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Monday night house fire destroys home



The garage and home were fully engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived on scene. Bryson Cruise photo.



Early Tuesday morning, it was evident the home and vehicles are a complete loss. The charred remains lie under a blanket of several inches of snow after the season's first snowfall Monday night into Tuesday morning. Tina L. Scott photo.

BY TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

The Merrill Fire Department (MFD) reported to a structure fire at 1103 Jefferson St. in Merrill last evening. The call came in around 8:00 p.m. and "Engine-61, Med-61 & 63-Truck responded immediately to the scene" according to MFD Fire Chief Josh Klug. "Upon arrival, they found significant fire coming from the home."



While structurally, most of the home is still standing, the fire, smoke, and water damage is extensive throughout the home. One neighbor's home was also damaged, with the siding on their house melting due to the intense heat of the blaze. Tina L. Scott photo.

"Crews began extinguishing the fire & protecting exposures," he said.

ranch style home with an attached garage. All three occupants were able to

See FIRE page 9



A colorful trunk at the Trunk or Treat event last Saturday at Trinity Lutheran Church in Merrill, just one of such events held over the weekend at area church parking lots. Joseph Frederick photos.



Top left: Kids dressed up in costumes for trunk or trunk trick or treating at area churches, but the grownups got into the fun by dressing up their vehicles and trunks and often donned costumes themselves. Top right: Toddlers to teenagers, and even the adults, enjoyed the trunk to trunk trick or treating events this past weekend, including this little Handlin dinosaur hatching out of an egg. Bottom right: A Jurassic Park themed "trunk" for little ones to stop to get treats.

Lincoln County board seeking applicants for vacant District 13 seat

BY JALEN MAKI
 MMC STAFF

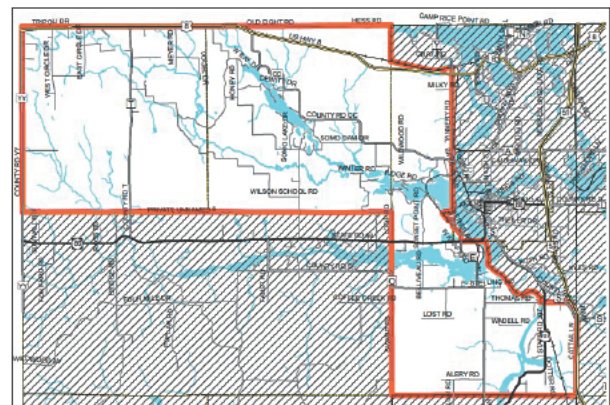
The Lincoln County Board of Supervisors is accepting applications to fill a vacant seat.

The vacancy was created by the resignation of former District 13 Supervisor Calvin Callahan.

Callahan stepped down from the Board in mid-September due to his relocation out of District 13, which covers Ward 4 in the Town of Bradley, Ward 1 in the Town of Somo, and Ward 1 in the Town of Wilson.

Applications to fill the vacancy will be accepted until 12 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 3, 2023. If needed, interviews will be

See VACANCY page 12



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Merrill Parks & Rec completes new Bierman Family Pickleball Courts at Ott's Park

The new Bierman Family Pickleball Courts were completed at Ott's Park (501 N. Foster St.) in Merrill on Oct. 20, 2023. The courts are located between the existing tennis courts and the baseball/softball field. "The project was funded through a generous donation from the Bierman Family Foundation to the Merrill Parks & Recreation Department," said Dan Wendorf, Merrill Parks & Recreation Director.



The new Bierman Family Pickleball Courts at Ott's Park. Photo courtesy of Merrill Park & Recreation Department.

"Pickleball is a sport that combines elements of tennis, ping pong, and badminton into one family-friendly game for people of all ages and abilities," he said.

This new facility consists of six fenced-in courts with windscreen fabric on the north and south ends as well as the divider fence separating the north courts from the south courts. The courts will have LED lights in the very near future so people will be able to play longer during the season.

"We are very excited to unveil these new pickleball courts," Wendorf said. "Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country, and we have had many requests

over the past several years to build courts. We cannot thank the Bierman Family Foundation enough for this wonderful community contribution."

The Merrill Parks & Recreation Department intends to provide pickleball lessons and leagues next year and to host tournaments in the near future, as well.

"The popularity of pickleball

brings visitors into our community that we would not normally see," Wendorf said. "Investments like this not only help our local businesses and economy, but they allow us to show off our beautiful community."

The Bierman Family Pickleball Courts will remain open until winter arrives and will re-open again next spring when conditions allow.

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Classical pianist Charlie Albright to perform in Merrill

The Merrill Area Concert Association (MACA) announced classical pianist Charlie Albright will be performing at the Merrill High School Auditorium at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023.

Hailed as "among the most gifted musicians of his generation" with a "dazzling natural keyboard affinity" by the Washington Post, American pianist/composer/improviser Charlie Albright has been praised for his "jaw-dropping technique and virtuosity meshed with a distinctive musicality" by The New York Times. Mixing classical with a bit of pops and some

improvisation, all tied together with his relaxed and friendly stage presence, Charlie Albright will delight audiences. Albright is an official Steinway Artist.

Attendance at all Merrill Area Concert Association events is open to members only, but anyone can become a member simply by purchasing a season membership. Membership supports the association's ongoing mission to provide live performances by professional musicians for the entertainment and betterment of the Merrill area community. For more information, go



Charlie Albright. Submitted photo.

to merrillconcerts.org, email MerrillConcerts@gmail.com, or call Diane at 715.722.3401.

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<h3>DELI SPECIALS</h3> <p>Pepper Jack \$4²⁹ lb.</p> <p>Sandwich Pepperoni \$5⁹⁹ lb.</p>	<h3>APPLE SALE!</h3> <p>Cortland, MacIntosh, Fuji, Crimson Crisp, Golden Delicious and Zestar \$14 1/2 bu.</p> <p>\$4⁹⁵ 1/2 pk.</p> <p>Apple Cider Only \$6⁹⁹ gal.</p>
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OCTOBER 2, 2023
Boy, Lakelann Robert, born to Cheyenne Stoflet and Calvin Stoflet of Stevens Point.
Girl, Lennix Gail, born to Meranda Wilke and Eric Wilke of Merrill.

October 3, 2023
Girl, Nirvana Ann Lynn, born to Brooke Winch and Kevin Winch of Wausau.

October 6, 2023
Girl, Raina Rose Nehrpass, born to Ashley Brietzke and Neil Nehrpass.

October 7, 2023
Girl, Maisy Brie, born to Morgan Nofsinger and Myles Nofsinger of Weston.

October 9, 2023
Girl, Sloane Cynthia, born to Melissa Toldness and Jacob Toldness of Wausau.

October 18, 2023
Boy, Keaton David Michael, born to Jenna Lezotte and Zach Lezotte of Merrill.

October 19, 2023
Boy, Levi Victor John, born to Hannah Hanested and Ryan Hanested of Merrill.

MAPS asks residents to give feedback on future of District facilities

The Merrill Area Public School (MAPS) District School Board and administration are seeking broad feedback on facilities priorities and potential future improvement plans with a community-wide survey.

This survey is a result of the three Facilities Planning Community Focus Group sessions that were held this summer; all Merrill residents were invited and welcomed to attend, and if they were unable to attend in person, the District shared the presentation materials on the school website. Feedback was received from more than 30 individuals during these sessions, and the District was able to frame the community-wide survey around the information gathered.

The eight-page survey was recently delivered to all MAPS District residents. The survey will provide the District with valuable information about the desired direction for future improvements. The District values community input and appreciates the public's consideration of participation in this important work.

MAPS is also hosting a Community Listening Session on Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2023 at 6 p.m. at Jefferson Elementary School to provide an opportunity for community members to get their questions answered and share input regarding the survey and the District's long-range facilities master plan while the survey is open. No RSVP is required to attend, and the meeting is open to all.

To view the proposed plans and learn more about the

facilities planning work, visit the district website. Over the past year, the District has been assessing and evaluating options to address facility needs that are too large to be covered by the District's annual operating budget and will make the best use of the best facilities.

The purpose of the community survey is to gather feedback on potential plans to consolidate operations, close/sell buildings, and invest in the remaining buildings to upgrade building systems and create more modern learning environments for current and future Bluejays. The survey feedback will help the District and School Board prioritize which projects should be funded in the near and long-term future.

To collect feedback, the District is working with School Perceptions LLC, an independent data firm with expertise in conducting school district surveys. Residents can complete the paper survey and mail it back to School Perceptions in the postage-paid envelope provided or log on to the website listed on the paper survey, enter the unique access code, and take the survey online.

To get additional survey copies for members of MAPS households, call the District Office at 715.536.4581. The survey is open until Nov. 20, 2023.

Results of the survey will be reported at the Board of Education meeting in December and will be available on the District's website.

More information is also on the District's website at

www.mapsedu.org. Questions can be directed to Shannon Murray, Superintendent, 715.536.4581 or shannon.murray@mapsedu.org.



Ellen Gilliard
1930-2021

It's been two years since the Lord took you in his arms! The love doesn't go away you walk beside us every day unseen unheard but always near still loved still missed and very dear, We will see you in our dreams and hold onto your memories!

Miss you dearly
Loving you, Family, Friends and Chester

Lincoln County to seek grant funding to help combat aquatic invasive species

BY JALEN MAKI
MMC STAFF

A trio of resolutions unanimously approved by the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors last month will give the County the go-ahead to seek grant funding aimed at combating aquatic invasive species (AIS).

The first resolution approved by the Board accepted a total of \$3,000 donated by a pair of Tomahawk-area lake associations.

A \$2,000 contribution from the Lake Nokomis District and Friends of Lake Mohawksin's \$1,000 donation will combine to serve as the \$3,000 funding match required for a Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) Grant, administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

According to the

resolution, CBCW Grants "provide funding to eligible sponsors to help with the cost of administering a CBCW program that helps prevent the introduction of AIS in Wisconsin's surface waters or limits the spread of AIS that may already be present."

With the resolution's approval accepting the donations, Lincoln County declared its intent to submit a CBCW Grant application to the DNR to cover Lake Nokomis and Lake Mohawksin access points.

The second resolution approved by the Board officially gave the Lincoln County Land Services Department the green light to apply for CBCW Grant dollars.

The third resolution given the thumbs up by the Board allows the Land Services Department to apply for a

DNR Lake Monitoring and Protection Network (LMPN) Grant.

Citing Lincoln County's 720-plus lakes and more than 650 miles of rivers and streams, and noting that the county contains "one of the highest concentrations of natural lakes in the world," the resolution said the quality of these waters and wetlands are being threatened by AIS and the County "recognizes the importance of the quality of our waters to its citizens and local economies."

"Lincoln County recognizes the need for a workable plan that will prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species into new waters, and control, reduce, or eliminate aquatic invasive species already present in some bodies of water," the resolution said.

The resolution said

the Lincoln County Land Services Department will continue to increase public awareness of aquatic invasive species by implementing activities to prevent and control their spread. A DNR LMPN Grant would cover 100% of such activities.

The resolutions did not provide a specific timeline for the grant application processes.

Lincoln County has previously received CBCW Grant funding and has offered CBCW services through an LMPN Grant.

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MADD needs volunteers

BY TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

The local group organizing Make A Difference Day (MADD) leaf raking in Merrill for the city's elderly and disabled residents say they are in need of more volunteers.

The event is scheduled for this Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023, and is Merrill's 28th annual Make A Difference Day event. But the event can only be a success for the community with adequate volunteers to get the jobs done. And the more, the merrier. Working together with family and friends makes the raking fun!

Volunteers should be at the T.B. Scott

Library in Merrill for 8:30 a.m. registration and should come with rakes and gloves and be able to provide transportation to work sites around the community.

Projects will run from 9 a.m. until about 12 noon, and cookies, soda, and water will be provided for volunteers.

"Please consider giving a few hours of your time to help those in our community in need," organizers said. "Working together—WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"

Those who signed up to have their yards raked are reminded to have plenty of clear plastic bags available if they would like their leaves bagged.

Anyone with questions can contact Stacy at 414.539.0182.

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THE FOTO NEWS (ISSN 0191-8958) is published weekly by Multi Media Channels LLC, N2919 County Road QQ, Waupaca WI 54981. Subscription price by mail: \$100 per year; domestic U.S. Mail only, nonrefundable but transferable. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE FOTO NEWS, 921 E. Main St., Merrill, WI 54452.

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CIRCULATION AUDIT BY
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OBITUARIES



Carl H. Voigt, 96, went home peacefully to his Lord and Savior in heaven, surrounded by his family, on Friday, October 20, 2023, while under the care of Aspirus Hospice at Copperleaf Assisted Living of Marathon. He is now another guardian angel to his family.

Carl was born January 22, 1927 on the family farm, son of the late Arnold F. and Herta E. (Plisch) Voigt. On May 31, 1952, he married Joyce E. Zastrow at St. John Lutheran Church, Town of Hamburg.

Carl and Joyce celebrated 68 wonderful years of marriage in the summer of 2020 before Joyce's passing later that same year. Joyce was Carl's one and only love in his life. They were a perfect match, made just for each other.

Carl worked on the Voigt family dairy farm, along with logging, from his teenage years, and he ran the farm throughout his adult life. He became a musician, Concertina Carl, in his early 40s, after taking only three concertina lessons. He also loved yodeling, which he learned at age 9. He was a frequent performer at area events, parties, and parades, both with his band, Concertina Carl and the Boys, and on his own, as well as for his family at home. He was also a loving daycare provider with his wife for all seven grandchildren. After his retirement from farming, he enjoyed spending time on the farm with his wife, children, and grandchildren, visiting with countless friends, gardening in his victory garden, making breads and wines, canning pickles and jellies, and performing at various nursing homes in the area.

Carl was very active in his community and church throughout his life. He was a charter and long-time member for both the Hamburg Fire Department and the Berlin-Hamburg Lions Club. Through his work with the Lions, he received the prestigious Melvin Jones Fellowship award. This award is the highest form of recognition to those who embody humanitarian ideas, consistent with the nature and purpose of the Lions. He served as the Tail Twister and chaplain for Lions meetings and always had great faith in leading in prayer before meetings and dinners. He was also a life-long member of St. Peter Lutheran Church, Hamburg, having been baptized and confirmed there, and he was a devout follower of Jesus, including reading the Bible daily.

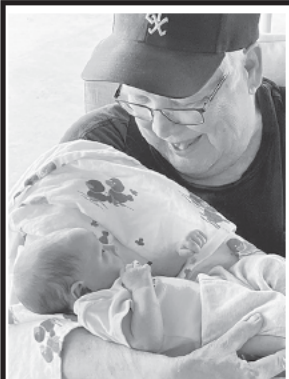
Survivors include four adoring children: Jeffrey Voigt, Hamburg, Randall (Kay) Voigt, Wausau, Rhonda (John) Altfillisch, Hamburg, and Valerie (John) Stubbe, Hamburg; seven cherished grandchildren: Nicole (Ben) Krenz, Danita (Nick) Hahn, Gina (Derek) Grenfell, Brodie (Samantha) Altfillisch, Brandice (Alex) Clauff, John Carl Stubbe and Samantha (Tyler) Hamann; 14 treasured great-grandchildren: Lydia and Carly Krenz, Alexander, Bennett, and Connor Hahn, Charlotte, Louisa, and Adelaide Grenfell, Clara, Artemis, and Cedric Altfillisch, Cecelia and Elijah Clauff, and Porter Hamann, with another great-grandson Hamann due 11/20/23; and one sister, Lola Schmidt, Wittenberg.

Besides his wife, parents, and mother and father-in-law, John and Clara Zastrow, Carl was preceded in death by an infant son and an infant great-granddaughter, Elaine Hamann, along with nine brothers and sisters: Doris Staus, Delores Scheu, Marion Haehlke, Lorraine Rusch, Mae Mathwich, Earl Voigt, Donald Voigt, Lois Achterberg, and Edward Voigt.

Funeral service will be held at 11 AM on Saturday, November 4, at St. Peter Lutheran Church, 135237 CTH A, Marathon, WI 54448, in the Township of Hamburg. Visitation will also be held at the church on Friday, November 3, from 4 to 8 PM, as well as on Saturday, November 4, beginning at 9 AM to the time of the service.

The family would like to thank the Aspirus Hospice staff, especially RN Cathe, for their compassion and kindness at a time when we needed it most. Also thank you to the staff at Copperleaf in Marathon for their care and kindness.

Online condolences may be expressed at www.petersonkraemer.com.



James M. Roberts, born on April 10, 1947, in Harvey, Illinois to Bernard and Margaret (Redmond) Roberts, passed away Monday, October 30, 2023, with his family by his side.

James proudly served in the United States Army 101st Airborne during the Vietnam War. He was awarded multiple commendations, including the Purple Heart for his bravery. After his honorable discharge, Jim went to welding school. He worked as a welder in the Chicago area for ten years. Jim then moved to northern Wisconsin and worked at the Harley Davidson plant in Tomahawk for more than twenty years.

Jim is survived by his wife, Claudia (Hamlin) Roberts; daughters, Audrey (Mark) Evans and Tammy (Adrian) Waller; granddaughters, Michelle (Cole) Kleinschmidt and Trinity Evans; and great-grandchildren, Willow and Hank Kleinschmidt. He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers, Patrick and Michael; sister, Mary; son, James; and many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Per Jim's request, there will be no ceremony. The family would like to thank Merrill EMS and Aspirus Merrill Hospital ER/MS for their extra special attention and support.

Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family. Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com

Valeria Schneider - June 17, 1941 - October 20, 2023
Valeria Mae Schneider passed away peacefully at home on Friday, October 20, 2023 surrounded by her loving family. She was born in Wausau to Fred and Evelyn Zimbauer on June 17, 1941. She attended Holy Name and Newman High School. Valeria married Gerald (Buck) Schneider on February 27, 1960.

During her retirement years she enjoyed the 17 years they spent in Bullhead City, AZ managing a 48-unit condo complex. Valeria loved taking care of her "ducklings" with a nightly meal or a ride here or there.

Valeria is survived by her husband of 63 years, Gerald; daughters, Linda (Ernie) Tessmer, Shelly (Pete) Coyle, Pam Schneider, and Kim (Steve) Hilleshiem. Valeria is further survived by 10 grandchildren; 9 great grandchildren; and 6 brothers and sisters.

Special thanks to the Aspirus hospice team for helping the family through this journey with their care, concern and love.

The family will be holding a private service for immediate family, followed by a Celebration of Life in the spring. In lieu of flowers please direct donations to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105. www.bolgerfuneral.com for condolences.



Warren Lee "Cub" Fischer, age 92, of Merrill, died on Monday, October 23, 2023 at Bell Tower Residence. He was born on November 20, 1930 to the late Clarence H. and Genevieve C. (Schultz) Fischer in Kaukauna, WI. He was their only child. At the age of 17, Cub bravely joined the United States Army. He chose to be stationed in post-war Landshut, West Germany, where he met and married his wife,

Margarete Bohringer. Sadly, she preceded him in death at the age of 56 in 1990. Cub was honorably discharged from the Army on June 23, 1952. Cub worked as a foundry core maker, before becoming a property maintenance worker for the Holy Cross Sisters. He left his employment at Holy Cross to enter the logging industry. Cub worked as a logger and pulp cutter, retiring after 22 years. He thoroughly enjoyed working outdoors as a logger. Also, a self-taught carpenter, Cub first built a cottage on Squirrel Lake and then a brick home on the Prairie River. His leisure time was spent hunting and fishing. Cub appreciated and respected nature and the wildlife. He had a great fondness for animals and enjoyed listening to old time polka music. Cub had a gentle soul and will be missed very much by his family and friends.

Cub is survived by his 4 daughters: Rosemarie Brock, Heidi (David) Duley, Christine (Daniel) Vorpapel and Kathryn (Randy) Pophal, 9 grandchildren: Sonya (Marvin) Simms, Mark (Amelia) Duley, Timothy (Thana) Duley, Steven (Leah) Duley, Davida (Michael) Pritchard, Danielle (Darin) Beschta, Donna (Jeremy) Vorpapel-Gunther, Lynn (Michael) Borkenhagen and Lee Pophal, 17 great grandchildren: James III, Margarete, Kyle, Claire, Nathan, Nicholas, Ariana, Alex, Connor, Blake, Janelle, Cassandra, Annaleese, Dominic, Isabella, Everett and Elliott and 1 great great granddaughter: Staci. He was preceded in death by his parents, his beloved wife: Margarete Fischer, grandson: Jeremy Reissmann and great grandsons: Douglas Siler and Anthony Phipps and granddaughter-in-law: Amy K. Duley.

The funeral liturgy for Cub was held on Friday, October 27, 2023 at 12:00pm at Waid Funeral Home in Merrill. Father Maria Vallabhaneni officiated. Visitation was held on Friday, October 27, 2023 from 10:00am until the time of the liturgy, also at the funeral home. Interment immediately followed and took place at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Cemetery in Merrill. Military honors were conducted by the Merrill V.F.W. 1638 at the cemetery. The liturgy was live streamed for those unable to attend, and is posted as a recording under his obituary on the funeral home website.

Memorials in Cub's name may be directed to either the Bell Tower Activity Fund, 1500 O'Day Street, Merrill, WI, 54452 or the Lincoln County Humane Society, 310 N. Memorial Drive, Merrill, WI, 54452. Over his 17 1/2 years at Bell Tower Residence, Cub developed some close relationships to staff members and residents. Family wishes to thank those people for that support and friendship. 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.



Tyler James Cole, age 16, of Tomahawk and Wausau, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, as the result of a car accident. He was born on August 16, 2007 to Joshua Cole and Ashley Carstensen in Wausau, WI. He was currently in the 11th grade at Tomahawk High School.

Tyler enjoyed doing various jobs, whether it was building, making something or concrete work, he enjoyed it, especially when Blake was helping. He was looking forward to working with heavy machinery when he was out of high school. Tyler loved his snacks and would grab a bowl of ice cream every chance he had! He enjoyed four-wheeling, hunting and fishing, playing softball, but he really looked forward to winter when he could go snowmobiling. Tyler liked to work on tractors for tractor pulls, splitting wood in his overalls and played softball and baseball for Tomahawk High School. He was a passionate and determined guy when it was about things that he liked, and was always up for a good time with his close friends. Tyler will be sadly missed by so many people, but he will never be forgotten.

Tyler leaves behind his parents: Joshua (Julie) Cole of Wausau and Ashley (Roger) Shore of Tomahawk, sisters: Hailey Cole and Karly Shore, brother: Mayson Shore, grandparents: Jerome "Charlie" Cole and Artie and Debbie Dellenbach, Janice (Dan) Hintze, Randy and Carmen Carstensen and Brenda Shore, great grandparents: Ward and Sandy Carstensen, Marian Coey and Ida Schult, and several aunts, uncles, cousins and good friends. He was preceded in death by his grandfather: Roger Shore Sr. and great grandfathers: Robert "JimBob" Coey and Milton Schult.

The funeral service for Tyler will be held on Thursday, November 2, 2023, at 11:00am at Trinity Lutheran Church in Merrill. Rev. Scott Gustafson will officiate. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, from 2:00pm until 8:00pm at Waid Funeral Home in Merrill, and again on Thursday, November 2, 2023, from 9:00am until the time of the service, at the church.

The service will be live streamed and will begin on Thursday, November 2, 2023, at 11:00am, and can be found under his obituary on the funeral home website. It will then be posted as a recording for future viewing.

Family wishes to thank all of the emergency personnel and first responders that came to offer help to Tyler. They also want to extend their appreciation to Leah with the Marathon County Medical Examiner's office for her support and care that she showed to Tyler and his family.

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.

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TOWN OF MERRILL
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING & SPECIAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS

Notice is hereby given that on Monday, November 13, 2023 a **PUBLIC HEARING** on the Proposed 2024 Budget will be held at 6:00 P.M., at The Town of Merrill Community Center, W4594 Progress Avenue. The Proposed Budget will be posted and available for inspection at the Clerk's Office, W4594 Progress Avenue, during regular office hours.

Following completion of the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2024 Budget, the **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING OF THE ELECTORS** called pursuant to Sec. 60.12(1)(c) of Wis. Statutes by the Town Board for the following purposes will be held:

1. To Adopt the 2023 Town Tax Levy To Be Paid In 2024,
Pursuant to Sec. 60.10 (1) (a) of Wis. Statutes

The regular monthly board meeting will be held following completion of the above meetings.

Mitzi Flegner, Clerk Treasurer

Published November 2 & 9, 2023 WNAXLP

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SATURDAY NOV. 4TH
CRIBBAGE TOURNAMENT
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 Lunch Provided

SATURDAY NOV. 18TH
HUNTER WIDOWS BINGO
 1pm
 Cash Prizes, Drink Specials, Snacks

Area Events & Entertainment Community Calendar

Nov. 2 - HAVEN Fundraiser @ Riverside Athletic Club
 Nov. 4 - Make A Difference Day (Leaf Raking)
 Nov. 5 - MACA Charlie Albright Piano Concert

Nov. 5 - Fall/Holiday Market at Agra Pavilion
 Nov. 9 - Lincoln County Sports Club Gun Raffle
 Nov. 10 - Holiday Market at Lange Machine & Tool
 Nov. 11 - Holiday Market at Lange Machine & Tool

Nov. 11 - Veterans Day ceremonies
 Nov. 11 - Holiday Preview at Fritz's Mountain
 Nov. 11 - Merrill Citywide Fall Craft Sales

For more information, go to: merrillchamber.org/events

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ST. PAUL'S 9th ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR
 Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023
 10 am - 2 pm
 W2604 Cty. Rd. P, Merrill

Luncheon Bake Sale
 by St. Paul's Ladies Aide

Handcrafted items, knitting, crocheting, Christmas wreaths, jewelry, maple syrup, wood working, rope baskets, hand painted decor, mittens and much more!!

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 NOV. 7TH - LIVER & ONIONS
 NOV. 14TH - BEEF TIPS OVER NOODLES
 Dinner served: Tuesday 4:00-8:00 PM

FRIDAY NIGHTS
 NOV. 3RD - BREADED SCALLOPS
 NOV. 10TH - WALLEYE
 Dinner served: Friday 4:00-8:00 PM
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FRI - FISH FRY PERCH
SAT - PRIME RIB
SUN - BROASTED CHICKEN
MON - SHRIMP SCAMPI

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SAT - WINE NOT
SUN - \$5 BLOODY MARY
MON - WHISKY DOUBLES \$9

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Adults - \$10 Children 6-12 - \$4
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 Carryouts available

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 15425 Highway K South - Merrill

PUBLISHER'S LETTER

"Hallo" Halloween!



DEAR READER,

Halloween, rooted in ancient Celtic traditions, has evolved over centuries into a beloved modern holiday. Originally known as Samhain, it marked the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter. Celts believed that on this night, the boundary between the living and the dead was blurred, allowing spirits to roam the Earth. To ward off these spirits, people lit bonfires and wore costumes.

Fast forward to the present day, Halloween has become a time of camaraderie for families and communities. It's a night when families come together to create and share memories. Parents and children often collaborate on costumes, turning their creativity into a memorable experience. Neighbors decorate their houses and open their doors to trick-or-treaters, fostering a sense of community.

This sense of togetherness extends to the tradition of trick-or-treating. Children excitedly go door-to-door, building a sense of neighborhood unity as they collect sweets and treats. This simple act of giving and receiving candy fosters a sense of belonging and creates lasting memories.

In essence, Halloween bridges the past and present, connecting us to our ancient roots while celebrating the bonds of family and community in the modern world. It's a time when history and camaraderie come together to make this holiday special for all generations.

PATRICK J. WOOD
Publisher

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MERRILL FOTO NEWS

Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is

Elijah Sanders
 Son of Mark & Paige Sanders

Elijah is in 3rd grade at NTC Christian Academy. He was nominated by Mrs. Woody.

What is your favorite subject in school?
 Why?
 My favorite subject in school is math. I love multiplication.

What is your favorite part of school?
 Why?
 My favorite part of school is my friends. I can play with them.

What would you like to do/become someday?
 Why?
 When I grow up I want to become a car mechanic. I love cars.

Elijah is a happy boy and is diligent in his work.
 ~ Mrs. Woody

Student of the Week Sponsored by:
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THE GLEASON CORNER

BY TINA L. SCOTT, EDITOR

Old Time General Store in Gleason: A staple for the locals and a destination for treasure hunters

Ronald and Vicky Forster purchased the former Country Gals Resale & Bait Shop in Gleason in mid-August 2023, took over effective Sept. 1, and renamed the store *Old Time General Store & Mercantile* to better reflect their vision for the store. Their goal, they say, is to have a little bit of everything for the locals or people passing through the community, just like old time mercantile stores did.

"A general general store has a little bit of everything, right?" Vicky said. "So that's our plan."

Prior to their purchasing the building and business, the store offered a lot of gently-used second hand merchandise the owners had purchased at estate sales, including dishes, clothing, furniture, holiday decor, some jewelry, some electronics, vintage pieces, etc., and Vicky said they will continue to sell these items, although they won't have much clothing or many books going forward, as those items don't sell as well. They also won't purchase entire estates, but will purchase partial estates or selected items from estates going forward. They don't take items on consignment, but will purchase items outright from people if they're interested in carrying them.

So some things will stay the same. They like the kind of story the former owners set up here. They will still have a good supply of fireworks for sale, some liquor and beer and soda, candy and snacks, a live bait shop area, and some tackle, Vicky said.

But true to their desire to become Gleason's general store, they have added some things to their inventory, as well. "We did just get a new bait dealer," Vicky said. "And we're going to have hardware in here. So like, nuts and bolts, nails, screws, things like that. So maybe people don't have to drive all the way to town on the weekend in the middle of a project."

In addition, "We are stocking toilet paper. We're going to try and get the essentials, you know. basic stuff: Toilet paper, dish soap, things like that," she said.

They've also added wood pellets and for autumn they added mums and sold a large volume of the seasonal flowers.

Ronald and Vicky are also planning to expand their hunting department, they said.

"We're going to get more hunting clothing, like the orange clothing and stuff like that. Probably some camouflage and things," Vicky said. That will probably be after the first of the year though, due to lead times on ordering.

And they're planning to add guns in the future. "In the future, we're not sure when yet," Vicky said.

Ronald said he always had the desire to open a gun shop, but they hadn't really planned on opening a shop like this quite so soon. "I do a lot of logging and excavating in the area, so I was just looking for something in the springtime ... and my wife collects a lot of this stuff." A store like this was "in the future," Ronald said, but when the opportunity arose, the Forsters decided to do it now.

As for the guns, "I'm not sure when I'm going to do the gun thing ... the problem with it is, I like doing my logging and that's pretty good, [but Vicky] doesn't know much about them [guns], so I think if I put the gun shop in here, it's going to be too busy and they're going to want to talk to me ..."

For that reason, initially once they do get guns into their inventory, "We're probably only going to do it on like Saturday and Sunday," Ronald said, at least to start.

The couple is also planning to add additional new home decor. "Ronald and I ... We just went to Vegas in August and we went to a big trade show," Vicky said. They purchased a number of things they thought would appeal to shoppers, including some fountains and some small trees for decor. "I thought those would be fun to decorate for just about any holiday," Vicky said.

The store also carries some handmade items, such as wooden trays and bird houses made by locals or people they know. Her mom also makes dish scrubbies and may contribute more of her handmade wares to the store in the future.

The couple is doing things slowly to add their personal touch to the new business. They added a set of double doors between the back and front of the store. Ronald collects Model T's and "is going to be actually bringing the Model T into the showroom for winter," Vicky said. "We're going to display our moonshine, whiskey, and that kind of stuff in the box of the Model T."

Ronald also has plans for more construction. "I'm going to go out all the way around with a covered porch all the way to that end in the front," he said. "So then a lot of our flowers and stuff will be underneath."

Old Time General Store & Mercantile, located at N5342 Hwy. 17 in Gleason (715.921.4561), is open Monday/Tuesday 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Thursday/Friday 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday 7 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sunday 7 a.m.-3 p.m. The store is closed on Wednesday.



Owners Ronald and Vicky Forster and their two children, Loretta and Clyde. Tina L. Scott photo



A peek inside Old Time General Store & Mercantile. Tina L. Scott photo

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Matthew 18:20

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Announcements 7005

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Announcements 7005

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Miscellaneous Sales 7212

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Representatives of Nicolet Bank present a \$1,500 check to Food For Kids representative Terra Holdridge. From L to R: Erica Wickman (Universal Banker), Nancy Stadler (Merrill Branch Manager), Terra Holdridge (St. Stephens Church, Food For Kids), Nicole Johnson (AVP Regional Manager), and Mary Hallgren (Wausau Branch Manager). Funds came from the Nicolet Bank Foundation which is funded by Nicolet employees and matched by the bank dollar for dollar. Employees then can nominate local organizations to be recipients of funds. The \$1,500 should cover the cost of food for one week of the program. Currently about 200 children are enrolled in the Food for Kids program which helps provide Merrill children with food for the weekend when school is not in session.



Submitted photo.

Winning with Wisconsin Workforce event

Northcentral Technical College has partnered with the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development to host Winning with Wisconsin's Workforce at NTC on November 29, 2023, from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. The event is free to attend. To register, go to: eventbrite.com/d/wi-wausau/business-events/?page=1 and click on the Winning with Wisconsin's Workforce Q4 - North Central event. There is no cost to register.

Winning with Wisconsin's Workforce will bring together businesses, community leaders, elected leaders, and workforce development professionals to discuss technology and training programs in North Central Wisconsin. The event will feature discussions on Wisconsin Fast Forward-funded technical education and customized training programs, grant application processes and timelines, local recipient success stories, and more.

Lincoln County students invited to participate in annual Conservation Contest

Students and educators from Lincoln County Schools, whether they be public, private, or homeschooled, are invited to participate in the Annual Conservation Contest hosted by the Lincoln County Conservation Program. The Conservation Contest encourages students to submit posters or write and perform speeches that illustrate the conservation theme of the year. For 2024, the Conservation Contest theme is "May the Forest be With You, Always."

The Conservation contest is an excellent opportunity for students to expand their appreciation for the environment and conservation and to become involved with numerous Wisconsin Academic Standards. Educators that have been involved with the contest found this connection to standards helpful and have enjoyed the opportunity to promote conservation within the classroom.

Students who are in grade K-12 are eligible to enter into the Poster portion of the competition, and students who are in grades 5-12 are eligible to enter into the Speaking portion of the competition (contest divisions are created by grade ex. K-1, 2-3, etc). First place entries from each division will advance on to the area contest which includes nine counties. From there, there is the possibility to advance on to a state contest and even a national contest.

For more information about the Annual Conservation Contest, rules, deadlines, and how to enter, contact Tom Boisvert, Conservation Program Manager, at 715.539.1054.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome letters to the Editor, a chance for members of the community to comment on issues of concern to them. All letters must be original, not duplications of letters addressed to public officials or written by others. The views and opinions expressed are those of the letter writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of this publication, its publishers, Editor, or staff.

TO THE EDITOR:

To Lincoln County inhabitants and the Foto News office: We all love Pine Crest, the employed staff, doctors, nurses, therapists, dietary, food served, entertainment provided, the list goes on. And of course, the impressive buildings and nice location are perfect.

BUT —

1. 85 rooms are empty, so if the room per day is \$400, that means 400 times 85 = \$34,000 per day lost. Per month, 30 days times \$34,000 = \$1,020,000. Big time, is lost. Never to put into the pot.

2. Millions of dollars lost. We are in the red. That means losses.

3. Shortage of staff. Advertise the needs maybe!

4. Difficulty in admittance. Poor planning with hospital vs. Pine Crest. This can be improved quickly with in-service time.

5. Expenses will rarely decrease, but only increase. Administrators can fix that with study, needs, not over stocking, etc. I have found administrators with nursing background are the best at this job.

These are the negative words to improve. The majority of folks in Lincoln County cannot afford the present set-up. If we purchased, we would never be out of debt. And folks would sell home, to leave town.

The positive effect would place this big headache on voting ballot box for people's choice. If it goes belly up, then have County officials find a reputable buyer, to provide utmost care to our people in need of help. Somehow keep living prices within positive. We can solve this —

From a retired RN, still with current nursing license.

— Dorothy L. Johnson
Merrill, Wis.

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Bluejay Varsity Girls Swim Team at Conference: Miles takes 1st in 100 Yard Freestyle

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

The Merrill Bluejays Varsity Girls Swim Team made a good showing at the Oct. 26, 2023, Wisconsin Valley Conference Swim Meet. Overall Merrill came in third place out of seven teams, and Merrill's Marissa Miles took first place in the 100 Yard Freestyle. Merrill also had three other 4th place finishes, three 5th place finishes, along with a 6th place, a 7th place, a 9th place, and an 11th place finish.

"This was a huge accomplishment for our small young team," said Merrill Varsity Girls Swim Team Head Coach Kristie Winter. "We went into the meet seeded 6th only ahead of Wisconsin Rapids. To move up to third was nothing short of amazing. It took every single Lady Jay to put the team before themselves to make this happen."

"We battled to hold third place from event two thru the end of the meet," she said.

The top Merrill Girls in each event were:

Event 1. 200 Yard Medley Relay, Addison Jirovec, Olivia Pajdash, Marissa Miles, and Claire Jirovec came in 5th place at 1:59.88.

Event 2. 200 Yard Freestyle, Olivia Pajdash



Marissa Miles on the podium after taking 1st place in the 100-yard freestyle at Conference.

came in 4th place at 2:09.27.

Event 3. 200 Yard IM, Marissa Miles came in 4th place at 2:22.66.

Event 4. 50 Yard Freestyle, Claire Jirovec came in 9th place at 26.85.

Event 5. 100 Yard Butterfly, Caroline Durbin came in 11th place at 1:11.36.

Event 6. 100 Yard Freestyle, Marissa Miles came in 1st place at 55.87.

Event 7. 500 Yard Freestyle, Olivia Pajdash came in 4th place at 5:44.29.

Event 8. 200 Yard Freestyle Relay, Claire Jirovec, Emily Winter, Brenna Jirovec, and Melissa Miles came in 6th place at 1:49.32.

Event 9. 100 Yard

Backstroke, Addison Jirovec came in 5th place at 1:05.70.

Event 10. 100 Yard Breaststroke, Claire Jirovec came in 5th place at 1:17.67.

Event 11. 400 Yard Freestyle Relay, Olivia Pajdash, Emily Winter, Brenna Jirovec, and Addison Jirovec came in 7th place at 4:13.31.

See **SWIMMING** page 12



The Merrill High School Varsity Swim Team on deck at Conference.

Submitted photos.

2023 FALL MERRILL HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCHEDULE

Girls Swimming (Varsity & JV)

Sat. Nov. 4 Sectional-Multiple Schools (Varsity) Home 5:30 pm

Please go to www.wiaawi.org for more playoff schedules and brackets.

2023 Winter Merrill High School Sports Schedule

Girls Basketball (Varsity, JV, & JV2)

Practice begins Monday, November 13th.

Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV, & JV2)

Practice begins Monday, November 6th.

Girls Wrestling (Varsity)

Practice begins Monday, November 13th.

Boys Wrestling (Varsity & JV)

Practice begins Monday, November 13th.

Ice Hockey (Varsity & JV)

Practice begins Monday, November 6th.

The Sports Calendar of events is sponsored by:



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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Marissa Miles, a Freshman at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. Marissa is on the Merrill High School Varsity Swim Team where she competes individually and as part of relay teams and recently made Conference Champion for the 100-yard freestyle. She's been swimming since she was young, and competitively since age seven, first as part of the Tomahawk Swim Club and, afterward and still, for the Merrill Aqua Jays where she started when she transferred to the MAPS District three years ago.

Marissa has also been playing softball since she was seven and generally plays outfield or second base. She started for the Tomahawk City League and now plays for the Merrill City League. Since she was four years old, she's also been in dance, first at Terry Bucaro Fine Art Studio and now at Brooke's School of Dance.

At school, Marissa is on Student Council and her favorite classes are math, science, or agricultural-related, she said. In her free time, Marissa sometimes works for Bein' Crafty making t-shirts for local businesses. She enjoys shopping, camping with family and friends, going up north and to Door County, "just chilling in the lake," tubing, water skiing, and any water sports.

The daughter of Rick and Dani Miles of Tomahawk, Marissa plans to attend college to study law after she graduates high school.



Marissa Miles

Congratulations from these sponsors:



Athletes highlighted in this feature are selected by the Foto News editorial staff, not by the sponsors.

Please direct comments or suggestions to fotonews@mmclocal.com

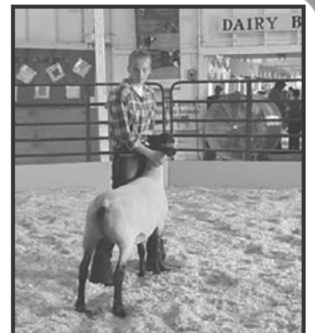
FFA MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Katelyn Klimek, a Junior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named FFA Member of the Month for October 2023. Katelyn joined FFA as a Freshman and participates in all the activities she can. "I joined FFA because that's my gang," she said.

Katelyn's grandfather used to own dairy cows, and she went there three times a day with family members to help milk and feed. "Now that Grandpa sold his cows, we have beef, sheep, and goats," Katelyn said.

Outside of the agriculture scene, Katelyn has been swimming competitively since sixth grade and is also involved in Leo's Club in Gleason.

"In my free time, I like to hang out with my grandparents," Katelyn said. "We go on walks in the woods, go to different places to walk. We all play board games together and go to the A-frame and cook hotdogs and s'mores over a fire."



Katelyn Klimek

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The former West Side Laundromat on W. Main Street was demolished the week of Oct. 23, 2023. The building was owned by adjacent Trinity Lutheran Church and representatives from the church said the plan is to let the ground settle and then the property will eventually be paved to expand the parking lot which is used by the church and Trinity Lutheran School across the street. Tina L. Scott photo.



VACANCY from page 1

given to selected candidates at the Lincoln County Service Center in Merrill on Tuesday, Nov. 7.

The Board will approve the appointment to fill the vacancy during its meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 14.

The appointed candidate will serve the remainder of Callahan's term, which ends

on April 15, 2024.

Individuals residing in District 13 can send letters of interest and personal qualifications to Lincoln County Clerk Christopher Marlowe at the Lincoln County Clerk's Office, 801 N. Sales St., Suite 201, Merrill, Wis., 54452; or to chris.marlowe@co.lincoln.wi.us.

To view the vacancy posting on the Lincoln County website, visit www.tinyurl.com/yttuy7x8.

SWIMMING from page 11

Team Rankings:

- 1. Stevens Point Girls Swimming 541
2. DC Everest Girls 505.5
3. Merrill High School 251
4. Wausau East Lumberjacks 249
5. Marshfield High School Girls 231
6. Wausau West 195
7. Wisconsin Rapids Girls 158.5

The Lady Jays will host Sectionals this

Saturday, Nov. 4, at Prairie River Middle School, competing against Antigo, Colby/Abbotsford (Coop Team), Ladysmith, Lakeland Union High School, Medford, Menomonie, Mosinee, Rhinelander, Rice Lake, Tomahawk, Wausau East, and Wittenberg-Birnwood.

"These ladies [Bluejay Girls] will be pushing as hard as they can to qualify for State," Winter said.

LETTERS from page 10

TO THE EDITOR:

QUOTES & FACTS TO CONTEMPLATE

Majority? 85.3% of 782 survey replies = 667 to increase County portion of real estate taxes.

Lincoln County has 17,541 registered voters; 8,603 cast ballots in April 2023.

Independent Financial Audit? Audit for Year End December 31, 2022, by Clifton Larson Allen LLP was presented to Lincoln County Board on October 17, 2023.

Ownership? "For years we have been investing in Pine Crest." What amount have you invested? Resident of Lincoln County for 70+ years but only 1 of 30,000 living in Lincoln County. There is no guarantee that you will be accepted at Pine Crest. It's a

true story that in past two years, a lifetime Lincoln County resident was denied by Pine Crest twice! She had been living in Merrill but ended up in Tomahawk in privately-run nursing home.

Affordable? Last time I checked for someone paying for their care, Pine Crest was approximately \$9,000 a month--same as other nursing homes. Assisted living homes are about half of that.

QUOTE: "I only knew I couldn't afford to put him in a private nursing home at a cost of \$6,000 to \$9,000 a month. Fortunately, a woman whose family took classes from Ken connected me with Pine Crest." "As we age it's only right that our county should look out for us."

(From someone who has spent years in Lincoln & Marathon County.)

- Leona Vander Sanden Gleason, Wis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY:

- * Letters must be 250 words or less. (There will be no exceptions to this. Any letter longer than 250 words will not be printed.)
* The writer must include their full name, complete address, and a phone number where he/she can be easily reached for verification. Phone numbers and street addresses will not be published, but will be used for verification purposes, if necessary. Letters must be signed and the name, city, and state will be printed.
* Letters may be edited for style, grammar, and length. Form letters or those we determine to be libelous or slanderous will not be accepted. Any letter deemed derogatory, inflammatory, or involving vulgar language will not be published. We reserve all rights to reject material submitted to this publication.
* Letters will be published on a "first come, first served" basis. Any letters which we are unable to publish in the printed newspaper may be run online at www.merrillfotonews.com and/or may be printed in the paper at a later date.
* In fairness to all, and due to space constraints, there is a limit of two letters per year from an individual writer. Additional letters may be submitted to our Paid Letters to the Editor column and will require payment in full prior to publication at the same rate as Political Letters to the Editor (see policy below).

Fall Tire Sale advertisement featuring tires, a '\$1 TIRE!' offer, and financing options from Brickners Park City, Inc.

Gloverdale Country Store advertisement with a list of products and prices, including Salmon Burgers, Chicken Breast, and various cheeses.

Merrill Foto News Fall MERRILLOPOLY advertisement for the game sheet event from October 26th to November 10th, including a list of participating businesses and a grand prize of \$950.