-olds are just so dang cute. They haven't been up to the treehouse yet, and Wilder is very anxious to visit it, so he and I decided we should have a bonfire this summer on June 6. Hopefully we will have the garden planted by that time and the weeds might not be too bad—maybe. They are going to come back the first part of August too, so he can pick some vegetables. Jerry Marsh had a birthday on Friday and cel-



brated by taking his girlfriend, Jodi Ladd, to Nicolet Island Inn for lobster fest on Saturday. On Sunday, they, and Jodi's daughter, Peyton, came up to Cumberland and met a bunch of family members for breakfast at Hilltop Retreat. There

were 14 of us at the table, so I won't mention all the guests, but we had a really good time. I do have to let you know, though, that little Ivana and her parents, Mark and Tinille, were among the guests. She keeps growing like a little weed, and has changed from being a toddler into being a little girl. How time flies.

It was the first time Duane and I have been to Hilltop since July. We will be able to go out once in a while now because, guess what ... he is walking again. He started walking with a walker last Tuesday, and is now walking with a cane. It's been a long haul, I'll tell you. We won't be doing too much because of the snow and ice, but at

least his foot is healed. We are very happy.

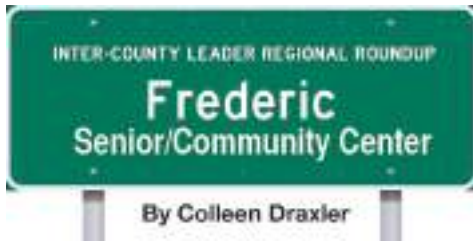
Because this is so difficult to write, I have waited to the end of this letter to let you know about the loss our family has suffered. Our grandson-in-law, Kurt Anderson, Jamie's husband, passed away at his home on Thursday. We love Kurt, and his death has left us devastated. Kurt was in the military for a few years, and spent two tours of duty in the Middle East. He was a wonderful stepfather to Jamie's daughters, Kaitlynn and Jessica. He fit so perfectly into our family. We are going to miss him more than I can say.

I'm going to run. See you next time.

Kaptain Karl will open the Frederic Arts 2026 **Winter Concert Series** with a live performance on Friday, Jan. 30, at 6:30 p.m. Entertaining audiences for more than 35 years, Karl is known for his sense of humor and rich baritone voice. The free concert will be held at the Frederic Art Center, 310 Lake Ave. S.

It's almost time for another **Free Soup Supper** at the Frederic Senior Center at 109 Elm St. W. by the grocery store. Join us on Tuesday, Feb. 3, from 4-6 p.m. Come early for the best selection of soups including cheesy broccoli cauliflower, vegetable beef, chili and two or three more. All ages are welcome to attend. This month's supper is sponsored by the St. Dominic Catholic Church.

**Mondays - Exercise for Seniors, 9:30-10 a.m.**



The cost is \$10 a month for two sessions a week. Sign up at the senior center. An energetic group of regulars will welcome you.

The Frederic **Scrabble** Club meets from 1 to 3 p.m. for two rounds of our favorite game, friendly competition and interesting conversation. There is room for more players. Beginners welcome. See you next Monday.

**Tuesdays - Coffee time, 8-11 a.m.** Every

week a crew shows up for good eats including cheese and sausage donated by Daeffler's Quality Meats, deviled eggs, sweet cherry bread, and triple berry muffins. Talk of the table: gorgeous sun dogs early last Tuesday morning and northern lights the evening before, possible plans for a Frederic grocery co-op, and stock market ups and downs. A card game is held each week. There is room for another foursome. Want to use our pool table? Stop in Tuesday mornings during coffee time. Bring a partner or maybe find someone here ready for a game.

**Wednesdays - Exercise for Seniors, 9:30-10 a.m.** Stop in the center and join this dedicated group at any time for only \$10 a month.

**Thursdays - From noon to 3 p.m., the 500 Card Club** gets together for a series of games

each week. Last week's winners were: Barb Holcomb, Carl Link, Arnie Holcomb and Lynn Olby. The nine bid: Barb Holcomb.

**Sundays** - Please join the **Bingo** action at the center. The games start at 2 p.m. with the door opening at 1:30 p.m. You must be 18 or older to play. A huge crowd filled the tables last week with \$295 for the coverall and \$63 awarded each game! And always a joke, "What did the big tomato say to the slow baby tomato?" Ketchup.

Consider the Frederic Senior/Community Center for your next class, reunion or party. Leave a message at 715-327-8623, email fredericse-niorcenter@gmail.com, or visit on Facebook at "Frederic Senior/Community Center." You're also welcome to stop by any Tuesday morning to chat with a board member.

David Miller and Connie Quam went to Amery Friday morning. They attended the funeral of David's aunt, Ele Palmberg.

Weekend visitors at the home of David Miller were his daughter and her family, Katie and Paul Cragg, and their sons, Mitchell, Sam and Gabe. Gabe played in a bantam hockey tournament at the arena in Siren. It was a good oppor-



tunity for David to cheer on his grandson. The family returned home to Morehead, Minnesota, on Sunday.

One interesting news item is this: Karen Mangelsen didn't go anywhere between church on Sunday, Jan. 18, and church on Sunday, Jan. 25. Imagine that! She had no doctor appointments, both Bible studies she attends were canceled,

and several friends picked up her prescription and a couple of grocery items she needed. Bless you, friends!

## Shenanigans and Bingo

Tuesday night is Shenanigans and Bingo at the Lions Hall. Shenanigans will start at 4:30 p.m. Bingo will start at 6 p.m. So, friends, music, popcorn, drinks and fun throughout the evening. Remember, if you bring a canned good for the food shelf, you get a complimentary drink.

### Winner

Another \$100 card winning last week.

I helped at last week's Bingo. What an enjoyable evening. The first caller was quite the showman, just about every number had a silly or interesting joke. How did he do it? Well, I guess that's his personality. Then there's me, I only know one knock-knock joke. At one point his wife took over to give him a break in his setting the tone for the evening—laughter.

It all began with casual conversation and feeling warm even though it was zero outside. I am a bit of a popcorn snob, but the popcorn was superb. Time to pick your lucky card and the games began. There were quick wins and games when one wondered if a number ball was missing, it went on so long. During the evening, people could enjoy homemade cheese soup.

### A Lifesaving Story

At Bingo I shared my story about how I left my ice cleats at home and should have had them with me. Simple story with a fall. Greg shared his story. It was mid-April, the ice had broken from the shoreline and there were open spaces of water. He looked and saw his dog Millie, across



the shoreline water and onto the first ice floe. Greg ran through the water to her and got her on land, but in the process he started to sink! Pam had just come home, saw what was happening, ran for the ice spikes (that were in the house!). She slid them across the ice—about 50 feet to Greg. He grabbed the spikes, stabbed them into the ice, and pulled his body out of the water. He was nearly frozen, but alive, and Millie was safe.

Greg said he always had ice spikes, even a long time ago, the old-fashioned spikes made from closet rods. I looked up ice spikes on the internet and found the Rapala Ice Spikes for \$15. The description is: contoured finger grip handles offer secure grip on this survival tool for ice anglers. Hardened steel spikes penetrate the toughest of ice. Designed to stow spikes inside handles when not in use. L&M in Hayward has ice spikes in stock.

So what else can I say? If you go on the ice for fishing, snowshoeing, hiking or snowmobiling, you are smart to have these around your neck. If you live on the lake and just look at the ice,

you are smart to have these hanging by your lake door. I wonder why we sometimes know but choose not to know.

### AI-Anon Meetings

The meetings are on Thursdays, from noon to 1 p.m. at the Lutheran church. Of note, the door facing the parking lot will also be open and the pathway shoveled, for those who would prefer not to use the front door.

### Annual Candlelight Snowshoe

Jill Fries, pastor of the Lutheran church, wants to know if anyone is interested in carpooling to Copper Falls State Park in Mellen for snowshoeing on Saturday, Feb. 7.

This annual fundraiser event is from 6 to 8 p.m. Departure time from the church is 4:15 p.m. There will be food and hot chocolate to purchase at the park.

### Dates to Remember

Lions Shenanigans – Tuesdays, 4:30-6 p.m., Lions Hall.

Lions Bingo – Tuesdays, 6 p.m., Lions Hall.

AI-Anon Meeting – Thursdays, noon to 1 p.m., Lutheran church.

Candlelight Snowshoe – Saturday, Feb. 7, 6-8 p.m., depart Lutheran church, 4:15 p.m. to Copper Falls State Park, Mellen.

Second Saturday Barn Dance – Saturday, Feb. 7, 7-9 p.m., Lions Hall.

*Christine Maestri can be reached at 715-558-2714, chmaestri@gmail.com.*



OK, it's just plain COLD out! I don't know if I'm thawed out enough yet. This is the last week in January, and it is going to be a bitter cold one. What's the coldest temperature you can remember? Does the cold make fishing any better?

Speaking of fishing, don't miss the opportunity to take your sweetheart out to the Legion Fishing Contest on Saturday, Feb. 14, you know, Valentine's Day!

Remember, all meal reservations are required to be at least 24 hours in advance. So, please call the Burnett Central Kitchen, 715-349-2154 for your requests.

For questions about the center or other requests, call the center at 715-463-2940 or email us at gburg118@gmail.com. You can contact Patzy Wenthe at 715-222-6400 for any other questions.

### Coming events:

Senior Center Valentine Party – Friday, Feb. 13.  
Pink Squirrel – Feb. 18-22.  
Soup & Soul – Monday, Feb. 23.  
Legion Meal – Thursday, Feb. 26.

DUBUQUE, Iowa – **Wyatt Kocurek**, of Centuria, had been named to the fall 2025 dean's list at the University of Dubuque. Full-time students in good academic standing (registered for and having earned 12 or more letter grade credits for the term) who earn a term GPA of 3.5 or above and who do not have any grades of Incomplete for the term are named to the Dean's List.

AMES, Iowa – More than 11,800 Iowa State University students have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by being named to the 2025 fall semester dean's list. Students



named to the dean's list must earn a GPA of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work. The following local students were named to the list:

### Amery

**Carter Matthew Kurtzhals**, software engineering.

### Osceola

**Kira L Schulze**, civil engineering.

BROOKINGS, S.D. – **Olivia Cunningham**, of Dresser, has been named to the dean's list at South Dakota State University. To earn dean's list distinctions, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credits and must have earned at least a 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale.

LA CROSSE – The following local residents were named to the Western Technical College President's List of High Distinction for the fall 2025 term. To be included on the president's list, students must achieve a GPA of 3.5 or higher and carry six or more credits in an associate's degree or technical diploma program.

**Peighton Carlson** of Osceola.  
**Payton Kelly** of St. Croix Falls.  
**Daniel Meister** of Spooner.



## THANK YOU TO ALL THE BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE IN UNIFORM TODAY

We thank you for your commitment to preserving freedom at home and around the world. You are an inspiration to all of us, and you make us proud to be Americans. We salute you and your families.

# THE RECIPE CORNER



## Chicken Divan Gluten Free, Dairy Free

- 1-1/2 cups raw cashews
- 1-1/2 pounds broccoli florets, steamed and cut to bite-sized pieces
- 4 cups cooked chicken breasts, cubed
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1/3 cup nutritional yeast
- 3 tablespoons arrowroot starch
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/3 cup crushed plantain chips

Soak the cashews in hot water for 15 minutes. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease a 9x13 glass baking dish. Place cooked chicken and steamed broccoli in the prepared baking dish. Drain cashews and place in high-speed blender with broth, sea salt, nutritional yeast, arrowroot starch, garlic and onion powder, ground mustard and ground pepper. Blend until smooth. Pour sauce over the chicken and broccoli in the baking dish. Sprinkle with crushed plantain chips. Bake for 30 minutes until sauce is bubbly and hot.

## Delicious News All The Way Through!



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Today

### Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thursday: noon-8 p.m.; Friday: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday: 9 a.m. to noon; Sunday: closed.

### Author Spotlight

On Thursday, Feb. 5, we are honored to be hosting a Virtual Author Spotlight with bestselling author Brian Freeman. We will offer light appetizers and beverages including beer that is being generously donated by Brickfield Brewery. Cost is \$10 per person.

**Calling all crafters!** We're looking for talented artisans to sell their handmade items at our upcoming craft sale on Saturday, April 11, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. It's a great opportunity to connect with the community and share your creativity. Deadline to sign up is March 25.

### Weekly events:

**Tuesdays, 3:30-5 p.m.** – Chess and strategy board games.  
**Thursdays 3:30-5:30 p.m.** – Nerd Night. Play Dungeons and Dragons or try out Magic, Lorcana

### Free movie screening of "The Librarians"

**Monday, Feb. 2, 1-3 p.m.**

The library is thrilled to announce the launch of the new season of Indie Lens Pop-Up, the free community-driven screening series from "Independent Lens." This year's lineup includes documentaries like "The Inquisitor," "The Grocery List Show" and more. Join us to talk about what matters most. Librarians across the U.S. examine how book review policies are shaping their communities. We will have refreshments and discussion afterward. PBS premiere date is Monday, Feb. 9.

### Embracing Books

**Tuesday, Feb. 3, 1:30 p.m.**

Join Embrace at the library for "Embracing Books Storytime," an interactive story time for young children and their caregivers. Children learn coping skills from trained advocates through age-appropriate stories and simple hands-on activities. The program features books focused on emotions, calming strategies, kindness, safety and inclusion. Designed for children from infancy through elementary age, families are encouraged to attend this free public program together.

## GRANTSBURG LIBRARY NEWS



or Pokemon.

**Fridays 10:30-11:45 a.m.** – Wee Play and Stay. Let your littles run in the gym for 45 minutes and then come and relax with a story or two.

### Adult Programming

First Tuesday Book Club - Come and meet with a great group for a lively book discussion.

Every Tuesday, join us for either Dungeons and Dragons or Magic the card game. Both programs are for adults only and start at 6 p.m.

**New books: Adult:** "Paper Cut" by Rachel Taff, "One of Us" by Elizabeth Day, "Easter Egg Murder" by Leslie Meier, "It's Not Her" by Mary Kubica, "More Than Enough" by Anna Quindlen, "Trust No One" by James Rollins, and "The Crossroads" by C.J. Box. **Youth:** "Love Me Tomorrow" by Emiko

Jean, "A Practical Guide to Dating a Demon" by Hannah Reynolds, "Don't Do It, Doug" by Maudie Powell-Tuck, "Peg's Egg" by Jo Renfro, and "Is It Spring?" by Kevin Henkes. **Movies and Audio-books:** "Regretting You," "Soul on Fire," "The Running Man," and "The Wrong Sister" by Claire Douglas. But make sure and come in to see what we have received!

**Book Clubs:** For more information about book clubs, please call the library, 715-463-2244.

**First Tuesday Book Club: Feb. 3, 6 p.m.,** Book title: "The Mighty Red" by Louise Erdrich. Books are available for checkout at the library. We also have large print and audiobooks available for check out.

### GAHS at the library, Mondays, 1-4 p.m.

The Grantsburg Area Historical Society is offering appointments for genealogical and local family history research in the Henry Peterson History Room. Appointments are required at this time. Please contact the library by phone to schedule an appointment, 715-463-2244.

## SHELL LAKE LIBRARY NEWS



### Click & Learn

**Thursday, Feb. 5, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

Join us for a Click & Learn workshop presented by NWWIB. This digital navigator program will be offered at the library through a partnership with Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board. This is a program that aims to connect with people and grow technical skills, even if they are starting at square one. Get help with basic computer, technology and internet skills. Bring your own devices, use the library's public computers, or try one of the laptops available. For example, people might get help with creating an email, setting up a telehealth account, learning to use the internet, using Libby or other library resources, or learning some tricks on their devices.

### Google Calendar with Ethan Compton

**Thursday, Feb. 5, 2-3 p.m.**

There's so much to learn about Google Calendar. This workshop will teach you everything you need to know. Starting with how to organize

and share your schedule, how to make, manage, and share events, how to create and share personal calendars, and how to add external calendars. Make Google Calendar work for you with our digital navigator's extra tips on organization techniques.

### Catch Them Club

**Friday, Feb. 6, 4-5 p.m.**

Are you crazy about Pokemon? Then this is the club for you! Come to the Shell Lake Public Library on the first Friday of each month. This is a social and friendly night for card enthusiasts. Kids are welcome to come and talk about their cards, do crafts, and look at cards. No trading cards allowed at this time.

### Take our Community Survey

The library is excited to announce the launch of our 2026 Community Survey, aimed at gathering valuable feedback from our community. We're focusing on how to enhance our services, expand resources and create a welcoming environment for all residents.

It's quick and easy. The survey can be accessed online through our website, shelllake-library.org, or social media, or in person at the circulation desk.

# Burnett County Democrats' chili feed raises over \$2,800 for food shelves

Candidates for governor, Congress, state senate draws crowd to fundraiser

By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter with information from Nancy Kolb

SIREN – About 100 Burnett County residents braved below-zero temperatures on Saturday, Jan. 24, to raise funds for the Grantsburg Food Shelf and Burnett County Food Pantry by attending a chili feed organized by the Burnett County Democrats. Attendees enjoyed chili, cornbread, salads and desserts donated for the event.

After the meal, two speakers highlighted the need for support: Dave Doskey from the Grantsburg Food Shelf described the spike in families they are helping, while Josie Woodman of the Burnett County Food Pantry outlined their food programs and broader community initiatives. The event suc-



Anne Taylor, Burnett County Democrats treasurer, and Nancy Kolb, vice chair, present funds to Dave Doskey, board chair of Grantsburg Food Shelf, and Josie Woodman, executive director of Burnett County Food Pantry. - Photo provided

cessfully raised over \$2,800 for these organizations.

The crowd also welcomed several candidates for state and federal office. Charly Ray, candidate for Wisconsin

Senate, 25th District, is running within the newly drawn district boundaries. A forester, small business owner, and county supervisor, Ray commented on state issues that affect northern Wisconsin.



Attendees visit prior to the start of the meal.



Mandela Barnes, Wisconsin gubernatorial candidate, answered questions from the crowd. - Photo provided



Guests work their way through the serving line at the fundraiser. - Photos by Sarah Beth Radomsky unless otherwise noted



Participants make donations to the food shelves and sign in at the start of the event.

This week's questions both focus on navigating conflict with people you care about—and deciding how to respond when frustration runs high.

**Mark in Luck writes:**

*Am I overreacting to the threat of taking my sister to court after her toddler destroyed my \$2,000 video gaming system? She said I should have baby-proofed my apartment.*

Of course, you feel frustrated if something valuable to you was damaged, and it likely seems unfair if you perceive the responsibility is being brushed aside by your sister.

Many other people might likely be upset in your situation. However, the key question you will want to consider is what matters most to you going forward.

Are you primarily focused on recovering the monetary value of the system? Or preserving your relationship with your sister? Or ensuring you will be able to create a close connection with your niece or nephew? Or a blend of these and more?

These priorities won't necessarily all point you in the same direction; however, when you are honest with yourself about which ones matter most, these answers can help guide your approach at this time.

Taking your sister to court is an option, but it's not the only one. You do get to be upset, but how you respond from anger might look very different

**MIDWEST MOXIE**  
  
**Coaching For Your Life with Kari Langkamp**

than a response from disappointment or acceptance that it happened. Maybe you explore shared responsibility, partial repayment, or a plan that allows you to replace the system over time. Maybe you find another solution that works for you and your sister.

And, she may or may not be willing to change her stance, but you can own your role and then consider how you want to handle it so that you can look back on this in the future and know you chose a path that was in line with your priorities.

You can't change the damage that occurred, but you can choose the story you tell about it and the action you take next.

**Charlie in Milltown writes:**

*My wife and I have been married for 13 years. After years of financial hardship, we can now travel twice a year. The problem is she only wants to go to Disney World. We've been nine times, including our honeymoon. How do I tell her I'm tired of Disney and want to go somewhere else?*

While it might seem like this is about the destination, your challenge here is

really about navigating different wants. Your wife likely loves the comfort, nostalgia and safety in the familiar. But that doesn't mean your desire for something new is wrong either.

Before talking to her, get clear on what you want. Is it variety? Adventure? Feeling considered in the decision-making? Understanding that, you can more easily share what you want from a loving place.

You can honor what Disney represents for her, but also share what you desire. This doesn't have to be an either/or conversation. It could be an opportunity to find middle ground. Maybe you alternate trip destinations or work together to redefine what vacation means to you both.

This conversation has the potential to actually deepen your connection.

Both of this week's questions remind us that frustration doesn't mean something can't be repaired. It often means something matters. Slow down, clarify your priorities, and respond intentionally. Challenges can often lead to growth.

*Midwest Moxie: Coaching for Your Life appears biweekly. Have a coaching question you want answered by a master-certified coach? Send your questions to the Inter-County Leader at editor@iccpaonline.com or visit Kari's website for free coaching at heykarianne.com/ask-kari.*

**DO YOU REMEMBER?**  
  
 Compiled by Sue Renno

**70 years ago**

Frederic Feed & Flour, a mill owned by Wm. E. Dawson, was sponsor of the upcoming dairy meeting at Frederic Grade School, with William Webb, representative of the Ralston-Purina Co., to speak on raising herd replacements.—“Polio Isn't Licked Yet” was the theme for the March of Dimes campaign that started in January 1956. The Salk polio vaccine came out in 1955 and hadn't been made available to all people in the nation yet. In 1955 Wisconsin ranked second, only behind Massachusetts, in number of polio cases per 100,000 residents, at 61.5. The polio epidemic in the U.S. lasted eight years.—Master Sgt. Edward W. Schroeder, son of Marie Schroeder, Lewis, completed the Army cargo helicopter pilots course at Fort Rucker, received his wings and was commissioned a warrant officer in the U.S. Army.—Pvt. Donald A. Christner, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Christner, Spooner, qualified as a tank gunner by completing a tank firing training program in Germany as a member of Tank Company of the 88th Infantry Regiment.

**50 years ago**

Airman Steve M. Peterson, from Milltown, graduated at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, from the aircraft mechanic course conducted by the Air Training Command and was being assigned to Columbus AFB, Mississippi, for duty with a unit of the ATC.—Wells Fargo Bank was sponsoring a contest themed “Toward Our Third Century” in honor of America's bicentennial, with three categories: essay by young person under 18, essay by individual 18 or over, and film or tape recording. They were to be on one of the following: Individual Freedoms in our Society; American Arts and Culture; Science, Technology, Energy and the Environment; Family Life, Work and Leisure; and The United States and the World. Top prize in each category was \$10,000.

**40 years ago**

State Patrol Trooper Richard Snider was punched in the face several times, separating the cartilage in his nose, by a 27-year-old Siren man whom he attempted to pull over near Falun for a burnt-out headlight. After a high-speed chase, the assault happened when the trooper was about to handcuff the man, who then took off in his vehicle and was arrested by the State Patrol in Golden Valley, Minn. He was being charged with two felonies, having also crossed state lines.—Glenn Meier, rural Frederic, was named manager of the new First American Bank at Siren.—Pastor Tom Lindblad and his wife, Karen, would be leaving Zion Lutheran Church of Trade Lake and Grace Lutheran Church of West Sweden as he had accepted a call from Bethany Lutheran Church in Norway, Michigan.—Pharis Stower, Burnett County Board member for eight years and Anderson Town chairman, announced he was retiring from local politics due to poor health. “Fresh blood and new ideas are good for government,” he added.

**20 years ago**

Steve Warndahl was unanimously elected by the Polk County Board to be the new county highway commissioner, replacing George Palo, who had resigned in September 2005.—Several stories in the Jan. 18, 2006, Leader focused on meth as it related to Polk and Burnett counties. It was estimated that 16% of the foster care placements in Polk County and 25% in Burnett County were related to meth, and Polk County led the state in meth-related crime lab case referrals. A new meth support group was starting in St. Croix Falls and a group focusing on educating people about meth was meeting monthly at the St. Croix Tribal Center in Hertel. The latter was called MAMA, Mothers Against Methamphetamine, and was the first MAMA chapter in Wisconsin.

The Inter-County Leader is proud to feature local award-winning photographer Dirk Miller as a regular contributor. Over the years, Dirk, who lives in Barron County, has had his work featured in national publications and on network and major cable television programs. Some of his favorite photography subjects include weather and storm chasing across Barron, Burnett, Polk and Washburn counties. He also enjoys capturing animals, nature, and just about anything interesting that crosses his camera's path. Enjoy more of Dirk's work at wisconsinimagery.weebly.com.

Last week, I spent the entire day in the Hayward and Cable area, wandering into spots where there wasn't another soul around. I sure didn't mind the solitude, but some of the roads I ended up on were questionable at best.

PHOTOS BY DIRK MILLER

**THE GUY BEHIND THE CAMERA**  
  
 Views from local award-winning photographer Dirk Miller



**The Leader is a cooperative-owned newspaper. Since 1933.**

# Leader Fun & Games Page



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**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Racket sport pros
4. Make tea
8. City South of Moscow
10. Spanish bullfighting term
11. Egg-shaped
12. Could not remember
13. French modernist painter
15. Persons
16. Painful intestinal obstruction
17. Professions
18. Is up to the task
21. Wood or metal bolt
22. Tax collector
23. A way to save for the future
24. Georgia rockers
25. Midway between north and northeast
26. High schoolers' test
27. Does not accept responsibility
34. One who prepares
35. Gout-indicative deposits
36. Place to play games
37. Book of Genesis character
38. Cleans oneself
39. Unloaded for money
40. Genus of flowering plants
41. Take a puff
42. Congressmen
43. God of battle in Scandinavian mythology

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Type of bomb
2. South Pacific islands
3. Celestial body
4. Negotiates
5. Consider in a specified way
6. Type of group in organic chemistry
7. Buddhist monasteries
9. Inhabitant of Bering Sea island
10. Body part
12. Milestone birthday
14. Thyroid-stimulating hormone
15. More (Spanish)
17. Chicago ballplayer
19. Leaves a place
20. Cannot be found
23. One's internal body parts
24. Tell on
25. North American peoples of southwest
26. Soviet Socialist Republic
27. Extract used for jams and jellies
28. Greek goddess of the dawn
29. Old English letter
30. A way to exaggerate
31. Get up and leave
32. "Boardwalk Empire" character
33. More generous
34. Hanging cloth used as a blind
36. Ancient Greek sophist

**See Breaking News?**  
E-MAIL BREAKING NEWS TIPS & PHOTOS

editor@iccpaonline.com

**ANSWERS  
ON  
PAGE 12**

**WORD SCRAMBLE**  
Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to basketball.

**H O S T O**

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**GUESS WHO?**

I am a singer born in New York on January 25, 1981. I studied Mozart and Chopin as a youth, and graduated from the Professional Performing Arts School. I became the first singer to receive five Grammy Awards at once after releasing my debut album.



Y	J	Y	T	F	E	C	V	E	Y	E	O	K	T	L	P	C	M	D	A
G	I	P	T	E	P	L	S	C	O	U	R	T	M	A	W	A	L	D	R
Y	B	A	S	E	L	I	N	E	W	L	J	L	W	P	L	F	J	E	E
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S	E	O	J	K	H	R	O	K	E	E	O	T	V	B	L	D	O	S	U
L	E	S	S	F	A	U	O	B	N	C	A	I	S	O	B	A	L	I	W
W	R	I	H	F	C	A	K	L	E	U	R	E	Y	B	T	I	C	S	E
I	H	G	R	O	I	A	D	T	S	R	D	L	E	W	U	G	R	T	R
C	T	W	E	C	T	B	A	C	K	B	O	A	R	D	Y	S	S	D	W

**WORDS**

- ASSIST
- BACKBOARD
- BASELINE
- CLOCK
- COURT
- CROSSOVER
- DEFENSE
- DRIBBLE
- DUNK
- FOUL
- FREE THROW
- JUMP SHOT
- LAY-UP
- OFFENSE
- PIVOT
- REBOUND
- SCREEN
- SHOT
- SUBSTITUTION
- THREE-POINTER
- TIMEOUT
- TIPOFF
- TRAVELING
- TURNOVER

## Balsam Lake Lodge holds fishing prize draw

By Zach Zelinski | Reporter

BALSAM LAKE – The Balsam Lake Lodge and Restaurant invited diners and bargoers to an indoor fishing contest on Saturday, Jan. 17. Though fishing out of controlled pools is possible indoors, the Lodge decided to spare the mess and instead opted to offer fish-shaped paper slips to draw out of a bucket for a potential prize. After ordering a drink or food, each player got a chance to draw a winning fish, with winners announced after the 3 and 5 p.m. “weigh-ins.” Prizes included gift baskets with smaller outdoor and kitchen accessories, along with larger prizes like a sled, portable heater, and ice fishing equipment. Door prizes were also declared every hour.

Bartender Ethan Tyler handed the bucket of potential-prize fish to each bar participant, while the wait staff of the



The Balsam Lake Lodge enjoyed plenty of business for the “indoor fishing” prize drawings. - Photos by Zach Zelinski

Lodge gave the same opportunity to patrons in the dining area. Young attendees meanwhile got the chance to draw their



Bartender Ethan Tyler gave each patron a chance to grab a prize fish from the bucket.

without the need to set out and drill a hole in the ice.

own prize out of a dedicated inflatable pool. The activity surely proved that fishing contest fun could still be had

## Sober Ice Fishing Event moved to warmer February date

By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter

LUCK – The fourth-annual Sober Ice Fishing Event, a drug- and alcohol-free gathering for the recovery community and families in Northwest Wisconsin, has been rescheduled due to forecasted cold temperatures that organizers said would make the day unenjoyable, particularly for children.

The event, originally set for Saturday, Jan. 17, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Sandhill Lake, will now take place on Saturday, Feb. 21, at the same time and location. Jeremiah Alling, who has organized the event for the past three years after taking it over with co-organizer Laura Larson, said the decision to postpone was made the morning of Thursday, Jan. 15. “It’s going to be way too cold for any kids to be involved, really,” he explained. “We should have 20-degree temperatures [on Feb. 21], so that’ll be nice.”

The event began several years ago as

a small gathering of people wanting to enjoy ice fishing without concerns about drugs or alcohol. Alling highlighted its role in his own recovery journey. “One of the biggest parts of my early recovery, and even now, is being involved in these events, knowing that there’s stuff we can do without drugs or alcohol involved,” he said. “That was a huge cornerstone to my early recovery, knowing that, hey, not everybody does this stuff.”

Last year, 38 people signed in, and more than 50 are expected this year. The family-friendly gathering includes brats and hot dogs provided free, along with prizes. Participants simply sign in upon arrival—no preregistration is required.

There’s a new twist this year: For every fish caught and registered (measured at the event), anglers receive a ticket entered into a final raffle drawing for prizes. Door prizes will also be awarded randomly throughout the day.

Alling emphasized the event’s strict rule: It is drug- and alcohol-free, and anyone violating that will be disqualified. “Everybody’s welcome,” he said. “The more people that come out and support our recovery community, the better I feel it would be for our whole community.” Alling hopes the event continues to grow, potentially becoming an official tournament in the future.

Sandhill Lake, a 55-acre Polk County lake with public access via boat landings, is known for panfish and largemouth bass—popular targets for ice anglers. The event uses the old boat landing on the north side of Sandhill Lake, accessible via a frontage road off County Road N (between Luck



Participants from previous events. - Photo provided

and Cushing) at 2024 Sand Lake Lane N., Luck.

For questions or more details, contact Jeremiah Alling at 715-501-9957. Attendees are reminded to dress warmly, check ice conditions for safety, and follow all Wisconsin fishing regulations.

## Oyster supper raises money for Clear Lake Fire Department

By Devon Christensen | Reporter

CLEAR LAKE – The Clear Lake Fire Department hosted its 113th annual oyster supper on the evening of Saturday, Jan. 17. Tickets for the meal were presale only, with Jan. 8 as the deadline, and nearly 400 tickets were sold. The buffet, with members of the fire department assisting in the serving, consisted of oyster stew, French dip sandwiches, potatoes, pickles, summer sausage, cheese, and drinks. Community members filled the event room of the Clear Lake Area Community Center while enjoying their meal, browsing raffle items, and visiting with friends. Items being raffled off included a cribbage board adorned with the fire department’s logo and the words “113th Annual Oyster Supper 2026,” gift certificates to local businesses, and many Milwaukee items and guns from Clear

Lake True Value. The oyster supper in January and the gun show in November are the main fundraisers that the Clear Lake Fire Department holds each year, with the funds going toward purchasing new equipment. The department is currently working to buy a thermal imaging drone for search/rescue operations, fire surveillance, hazmat operations, incident preplanning, and other lifesaving situations. The approximate cost for the drone with training and certification is \$25,000. A firefighter boot was displayed during the oyster supper encouraging attendees to fill the boot with donations.

The Clear Lake Fire Department was formed in 1890 and has been serving the community ever since. It is currently made up of 30 firefighters, all of whom are volunteers.



Diners enjoy their oyster supper in the event room of the Clear Lake Area Community Center. - Photos by Devon Christensen



Amy Strobach, a volunteer firefighter, announces a winning number during the meat raffle with help from the Clear Lake Royal Court.



Members of the fire department help serve the meal.

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## Historical Society potluck shines light on Ladies Aid

By Zach Zelinski | Reporter

WOLF CREEK – The Sterling Eureka and Laketown Historical Society held its annual potluck at the Wolf Creek Methodist Church on Thursday, Jan. 15. Many attendees brought dishes of their own to share at the event, as the society enjoyed a full lunch in the church's fellowship hall. Many featured dishes came from recipes fitting for the theme of honoring local Ladies Aid associations.

Though Ladies Aid organizations formed and flourished during the Civil War, the potluck focused on local church organizations of the earlier 20th century. As women weren't yet allowed in many denominations' ministry or church boards at the time, they came together to form community-outreach organizations, carrying out much of the work in coordinating activities and fundraisers. Through eras like the Great Depression and the rationing of World War II, the Ladies Aid and similar organizations formed a crucial rural network of resource sharing and mutual persistence. Many in attendance shared memories of their own or their relatives' involvement in these associations.

Local historian Russ Hanson commemorated the potluck with the celebration of the release of a third volume in



Members of the Sterling Eureka Laketown Historical Society and the invited public enjoyed lunch in the Wolf Creek Methodist Church's dining hall. - Photos by Zach Zelinski

a series of scrapbook-style compilations of the Laketown Lutheran Church's history. With each volume's insightful primary resources from the old "Tamarack Church," Hanson commended the efforts of longtime council member Claudia Balcom. Balcom acknowledged that it was "an abundance of information that was put together during a difficult time."

Another cause for celebration was the preservation of minutes and documents from the First Presbyterian Church in St. Croix Falls. Thought lost after a 1994 fire,

they were recovered by Mary Beth Blanding when she found them preserved after the passing of her father, Durand Blanding. These documents went as far back as the 1890s, and also preserved many testaments to the church's own Ladies Aid operations.

After lunch was served, attendees shared reminiscences of the Ladies Aid, valuing the crucial work they did in assuring their communities thrived. Memories included "pound sales," where useful resources were auctioned by the pound, as well as banquets of fried



Russ Hanson gave remarks and showcased primary historical material.

chicken and ice cream during the ubiquity of locally-raised poultry and dairy during otherwise demanding times. As attendees also shared their continued work with their church organizations, the implication was clear that they continued the legacy of this work. Gratitude for the women who took charge to help their communities was plentiful, as well as the preservation of their history.

## Amery Ale Works hosts adult spelling bee

By Devon Christensen | Reporter

AMERY – On the evening of Thursday, Jan. 15, Amery Ale Works hosted its first-ever "Sip & Spell" adult spelling bee event. The event was free to take part in, and participants could sign up online ahead of time or arrive early before the contest began at 6:30 p.m. Samantha Brandt, the event coordinator for the restaurant and bar, served as the moderator for the spelling bee. The 10 registered participants started out in Round 1 with the "sneaky common words" category—words we all know, but are often misspelled. Words in this category included accommodate, broccoli, handkerchief, privilege, zucchini, and embarrassed. The handful of spellers who survived the "sneaky" round then moved on to continue competing. At the end of six rounds, the best spelling champion received an Amery Ale Works gift card, and the runner-up received a drink or appetizer of their choosing.



The first participant, Kenny, spells the word "accommodate." - Photos by Devon Christensen

Prizes were also given to the "most confidently wrong speller" and the crowd's favorite speller. Cheering, laughing, and enjoying drinks were encouraged, and all participants and audience members did just that throughout the contest. Many also enjoyed food items from the week's rotating menu, such as chicken



A participant named Sue spells the word "broccoli."

alfredo flatbread, Tuscan turkey paninis, fiesta salads, and chicken and dumpling soup. Diners could end their night with mini churros or Mississippi mud cake, if they saved room for dessert, two additional items on the weekly specials menu.

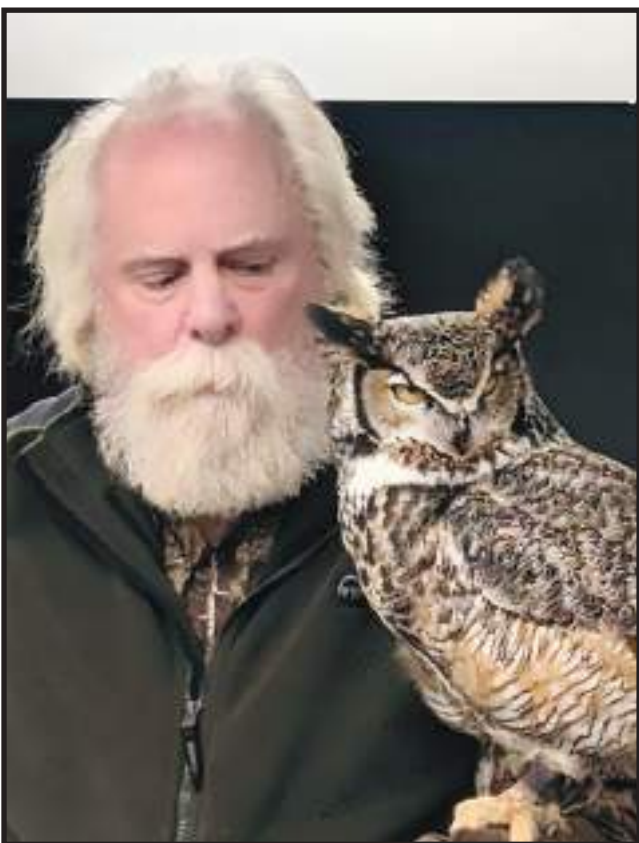
Other fun upcoming events at Amery Ale Works include their Thursday night



Donna, the third participant, spells the word "handkerchief."

trivia every other week, a puzzle building competition on Jan. 29, an acoustic brunch on Feb. 15, and pet-themed Bingo on Feb. 20. They also host the Amery Fly Tiers Club on the third Thursday of each month for local fishing enthusiasts, which took place upstairs during the adult spelling bee.

## Chris Cold and animals make an appearance at wild game feed



LEFT: Bethesda Lutheran Church in Dresser held its annual wild game feed on Saturday, Jan. 17, with Chris Cold, recently retired from the DNR, presenting an entertaining and educational program on the Great Lakes. Accompanying him were two of his friends, a large pine snake and a great horned owl. Delicious and "interesting" food was enjoyed by all. - Photo provided

## St. Croix Festival Theatre and Chateau St. Croix Winery present Hearts Uncorked

A Valentine's concert with Joni Griffith, Amanda Weis and Debi Kildie

Submitted by Lindsey Fry

ST. CROIX FALLS – This Valentine's Day, St. Croix Festival Theatre partners with Chateau St. Croix Winery to present Hearts Uncorked, an intimate and spirited evening of music celebrating love in all its forms. On this special night, acclaimed vocalists Debi Kildie, Amanda Weis and Joni Griffith take the stage as a powerhouse trio, blending tight three-

part harmonies with heartfelt solos and beloved duets.

Spanning Broadway favorites, chart-topping pop hits, and country classics, Hearts Uncorked is a joyful, romantic journey through passion, heartbreak, friendship and self-love, all set against the warm and inviting atmosphere of the Chateau St. Croix Winery. Whether you're celebrating with a partner, friends, or simply treating yourself, this concert promises an unforgettable Valentine's experience.

Tickets start at \$25, with an optional wine and dessert package available for \$38. Seating is limited. Tickets and additional information are available at festivaltheatre.org.



LEFT: Musicians Joni Griffith, Amanda Weis and Debi Kildie present Hearts Uncorked at the Chateau St. Croix Winery. - Photo provided

# The Wilderness Fellowship Ministries hosts candlelight acoustic praise night

**By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter**  
 FREDERIC – The Wilderness Fellowship Ministries hosted a candlelight acoustic praise night on Saturday, Jan. 17, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The 90-minute gathering provided a setting for acoustic worship and reflection following the holiday season. The event took place in the ministry's octagonal log meeting structure, illuminated by candlelight. Acoustic worship was led by musicians, including Executive Director Randy Klawitter on guitar. After the worship portion, attendees remained for cookies, hot apple cider and informal fellowship provided by the ministry. The public event encouraged participants to bring friends and family.

During the event, founder Dick Klawitter, age 93, was present and spoke about the ministry's history. He noted that his son Randy currently serves as executive director. Dick also mentioned that a donor has committed to funding the construction of an additional new prayer cabin. The ministry recently completed renovations to its hike-in log

cabin, which accommodates 18 to 20 people. Updates included replacing gas lights with electric fixtures while maintaining the rustic appearance, as well as sanding, staining, sealing and chinking the interior logs. Staff and volunteers contributed to the project.

The Wilderness Fellowship Ministries, a Christian camping and retreat center, was founded by Dick Klawitter and his late wife, Lois, and was incorporated in 1972. The facility spans more than 240 acres of wooded land with frontage on two fishing lakes, located approximately 10 miles northwest of Frederic. It includes prayer cabins, group and family cabins,



Attendees participate in worship during the candlelight acoustic praise night at The Wilderness Fellowship Ministries on Saturday, Jan. 17. - Photos by Sarah Beth Radomsky unless otherwise noted



(L to R): Founder Dick Klawitter, daughter-in-law Caitlyn Klawitter, and grandson Gideon stand next to a woodcarving encased in glass, created from a drawing by Caitlyn and carved by the late Cliff Leddy.

campsites, and the octagonal log meeting structure. The ministry reports 10 prayer cabins tucked into the rolling wooded hills, which were fully booked that weekend with visitors from the Twin Cities area, southern Minnesota, other states, and internationally. Facilities are available

for reservation on a suggested-donation basis. Information and bookings can be obtained by calling 715-488-8564 or visiting [wildernessfellowship.com/reservations](http://wildernessfellowship.com/reservations).



Musicians, including Executive Director Randy Klawitter (center) on guitar, lead the acoustic worship portion of the event.



Views of the recently renovated log cabin, showing updated electric lighting and restored interior log work at The Wilderness Fellowship Ministries. - Photos courtesy of The Wilderness Fellowship Ministries



## Shauncey Ali Quartet to perform Feb. 7 at West Denmark Lutheran Church

**Submitted by Mark Pedersen**  
 WEST DENMARK – The Shauncey Ali Quartet is planning to perform on Saturday, Feb. 7, at 7 p.m., at the West Denmark Lutheran Church near Luck. Shauncey Ali is an accomplished musician on the violin and viola, as well as a teacher and composer. Ali is the founder and leader of a youth fiddle group, Mad Fiddle, in the Madison area. His new project is the Shauncey Ali Quartet. The instrumentation is fiddle, mandolin, guitar, and bass. The music is eclectic, drawing from Nordic, Celtic, bluegrass, and traditional American music. The arrangements are interesting and challenge the listener to hear creative embellishments. This band is new on the music scene and will quickly become a highly sought-after group.

Ali has won the RockyGrass fiddle contest, played with Peter Gabriel, been featured in Fiddler Magazine and received awards as a performer, composer and educator—work that has taken him throughout the U.S., Canada, Italy, Spain and Scotland.

At the intersection of tradition and innovation, the Shauncey Ali Quartet

captivates audiences with evocative melodies and daring arrangements that feel timeless, adventurous, and refreshingly new. The ensemble draws from the deep wells of Americana and Celtic fiddle traditions, a love for improvisation, experience in classical and jazz orbits, and sensibilities shaped by pop, rock, and Scandinavian music.

Together, the Shauncey Ali Quartet delivers a chamberstyle interplay that is virtuosic yet accessible, rooted in tradition yet unbound by convention.

Hans Holzen grew up playing fiddle and guitar in Nashville where he was heavily influenced by traditional music and in close contact with some of Music City's finest musicians. After studying jazz performance, Holzen toured with Americana and folk acts including Carrie Rodriguez and Chip Taylor ("Wild



The Shauncey Ali Quartet. - Photos provided



Thing," "Angel of the Morning") and violinist/composer Mark O'Connor. Nicholas Vanhaute is a multi-instrumentalist who picked up the guitar at the age of 10 and never looked back. Originally from Arkansas, Vanhaute fell in love with the raw authenticity of acoustic music in college and has become a fixture of the Madison bluegrass scene.

David Havas was a bassist before becoming a professor of psychology. His musical travels have taken him from the altitudes of the Colorado Rockies to the valleys of the Carolina Blue Ridge

Mountains. Having toured with legendary Tennessee old-time string band, the Reeltime Travelers, he now brings a seasoned soulfulness, sensitivity and insight to his bass playing.

Tickets can be purchased in advance at [westdenmark.net](http://westdenmark.net) and will be available at the door. Reserved seats are \$25 and open seating is \$20. K-12 free with parent. Artist information can be found at [shaunceyali.com/shaunceyaliquartet](http://shaunceyali.com/shaunceyaliquartet). The West Denmark Lutheran Church is located at 2492 170th St., Luck. For more information, call 715-529-0830.



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## MLK Day Serve & Celebrate event

By Jackie Libis | Reporter

ST. CROIX FALLS – Curious community members visited with local organizations from throughout the St. Croix Watershed on Monday, Jan. 19, at the St. Croix National Riverway Visitor Center for a MLK Day Serve & Celebrate event. The function, hosted by Riverway Volunteers and Wild Rivers Conservancy, ran from 1 to 3 p.m. and was focused on community service.

A table greeted visitors in the hallway leading to the main room where the Open Cupboard of Osceola collected food donations from the community and displayed a quote from Martin Luther King Jr., “Everybody can be great because everybody can serve.”

In the main room, booths were lined up for families to visit and sign up for volunteer opportunities, learn about local organizations, and study invasive and noninvasive plant species, bird feathers and other animal artifacts. In-

formation on the YMCA in Hudson, the National Park Service, and Wild Rivers Conservancy was readily available at their stands, with some organizations handing out stickers and candy. Snowshoeing and hot drinks were also available to try.

Polk County Environmental Services staff Colten Sorenson and Katelin Anderson helped visitors differentiate between invasive species and look-alike native species. Their display included plants that were frozen during the summer of 2025 and thawed for the event. They hoped to bring in more volunteers to help monitor plant species in the area. They offer aquatic invasive species trainings and events throughout the year, many include in-the-field monitoring to ensure detection—key to potentially eradicating invasive species.

Sandy Law and Pam Arnold handed out butterfly buttons and information to help reduce pesticide contamination at

the Pollinator Friendly Alliance booth. They encouraged nontoxic landscaping and gardening methods. They were promoting their 2026 Best Practices for Pollinators Summit, a three-day virtual summit scheduled for Feb. 24-26, with live presentations on topics that promote ecologically sound land practices that promote pollinators, climate resilience, clean waters and lands. To sign up for the summit, visit [pollinatorfriendly.org](http://pollinatorfriendly.org).

At the Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center booth, Abbey Holden operated a pressure measurement device that measured hand grip (60-190 pounds for humans) to compare to an eagle (500-700 pounds) or hawk (400-500 pounds) talon grip. Their educational booth provided artifacts from animals to assist in identify-



Colten Sorenson of Polk County Environmental Services held up a native plant species beside co-worker Katelin Anderson.

ing items people might find out hiking or on their property.



Overlooking the St. Croix River, the St. Croix National Riverway Visitor Center hosted a MLK Day Serve & Celebrate event on Monday, Jan. 19. - Photos by Jackie Libis



Sandy Law and Pam Arnold, volunteers with Pollinator Friendly Alliance, supply information to the public.



Abbey Holden posed with a tortoise shell next to other animal artifacts at the Carpenter Nature Center stand.

## Frederic students lend a hand for blood drive

By Zach Zelinski | Reporter

FREDERIC – At Frederic High School, students took a role in helping blood donations proceed at a Red Cross blood drive. On the morning of Thursday, Jan. 15, one of the high school’s gyms was filled with equipment and staffed with Red Cross volunteers. While Red Cross personnel did the sensitive work of readying the donating process and storing blood for later use, those in charge of welcoming and checking in donors were Frederic students. Some of the Vikings even went as far as to donate blood themselves, as Kenna Chenal did. “I’ve had family members who have needed blood before, so I’m doing my part,” Chenal explained. “It feels like I’m giving back to the community at little cost to me.”

Greg Heine, a Frederic community member and the chaplain of the nearby



Donors Kenna and Carson recover for a moment at the post-donation refreshment table.

Landmark Masonic Lodge, continued a long running inclination towards generosity. “I’ve been giving blood since I was 18 years old,” Heine noted.

When donors were finished with the process, students also tended to the table

of refreshments, offered to help recuperate after the donation process.

For more information and appointment scheduling, potential donors may call 800-733-2767 or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).



Frederic students, Leif and Charley, welcomed donors at the drive’s front desk. - Photos by Zach Zelinski

org for an interactive map of scheduled events. Upcoming drives include a Feb. 2 drive at Luck High School and a Feb. 3 drive at the Cushing Community Center.

## Blood drive at Siren Bethany Lutheran

By Zach Zelinski | Reporter

SIREN – Bethany Lutheran Church in Siren hosted a Red Cross blood drive on Wednesday, Jan. 14. Community members were welcomed in the fellowship hall to donate blood for crucial medical use. On cushioned reclining beds, donors had their blood drawn and stored before being directed to sit and recover with some juice and snacks. Even with such a serious process, spirits at the drive were notably high. While setting up equipment and facilitating donations, volunteers with the Red Cross shared jokes with the donors.

Those who gave their blood on Wednesday cited compelling reasons for doing so. Shelly Moll chose to donate in memory of her mother, who frequently donated to the Red Cross. Moll estimated that her mother donated as much as eight gallons and noted that she still had many of her souvenir pins.

Georgette Krueger meanwhile took motivation in knowing where her blood was going. The Red Cross provides a



Donors enjoyed snacks and hydrating juice to help rest and regenerate.

detailed “Blood Journey” application, which shows donors where and how their blood is used. Krueger expressed her satisfaction in knowing how her donations have been distributed to their specific destinations and applications.



Bethany Lutheran Church’s fellowship hall was turned into a blood donation area for the Wednesday drive. - Photos by Zach Zelinski

Blood donations can save lives and be used for a multitude of medical purposes, including treating traumatic injuries and providing transfusions. For more information and appointment scheduling, potential donors may call


800-733-2767 or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) for an interactive map of upcoming drives. Upcoming drives include a Feb. 2 drive at Luck High School and a Feb. 3 drive at the Cushing Community Center.

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715-201-2295, newlifechristiancommunity.org  
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715-866-8646, Pastor Chul Kikim



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715-327-8119, sd-ic.org

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Facebook: Zion-Grace Lutheran Parish

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715-463-2624, upperstcroixparish.org  
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715-472-2535 or 715-472-8153, blc@lakeland.ws  
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715-483-9202 or 715-475-7666  
faithfellowshipluck.com  
**LUCK LUTHERAN**  
715-472-2605, lucklutheran.org  
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715-472-8190, 1614 270th Ave.  
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715-857-5580, trinitylutheranchurchmckinley.com  
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715-472-8660, zionlutheranbonelake.org

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715-294-2243, osceolacatholic.org  
**TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN (WELS)**  
715-294-2828, trinity.osceola.com  
**WEST IMMANUEL LUTHERAN (ELCA)**  
715-294-2936, westimmanuel.org  
**ZION LUTHERAN (WELS) – East Farmington**  
715-294-3489, 252 Hwy. 35

## SARONA

**LONG LAKE LUTHERAN**  
715-354-3804, llchurch.com  
**SARONA METHODIST**  
715-924-4660, P.O. Box 22, 5316 Klein St.  
chetekumc.org, Facebook  
**ST. CATHERINE'S (Catholic)**  
715-468-7850, W5262 CTH D

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715-468-2734, 53 3rd St.  
**LAKEVIEW UNITED METHODIST – Hertel**  
715-635-3227, 23980 CTH X  
**NORTHWOODS BAPTIST**  
715-468-2177, northwoodsrbaptist.net  
**SALEM LUTHERAN (ELCA)**  
715-468-7718, 803 2nd St., slsalemchurch.org  
**SHELL LAKE FULL GOSPEL**  
715-468-2895, slfgchurch.com  
**SHELL LAKE UNITED METHODIST**  
715-468-2405  
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715-635-3105, 502 N. 2nd St.

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**TRINITY LUTHERAN – Falun**  
715-689-2271, tlcfalun.com

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**CHRIST LUTHERAN (LCMS) – Trego**  
715-466-4516, Christ Lutheran of Lampson  
**CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**  
715-635-3496, welcomevalley.com/spooner  
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715-635-9222, cornerstonechurchspooner.com  
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715-635-8167, faithspooner.com

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715-635-2903, earlucc.com  
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715-635-2277, spoonerbaptist.com  
**SPOONER UNITED METHODIST**  
715-635-3227, spoonerumc.org  
**SPOONER WESLEYAN**  
715-635-2768, spoonerwesleyan.org  
**ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL**  
715-635-8475, Facebook  
**ST. FRANCIS de SALES (Catholic)**  
715-635-3105, we3churches.org  
**TREGO COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
715-635-8402, tregocommunitychurch.com  
**TRINITY LUTHERAN**  
715-635-3603, trinityspooner.org

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**FIRST LUTHERAN – Cushing**  
715-648-5323, cushingparish.com  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN**  
715-483-3550, firstpresbyterianscf.org  
**LAKETOWN LUTHERAN – Cushing**  
715-575-4371, laketownlutheran@gmail.com  
**REDEEMER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN (Wisconsin Synod)**  
608-397-3346, redeemerstjohns.com  
**RIVER VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH LIGHTHOUSE**  
715-483-5378, rvclighthouse.org  
**SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY LUTHERAN (Missouri Synod)**  
715-483-1186, shepherdofthevalleyscf.org  
**ST. CROIX FALLS UNITED METHODIST**  
715-463-2624, upperstcroixparish.org  
**ST. CROIX UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP**  
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**WOLF CREEK UNITED METHODIST**  
850-217-7188, 2417 River Rd., Facebook, Youtube

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**FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN**  
651-465-5265, tflutheran.org  
**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER – Shafer**  
651-465-7345, stjoseph Taylorsfalls.org  
**ST. JOSEPH (Catholic)**  
651-465-7345, stjoseph Taylorsfalls.org  
**TAYLORS FALLS UNITED METHODIST**  
651-242-6046, taylorsfallsuwc.com

## WEBSTER

**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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**CROSSROADS CHRISTIAN CHURCH – A&H**  
715-635-4816, 28509 CTH H  
**FIRST BAPTIST**  
864-607-5606, websterbaptist.org  
**GRACE UNITED METHODIST**  
715-866-8646  
**HOLY CROSS FELLOWSHIP**  
651-413-1898, 5558 Hwy. 70  
**LAKESIDE COMMUNITY LUTHERAN (ELCA)**  
715-635-7791, lakesidelutheranwi.com  
**OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN (LCMS)**  
Vicar Joshua Henry  
715-866-7191, ourredeemerwebster.com  
**SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS & MARY (Catholic) – A&H**  
715-866-7321, 28450 CTH H  
**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST (Catholic)**  
715-866-7321, 26455 Muskey Ave. S.  
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# Students of the Week



## Frederic

**Caleb Olson** is in third grade and the son of Nicole Steele. Caleb has three siblings, three kitties, two dogs, and a lizard. He is a hardworking student who has shown great growth as a writer this year. Caleb is friendly, kind, and a thoughtful participant in class. He likes to read the "I Survived" series, and his favorite subject is recess. Caleb enjoys video games, skateboarding, and dirt biking. When he grows up, he would like to be a soldier. Congratulations, Caleb!



**Austyn Mara** is Frederic Middle School's student of the week. He is in seventh grade and the son of Casey Mara. Austyn consistently works hard during ELA target time and shows a strong commitment to improving his skills. In the fall he helps to shrink-wrap boats. Austyn enjoys carving things. He plans to be a millionaire in the future. Congratulations, Austyn!



**Kavin Harp** is a freshman and the son of Nicole Steele and Nick Lauber. Kavin demonstrates a strong passion for learning, and a positive attitude that stands out in the classroom. He takes pride in his work, and is not afraid to challenge himself when something feels new or difficult. Kavin is a great role model for his peers. He is involved in baseball and football. He enjoys dirt biking, snowboarding, and snowmobiling. Congratulations, Kavin!



**Jorden Adams** is in kindergarten and the son of Anthony and Anna Adams. Jorden comes to class with a big smile on his face each morning ready to learn. He consistently shows kindness to each classmate and is eager to help wherever he can. He works to show the Pirate Way every day and encourages others to do the same. He makes sure a special friend gets on the right bus each day. Thanks for making our classroom a better place. Congratulations, Jorden! We are so proud of you!



## Grantsburg

**Noah Trenter** is in fifth grade and the son of Timothy and Veasna Trenter. Noah is a hardworking student who puts his all into every school day. He is caring toward everyone, along with being a positive leader for his peers. Noah's favorite class is math because it is easy and fun. He is involved in basketball and plays the alto saxophone in band. When he grows up, he would like to be an engineer because he enjoys building things. Congratulations, Noah!



**Mari Anderson** is a freshman and the daughter of Heather and Gabriel Anderson. Mari is a top student in algebra. She frequently gets perfect scores on quizzes and tests and works hard to maintain her grades. She is always kind and respectful to others. Mari is happy to help her classmates who are struggling, and does not simply give them the answer and guides them to understand the content. Mari enjoys hanging out with friends, sewing, water skiing, tubing and swimming. Congratulations, Mari!



## Luck

**Charlie Hetrick** is Luck Elementary School's student of the week. He is in kindergarten and the son of Samantha Hetrick. He shows compassion, responsibility, and kindness. Charlie's calm and respectful demeanor creates a positive atmosphere for his peers. His animated personality blossoms when he talks about monster trucks. Outside of school, Charlie loves exploring and the outdoors. Congratulations, Charlie!



**Lucy Tretsven** is in seventh grade and the daughter of Ty and Jenni Tretsven. Lucy loves a challenge and thrives on competition. She produces high-quality work in class and always strives for excellence. Lucy participates in band, choir, volleyball, basketball, and track. Outside of school, Lucy takes on lead roles in her youth group and impresses audiences with her powerful singing. She is a standout student and great role model and leader. Congratulations, Lucy!



**Teya Hinkel** is a freshman and the daughter of Kayla and Cory Hinkel. Teya consistently comes to class prepared and eager to learn. She is respectful, works well with others, and demonstrates a positive attitude each day. She often volunteers to help, and takes pride in her work. Teya participates in Kinship, FCCLA, student council, volleyball, basketball, track, and softball. She is also a class officer and summer school helper. Teya enjoys reading, watching sports, and baking. Congratulations, Teya!



**Nixie Lawrence** is Shell Lake Elementary School's student of the week. Nixie is always excited and ready to learn. She follows the Laker Way and gives her best effort. Thank you, Nixie, for being a great role model in the classroom. Congratulations, Nixie!



## Shell Lake



## Siren

**Vivic** is Siren Elementary School's student of the week. Vivic is a cheerful and energetic third-grader. He is kind and shows compassion toward others. He is interested in learning new things, and his favorite subject is math. Outside of school, Vivic loves playing hockey and spending time with his sisters. When he grows up, he hopes to be a police officer and help people. He is a great member of the third grade! Congratulations, Vivic!



**ConLee** is Siren Middle School's student of the week. He is in sixth grade and is an all-around great kid. ConLee is involved with football, baseball, and wrestling; wrestling being his favorite, if he had to pick one. In the classroom, he always has his hand up to answer questions or help with anything during class. He is a great trumpet player and sings in the choir. Congratulations, ConLee!



**Owen** is Siren High School's student of the week. He is a sophomore and a great student to have in class. He is always willing to help in the classroom and outside of the classroom. He is a new member of the National Honor Society, plays basketball and is a great addition to the choir. His future plans are to attend UW-Madison for pre-law. Congratulations, Owen!



**Wyatt Ressler** is St. Croix Falls Elementary School's student of the week. Wyatt is a motivated helper in every corner of the school. He is active and loves all things outdoors, especially if he is able to work with animals. His kind heart shows through in all he does. Wyatt's favorite things about school are phy ed, reading his cowboy book, and recess. When he grows up, he wants to be a cowboy. Great job being a Saint who CARES! Congratulations, Wyatt!



## St. Croix Falls

**Emersyn Hala** is St. Croix Falls Middle School's student of the week. She is in sixth grade and the daughter of Brian Hala and Jennifer Saltzman. Emersyn does an excellent job participating in physical education. She is willing to help others and does a great job being a good teammate. Emersyn is a positive role model with a positive attitude. Congratulations, Emersyn!



**Adalynne Anderson** is St. Croix Falls High School's student of the week. She is a sophomore and the daughter of Kirk and Shara Anderson. Addie is involved in Kinship, student council, cross country, basketball, and track. She works very hard and is involved in a variety of ways. She leads by example and is a great student to have in class. Congratulations, Addie!



## Unity

**William Unruh** is Unity Elementary School's student of the week. He is in pre-K and the son of Hannah and Matthew Unruh. William is a student who consistently follows rules at school and sets a wonderful example for his classmates. He is a kind friend who always takes the time to listen and support others. William's positive attitude is contagious, as he always has a smile on his face, bringing so much joy to the pre-K classroom! Congratulations, William!



**Terrance Swanson** is in eighth grade. Terrance has been working very hard in the classroom. He is a role model for his peers and encourages them to try new positive things at school. His enjoyment for hunting and the outdoors is not missed by his teachers. He often asks us how our weekends were and shares his latest hunting or taxidermy adventure. Terrance has matured and developed into an inspiring young man. Congratulations, Terrance! Keep up the great work!



**Jacob Johnson** is a junior who leads by quiet example. He completes his work efficiently and with the utmost care. He approaches the study of literature with heart and a critical eye for detail, bringing exceptional insights to conversation and asking complex, intelligent questions that deepen his understanding of the text as well as the experience of others. Jacob is dependable, creative, and kind—all qualities that make him a great student and positive role model. Congratulations, Jacob!



## Webster

**Sydney** is Webster Elementary School's student of the week. She is in fourth grade and the daughter of Seth and Anna Pearson. Sydney is always great to have in class. She is a great listener and always tries her best. She does a great job every day and is a very honest and trustworthy student. Congratulations, Sydney! Way to go!



**Nova** is in sixth grade and the son of Joe and Heather Pigman. Nova is a kind, laid back, optimistic, funny and friendly student. He is a fun student to have in class. He always has a smile on his face and works well with others. He is also a hardworking student who has achieved B honor roll status! Nova enjoys playing football and baseball, and just playing outside in general. He is happy to be at Webster School this year and is quoted as saying; "I like to take naps." Congratulations, Nova!



**Brielle Winter** is a freshman and the daughter of Kara and Jeremy Winter. Brielle is a hard worker who comes to class with a positive attitude and always does her best in her physical education class. She is kind and goes out of her way to help others. Brielle is on the A honor roll and First Team All-Conference. She participates in cross country and track. Brielle enjoys reading, hanging out with her family, and walking her dog. She would like to pursue a career in law. Congratulations, Brielle!



***Congratulations, students, from these area businesses and organizations:***

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- Frandsen Bank & Trust  
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Luck, Webster & Danbury
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***We are proud of you!***

# SCHOOL SNAPSHOTS

By Sarah Beth Radomsky | Reporter

Thanks for checking out this week's School Snapshots section in the Inter-County Leader where we feature various school-related photographs taken across the area in the past week or so. We welcome our member readers to submit their own photos for

consideration. Please email them to us at editor@iccpaonline.com, with the subject line "School Snapshots." Be sure to include your name and where your photo was taken.



Webster High School band students performed with the Upper St. Croix Valley Honors Band on Jan. 12, earning praise from the guest clinician for their talent, kindness and professionalism. - Photo courtesy of School District of Webster



(L to R): Doug Mitchell of the Lewis VFW awarded scholarships to Patriot's Pen Essay Contest winners. Congratulations to Tegan—first place, Jo—second place, and Jaylyn—third place, for their essays honoring veterans and representing Frederic. - Photo courtesy of Frederic School District



Polk County Deputy Goehring and K-9 Odin visited Mrs. Jagielo's Small Animals class at Unity, where students learned about K-9 handling, training, police work, and animal care. Odin demonstrated impressive skills, giving the class insight into how these dogs serve the community. - Photo courtesy of Unity School District



(L to R): The Frederic Math Counts team competed at the Rice Lake meet against students from Rice Lake and Menomonie. Zander placed sixth in the Countdown Round, and Zack took ninth in the Countdown Round and first overall among seventh graders. - Photo courtesy of Frederic School District



Luck eighth-grade tech ed students recently learned to work with epoxy while creating handcrafted coasters as part of their final projects. - Photo courtesy of Luck Public Schools



Ten Unity students participated in the 37th annual Upper St. Croix Valley Honor Band, hosted at the Unity Performing Arts Center. The musicians, under the direction of Michael Pearson, rehearsed all day and performed in an evening concert. Pictured are Evelyn Fugate, Elias Hikel, Judah Hikel, Neil Martin, Sky Mosay, Breeyn Nelson, Megan Peterson, Ashley Siefert, Natasha Tait and Mazie Webster. - Photo courtesy of Unity School District



Amery sixth-graders took their annual field trip to the Minneapolis Children's Theatre in December. One student was invited onstage by the Grinch, becoming a memorable part of the experience. - Photo courtesy of School District of Amery



LEFT: St. Croix Falls Little Saints played in the snow during a recent outdoor recess. - Photo courtesy of St. Croix Falls School District

# JANUARY

WED. & THURS./28 & 29

## Siren

• **Auditions for variety show** sponsored by the Siren Schools Music Department, 4 p.m. The show will be held on Sunday, March 1, at 2 p.m. Beth Peterson, 715-349-2277, ext. 238.

## THURSDAY/29

### Osceola

• **Night Hikes** at The Acreage, 6:30-8 p.m. Led by naturalists from the National Park Service. Each night features a guided theme to connect us to the natural world. Snowshoes are recommended. A \$10 donation is requested to support more fun programs at The Acreage, theacreage.org/events.

## FRIDAY/30

### Falun

• **Free bread distribution** at Trinity Lutheran Church, 8 a.m.

### Frederic

• **Winter Concert Series with Kaptain Karl** at Frederic Arts Center, 6:30 p.m. Free admission, fredericarts.org.

### Luck

• **Mindfulness Session** at the library, 10 a.m., luckpubliclibrary.org.  
• **Prayer for America's turning point** at Faith Fellowship Church, 7 p.m., 715-475-7666.

## SATURDAY/31

### Dresser

• **Comedy Show Fundraiser with Wendy Maybury, Sam Bondhus, and Sara Haase** at Peace Lutheran Church, 4 p.m., to benefit the Africa Mission Team. Tickets can be purchased online or at the church. \$20 in advance with code; LAUGH. \$25 at the door. Facebook.com/plcdresser/.

### Luck

• **American Food Product's 40th Annual Ice Fishing Tournament on Bone Lake**, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Register at the north landing or Wilkins Bar & Resort. \$10 entry fee. Proceeds benefit local charities. Details on Facebook at https://bit.ly/3NcuAau.

### Osceola

• **Hot Potato Bingo** at West Immanuel Lutheran Church, 5-8 p.m. **Freewill offering dinner** from 5-6 p.m. with loaded potato bar, and desserts. **Bingo** from 6-8 p.m., https://westimmanuel.org/calendar.

# FEBRUARY

## SUNDAY/1

### Frederic

• **Bingo** at the senior/community center, 2-3:30 p.m. Must be 18 or older. Door opens at 1:30 p.m., 715-327-8623.

### St. Croix Falls

• **Community Drum Circle** at the library, 1-3 p.m. Free admission, drums provided, all ages and all levels are welcome, from beginner to expert, stcroixfallslibrary.org/events.

## MONDAY/2

### Balsam Lake

• **Indianhead Barbershop Chorus meets** at the Justice Center for practice, 7 p.m., 715-475-7666.

### Luck

• **Lions Club monthly meeting** at the Lions Hall, 7 p.m.  
• **Indianhead Gem & Mineral Society meeting** at the Senior Center, 7 p.m.  
• **Blood drive** at Luck High School, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Make appt. to donate, redcrossblood.org, 800-733-2767.

## TUESDAY/3

### Clam Falls

• **Coffee hour** at Clam Falls Lutheran Church, 9 a.m. Everyone welcome.

### Cushing

• **Blood drive** at the Cushing Community Center, noon-6 p.m. Make appt. to donate, redcrossblood.org, 800-733-2767.

### Frederic

• **Soup Supper** at the senior center, 4-6 p.m. Free and open to all. Come to dine or volunteer, 715-790-8015.

### Grantsburg

• **First Tuesday Book Club** at the library, 6 p.m. Check the website for monthly book selection, grantsburglibrary.org.

### Luck

• **TOPS meeting** at the senior center, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

## WEDNESDAY/4

### St. Croix Falls

• **Blood drive** at St. Croix Falls High School, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Make appt. to donate, redcrossblood.org, 800-733-2767.

## THURSDAY/5

### Siren

• **Caregiver support group** at Bethany Lutheran Church, 10-11:30 a.m. Call to register, 877-485-2372.  
• **Burnett County Democrats monthly meeting** at the Siren Community Senior Center. Social time at 6 p.m., meeting from 6:30-8 p.m., 715-869-6081, burnettcountydemocrats.org.

## FRIDAY/6

### Falun

• **Free bread distribution** at Trinity Lutheran Church, 8 a.m.

# Coming Events

SUBMIT YOUR COMING EVENTS ONLINE TO: [www.leadericcpa.com/contact](http://www.leadericcpa.com/contact)

We list cultural events, fundraisers, benefits, monthly meetings, free meals, and the like, for schools, nonprofit organizations, churches, libraries, community organizations, clubs, support groups, etc. We occasionally list events of community/family interest that are sponsored by a business. Events are listed as space permits and at the discretion of the editor. Please submit your event online, by phone or in person by 10 a.m. on Monday to get it listed in that Wednesday's paper.

## "Race of Life"

by Jaiden, 13



Life is a race to flourish and grow towards bigger and better things. If you want to achieve your goals in life, you have to work to get better at life. This tree branch is fighting for its life. It goes through hard weather and harsh conditions. It gives me hope and trust in myself.

*In A New Light is a therapeutic nature photography program at Northwest Passage. It emphasizes skilled expressive arts training and nature immersion, ultimately empowering youth to define themselves by their strengths rather than their weaknesses.*

### Luck

• **Mindfulness Session** at the library, 10 a.m., luckpubliclibrary.org.  
• **Prayer for America's turning point** at Faith Fellowship Church, 7 p.m., 715-475-7666.

### Siren

• **Blood drive** at Siren Fire Hall, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Make appt. to donate, redcrossblood.org, 800-733-2767.

## SAT. & SUN./7 & 8

### Balsam Lake

• **Winterfest.** Fun winter activities. **Food, ice bowling, minnow races, kids games and much more,** facebook.com/events/1920959878450565.

## SATURDAY/7

### Amery

• **Wanderoos Area Community Club Ice Fishing Contest** on Lake Wapogasset, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in five divisions: sunfish, crappie, northern, bass, perch/walleye. Door prizes and fun for the kids, wanderoos.org/icefishingcontest.

### Dresser

• **Community Sewing Day** at Peace Lutheran Church to sew dresses to send to needy girls in Africa, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. No experience necessary to cut, iron, or even sew. A light lunch will be provided. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult, 715-483-9791.

### Luck

• **The Shauncey Ali Quartet in concert** at West Denmark Lutheran Church, 7 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for reserved seating and \$20 general admission. Available at the door or in advance at westdenmark.net.

### St. Croix Falls

• **Candlelight hike** at Interstate Park, 5-8 p.m. Experience a winter evening by candlelight as hundreds of candles are lit to guide skiers, snowshoers and hikers on separate trails. Gather around the warming fires, with entertainment, food and refreshments provided throughout the evening. A park vehicle admission sticker is required, facebook.com/interstatepark.

## SUNDAY/8

### Frederic

• **Bingo** at the senior/community center, 2-3:30 p.m. Must be 18 or older. Door opens at 1:30 p.m., 715-327-8623.

### Siren

• **Burnett Medical Association Valentine brunch fundraiser** at Zhashagiins Event Center, noon. Purchase tickets, sponsor a table or donate by Jan. 20 by calling Halle Pardun, 715-463-7285.

## MONDAY/9

### Balsam Lake

• **Indianhead Barbershop Chorus meets** at the Justice Center for practice, 7 p.m., 715-475-7666.

### St. Croix Falls

• **Knit and Crochet group** at the library, 6-8 p.m. Bring a project or start a new one. We would be happy to teach new crafters! Bring some yard and needles or a hook, stcroixfallslibrary.org.

## TUESDAY/10

### Dresser

• **Lions Club meeting** at the Dresser Community Center, 7 p.m.

### Luck

• **TOPS meeting** at the senior center, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

### Online

• **Northwoods MS Connection Group, multiple sclerosis support group monthly meeting**, 6-7:30 p.m., 763-742-8572, dianewhitcraft@gmail.com.

### Webster

• **Monthly senior citizen breakfast** at the MS/HS Cafeterium, 8:30 a.m. Offered by the school district to provide the community an inside look at the wonderful things our students are learning and being offered. Cost is \$3 to cover food service expenses.

## THURSDAY/12

### St. Croix Falls

• **Polk County Democrats monthly meeting** at the American Legion Hall, 6-8 p.m., polkcountywisconsin democrats.org.

## FRIDAY/13

### Falun

• **Free bread distribution** at Trinity Lutheran Church, 8 a.m.

### Grantsburg

• **Candlelight Hike** at Crex Meadows, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Enjoy a peaceful evening walking or snowshoeing on the candlelit, 1.25-mile trail behind the Crex Visitor Center. Then warm up with some hot beverages and snacks in the Meeting & Gathering Hall, crexmeadows.org/programs/.  
• **Blood drive** at Burnett Medical Center, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Make appt. to donate, redcrossblood.org, 800-733-2767.

### Luck

• **Mindfulness Session** at the library, 10 a.m., luckpubliclibrary.org.  
• **Prayer for America's turning point** at Faith Fellowship Church, 7 p.m., 715-475-7666.

### Sarona

• **Citizen Science: Great Backyard Bird Count** at Hunt Hill, 7:30 a.m. Citizen Science empowers the curious and concerned to collect valuable data that contributes to specific scientific research. No prior experience is needed to participate. Free, but donations are appreciated. Registration is not required, but strongly encouraged, hunthill.org/calendar/.

### Siren

• **Free soup and fellowship** at the Burnett County VFW, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Hosted by the Post and Trinity Lutheran Church of Falun.

## SAT. & SUN./14 & 15

### Luck

• **Luck Winter Carnival.** Friday night is the **Royalty Pageant.** Saturday activities include **Bingo, medallion hunt, torchlight parade, and sales along Main Street,** 715-472-2221.

INTER-COUNTY

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