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# Northern Roundup draws thousands to Gleason area

Attendees come to celebrate hotrods, pinups, and all things vintage

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

Northern Roundup Vintage Weekend drew thousands of people to the Gleason area on June 22-24, 2023. Held at the MC Festival Grounds, N5890 Cty. Rd. H., Gleason, in Deerbrook, the three-day event is billed as the “hotrod party of the summer in the great northwoods” and draws campers and attendees who love vintage cars, trucks, motorcycles, semis, and all things vintage from throughout the state of Wisconsin and beyond.

In addition to on-site camping, some in vintage campers, some in modern campers, and others who rough it in a tent, Northern Roundup includes a display of vintage automobiles and semis, mini bikes and a mini-bike show, car cruise, live music, a swap area, a talent contest, merchandise vendors, food and drink vendors, covered bar area, a pinup contest, and more.

Auto clubs present their “club picks” awards in the car/truck show for best of show and other categories of their choosing. Raffles and an auction raise funds for a charity each year, typically related to veterans in some way. And this year, a 1962 Chevrolet C10 was the vintage hot ticket item for the raffle, and live performances included headliner Reverend Horton Heat, The Hotrod Walt Trio, and The Best Westerns with Eddie River on steel guitar on Saturday and other live bands on Thursday and Friday.

Roosters Six Customs Car Club hosts the event. “We started The Northern Roundup Vintage Weekend in 2015 as a way to raise money for local veterans’ charities and to bring a little bit of a different car show experience to the



**Above:** This line of vintage automobiles is a tiny peek at the many vehicles that were on display at Northern Roundup last weekend. **Right:** White gloves, shoes, hairpiece, dress, pearls, and petticoats outfit this pinup contestant, but pinup girls also showcase their style and sass to gain points with the judges.



Tina L. Scott photos.

northwoods,” said Chad Walker, founder and President of the car club. “More of a car and music festival.”

The event, which started small and grew to a three-day event, now draws an average of 2,000 to 4,000 people to the rural Gleason area each year, he said.

“Last year we raised \$10,750 for the Northwoods Veterans Post,” Walker said. “This year we raised \$2,500 for The Never Forgotten Honor Flight and \$500 for The Lincoln County Humane Society.”

In addition to raising funds for local charities, a few other things set Northern Roundup apart—primarily, the combination of so many vintage interests in one place.

“Our event features not only classic cars and trucks

See **ROUNDUP** page 6

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## Merrill father and son charged in first degree sexual assault and cover-up, possible destruction of evidence



Left: Andre Pierre Galella. Right: Vincent Anthony Louis Galella.

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

A Merrill man is charged with felony first degree sexual assault and misdemeanor possession of a firearm while intoxicated; his father is charged with felony harboring or aiding a felon-falsifying information-as a party to a crime and misdemeanor obstructing an officer in an apparent attempt to destroy or hide physical evidence that could incriminate his son, among other things.

### The first alleged crime

Vincent Anthony Louis Galella, age 22, of Merrill, was arrested the evening of Tuesday, May 9, 2023, on charges of attempted first degree sexual assault and possession of a firearm while intoxicated. The first charge is a Class B felony, while the second is a Class A misdemeanor, and if convicted, Vincent faces up to 30 years in prison on the felony count and a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or up to 9 months in prison for the misdemeanor charge.

According to the Criminal Complaint on file in Lincoln County Circuit Court, the charges stem from an incident

See **ASSAULT** page 15

## Merrill woman charged with attempting to murder her 16-year-old autistic son

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR



Heather Joy O'Neill

Heather Joy O'Neill, age 53, of rural Merrill (Town of Harding) was taken into custody on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, and was formally charged with two felony charges and a misdemeanor in Lincoln County Circuit Court (LCCC) on Thursday, June 22. O'Neill is charged with first degree intentional attempted homicide and first degree recklessly endangering safety as a result of her overdosing her 16-year-old autistic son with possibly both prescription and over-the-counter medications on June 20. She also took an overdose of medications herself in an apparent attempt to take her own life. In addition, she is charged with an additional misdemeanor count of resisting or obstructing an officer.

### Defendant called 911

According to the Complaint on file in LCCC and the sergeant investigator's Affidavit in support of the Search Warrant issued for O'Neill's home, where she lived with and was primary caretaker for her 16-year-old son, the Lincoln County 911 dispatch center received a call from Heather O'Neill at 5:59 p.m. on June 20.

A transcript of the 911 call indicates Heather O'Neill told the 911 operator: “I just gave my son and myself an overdose.”

She identified herself by name.

When asked what they took, she answered “Numerous things.”

In answer to other questions, O'Neill indicated her

See **MURDER** page 11



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# Class of 2023 Merrill High School scholarships and awards

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

Merrill High School held their awards night prior to graduation. The following students from the graduating Class of 2023 received scholarships and awards:

- Anderson, Jaylen - Matthew Zocher Memorial Scholarship, X To C Golf Scholarship, Gladys Phillips Award Of Merit, Gold Tassel
- Arneson, Erica - Sally Pfund Memorial Scholarship, Merrill Wrestling Club Scholarship, NTC Foundation - Bierman Family Foundation Scholarship, Merrill High School Softball Class Of 2023 Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Hall Of Fame, Senior Athletic Award
- Ball, Brian - Merrill Wrestling Club Scholarship, Park City Cares Foundation Scholarship, Jered Severt Memorial Scholarship, Silver M Club - Memory Of Harry Dahm Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Hall Of Fame, National Honor Society, Senior Athletic Award
- Banser, Jaxson - David H. Eckerle Memorial Scholarship, Leo And Ivy Nevala Scholarship, United Steelworkers Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Uw-Madison - O'Reilly Scholarship
- Bentz, Jolene - Carl & Wella Orin Memorial Scholarship, Marshfield Clinic Health Scholarship, Mutual Of Wausau Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Blystone, Aidan - Tim Volz '79' Memorial Scholarship, Haunted

- Sawmill Scholarship, Merrill Lions Club Scholarship, Robert & Jo Ann Opsahl Scholarship, Wa Marquardt Scholarship, Technical Excellence Scholarship
- Borchardt, Mason - Robert & Jo Ann Opsahl Scholarship, X To C Golf Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Brandenburg, Branden - Gold Tassel
- Brzozowski, Nathan - Haunted Sawmill Scholarship, Merrill Baseball Association Scholarship, Silver M Club - Memory Of Steve Strassman Scholarship, Robert & Jo Ann Opsahl Scholarship, Agra Industries - Engineering Scholarship, Fab Lab Scholarship, Packaging Corporation Of America - Tomahawk Mill Scholarship, Mitchell Metal Products Scholarship, Senior Athletic Award
- Burrows, Lydia - Carl & Wella Orin Memorial Scholarship, Robert & Jo Ann Opsahl Scholarship, William T. Evjue Scholarship, Mutual Of Wausau Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Bushar, Hana - Sherry Simon Success - Education Scholarship, Merrill Admin Association Education Scholarship
- Cohrs, Lauren - Herb-Kohl Student Excellence Scholarship, The Community Blood Center Gallon Grad Award, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, President'S Education, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete Scholarship, Uw-Madison - O'Reilly Scholarship
- Cordova, Olivia - Elsie H. Heckman Memorial Scholarship, Jessica & David Alft Memorial Scholarship, Kate Goodrich

- Elementary School PTO Scholarship, Aspirus Merrill Hospital Scholarship, Merit Housing Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Crossman, Madison - Washington Elementary School Scholarship, Pine River Elementary School Scholarship, Al & Elayne Saeger Memorial Scholarship, Reindl Printing Scholarship, Church Mutual Family Scholarship, Trustee Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Mickelson Athletic Award (Female), National Honor Society, Senior Athletic Award, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Depies, Ryder - Merrill Wrestling Club Scholarship, Academic Excellence Scholarship, Raymond And Marie Goldbach Foundation Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Great Northern Conference Scholar Athlete, Klug Athletic Award (Male), National Honor Society, President'S Education, Senior Athletic Award, WIAA Scholar Athlete (Male), Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete, Walter & Mabel Fromm - College Scholarship
- Dettmering, Arin - Gold Tassel, Senior Athletic Award, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Dreikosen, Ian - Merrill Wrestling Club Scholarship, Haunted Sawmill Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Walter & Mabel Fromm - Technical Scholarship
- Drew, Madelyn - Beta Sigma Phi Sorority Scholarship, Wickman/Kohl Scholarship, Merrill High School Softball Class Of 2023 Scholarship, Gold Tassel, UW-Madison - Drew Scholarship

- Duley, Kyle - Gold Tassel
- Entenmann, Vincent - Gold Tassel
- Esparza, Angelina - Genevieve Bowell Scholarship, Robert J. And Eileen S. Gallagher Endowed Scholarship
- Folz, Tanner - NTC Foundation - Bierman Family Foundation Scholarship
- Franke, Galen - Gold Tassel
- Fritcher, Tyler - Gold Tassel
- Geiger, Makalia - Robert & Jo Ann Opsahl Scholarship, Ellen Dunphy Memorial Scholarship
- Glish, Tyson - Lincoln County Tavern League Scholarship, Merrill Baseball Association Scholarship, Silver M Club - Memory Of Arnold Kromholz Scholarship, Hall Of Fame, Senior Athletic Award
- Grefe, Lily - Adam Smith Memorial - 2 Year Technical Scholarship, Alan C. Vecchio Memorial Scholarship, Robert & Jo Ann Opsahl Scholarship
- Handlin, Jonathan - Gold Tassel, Senior Athletic Award
- Hanson, Elliott - Haunted Sawmill Scholarship, Agra Industries - Designing Scholarship, Senior Athletic Award
- Hanson, Nichole - Kiwanis Club Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Herd, Breannon - Ronald & Ellen Nicklaus Scholarship, Merit Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Herd, Catherine - Sherry Simon Success - Financial Scholarship, Eagles Auxiliary #584 Scholarship, Rotary Club - College/University Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Higgins, Carla - Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, President'S Education Scholarship, UW-Madison - Guenzl Scholarship
- Holzinger, Samuel - Beta Sigma Phi Sorority Scholarship, Erwin G. Rusch Scholarship, Varsity Hockey Blue Line Club Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete, UW-Madison - Guenzl Scholarship
- Hoyt, Summit - Gold Tassel, President'S Education Scholarship, Walter & Mabel Fromm - Technical Scholarship
- Jacobson, Taylor - David & Emily Streich Scholarship, Lawrence & John Frederick - Agriculture Scholarship, Lincoln County Beef Producers Scholarship, Falcon Soar Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Kasten, Cassandra - Lincoln County Sports Club Scholarship, Nicklaus Agriculture Scholarship, Lincoln County Beef Producers Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Knospe, Logan - Evelyn

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See AWARDS page 16



# “People for Pine Crest” present petition

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

A group of Lincoln County residents calling themselves the “People for Pine Crest” called a press conference on Monday, June 26, 2023, in the Lincoln County Service Center on N. Sales Street in Merrill. Representatives of the group spoke to the media.

Renea Frederick, a local business owner and Merrill resident began. “We are all here to ask the Lincoln County Board not to sell Pine Crest,” she said. “We want the Board to thoroughly explore the different options listed in the Ad Hoc Committee report and also to look at some of the out-of-the-box strategies other communities have used to financially support their nursing homes. We also ask that the citizens of Lincoln County be part of this process. Our goal is to find financial solutions that will enable Pine Crest to continue to serve our residents now and into the future.”

The group of about 20 people gathered included Elizabeth McCrank, current Lincoln County Board Supervisor for District 3.

“I feel that the process that has been and is being used is deeply flawed and perhaps even dishonest toward the people of the County,” McCrank said. “I believe that selling Pine Crest, in any fashion whatsoever, is turning our backs on the people who have invested in our community and paid their taxes, sometimes for decades ... [who] did it all the while believing that this would be a great place for them to live out their lives ...”

“Turning our backs on these people is to me unacceptable and immoral,” she said. “I believe that selling Pine Crest amounts to cheating the people of the county, and even those people who think they support selling Pine Crest, in my opinion, are being dealt with dishonestly by the people carrying this out.”

McCrank said the County Board needs to include the public “in weighty and consequential decisions such as asking what the people of the County are willing to do in order to keep Pine Crest functioning as a public institution.”

She said she was particularly disappointed that her proposed resolution for a county-wide resolution was “killed” at a recent County Board meeting. “They claim the result [of a referendum] would ‘put us in the same place we are now.’ That shows they know the voters don’t want them to do this, but they don’t want to hear it,” McCrank said. “Some of them claim that a referendum would cause a distress sale. But they have already done that themselves by committing to this course of action.”

“And their recent claims that they’re not committed to a sale are even more disingenuous,” she said.



A group of about 20 people who called themselves the “People for Pine Crest” speak during a June 24 press conference they organized. Tina L. Scott photos.

“No one hires a broker to get an appraisal ... You hire a broker to sell something.”

McCrank also accused members of the County Board of lying about their intentions, though she did not call anyone out by name.

With regard to her proposed referendum, “I don’t know what the public would choose in a referendum, but I’d like to find out,” she said. “I don’t know what depth of support for Pine Crest there is. But I listened to hours of public comment at County Board meetings and at listening sessions held by the County Board on this topic. I’ve heard overwhelming desire from people to keep the facility and keep it public, and then I heard my colleagues on the County Board do the exact opposite of what the public had told us.”

“I accept that sometimes elected officials are faced with moral decisions where we may have to choose an unpopular path, but in this case the moral choice is between valuing community or valuing money. The people told us community, and the Board chose money,” McCrank said. “Saving money while costing community turns us into a civic desert. I choose community, and I desperately urge my colleagues on the County Board to rethink this choice and choose the same. At the very least, let’s let the public weigh in with a straightforward referendum.”

Pastor Michael Southcombe of Saint Stephens UCC in Merrill also spoke, but he took a different approach.

“Our quarrel is not with our County Board,” he said. “Our quarrel is with the payment structure and the business model we have now for elder care in this country.”

“Most nursing homes are not financially viable if they have more than 10% of

their residents on Medicaid. Pine Crest has 70-80% of its residents on Medicaid.”

It is not financially viable to run a nursing home with that many residents on Medicaid unless that nursing home has an outside source of income to make up the losses, he said.

“Nursing homes that go beyond that 10% of residents on Medicaid have an outside source of funding—either an endowment fund, a boisterous fund development office raising money, connections with churches, or county funds or an endowment fund,” Southcombe said.

“To believe that someone will buy Pine Crest—either a non-profit or a for-profit entity ... and keep the same level of service with 70-80% of the residents on Medicaid, is magical thinking,” he said.

Southcombe challenged the Board to “stand up and abide by the moral contract we have had with the most vulnerable elderly residents of Merrill since 1900.”

“For 123 years people have counted on Pine Crest as the backstop,” Southcombe said. He explained that many residents who can initially afford for-profit nursing homes are faced with needing to move when their funds run out. “And then the family gets the call,” he said. “We only have five Medicaid beds left and they’re all filled. You’ve got three days to get your loved one out of this home and somewhere else.”

“I’ve seen that happen with members of my churches over the last 30 years with countless for-profit nursing homes,” he said. “It is unconscionable that that would happen here in Merrill.”

Southcombe referred to “an endowment fund that can supply the extra money needed when you have so many Medicaid patients” and said, “We have an endowment fund here in Merrill, in Lincoln County.

It’s called the integrity of the citizens.”

“We have over 650 signatures, and we have more coming,” he said. He added this was just over the course of a three or four-week signature drive. “The signatures we have represent almost 10% of the number of people who voted in the last election, and we’re going to deliver those signatures to not sell Pine Crest this morning when they are opening up the bids, or RFP’s, for a broker to broker just such a sale.”

Frederick handed the petitions to Lincoln County Board Chair Don Friske when he entered the building to attend the scheduled receipt and review of proposals in response to the County’s request for proposals.

### RFP results from brokers

After the press conference, Lincoln County Clerk Chris Marlowe publicly opened and documented the receipt of three proposals from brokers who sent in a proposal to represent Lincoln County in exploring the potential for any interested buyers who might wish to purchase Pine Crest Nursing Home to run it privately.

Most of those who came for the press conference witnessed the process.

Proposals were received from Evans Senior Investments, SVN, and Marcus & Millichap. Their initial proposed bid percentages ranged from 3 to 13 percent, but it was not clear whether those percentages included associated expenses or whether the brokers who submitted proposals met the Board’s minimum specified requirements. Friske said the proposals would be reviewed in more detail at a meeting of the Lincoln County Administrative & Legislative Committee scheduled for Wednesday, June 28, at 3:30 p.m.



Lincoln County Clerk Chris Marlowe (left) prepares to open the sealed bids submitted in response to the County’s RFP. Lincoln County Board Chair Don Friske looks through the signed petitions he received just minutes prior.



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11:30 a.m. Monday

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CIRCULATION AUDIT BY  
**CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL**



# OBITUARIES



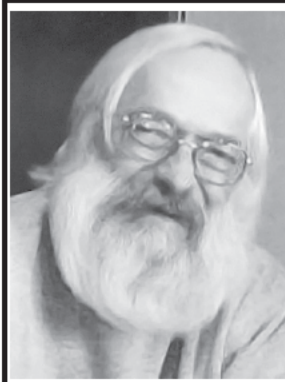
**Robert "Bob" E. Reed**, age 63, of Tomahawk, WI, and formerly of Merrill, WI, passed away on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at Riverview Health Services in Tomahawk under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care Hospice Services.

A beloved father, brother, and uncle, Bob was born on April 3, 1960, to the late Robert D. Reed and Alberta Leone (Yocum). He was born in Philadelphia, PA, where he grew up with three sisters.

In the weeks leading to his passing, Robert was surrounded by the love of his family and friends. He was under the comfort care of hospice and the wonderful staff at Riverview Health Services. Robert will be remembered for his sassy, fun-loving nature who was always quick with a joke as well as, surprisingly, giving sound advice to those closest to him. He had always been a firm believer in the higher power, even in dark times.

Robert leaves behind his only son, Steven Reed, of Merrill; his sole surviving sister, Barbara "Sissy" Kasten, as well as his longtime friend and brother-in-law, Kent Kasten, of Merrill. He is further survived by many nieces and nephews (he will forever be their Uncle Eddie), along with many great-nieces and great-nephews. Robert is preceded in passing by his loving parents, Alberta and Robert; two sisters, Linda Rivera and Joanne Hughes; and his nephew, William C. Gibson III.

A celebration of life in honor of Robert will be held on a future date. Generations Funeral Home & Crematory is assisting the family during this difficult time. You may view Robert Reed's obituary and leave online condolences at generationsfuneral.com.



**David A. Szulczewski**, age 73, of Wisconsin Rapids, passed away on Tuesday, June 21, 2023, at his residence. David was born on November 2, 1949, in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, to Joseph and Janet (Krubsack) Szulczewski. He married Linda Rehwinke on May 24, 1980.

He served in the U.S. Army from June of 1968 to October of 1975 and is proud to be a Vietnam veteran.

David enjoyed fishing, steam engines, Harley Davidsons, and John Deere tractors. He loved to spend time with his family, swapping jokes, and making people laugh. He was very generous to his nieces and nephews who he loved dearly.

He was a welder in the Army, for Merrill Manufacturing, or for anyone who needed it.

David is survived by his son, Jeremy Szulczewski; stepsons, Chris and Shawn Rehwinke; siblings, Daniel Szulczewski of Raleigh, NC, Jennie (Greg) Ferkey of Wisconsin Rapids, Jeanne Cole of Wisconsin Rapids, Cindy Peckham of Nekoosa, Donna (Damon) Klinger of Wisconsin Rapids, Jerry (Lynn) Szulczewski of Omro, WI, Sara (Gareld) Morris of Wisconsin Rapids; sisters in law, Julie Szulczewski and Brenda Szulczewski; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents, ex-wife Linda Szulczewski; brothers, Patrick, Robert, and Richard Szulczewski; sisters in law, Kathy and Connie Szulczewski; and brothers in law, Roger Kauffman, Robert Cole, and John Peckham.

The family will be holding a celebration of life at the Rock Resort in Merrill on July 8th at 1:00 pm.

Feldner/Ritchay Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements.



**Jason P. Meyer**, 49, of Irma, formerly of Medford, Wisconsin, lost his battle with mental illness on Friday, June 16, 2023. Jason was the son of Patrick and Carol Meyer.

In addition to his parents, Jason is further survived by his wife, Brenda; his children, Isaac and Ahna; his siblings, Lori (Terry) Steinman, Justin (Jen) Meyer, Kristina (Bub) Beidel, and Josh (Erin) Meyer. He is also survived by numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. He is

preceded in death by his grandparents, Clifford and Lydia Meyer, and Emeal and Elsie Thompson.

Jason attended Holy Rosary Catholic Elementary School, Medford Middle School, and Medford High School. He went on to attend the University of Wisconsin - Stout and earned a bachelor's degree.

Jason was a devoted husband and father. He was a very quiet and gentle man who used his level-headedness to help his wife with all her crazy ideas around the house and in the yard and garden. He made sure to kiss Brenda goodbye each morning and tell her he loved her. He was super proud of Isaac and Ahna and always was grateful to spend time with them just talking and catching up with their busy lives. He felt he was very blessed by his family. His favorite things to do were spending time out in the woods admiring trees, making firewood, and spending time in his shed maintaining vehicles and equipment. Jason especially loved learning about Bigfoot and he watched many tv shows and read a variety of books on the topic over the years. Jason doted on the family pets and was always their favorite person. He really loved working in the flooring and tile business, especially when he got to work with his brothers. Camping at the lake was a favorite pastime and he particularly enjoyed the many delicious suppers with family. His favorite trips over the years were to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and he used his time there to hike, relax, and comment on how big the trees were. He would make sure to drag the family off the trail to find the biggest ones.

A private celebration of life will be held at a later date. Any donations in his name can be made to the National Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health America and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Additionally, planting a tree in his memory is an excellent way to honor Jason.

Hemer-Pickerign Funeral & Cremation Services of Medford and Rib Lake is serving the family. Online condolences can be left at [www.hemerfuneralservice.com](http://www.hemerfuneralservice.com).



**Mark Alan Kanitz**, age 64 of Merrill, WI passed away at home on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 surrounded by his loving daughters. He was born in Merrill, WI on February 18, 1959 to the late Marvin and Dorothy (Doering) Kanitz.

Mark lived an incredible life and his passing has left an immense void in the hearts of those who knew him. You could always count on him for advice or just to lend a listening ear. Mark had an infectious smile that earned him the nickname "Smiley" and an incredible sense of humor. He loved nothing more than having fun and making people laugh.

Mark was a devoted father and grandfather. His family was truly his pride and joy. He had a special bond with his grandkids and was always there for them no matter what. Nothing made him happier than the multiple trips with his family or friends to Minocqua and The Doering Pond.

Mark worked at Wisconsin Public Service for over 35 years, starting at the Weston Power Plant and then finishing his career as a Hydro Operator. He was a hard-working man that took on projects, tinkered with stuff, and took pride in his yard work.

In his earlier years, he enjoyed fishing, but more recently he could be found cruising through town, enjoying ice cream, or watching the Brewers. He was a NASCAR enthusiast and enjoyed attending local car races and going to classic car shows. In the winter months, you could find him being the biggest supporter of the grandkids' snowmobile races. He never missed a race and always made sure his vehicle was packed with goodies to share.

While this loss will undoubtedly leave a hole in their hearts, those who knew Mark will always remember him for his infectious smile, fun-loving personality, and the impact he had on their lives.

He is survived by his daughters: Leah (Nathan) Strand and Lisa (Dan) Folta, grandchildren: Trentyn Strand, Tavyn Strand, Ainsley Folta, step-grandchildren: Nyomie (Eli) Heimerl and Danny Folta, siblings: Kaye (Jim) Rell, Bruce (Paula) Kanitz, and Jan Lemmer as well as many cousins, nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, and many beloved aunts, uncles and cousins.

The family would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the caregivers at Inner Peace Home Care Services LLC., and the support they have received from Aspirus and their friends and family.

A celebration of Life for Mark will be held on Sunday, July 16, 2023 from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Rock Island, N2737 WI-107, Merrill, WI 54452.

Waid Funeral Home & Cremation Service of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at [www.waidfuneral.com](http://www.waidfuneral.com).

## BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

**JUNE 1, 2023**

Girl, Edith Nyx, born to Nichole Garcia and Seth Garcia of Wausau.

**June 7, 2023**

Girl, Natalie James, born to Kelsey Beyer and Brad Beyer of Wausau.

**June 9, 2023**

Girl, Mara Marie Kurtzweil, born to Stephanie Kurtzweil and Daniel Kurtzweil of Wausau.

Girl, Unitee Ann-Gela, born to Natalee Falcon and Oscar Coleman of Merrill.

**June 15, 2023**

Boy, Korbynn Allen, born to Charisma Christensen and Cody Davis of Nekoosa.



Shown in the new Diaper Closet at Our Saviour's Church in Merrill, from L to R: Greg Latzig, Church Council President; and Outreach Committee members Marie Rein, Jackie Ackley, and Dona Leitzke. Submitted photo.

## Diaper Closet to open in July at Our Saviours Lutheran Church

A new baby brings oodles of joy ... and the need for about 160 diapers each month. Purchasing enough diapers and wipes can be stressful for families when a paycheck is gone before the month is over. Members of Our Saviours Lutheran Church recognize this is an issue for some families in the Merrill area, and they want to help.

On Tuesday, July 11, 2023, Our Saviours Lutheran Church at 300 Logan St. in Merrill [on the corner of Third and Logan Streets, across from Prairie River Middle School] will launch a "Diaper Closet," an outreach project to help those in the community who are having difficulty financially to meet this important need. To access the Diaper Closet, families are asked to use the ramp adjacent to the church's north parking lot and enter through the door there.

The Diaper Closet will be open the second Tuesday of each month from 3 to 5 p.m. and the fourth Saturday of each month from 9 to 11 a.m. Diapers will be available in a variety of sizes, including adult diapers, and are available to anyone in the community with a need, at no cost to the family.

At least initially, there will be a limit of one package of diapers and wet wipes per family each month, with a limit of six visits to the Diaper Closet per year.

Our Saviours was able to start the Diaper Closet thanks to funds from the Gerald and Lorraine Muschinske Memorial Fund, coupled with a grant from Thrivent. However, the church will rely on generous support and donations from

See **DIAPER CLOSET** page 15

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# LEGAL NOTICES

Legals 7700

**BY THE COURT**  
DATE SIGNED June 21, 2023  
Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer  
Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN,  
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
Carolyn M. Meyers  
Notice to Creditors  
(Informal Administration)  
Case No. 2023 N 28

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE**

1. An application for informal administration was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth 11/15/1935 and date of death 04/05/2023, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of WI, with a mailing address of 1005 Elm St, Merrill, WI 54452.  
3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is October 20, 2023.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, 1110 E. Main, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office.  
June Bebel  
1104 Homestead Rd  
Beaver Dam, WI 53916  
920-382-7928  
Published 6/29/23, 7/6/23 & 7/13/23  
WNAXLP

**BY THE COURT**  
DATE SIGNED June 9, 2023  
Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer  
Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN,  
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
Bonnie Joy Schmidt  
Notice to Creditors  
(Informal Administration)  
Case No. 2023 IN 27

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE**

1. An application for informal administration was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth 11/08/1949 and date of death 05/16/2023, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of WI, with a mailing address of W2566 Violet Ln, Merrill, WI 54452.  
3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is October 6, 2023.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office.  
Dianna Gustafson  
N11980 CTY RD CC  
Tomahawk, WI 54487  
715-966-1198  
Published 6/22/23, 6/29/23 & 7/6/23  
WNAXLP

**CITY OF MERRILL**  
**COMMON COUNCIL**  
Tuesday, June 13, 2023 MINUTES

**Regular Meeting**  
City Hall Council Chambers 7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order Mayor Hass called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. The meeting had a delayed start due to the Committee of the Whole meeting held previously in the evening. The following elected officials, department heads and residents were in attendance:  
Elected Officials and Department Heads present: Mayor Hass, City Attorney Hayden, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, Finance Director Unertl, Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, Library Director Ollhoff, Police Chief Bennett, Street Superintendent Bonack, Utility Operations Manager Steingel, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel and Fire Department Rep.  
Excused: Fire Chief Klug and Park & Recreation Director Wendorf  
Others in attendance: Pastor Mike Zahn, Mike Geissler and Merrill Productions.

II. Invocation by Pastor Mike Zahn - United Methodist Church

III. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Roll Call was taken and the following alderperson's were in attendance:  
Paul Russell - First District Present  
Michael "Gus" Caylor - Second District Present  
Rick Blake - Third District Present  
LaDonna Feranich - Fourth District Present  
Dick Lupton - Fifth District Present  
Mike Rick - Sixth District Present  
Mark Weix - Seventh District Present  
Steve Sabatke - Eighth District Present

V. Public Comment-There was no public comment.

VI. Minutes of previous Common Council meeting -May 9th, 2023  
Alderson Russell made a motion to place the minutes from the May 9, 2023 Common Council meeting on file. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried.

VII. Revenue & Expense Reports  
Alderson Caylor made a motion to approve the May 2023 Revenue and Expense reports. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried.

VIII. General Agenda Items  
1. Consider approving Class "B" picnic licenses for Athletic Park Baseball Boosters to sell fermented malt beverages inside Athletic Park during baseball games on the following dates in 2023 May 28, June 2, 4, 6, 9, 13, 15, 20, 23, 26, 27, July 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 19. An additional day of July 5th was added - Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the picnic licenses. Alderson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried.

IX. Committee of the Whole  
1. Consider recommendations from the June 13th Committee of the Whole - Mayor Hass spoke on the EV charging stations discusses at the Committee of the Whole stating this will be discussed at a future meeting.  
City Clerk Anderson-Malm read the following motion regarding the Communications Specialist. A motion was made to terminate the contract of the Communication Specialist per the terms of the contract. Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the motion from the closed session. Alderson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried.

X. Health & Safety  
1. Consider approving three temporary Class "B" picnic licenses for Merrill Youth Fastpitch Association for July 21, 22 and 23rd - Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the three picnic licenses for

Legals 7700

Merrill Youth Fastpitch Association. Alderson Caylor seconded and the motion carried.

2. Consider approving a temporary Class "B" picnic license for VFW/Post 1638 for July 29th - Alderson Weix made a motion to approve the picnic license for VFW/Post 1638. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried.

3. Consider approving the 2023/2024 liquor license applications (per list) - Alderson Weix made a motion to approve the 2023/2024 liquor license applications per the list provided. Alderson Rick seconded and the motion carried.

XI. City Planning Commission  
1. Update on rezoning request for 100 N Polk Street from public to business - Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel gave an update regarding this property. No action was taken.

XII. Employee Recognition  
Mayor Hass thanked David Graven - Fire Department for his 20 years of service to the City of Merrill.

XIII. Place Committee Reports on File  
Alderson Caylor made a motion to place the committee reports on file. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried.

XIV. Resolutions  
1. A Resolution approving the 2022 Compliance Maintenance Annual Report for the City of Merrill Wastewater Treatment Plant  
WHEREAS, the City of Merrill is required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) to complete a Compliance Maintenance Annual Report on its Wastewater Treatment Plant; and  
WHEREAS, the City of Merrill, has reviewed the Compliance Maintenance Report for the year 2022, and has determined that it reflects the performance of the Wastewater Treatment Plant during 2022; and  
WHEREAS, the report indicates a need for continued improvements at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and its operations to meet the requirements set forth by the WDNR;  
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN, this 13th day of June, 2023, that:  
1. The Compliance Maintenance Annual Report for 2022 is hereby approved and authorized to be filed with the WDNR.  
2. That the Compliance Maintenance Annual Report for 2022 is an accurate indication of the performance of the City of Merrill Wastewater Treatment Plant for the year 2022.  
City Attorney Hayden read the Resolution. Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the resolution. Alderson Blake seconded and the motion carried.

2. A Resolution honoring Joy Ellen Annis, for her long-time service to the City of Merrill  
WHEREAS, Joy Ellen Annis, has served the City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Department for almost 24 years; and  
WHEREAS, these years of service have been marked by dedication to the best interests of our community and citizens; and  
WHEREAS, Joy has earned the admiration and respect of her fellow employees by the way in which she has carried out her duties; and  
WHEREAS, Joy's dedication was above and beyond, and she always went out of her way to help all her fellow employees; and Joy's skills and experience will be missed at the City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Department;  
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 13th day of June, 2023, that the Common Council, and the people of Merrill officially acknowledge with deep appreciation the dedicated and faithful service Joy has given the City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Department and commends her for those 24 years of service; and  
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we hereby commend the meritorious and dedicated service of Joy, congratulate her upon the occasion of her retirement from the City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Department, and extend our warmest wishes for her enjoyment of continued prosperity in the years that lie ahead.  
City Attorney Hayden read the Resolution. Alderson Russell made a motion to approve the resolution. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried.

XV. Mayor's Communications  
Mayor Hass read the following communications:  
The Rodeo and June Dairy breakfast were successes  
Muds and Jams is the weekend Quad Racing at the Festival Grounds on July 29th  
The Fireworks will be at the MARC this year  
The Critic's Choice Movie will be on June 28th at 1:00 PM at the TB Scott Library  
The library still has State Park passes; contact the library for more information  
Welcome to my Band! at the TB Scott Library on June 29th at 10:30 am  
The Library will be closed Monday, June 19th for a staff development day  
Oil Painting with Dennis will be at the Enrichment Center, June 27th at 9:00am  
XVI. Adjournment  
Alderson Rick made a motion to adjourn. Alderson Blake seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.  
Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori L. Anderson-Malm - City Clerk  
Published June 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

DATE SIGNED June 6, 2023  
Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer  
Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN,  
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
JUNE J. MAGRAY  
Notice to Creditors  
(Informal Administration)  
Case No. 2023 IN 26

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE**

1. An application for informal administration was filed.

Legals 7700

2. The decedent, with date of birth June 3, 1941 and date of death March 28, 2023, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of N1412 Highway 64, Merrill, WI 54452.  
3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is October 6, 2023.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, 1110 East Main Street, Merrill, Wisconsin, Room Probate Office.  
Attorney Jason Krautkramer  
Eckert & Krautkramer, LLC  
PO BOX 1185  
Wausau, WI 54402-1185  
715-842-0907  
Bar No. 1092990  
Published June 15, 22 & 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

**Merrill Area Public Schools**  
**Regular Board of Education Meeting**  
May 17, 2023 - Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Blake at 5:30 PM in the Board Room. Board members present: Ashbeck, Gremier, Krueger, Liberty, Osness, Proulx, Woller and Blake. Board member absent: Yingling. Others Present: Superintendent Murray, MAPS Administrators, Rell and Rudie, ten people from the staff and public and Recorder Woller.

MOTION by Gremier, second by Osness to approve the appointments made by the Superintendent for committee membership of the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Woller, second by Proulx to table this topic indefinitely (consideration of Board member's request to review policies and guidelines for Board members to be allowed to attend and participate in meetings virtually). Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Woller to approve the second reading and approval of the 2023-2024 Teacher and Support Staff Handbooks. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Gremier, second by Ashbeck to approve the 2023-2024 application for State Head Start Supplemental Funds. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Liberty to approve the revised Head Start evidence-based COVID-19 Mitigation Policy. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Liberty, second by Ashbeck to approve the dishwasher replacement at the Merrill High School as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Woller to approve the summer maintenance projects for 2023-2024 as funding is available. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Gremier, second by Proulx to approve the 2023-2024 course descriptions for Prairie River Middle School. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Ashbeck, second by Proulx to approve the 2023-2024 MADA Calendar. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Osness, second by Liberty to approve the 305 new students open enrolling to MAPS, and also approve the 564 open enrolled students continuing at MAPS. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Osness, second by Krueger to approve the 43 new students indicating open enrollment out of MAPS and also approve the 142 open enrolled students continuing to open enroll out of MAPS. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Gremier, second by Ashbeck to approve the Human Growth and Development updates for grades K-12. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Liberty to approve the 7 Mindsets SEL Curriculum/licensing quote in the amount of \$27,000.00 from grant dollars for implementation in the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Liberty to approve the contracted service for Security's Internet-Safety Filter Solution that will be paid out of the tech budget each year. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Liberty, second by Ashbeck to approve the 2023-24 fiscal year addendum of the Taher Food Service contract as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Ashbeck, second by Osness to approve the Bone & Joint Training Service contract as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Liberty to eliminate the support staff positions held by Khadija Mirza and Lakisha Pollard, effective May 26, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Woller to take off the standing agenda item and no longer do the regular review of policies. Committees will only review policies on an as needed basis. The Policy Committee should conduct a regular review of policies when not reviewing the Neola updates at quarterly meetings. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Ashbeck, second by Proulx to change the September 20, 2023, Regular Board Meeting date to September 27, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Ashbeck, second by Krueger to approve the donation of funds from the Friends of the Forest valued at approximately \$40,000 for a shelter to be constructed by the pond at the Merrill School Forest. Motion carried

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unanimously.  
MOTION by Liberty, second by Osness to approve the donation of funds from the Merrill Aqua Jay Swim Team valued at \$9,025 for a 6-lane scoreboard to provide a scoreboard in remote areas during meets; as well as, for outdoor events. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Krueger, second by Liberty to approve the donation of funds from the Merrill Foundation valued at \$3,000 for the Merrill High School Senior Celebration. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Osness, second by Liberty to approve the donation of funds from the Habitat for Humanity valued at \$5,000 for The Nest at the Merrill High School. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Osness, second by Proulx to approve the donation of funds from the Habitat for Humanity valued at \$5,000 for The Nest at the Prairie River Middle School. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Liberty to approve the attached personnel report, contingent upon the satisfaction of the appropriate liquidated damages for resignations, if applicable. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Liberty, second by Osness to approve consent agenda items a through c, which includes minutes of the April 19, 2023, April 24, 2023, and May 4, 2023, meetings; claims, vouchers and receipts totaling \$3,232,670.70; and, donations totaling \$2,755. Motion carried with Ashbeck abstaining from the April 19, 2023 and April 24, 2023 minutes; and, Woller abstaining from the April 19, 2023 minutes.

MOTION by Ashbeck, second by Gremier to adjourn at 6:31 p.m. Respectfully submitted,  
Kendra Osness  
Board Clerk  
KO/tw

(The official minutes in their entirety are available by calling (715) 536-4581, by visiting www.mapsedu.org, or by visiting the MAPS District Office at 1111 N. Sales Street, Merrill, Wisconsin.)  
Published June 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

**Merrill Area Public Schools**  
**Special Board of Education Meeting**  
June 5, 2023 - Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Blake at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room. Board members present: Ashbeck, Gremier, Krueger, Liberty, Osness, Woller, Yingling and Blake. Board member absent: Proulx. Others present: Superintendent Murray, Baker, and Recorder Woller.

Blake called for a motion to adjourn into executive (closed) session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes under Section 19.85(1) (a); (f) except where par. (b) applies; and, 118.125. The purpose of the closed session is the following: To discuss and consider the appeal of the District Administrator's denial of the early entrance of a student to Kindergarten. MOTION by Liberty, second by Ashbeck to adjourn into closed session. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Woller, second by Ashbeck to reconvene into open session. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Osness, second by Gremier to approve the appeal request of the parents of Student A for early entrance to kindergarten and allow Student A to begin Kindergarten for the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Ashbeck, second by Yingling to adjourn at 7:25 p.m. Respectfully submitted,  
Kendra Osness  
Board Clerk  
KO/sf

(The official minutes in their entirety are available by calling (715) 536-4581, by visiting www.mapsedu.org, or by visiting the MAPS District Office at 1111 N. Sales Street, Merrill, Wisconsin.)  
Published June 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

**Merrill Area Public Schools**  
**Special Board of Education Meeting**  
June 5, 2023 - Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Blake at 5:30 p.m. in the Board of Education room. Board members present: Ashbeck, Blake, Gremier, Krueger, Liberty, Osness, Woller, and Yingling. Board members absent: Proulx. Others present: Detert, Kautzer, Officer Jaeger, Superintendent Murray, Baker, and Recorder Fuchs.

Blake announced an executive (closed) session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes under Sections 19.85(1) (a); (f) except where par. (b) applies; and, 118.125. The purpose of the closed session is the following: conduct one (1) student expulsion hearing, deliberate, and act regarding the same. Blake asked for a contemplated motion to go into closed session. MOTION by Osness, second by Liberty. Motion carried on a roll call vote (Aye: Linda Yingling, Brett Woller, Kendra Osness, Ron Liberty, Chad Krueger, Jacqueline Gremier, Kevin Blake, and Nubs Ashbeck) (Nay: None). MOTION by Woller, second by Osness to adjourn at 6:13 p.m. Respectfully submitted,  
Kendra Osness  
Board Clerk  
KO/tw

(The official minutes in their entirety are available by calling (715) 536-4581, by visiting www.mapsedu.org, or by visiting the MAPS District Office at 1111 N. Sales Street, Merrill, Wisconsin.)  
Published June 29, 2023  
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# PUBLISHER'S LETTER

## Happy 4th of July

DEAR READER,  
On July 4, 1776 the Continental Congress adopted the declaration of independence, declaring the 13 American colonies as a new nation separate from British rule. This bold act of defiance set in motion a revolutionary journey towards freedom, democracy, and self governance.



Amidst the 4th of July festivities is a time for reflection and gratitude. Americans take a moment to remember the sacrifices made by those who fought for independence and to honor the ideals upon which this nation was founded.

The 4th of July remains as an integral part of American culture serving as a day to honor the past, celebrate the present, and envision the future. As we come together in parades, firework displays and family gatherings, we pay tribute to the principles of freedom and independence that define our nation. This day reminds us that the United States of America, built on the dreams and determination of its people, continues to strive for a more perfect union.

**PATRICK J. WOOD**  
Publisher

Author of "Dear Reader" and "Tapestry of Love and Loss"

Legals 7700

**Merrill Area Public Schools**  
**Special Board of Education Meeting**  
June 5, 2023 - Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Blake at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room. Board members present: Ashbeck, Gremier, Krueger, Liberty, Osness, Woller, Yingling and Blake. Board member absent: Proulx. Others present: Superintendent Murray, Baker, and Recorder Woller.

Blake called for a motion to adjourn into executive (closed) session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes under Section 19.85(1) (a); (f) except where par. (b) applies; and, 118.125. The purpose of the closed session is the following: To discuss and consider the appeal of the District Administrator's denial of the early entrance of a student to Kindergarten. MOTION by Liberty, second by Ashbeck to adjourn into closed session. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Woller, second by Ashbeck to reconvene into open session. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Osness, second by Gremier to approve the appeal request of the parents of Student A for early entrance to kindergarten and allow Student A to begin Kindergarten for the 2023-2024 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Ashbeck, second by Yingling to adjourn at 7:25 p.m. Respectfully submitted,  
Kendra Osness  
Board Clerk  
KO/tw

(The official minutes in their entirety are available by calling (715) 536-4581, by visiting www.mapsedu.org, or by visiting the MAPS District Office at 1111 N. Sales Street, Merrill, Wisconsin.)  
Published June 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

Legals 7700

**Merrill Area Public Schools**  
**Special Board of Education Meeting**  
May 23, 2023 - Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Blake at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room. Board members present: Ashbeck, Krueger, Liberty, Osness, Proulx, Woller and Blake. Board members absent: Gremier and Yingling. Others present: Superintendent Murray, MAPS Administrators, and representatives from Miron and Bray.

There was an update on the District facilities study and discussion regarding the findings to date.

MOTION by Proulx, second by Liberty to adjourn at 7:34 p.m. Respectfully submitted,  
Kendra Osness  
Board Clerk  
KO/tw

(The official minutes in their entirety are available by calling (715) 536-4581, by visiting www.mapsedu.org, or by visiting the MAPS District Office at 1111 N. Sales Street, Merrill, Wisconsin.)  
Published June 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

Notice is hereby given that the following application has been filed with the City Clerk, Merrill, Wisconsin:  
Class B Liquor/Class B Beer Combo License  
Melissa Hoffman, Agent  
Sunset Hollow Ranch  
Dba Sunset Hollow Wine, Bistro & Gifts  
813 E 1st St  
Merrill, WI 54452  
License Period: 07/12/2023-06/30/2024  
Lori Anderson-Malm  
City Clerk  
Published June 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

## Alderson Recruitment District No. 3

The City of Merrill Common Council is seeking District No. 3 residents interested in serving as alderperson. Notice of intent form is available on the City of Merrill website or on our Facebook page. Deadline for letter of intent form is 4:30 pm on July 5, 2023.

Interviews will begin for all applicants at 5:30 pm on July 11th. New alderperson will be sworn in at the Common Council meeting at 7:00 pm, July 11, 2023.

Published June 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

## TOWN OF MERRILL MERRILL, WISCONSIN

### BID NOTICE

The Town of Merrill, Lincoln County Wisconsin will be accepting sealed bids for ditch mowing all town roads (Approx 81 miles).

Contractor to provided certificate of insurance showing liability & workers comp. coverage. Sealed bids can be submitted to the Town of Merrill W4594 Progress Ave, Merrill, WI 54452. Bids will be opened on July 10, 2023 at town board meeting.

The Town of Merrill reserves the right to reject any and all bids or to accept any bid deemed to be in the best interest of the town.  
TOWN OF MERRILL BOARD  
Published June 22 & 29, 2023  
WNAXLP

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Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer  
Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN,  
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
JUNE J. MAGRAY  
Notice to Creditors  
(Informal Administration)  
Case No. 2023 IN 26

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE**

1. An application for informal administration was filed.



# ROUNDUP from page 1

but vintage semi trucks, as well," Walker said. "Also mini-bike racing, flame throwing cars, a loud pipes contest, a pinup contest, live auctions of vintage items, camping, and so much more."

"Northern Roundup isn't about sitting by your car waiting for a plastic trophy," he said. "It's about interacting with like-

minded people that love this lifestyle as much as they do."

In fact, the trophies aren't even plastic. Each club creates their own trophies, which tend to be creative custom trophies incorporating various car parts in their design.

This year's pinup contest drew 25 contestants from throughout Wisconsin, including a number of contestants from north central Wisconsin, as well as a couple from Minnesota.

The winner was Nickole Miller from Edgerton, Wis.

On display in the show this year, "We had 200+ cars and trucks and 31 semis," Walker said. Many attendees came for the entire three days, with 315 campsites sold. "Our camping typically sells out before December first," he said.

For more information or to reserve a campsite for the 2024 Northern Roundup Vintage Weekend, when the event will celebrate its 10-year anniversary, go to northernroundup.com.



A vintage-themed event is the perfect place to camp in your vintage camper.

Tina L. Scott photo.



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 TUESDAY & THURSDAY: 7:00PM ONLY  
**ELEMENTAL**  
 "PG" (1HR 43MIN)  
 FRIDAY: 1:00, 7:00PM  
 SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:30, 7:00PM  
 SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:30 & 7:00PM  
 MONDAY & WEDNESDAY: 1:00 & 7:00PM  
 TUESDAY & THURSDAY: 7:00PM ONLY  
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Vibrant colors really make some vehicles at the Northwoods Roundup pop.



Vintage mini bikes were on parade at the Northwoods Roundup, in addition to automobiles and semi trucks



A vintage GMC sports a canoe at the Northwoods Roundup Vintage Weekend in Deerbrook.



The shine on this vintage model gleams in the sunlight.



Some attendees sat on hanging swings at the bar, while others perched on rustic wooden barstools.



A contestant in the 2023 pinup contest brought her own props and then struck a pose for the judges.



Right: A contestant in the pinup contest strikes a pose.



Whether you plan to travel on two wheels or four, this exhibitor is all set. And in the background, a lineup of folks who like to travel on 18 wheels show off their vintage semi trucks.



If you're into vintage hotrods, chances are you might also be into vintage gas cans, signage, and gas pumps as displayed at one vendor's booth.

More photos online  
merrillfotonews.com







*Happy*  
*4<sup>th</sup> of July*  
*Independence Day*

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**Merrill Foto News**





Independence



**SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER ...**

# The cost of State funding inadequacies and failed referendums:

30 positions eliminated at MAPS for next school year

Since starting my role as Superintendent of Schools last summer, I have shared on many occasions that Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) has some unique financial challenges that we are facing between declining enrollment, the end of one-time federal COVID funds, and inadequate state funding. These issues were shared with the community through many avenues as MAPS prepared for the operations referendum this past November. Unfortunately, that referendum failed and we were charged with the task of creating a budget for the 2023-24 school year that included over \$3 million in budget reductions.



expenses, etc. That's logical and we've done that for many years as we've gotten smaller. We were fully prepared to do that again this year—the tune of approximately \$800,000—and we have done that. The end of the federal ESSER (COVID) funds was a bit trickier, but was also something we could plan for and we made those reductions accordingly; accounting for almost \$500,000 in cuts for next year. It's the other \$2 million—funds that result from flat revenue limits for schools for the past several years and the subsequent failed referendum—that get really challenging.

I think it's important for the community to know our financial situation, understand how we have responded, and the impact it will have on our staff, students, and

See **FUNDING** page 16

The declining enrollment part of the equation is relatively simple—fewer students means fewer staff, fewer resources needed, fewer buildings, fewer

**MURDER** from page 1

son was in his bedroom and was breathing and said she was "extremely upset" and, referring to her son, said that "He was very violent this afternoon. ... He has tantrums. You're gonna have to pump his stomach."

After learning help was being sent, Heather O'Neill hung up despite being asked to stay on the line.

The Affidavit said a Lincoln County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) deputy arrived on scene and was met by Heather and her son outside and that Heather told the deputy her son needed to go to the hospital. Heather then attempted to retreat to the residence but was detained by the deputy and, after brief attempts to evade the deputy, the deputy successfully handcuffed her.

When the deputy asked Heather what she had given her son, "Heather stated she gave him a bunch," the deputy said.

After Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrived and "began rendering aid," they also asked Heather what she gave to her son, and the deputy said Heather told them she "gave him Trazodone, sleeping aids, and sedatives."

According to the deputy's account, "Heather then stated, 'I'm tired of living like this' and that her son had had a temper tantrum today and stated, 'I'm done.'"

A search warrant of the home revealed four empty bottles for prescription medications prescribed to either Heather or the victim. According to the dates the medications had been filled by the pharmacy, the medication bottles should not yet have been empty. Additional partial bottles of medications prescribed for either Heather or the victim were also located, along with boxes of numerous other prescription and non-prescription medications, either full or partially used.

A suicide note addressed to Tom, the defendant's husband, and signed "Your wife & friend, Heather" was also found.

The note said, in part, "I have come to the conclusion that life will not get better from here." The note said the victim had had a "physically violent temper tantrum" and she could no longer live together with him.

"As soon as he does not get his way, [he] turns aggressive with me. This I can no longer handle," the note said.

"I can no longer remember why I even wanted a child," the note said. "He has been such a miserable burden to me and will continue to be so. Never will this end. Never will I be able to live the happy peaceful life that I have needed. I am sorry to have caused you pain ..."

In statements to the deputy, Tom O'Neill advised he had called his wife and she didn't answer, but she called him back approximately 15-20 minutes later and stated an ambulance was on the way and that Heather told him, "We took medicine. I gave us medicine."

The Complaint showing probable cause documented numerous statements credited to Heather.

On the one hand, the Complaint said that Heather, when asked by paramedics if the medication overdose had been intentional, had confirmed that it was and stated, "I'm done" and "I'm tired of living like this."

However, Heather had also initiated the call to 911 and, once paramedics arrived on scene, "Heather would frequently get upset and kept yelling at EMS that they needed to 'pump victim's stomach.'" And, "At one point, Heather got belligerent and told law enforcement something to the effect of if EMS didn't hurry up, victim would die."

"Heather would continuously ask 'What are they waiting for?' and 'He needs to go to the hospital right now' and 'He needs to get his stomach pumped,'" the Complaint said.

The victim was transported to Aspirus Merrill Hospital by ambulance and Heather was transported by marked squad.

"While at the hospital, Heather stated that she (Heather) gave them (Heather and victim) the pills to die. Heather also said, 'I gave him some meds and I took the same ones but I cannot tell you how much each of us had' and 'I've snapped, this is 16 years of his violent tantrums. I can't take it anymore, he beats me up. I wanted it to be over for both of us.'"

"Heather had additionally made a statement to the effect of that she wished she had not called 911 and just let it happen," the Complaint said.

While at the hospital, the victim had a seizure, got very blue in the face, and stopped breathing for a short time, then had to be intubated, and staff advised that his condition was deteriorating, according to the Complaint. The victim's current condition is not known.

**Initial appearance and cash bond set**

Heather O'Neill made an initial appearance in Lincoln County Circuit Court via video from the Lincoln County Jail on the afternoon of June 22, appearing before Judge Robert Russell, who set O'Neill's bail at \$100,000 cash bond.

Additionally, if she makes bail, Heather O'Neill is to have no contact with the victim and to maintain absolute sobriety. Attorney Kristopher R. Ellis appeared for the State of Wisconsin, and Attorney Jessica Fehrenbach appeared specially for O'Neill.

The Court adjourned the matter to allow O'Neill time to retain an attorney, and her adjourned initial appearance is set for July 21, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

Heather O'Neill currently remains in custody at the Lincoln County Jail.

This case has not been concluded. Unless a judgment of conviction is entered, the defendant is presumed innocent of all charges.

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**Flea Markets 7210**  
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This is a full time, regular position with a full benefit package and starting hourly wage range of \$27.89 to \$30.26, depending on experience. Benefits include Wisconsin Retirement System with employer match, health insurance, 10 days of vacation after 90 days of service, 10 paid holidays, paid sick leave, employee lifestyle enhancement perk, and paid maternity/paternity leave. Dental/vision, health savings account, flex spending, WI Deferred Comp, life, short-term disability, accident, and cancer/critical illness coverages are available.

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This is a full time, regular, exempt position with a full benefit package and starting annual salary range of \$90,771 to \$96,324, depending on experience. Benefits include Wisconsin Retirement System with employer match, health insurance, vacation, 10 paid holidays, paid sick leave, employee lifestyle enhancement perk, and paid maternity/paternity leave. Dental/vision, health savings account, flex spending, WI Deferred Comp, life, short-term disability, accident, and cancer/critical illness coverages are available.

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**ASSAULT** from page 1

that, according to the victim/witness, occurred at and outside a tavern in the Township of Scott shortly before midnight on Monday, May 8, 2023, during which the victim said Vincent made unwelcome sexual advances toward her. When she attempted to leave, the victim said, Vincent told her that she "wasn't going anywhere" and then demanded sex and sexual favors from her outside the bar, threatening her at gun point and saying he would shoot her if she did not comply.

The victim was able to escape in her vehicle when Vincent briefly lost control of the gun. She reported the incident to Lincoln County deputies right afterward, shortly after midnight on Tuesday morning, May 9.

The victim said she believed Vincent was "severely intoxicated."

Vincent appeared in Lincoln County Court on May 11, 2023, by video while in custody, and Judge Galen Bayne-Allison set a \$5,000 cash bond and \$20,000 signature bond. Bond was posted and Vincent was released, subject to additional conditions imposed by the Judge, including no contact with victim or going within 500' of her residence or place of employment, defendant not to possess any dangerous weapons, absolute sobriety, no direct contact with his father, surrender of his passport, no leaving Wisconsin without prior court approval, no going on tavern or bar premises except for employment purposes, and orders not to renew/obtain a passport and an order that defendant is to be in custody of specified, named individuals for supervision at all times.

The case is set for a Status Conference on August 1.

**The alleged cover-up attempt**

Andre Pierre Galella, age 58, of Merrill, and father of Vincent Galella, was charged, in a Criminal Complaint filed with Lincoln County Circuit Court on Wednesday, June 21, 2023, with one felony count of harboring or aiding a felon-falsifying information-as a party to a crime and one misdemeanor count of obstructing an officer. If convicted, Andre faces a fine of up to \$25,000 and/or up to 10 years in prison on the felony charge and a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or up to 9 months in prison for the misdemeanor charge.

In the Complaint, Lincoln County Sheriff's Office deputies indicate they were at/outside of the tavern where the incident with Vincent was alleged to have occurred, with a search warrant when, prior to arresting Vincent, Andre called one of the lieutenants on his cell phone and asked to speak with the detective on the case. During a conversation with the detective, Andre said that "he was aware there was an incident the night prior which involved his son, Vincent, but he didn't know anything further." However, the detective, in his sworn Complaint, said, "Through our conversation I learned Andre knew a lot more than he initially stated, to include the name of the victim in the case, and I informed him of the charges associated with the search warrant; Attempted 1st Degree Sexual Assault and endangering safety by use of a dangerous weapon."

According to the Complaint, Vincent then came out of the bar and was detained in handcuffs. At that time, Vincent's cell phone rang and "Vincent asked to see who it was and then asked to have the phone answered for him." A lieutenant answered the phone as requested, put the call on speaker phone, and then documented the conversation. Andre was heard saying how mad he was and then asking Vincent what he had done with the gun and asking him to answer in code. "Let's do 1, 2, or 3. 1 it's in the house, 2 it's in the car, or 3 it's where I told you to put it." When Vincent deflected the question, saying "I don't know what you are talking about," Andre then told Vincent to answer a question with "Chicago means yes and Green Bay means no." Vincent replied that he didn't know what was going on and told his father he was with deputies, to which Andre then stated, "I see how this is going, this is entrapment," the Complaint said.

"Vincent's phone was seized and a search warrant for his phone was later granted," the Complaint reads. "The messages on his phone revealed significant coaching efforts by Andre to get Vincent to hide and/or destroy evidence of criminal activities, both felony and misdemeanor."

A transcript of text messages between Vincent and Andre from Vincent's phone were also included in the Criminal Complaint which documented Andre asking Vincent questions and then telling Vincent what to say and do. One message from Andre to Vincent said, "Start doing everything I ask right now so I can get you out of your sh\*\* again" and then later "Everything I tell you to do just do it OK" and "I just talked to Kevin what would the video say from the bar."

Andre then coached Vincent saying "your defense is this

..." and "... there's no signs of abuse ..." and told Vincent to take a "really good hot shower with some really good soap" and "get rid of any DNA from her that's on you."

"It's not bad there's no witnesses as long as she isn't beat up or something else it'll be fine" a text from Andre said. "And you're gonna have to do everything I tell you."

Another text from Andre to Vincent said, "I know her name. You are safe ..."

"Andre asked Vincent what would be on the cameras which indicated he believed the cameras were functioning," the Complaint signed by the detective also said. "However, upon forensic analysis of the system the original hard drive was not present in the system and the hard drive which

was present had never been formatted for the system. The hard drive in the system was not attached with screws as it should have been and no videos were on the camera system hard drive."

Andre appeared in Lincoln County Court on June 21 by video while in custody at the Lincoln County Jail and Judge Robert Russell set \$5,000 cash bond, which Andre posted the same day, and \$5,000 signature bond. Andre was also ordered not to discuss the case with his son, Vincent. This matter is set for a Scheduling Conference on Aug. 3.

These cases have not been concluded. Unless a judgment of conviction is entered, the defendants are presumed innocent of all charges.

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**DIAPER CLOSET** from page 4

community members to sustain the Diaper Closet going forward, and they are requesting donations of both new diapers and funds to purchase additional diapers in needed sizes for the Diaper Closet.

Call 715.536.5813 to make arrangements to drop off diaper donations if you can help or for answers to questions. Monetary donations may be mailed to the church at: Our Saviours Diaper Closet, 300 Logan St., Merrill WI 54452. Be sure to note on your check that the donation is for the Diaper Closet.

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## AWARDS from page 2

Broecker Memorial Scholarship

- Kremsreiter, Cassy - Little Lakes Memories, Inc. Scholarship, Ntc Foundation - Charmaine Whitburn Women's Leadership Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Kremsreiter, Erin - Park City Cares Foundation Scholarship, Incredible Bank Finance Scholarship, Eagles Auxiliary #584 Scholarship, Professional Insurance Agents Scholarship, The Community Blood Center Gallon Grad Award, Gold Tassel
- Leander, Jessica - Gleason Area Lions Club #2 Scholarship, Little Lakes Memories, Inc. Scholarship, Al & Elayne Saeger Memorial Scholarship, Martin & Marcella Lahni Scholarship, The Community Blood Center High School Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society
- Lemke, Melaina - Ntc Foundation - Bierman Family Foundation Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Marnholtz, Sawyer - Gold Tassel
- Miles, Megan - Adam Smith Memorial - 4 Year University Scholarship, Beta Sigma Phi Sorority Scholarship, Leone Torzewski Memorial Scholarship, William Hinke & Jeanne Kroepflin Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Senior Athletic Award
- Moore, Sierra - Gold Tassel
- Mootz, Troy - Lincoln County Sports Club Scholarship, Genevieve Bowell Scholarship
- Mosher, Austin - Gold Tassel
- Moyer, Catherine - Gold Tassel
- Neal, Tayler - Gold Tassel
- Norton, Caleb - Rich & Jane Poirier Scholarship, Stephany "Stevie" Smith Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, Senior Athletic Award, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Orchard, Mia - Rotary Club - Technical College Scholarship, Lucas Anderson Memorial Scholarship
- Patterson, Montana - WA Marquardt Scholarship
- Peck, Brady - NTC Foundation - Bierman Family Foundation Scholarship
- Pehlke, Caitlynn - Carl & Wella Orin Memorial Scholarship, WA Marquardt Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Senior Athletic Award
- Pieper, Bradyn - Gogebic Basketball Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Hall Of Fame, Mickelson Athletic Award (Male), Senior Athletic Award

- Pillai, Jaiden - Gerald & Charmaine Whitburn Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, President'S Education Scholarship
- Polacek, Morgan - Washington Elementary School Scholarship, Aspirus Merrill Hospital Scholarship, Optimist Club - Jr Optimist Member Scholarship, Martin & Marcella Lahni Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Polak, Alana - Pine River Elementary School Scholarship, Optimist Club - Jr Optimist Member Scholarship, Rich & Jane Poirier Scholarship, Martin & Marcella Lahni Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society
- Pozorski, Alayna - Gold Tassel
- Pozorski, Trenton - Gold Tassel
- Reist, Lucas - Gold Tassel
- Rell, Isaiah - Leonard N. Anson Memorial Scholarship, Academic Excellence Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, President'S Education Scholarship
- Rice, Luke - Haunted Sawmill Scholarship
- Schmeltzer, Addison - Paul Simon Memorial - Business Scholarship, Herb Kohl Initiative Scholarship, Merrill High School Softball Class Of 2023 Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Schuetze, Ian - Ntc Foundation - Bierman Family Foundation Scholarship, Technical Excellence Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Senior Athletic Award
- Schultz, Brendan - Gold Tassel
- Semling, Drew - Louis Armstrong Jazz Award, Gold Tassel
- Shull, Truman - Genevieve Bowell Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Silva, Donna Jo - Ntc Foundation - Bierman Family Foundation Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Slogoski, Brooke - Gold Tassel
- Small, Gabriel - Lee Wardall Memorial - MTA Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Walter & Mabel Fromm - College Scholarship
- Smith, Spencer - Eagles Aerie #584 Scholarship, Eagles Auxiliary #584 Scholarship, Optimist Club - Youth Of The Month Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society
- Stadler, Hunter - Carl & Wella Orin Memorial Scholarship, Blue Devil First-Year Student Scholarship, Lincoln County Leaders Association Tuition Scholarship, Packaging Corporation Of America - Tomahawk Mill Scholarship, USW Local 7-248 Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Stieber, Ethan - Haunted

Sawmill Scholarship

- Stockman, Conner - Lincoln County Crime Stoppers Scholarship, Merrill Police Dept. Scholarship, Owen Cordova Memorial Scholarship
- Tanck, Eleanor - Robert & Jo Ann Opsahl Scholarship, Haunted Sawmill Scholarship
- Toppi, Jasmine - Gold Tassel
- Troyer, Olivia - Merrill Lions Club Scholarship, Optimist Club - Youth Of The Month Scholarship, Wickman/Kohl Scholarship, Gold Tassel, National Honor Society, President's Education Scholarship, Senior Athletic Award, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Vandergeest, Madison - Aspirus Merrill Hospital Scholarship, Gleason Area Lions Club #1 Scholarship, Optimist Club - Jr Optimist Member Scholarship, Sgt Ryan Jopek Scholarship, Gold Tassel, Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Waliczek, Clint - Gold Tassel
- Weix, Macey Jo - Knights Of Columbus Scholarship, Shannon L. Hall Memorial Scholarship, Lincoln County Medical Society Scholarship, Mutual Of Wausau Scholarship, Merrill High School Softball Class Of 2023 Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Wendt, Hannah - FFA Alumni Scholarship
- Westbrook, Tallison - Gold Tassel
- Wilde, Mya - Paul Simon Memorial - Financial Scholarship, Kate Goodrich Elementary School PTO Scholarship, PRMS Student Council Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Wimmer, Maverick - Gold Tassel
- Winter, Amber - Boyd & Dorinda Gustke Family Scholarship, Spectrum News One Scholar Athlete, DECA Gold Leadership Award, Gold Tassel, Klug Athletic Award (Female), National Honor Society, Senior Athletic Award, WIAA Scholar Athlete (Female), Wisconsin Valley Conference Scholar Athlete
- Woller, Croix - Kiwanis Club Scholarship, Silver M Club - Memory Of Dave Hoff Scholarship, Gold Tassel
- Wszalek, Nicholas - NTC Foundation - Weinbrenner Shoe Co. Scholarship, NTC Foundation - William B. & Caroline Mark Scholarship
- Yates, Dafney - Gerald & Charmaine Whitburn Scholarship, Lincoln County Farm Bureau Scholarship, Lincoln County 4-H Scholarship, Stratford Equity Livestock Co-Op Scholarship, John Philip Sousa Band Award, Gold Tassel, National Honor

# Merrill Baseball HOF to induct new members

The Merrill Baseball Hall of Fame will induct three new members on Friday night, July 7, 2023.

Erik Finanger, Eric Dayton, and Roger Wendorf are the 2023 inductees who will have their names engraved on the Hall of Fame plaque at Merrill's Athletic Park and be honored during this year's ceremony.

The ceremony will take place between the first two games of the American Legion Tournament being held that night at Merrill's Athletic Park, on the corner

of E. Sixth and N. Logan Streets, at approximately 6:30 p.m.

This year the ceremony will also honor the 1965 Merrill High School Baseball Team who won the Wisconsin Valley Championship in 1965. All members of that team are invited to come to be honored.

Previous Hall of Fame inductees are also invited to attend the games and the ceremonies, and the public is welcome.

## FUNDING from page 11

community. You simply cannot cut millions of dollars out of a district budget without it having a significant impact on our district and community. That said, here's what will be different starting in the 2023-24 school year:

Thirty staff positions have been cut from MAPS going into next year. Of these, 20 are certified staff (administrators, counselors, teachers, etc.) and 10 are support staff (secretaries, aids, custodians, etc.).

With 20 fewer certified staff, we will see less student support available due to the elimination of pupil services positions like social workers and counselors. It will be harder, and take longer, to support students who need letters of recommendation, college and career advice and guidance, mental health support, need to be tested for accommodations, or need support both in school and at home. This, of course, takes place at a time when the mental health needs of students is as high as they have ever been. With regard to the administrative cut, student management and discipline will be more challenging, teacher evaluations will take longer, communication to families will be more difficult, and the tasks required to run a school will become much more challenging. As for the teacher cuts, class sizes will increase, programs such as tech ed, art, physical education and music will be reduced for students, some specialized courses at the high school will not be offered, communication with families will take a bit longer, and the amount of time and attention available to each student will be reduced. In addition, the elimination of interventionists means that struggling students will no longer get the extra help they need from those adults and the elimination of instructional coaches makes it more difficult to ensure that the best instructional practices are taking place in our classrooms. Each of those reductions will have an adverse effect on our students and the operations of our schools.

The reduction of 10 support staff positions means that our libraries will not be as accessible to our students as much at some locations, that supervision of students in the lunchroom and playgrounds falls on other staff, and that extra help for students is diminished. In

addition, study spaces at the high school will be closed, and classrooms will not be cleaned as frequently as we are used to. All of these cuts impact our students.

A reduction to our transportation budget means that we will have more kids on fewer buses, potentially taking longer bus rides each day. In addition, we will have to rethink our in-town pick up distances to align to state minimums.

A reduction in the athletic and activities budget means that we will have fewer coaches in many sports, which could lead to the elimination of some sub-varsity teams and fewer opportunities for our students. The district will no longer fund overnight athletic trips to tournaments outside of our area.

A 20% reduction in building budgets will mean fewer resources, equipment, and supplies for our students at each of our classrooms and buildings.

The elimination of a family support position at Head Start reduces support for students and families who benefit from those services.

It should be noted that the reductions could, in fact, have been deeper, but our Board considered strategies that involve potentially using our fund balance as a one-time solution to soften the impact this year. However, if state funding doesn't catch up in the next budget cycle and we are forced to go back to the community for a referendum next year, we will be looking at similar cuts again next year.

It is pretty clear that all of the reductions, especially when looked at collectively, will mean a different experience for our students moving forward. I personally wonder about the different opportunities and advantages that students in neighboring, better-funded districts will realize and what impact that will have on our young people moving forward.

Those 30 positions mean lost opportunities and supports for our students—there is no way around that. However, this is the situation we find ourselves in, and we have to respond to the challenging financial conditions in which we operate while still providing the best learning opportunities for the children of our community that we can. As always, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Shannon Murray  
Superintendent

## 2023 Merrill Summer Baseball Schedule

### Babe Ruth 7th Grade (Blue)

Thurs. June 29 Mosinee Purple Away 6:00 p.m.

Bye Week for July 4th to prepare for Playoffs/Holiday Break

### Babe Ruth 8th Grade (White)

Bye Week for July 4th to prepare for Playoffs/Holiday Break

### Babe Ruth 8th Grade (Red)

Bye Week for July 4th to prepare for Playoffs/Holiday Break

### Junior Legion

Thurs. June 29 Marshfield Away 5:00 p.m.

Wed. July 5 Antigo Away 6:00 p.m.

### Post 46

Thurs. June 29 Marshfield Away 8:00 p.m.

Wed. July 5 Stevens Point Athletic 7:00 p.m.

### Merrill Rangers

Sun. July 2 Rhinelander Away 1:30 p.m.

The Sports Calendar of events is sponsored by:



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