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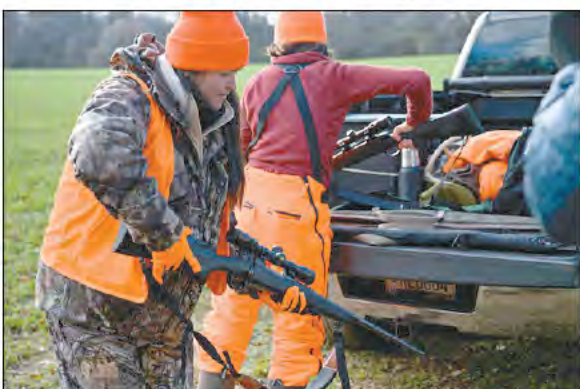


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Wisconsin's gun deer hunting season opens Saturday



Make safety your number one target as you head out into the field this gun deer season.
 Nick Berard photo. Courtesy of Wisconsin DNR.

BY TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

Wisconsin's nine-day gun deer hunting season begins this Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023, and 600,000 hunters are anticipated to take to the woods and fields for the hunt. Unfortunately, according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), that's a 2% decline, and the number of hunters has been declining for a couple of decades.

Ethical deer hunting is a rural tradition for many in north central Wisconsin-where young and old, boys and girls, men and women-can all participate and enjoy a sport that helps the state's ecosystem. Without hunters and a hunting season to harvest an appropriate number of deer, a population increase would create a host of problems-from excessive crop damage to animals dying of diseases to an increase in deer vs. automobile collisions, some of which can prove to be fatal. Harvesting animals ethically and utilizing them as a natural resource for food is admirable, and the process teaches kids and youth gun and hunting safety, responsibility, the value of putting in the time and effort, and provides valuable bonding and mentoring opportunities between generations.

Before you head out to the woods or pack up your gear for the annual trip to the hunting shack, take a few minutes to brush up on some tips for a safe and healthy hunting season.

Safety first

The DNR reports conservation wardens investigated eight hunting incidents during the 2022 gun-deer season, and one of those was fatal. Half (four) of the incidents were self-inflicted gun shots. Almost all gun-deer season

See HUNTING page 3



Scenes from the Veterans Day ceremony at Cenotaph Park in Merrill on Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023



Joseph Frederick photos.

More photos online
merrillfotonews.com



Craft show weekend draws crowds

BY TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

Merrill's City Wide Craft and Vendor Extravaganza drew crowds last Saturday, having expanded this year to nine locations, with a couple of locations starting their sales on Friday. Shoppers came out to the Agra Pavilion, the Lange Building on Hwy. K south of town, the former Jefferson School in Merrill's Sixth Ward, the Merrill High School Fieldhouse, St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, New Testament Church, St. John's Lutheran School Gymnasium, Les & Jim's Lincoln Lanes, and VFW Post 1638 to browse wares that covered a wide array of handcrafted merchandise, holiday decor, food and baked goods, clothing, crafts, jewelry, books, vintage pieces, antiques, toys, candles and soap, wreaths and evergreen items,



More photos online
merrillfotonews.com

The Agra Pavilion was a new craft show location this year, and it was filled with a combination of handcrafted items, many incorporating evergreen boughs and bows, and vintage household items and rustic decor.
 Tina L. Scott photos.

and lots more. Some were shopping to get a head start on Christmas, others to decorate for the holidays, and others to treat themselves.

While some locations were totally full with vendors, others had some room to grow, so next year's event may be even bigger.



Left: Shoppers came out early to the Lange building on Hwy. K to peruse handcrafted items, vintage pieces repurposed as decor, and holiday arrangements. This location was open Friday evening and all day Saturday. Center: The craft shows throughout Merrill on Saturday featured a large variety of handmade merchandise—from paintings like these to woodcrafts, knitted and crocheted gifts, signs, faux food decor, toys, and so much more! Right: Handcrafted teddy bears fill a table at the craft show located in the Merrill High School Field House on Saturday.

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Homelessness: Providing a sense of belonging and love

BY KRIS LEONHARDT
MMC SENIOR EDITOR

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) programming is providing assistance to those experiencing homelessness that is designed to create a

sense of belonging and love. Homelessness often sees the intersection of complex health and social challenges.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), of an estimated 4,515 people in Wisconsin considered homeless, 1 in

5 live with a serious mental illness.

The Wisconsin DHS Peer Services says that often “the best remedy for mental health and substance use challenges is the attention of someone who understands.”

Peer support mobilizes those with lived experience to provide support to others in similar situations, such as homelessness, substance use, and mental and physical health.

A 2013 study completed by K.F. Bean, M.S. Shafer and M. Glennon found that through peer support, “98% of the participants remained in housing after 12 months. Individuals who were housed reported significant increases in their access to and utilization of planned health care services and quality of life, and reductions in their involvement in the criminal justice system.”

DHS Division of Care and

Treatment Services Peer Coordinator Lynn Maday-Bigboy explained that with peer support training, the focus is on self-care as well as community care.

“We certainly talk about taking care of each other. We think about the delicate topics we talk about. We explore things such as trauma, historical collective trauma, supporting people, considering suicide diagnoses, the effects of stigma, systemic

marginalization and oppression, and also voluntary commitment,” she said.

“We recognize that in self-care everyone does not have equal access to practicing self-care,” added DHS Division of Care and Treatment Services Peer Coordinator Marguerit Galindo. “With self-care, there comes a level of privilege, and not everybody has that privilege. In our society, we know that many times when you hear somebody say that they’re going to take some time for self-care, it oftentimes has a monetary value to it. Not all people can do that.”

“So, we’ve acknowledged that in community care, we find connection and community engagement; we find deeper, deeper relationships and healing can take place within lost connections as well.”

“Recovery and meaningful living are intertwined with community engagement and community care. [Recognizing] our interconnectedness and nurturing close relationships fulfills that innate need. So with that, we understand, like we all know that Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is like that sense of belonging and love and every one of us has that need. So, when working alongside in a peer modeling and learning how to either a) connect back to their community that they’ve already had in place or b) cultivate community within new places by finding out what type of community they are interested in becoming a part of and then providing that resource and walking alongside of them.”

Galindo added that it is also important in these situations to check in with them.

“Are you checking in regularly with folks to see how they’re doing, not wait until they’re reaching out to you; but, actually reaching out to them and seeing how they’re doing and going beyond the ‘Hi, how are you?’ piece of things but really stopping and intentionally listening and hearing how they’re actually doing,” she said.

“When we hear those things and we hear the challenges or maybe they’re just sharing their joy with us—we can, you know, be intentional about our listening and validate those feelings that they’re sharing with us.”

Training and funding
Over 1,500 peer specialists are currently certified in the state of Wisconsin.

DHS Division of Care and Treatment Services Supervisor of Integrated Services Kenya Bright said that there are two different tracks of funding for the program.

“DHS funds about 7 to 10 trainings a year, and then there are sometimes agencies that want to have their own training where

See
HOMELESSNESS
page 5

Pet of the Week
Lily, Max, Bernard & Freckles have all found their way to the shelter after their owner passed away. They are litter mates and about 4 years old. They are shy here at the shelter but we are told they are all sweet and very friendly. With some time and patience they will be wonderful pets! They do not have to go to a home together, but LCHS always offers **2 for 1 on cats to the same home**. They are all up to date on vaccinations, fixed and microchipped.
Visit all the adoptable animals at Lincoln County Humane Society, 310 N. Memorial Dr., in Merrill. Hours: Mon-Sat 12-4PM; Sun 12-2PM. Call the shelter at 715-536-3459, or visit us on the web at www.furrypets.com.

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Drop off Christmas Child shoeboxes at St. John's this week

As the Thanksgiving season approaches, many families and children are giving thanks for all their blessings and sharing those blessings with children in need by packing shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child.

Shoebox gifts prepared by generous donors and filled with toys, personal care items, and school supplies may be dropped off this week in Merrill, during National Christmas Child Collection Week, Nov. 13-20, 2023, at St. John Lutheran Church/School, 1104 E. Third St. in Merrill, during the following hours:

Thurs. Nov. 16: 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Fri. Nov. 17: 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Sat. Nov. 18: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Sun. Nov. 19: 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Mon. Nov. 20: 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Operation Christmas Child has been collecting and delivering shoebox gifts to children worldwide for three decades. In 2023, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect enough shoeboxes to reach another 11 million children. This season, there's still time for individuals, families, and groups to transform empty shoeboxes into fun gifts. The project of Samaritan's Purse partners with local churches across the globe to deliver these tangible expressions of God's love to children in need. Find a step-by-step guide on the How to Pack a Shoebox webpage at: samaritanaspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/pack-a-shoe-box/.

"This season, children around the world need a tangible reminder that there is hope and that God loves them," said Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan's Purse. "Through these shoebox gifts packed with special items,



A child holds the box of gifts and treasures she received from Operation Christmas Child.

Photo courtesy of Operation Christmas Child.

children also receive the opportunity to hear about the eternal hope found in Jesus Christ."

Participants can use the online lookup tool to find the nearest drop-off location and hours of operation as they

make plans to drop off their shoebox gifts. It is searchable by city or ZIP code. Signs at each location will identify the drop off.

Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, seeks to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world and, together with the local church worldwide, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 209 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 170 countries and territories. This year, Operation Christmas Child will celebrate its 30th year of ministry!

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HUNTING from page 1

injuries are preventable.

"I especially want to stress the importance of muzzle control—as you can see from 2022, there are quite a few people who accidentally shot themselves," said Lt. Mike Weber, DNR Hunter Education Administrative Warden. "If those same people had proper muzzle control, that likely would not have happened."

- Always follow the four basic rules of firearm safety (TABK-see info box).

- Pace yourself according to your level of fitness. Walking, navigating difficult terrain, carrying a gun and gear, and tracking deer can be physically exhausting, so don't overdo it. Understand your physical limitations. "Hunting often involves prolonged periods of exertion, which can put a significant strain on your cardiovascular system," said Marcus Sublette, MD, Aspirus cardiologist. "The abrupt transition from a sedentary lifestyle to intense physical activity may lead to a sudden increase in heart rate and blood pressure, increasing the risk of heart-related issues. ... Be realistic about your abilities and listen to your body. Rest when needed, and don't take unnecessary risks." Even for the heart-healthy, overexertion can lead to exhaustion and sometimes other medical emergencies.

- Dress for the weather. Check the weather before preparing for the day's hunt. Dress in layers and use waterproof gear to stay warm and dry and prevent hypothermia.

- Eat properly and hydrate. "Long hours in the wilderness may lead to irregular eating habits and dehydration, which can lead to fatigue and other health concerns," a press release from Aspirus Hospital said. "Ensure you have sufficient water and pack energy-rich snacks to keep your energy levels up."

- Carry a well-equipped first aid kit and know CPR. "Every hunter should have a basic understanding of first aid and CPR," Aspirus representatives said. "Minor injuries can quickly become more severe in the wilderness." That first aid kit, CPR knowledge, and the ability to perform life-saving measures in the event of a cardiac emergency could save a life.

- Let others know where you will hunt, and carry a cell phone, satellite phone, or personal locator beacon. Understand that cell service may be limited or unavailable entirely in remote areas. "Always inform people close to you where you will be and what hours you plan to be there," said Wisconsin DNR Lt. Conservation Warden Bryan Lockman.

With advance preparation and safety precautions, make this year's deer hunting season the best one yet.

FOUR BASIC RULES OF FIREARM SAFETY:

- T - Treat every firearm as if it is loaded.**
- A - Always point the muzzle in a safe direction.**
- B - Be certain of your target, what's before it and what's beyond it.**
- K - Keep your finger outside your trigger guard until you are safe to shoot.**

DEER DRIVES

Deer drives can be an effective way to harvest deer while enjoying the fellowship of family and friends. With many people hunting or walking in the same area, it's essential that safety is everyone's top priority.

- Plan your hunt and hunt your plan. Make sure that everyone knows their role and sticks to it. No one deviates from the plan.
- Each hunter should have a safe zone of fire and only shoot at deer within their safe zone of fire.
- Reconfirm you have a safe backstop if you plan to shoot.
- Everyone involved with the drive should follow blaze orange clothing requirements.



NO ONE HAS TIME TO GET SICK.



Talk to your health care provider, local pharmacy or visit vaccines.gov to find COVID-19 vaccines near you.

Call Lincoln County Health Department at 715-536-0307 if you are unable to pay for your vaccine or have no insurance.



Merrill Area United Way



GIVE • ADVOCATE • VOLUNTEER

November 2023 Foto News Article
Merrill Area United Way
Dee Olsen, Executive Director

By chance, did you get out of bed today and say, "I wonder how I can make a positive difference in the life of one person today?" I am a little guilty, because I don't think about this on a regular basis, but sometimes I think about it. Maybe because of my work with agencies and seeing people who have a higher degree of needs, it has a stronger presence with me. But perhaps my attention is heightened because of the onset of Thanksgiving and Christmas, and challenging times influenced by weather changes and additional monetary constraints.

Doesn't it bring cause to pause cause to think about doing something for someone else that would make things just a little bit better, even if it is a small thing.

During this season there are many lessons to learn about giving from the heart. In that spirit, we should all be reminded the holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, the New Year, are a wonderful time of year for not only enjoying all the blessings and gifts we have in our lives, but also a time to reflect on those that are less fortunate and extend a helping hand. United Way works closely with our twenty funded programs/agencies and each agency demonstrates the depth of need we have here in the Merrill area. Most of us cannot imagine going through the stress of the holidays without any money to buy the children a Christmas present, or to have a turkey dinner for Thanksgiving, or for that matter, not being able to pay the rent or know if you'll be able to keep a roof over your head. It happens right here in the Merrill area though. That is why the agencies carry out the important work they do each day.

Merrill is so fortunate to have caring people and a great network of support. Many small communities don't have such networks. Nor do they have (or find) the capacity to reach out and develop programs like Merrill has to offer.

United Way encourages you and your family to "LIVE UNITED" and get involved in a way that will bring heartfelt meaning and self satisfaction to you and your family. Instill the importance of helping others in your own children. Do something for someone else that would make things just a little bit better. Local initiatives can help families through this season with food, clothing, housing and gifts for children and elderly.

Consider supporting the Merrill food pantry, or a church food pantry for holiday meals. Or give to the Christmas Spirit Appeal (gifts for children and families who may not otherwise have a Christmas), give gifts for residents at Pine Crest Nursing Home and other nursing facilities. Consider volunteering to help with local projects or Salvation Army Bell Ringing, or just going caroling to lighten hearts. Several churches know families that need assistance, or help with the breaking bread community meal, the tree of hope, or the mitten tree. Involvement with Food for Kids (providing food for weekends), the MAC Home, are other options. Watch and listen to the local media for additional opportunities. Get involved and volunteer or give from the heart this Holiday Season, but also all year round.

As a reminder United Way is concluding its fall campaign, but donations can be given all year. If interested send your check to Merrill Area United Way today to P.O. Box 813, Merrill, WI 54452. All dollars stay local and support our twenty funded agencies and programs. For more information about the MAUW visit our website at merrillareaunderway.org or email delores.olsen@merrillareaunderway.org. Our part time office number is 715 536 2016.

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CIRCULATION AUDIT BY



OBITUARIES

Lyle Clayton Whiting, age 90, of Merrill, went to his Heavenly home on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at the Aspirus Merrill Hospital. He was born on December 26, 1932 to the late Herbert and Grace (VanAlstein) Whiting. Lyle leaves behind his wife of 67 years: Fern Whiting (Gritzmacher). The visitation and funeral service were held on Monday, November 13, 2023, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Merrill. Military honors were performed by the Merrill V.F.W. Post 1638 at the church, immediately following the service.



Everett "Ev" M. Kniess, age 81, of Gleason, Wisconsin, passed away on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at the Aspirus Hospital in Wausau, Wisconsin. He was born on January 22, 1942 to the late Erwin and Esther (Luedtke) in Merrill, Wisconsin. Ev married his first wife, Yvonne Tewes on October 23, 1965 at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Gleason. She preceded him in death on June 1, 2015. He



remarried on September 29, 2018 to Darleen Wendt (Klebenow) at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Gleason. She survives.

After high school, Ev served in the Army National Guard. He was in the Labors Union for 35 years as a labor foreman in construction. He was a hardworking man who could make something out of nothing. He was involved with Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, a member of the Lions Club, and he was a volunteer fire fighter. He also enjoyed playing softball and bowling.

Ev loved being in the woods, hunting, and driving the UTV. He looked forward to his annual fishing trips in Canada each year. He loved feeding the birds and cutting wood, this was like therapy to him. He was also a huge sports fan, always cheering on the Packers, Brewers and Badgers. Ev was a very quick-witted man, who was kind and very family oriented.

Ev is survived by his wife, Darleen Kniess, children: Laurie (Frank) Frederick, Sandy (Tim) Reader, Russell Kniess and Debbie (Scott) Bagley, step-children: Linda (Rick) Dorn, Laurie (Mark) Folz, and Kris (Bob) Reichelt, 8 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren, 12 step-grandchildren, and 12 step-great-grandchildren, siblings: Dan and Vess Kniess, sisters-in-law: Doreen (Darwin) Gaeu, Nancy Burgener, and Debra (Keene) Robl, and many extended family members.

He was preceded in death by his parents, first wife, Yvonne Kniess, sisters, Betty Jahns, and LaBelle Klug.

A funeral service was held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 11:00 am at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Gleason. A visitation was held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Waid Funeral Home in Merrill and again on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 from 10:00 am until the time of service at the church. Interment took place at Luther Memorial Cemetery in Gleason.

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.



Anita Selma Nora (Natzke) Barlau greeted her Savior on October 20, 2023, under the loving watch of her family. She was 84 years old. Anita was born on April 22, 1939, to Elmer and Leona (Prast) Natzke in Merrill, WI, and grew up on their family farm.

She graduated from Merrill High School in 1957 and went on to Concordia Teacher's College at River Forest, IL, graduating in 1961. She then taught second and third grades at Redeemer Lutheran School

in Warrington Florida and was an organist for the Pensacola Naval Air Station church services.

It was at the church organ at Redeemer, practicing for a service, that she met Steve Barlau, her husband of 58 years. The couple married on July 31, 1965, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Merrill, WI.

Anita maintained a lifelong love of music, education, children and family. She gave selflessly, and never stopped working while providing continuous love and support. She furthered her own education, taking librarianship classes when she could during her time in Florida and Minnesota, while her husband worked towards successful completion of his PhD in German Linguistics. She played organ and piano throughout her life in many churches, playing for weekly services as well as funerals, weddings, and other special services. She worked tirelessly to help provide for her family and to help on her family farm. She was a devoted mother who worked to provide a life of stability, comfort and love for her son Noel. She also adored, and was in return adored by, her granddaughter Astrid.

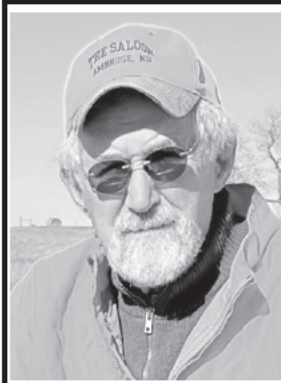
Anita is survived by her husband, Steve Barlau, her son Noel Barlau, daughter-in-law Jennifer Stewart, and her beloved granddaughter Astrid Barlau of Fayetteville GA, her sister Doris Natzke of Merrill WI, her brother John and sister-in-law Madelyn Natzke of Merrill WI, and her brothers-in-law Martin Barlau, Norman Glock, Kay McCalla and Jesse Barlau and her sisters-in-law Jeanne Marie Barlau, Beata Raedeke, Agatha Baden, Elvira McCalla, Ethel Wolff, Trudy Barlau and Deborah Hammond.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Elmer and Leona (Prast) Natzke, her husband's parents Werner and Margaret (Jeske) Barlau, by brothers-in-law Norman Raedeke, Donald Baden, and James Hammond, and sisters-in-law Judith (Koenn) Barlau and Judith (Barlau) Glock.

A memorial service for Anita is being held on November 18, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Merrill. Pastor Joel Danner will officiate. Visitation will be at Immanuel from 9am-11am, and the service will begin at 11am. A luncheon will follow the service in the church basement. Committal at Memorial Park in Merrill will take place after the luncheon.

In lieu of flowers, the family request that a memorial donation be considered to Immanuel Lutheran Church of Merrill, Trinity Lutheran School of Merrill, Pommerscher Verein Central Wisconsin Endowment Fund, or Unity Hospice in DePere, WI.

The family would like to extend special thanks to Pastor Danner during this difficult time. He went well above the call of pastoral duty in providing spiritual care to Anita and her family, and it is most appreciated.



Thomas "Tom" James Frisch of Merrill, Wisconsin passed away on Monday, November 6, 2023 at his home in Merrill. He was born on August 22, 1951 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to the late Ervin and Florene (Mootz) Frisch.

Tom loved hunting, fishing and guns. He was an avid gun collector and dealer. He loved making trips to North Dakota for ice fishing and he recently enjoyed his 50th year of bird hunting in North Dakota. Tom was a quiet man who loved his

family dearly.

Tom is survived by his brother: Tony (Diane) Frisch with their sons, Jesse (Kelly) Frisch along with their children: Lani, Crosby, and Joey, and Scott (Danielle) along with their son; Rowan, and further survived by his brother: Dr. Todd (Linda) Frisch with his children, Casey (Jeremy) Miller along with their child; Sunny, Toby Frisch along with his children; Olivia, Vera, Ava, and Finn, and Abbie (Tyler) Belliston along with their child; Coltrane.

He is preceded in death by his parents, nephews: Cody Frisch and Brady Frisch and niece: Katie Frisch.

A funeral service was held on Saturday, November 11, 2023 at 11:00 am at Waid Funeral Home in Merrill. A visitation was held on Friday, November 10, 2023 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Waid Funeral Home and again on Saturday, November 11, 2023 from 10:00 am until the time of service also at the funeral home. Interment took place at Merrill Memorial Park Cemetery.

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.

Taylor & Stine
Funeral Home and Cremation Services

Leah D. Reist, Director
McKenna K. Meunier, Director

903 E. Third St. • Merrill, WI
715-536-6244
www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com

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Merrill, WI
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www.WaidFuneral.com
Email: info@waidfuneral.com

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In Memoriams

In Loving Memory of
JOHN DOE
Apr. 9, 1954-Aug. 6, 2014

We can assist you in finding a heartfelt way to honor and remember your loved one.

Stop or call our office to place your ad.

MERRILL Foto News
2011 E. Main St., Merrill
715-536-7121

Thank You

Special thanks for the following that helped us out Saturday, Nov. 4th, with removing the remaining salvageable items out of our house, donating food and drinks, and visiting with us. David Bonham, Renee Benish, Sherry Matsche, Brandt Wiebold, Cindy Punke, Mark Moon, Dave & Robbin Gigl, Lucien & Cameo Almi, William Hull, Kristine Golden, Will Hall, Anthony Williams, Amanda Molitor, Tony Williams, Lamont & Tiffany Bonham, Jack & Sherry Kleinschmidt, Brayden's Crew of great friends: Higgins, Logan, Corey, and Joe, Rich Rajek, Bryson Cruise, Bundy & Kristin Jacobson, Tom & Kathy VanDerGeest, Mark Raymer (Westside Market), Polka Dotted Pie and Kwik Trip.

Words cannot express our gratitude with all the help and assistance we have received. We could not have gotten through the same amount of work that day if it were not for those people. Thank you!!

The Rajek Family

Remember, and be remembered with a granite memorial from

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ALL OF OUR WORK IS PROUDLY DONE IN-HOUSE

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Email us at: contactus@tomahawkmonument.com

In Memory of
CHARLES R. PHELPS
Who passed away three years ago on Nov. 18th, 2020.

I can't believe it's been three years that God has called you home. We did not know that you'd be gone, you did not go alone.

With the memories all around us, the tears begin to fall. Living on without you, is the hardest part of all.

Our family chain has broken, has shattered to its core. But as God calls us one by one the link will bond once more.

Deeply missed and loved,
Marsha, Kristin, Nicholas and Families

PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Get Up and Ride (or Walk) the Camino

DEAR READER,

The Camino de Santiago, also known as the Way of St. James, has a history that spans over a thousand years. Its origins are rooted in the early 9th century, when the tomb of Saint James was miraculously discovered in what is now the city of Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain.

The discovery of the apostle's remains turned the site into a major Christian pilgrimage destination, rivaling even Jerusalem and Rome. Pilgrims from all over Europe began making their way to Santiago, and the routes leading to the shrine gradually formed what we now know as the Camino.

During the Middle Ages, the Camino de Santiago became a well-established network of trails and roads. The pilgrimage was a profound spiritual journey, offering penance and the opportunity to seek forgiveness. It also served as a cultural exchange route, with pilgrims sharing stories, music, and art, contributing to the spread of knowledge and ideas across Europe.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the Camino saw a decline in popularity, partly due to political turmoil in Spain and changes in religious practices. However, the pilgrimage experienced a revival in the late 20th century, largely driven by a renewed interest in spirituality, adventure, and a desire to connect with



history and culture.

Today, the Camino de Santiago has regained its status as one of the world's most famous pilgrimages. It offers a range of routes, each with its unique charm, from the rugged Camino Francés to the coastal Camino del Norte. Pilgrims, whether driven by faith or a desire for self-discovery, continue to walk or cycle these ancient paths, forging new traditions

while honoring the rich history that underlies this remarkable journey.

I walked the Camino eight years ago which was a pilgrimage. Recently my two cousins, Jimmy Shea (famous author of the book "Get Up And Ride") and his trusted wingman Marty Moldovan, rode their bikes from Pamplona to Santiago. I met them for moral support and also with a car to help carry some of their gear towards the

end of their pilgrimage. It was glorious to film those guys riding in to the front of the Basilica after their arduous trek on the road. We especially savored the brotherhood of bonding at Mass that Sunday as the last people who were able to enter with hundreds left outside to possibly catch it another time. "Buen Camino," it was!

PATRICK J. WOOD
Publisher

HOMELESSNESS from page 2

all of their staff is trained. So, those eight or so agencies can come together as a community or agencies can themselves pay to have trainers train their staff. It's the same curriculum. They don't veer off of what the training would be. But those are called community trainings or private trainings because they're not just generally open to the public," she explained.

"Combined with the public ones that DHS funds and the community-specific trainings, we do over 20 trainings a year and we just continue to grow because more and more people are very interested in becoming certified."

"We've had just, thinking off the top of my head, like clinics and hospitals that have sponsored trainings for community-specific (programming) because the value there is tremendous. Who can come along and walk alongside someone with a mental health and substance-use crisis," Maday-Bigboy stated.

"Now we'll have youth as a certification, certified peer specialist, and then also the parent peer specialist. So, it really encompasses everybody, and the goal is to have anybody that wants to receive peer support in the state of Wisconsin have that accessibility to them."

"We are enough. We are all we need to survive. We always have been. We're all we've got. Be good to each other. Take care of each other. That really encompasses what peers do."

Five fundamental processes

Certification includes a 48-hour training session and a test. The certification curriculum highlights five fundamental processes, including:

- Connecting - Involves establishing a comfortable working relationship.
Exploring - Works with exploring who the person is and what their story is.
Supporting - Take all of the information you have gathered and ask what type of resources might aid them.
Planning - Exploring what pathways are available.
Advocating - Exploring their rights and options and walking alongside them to obtain them.

For more information, visit dhs.wisconsin.gov/peer-services/index.htm.

NOTICE OF SPRING ELECTION
CITY OF MERRILL
APRIL 2, 2024

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an election is to be held in the City of Merrill, on Tuesday, April 2, 2024. The following offices are to be elected to succeed the present incumbents listed. The term for alderperson's begin on Tuesday, April 16, 2024. The terms for all alderpersons are two years.

Table with 2 columns: Office and Incumbent. Lists alderpersons for districts 1-8 and their respective incumbents.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN, that the first day to circulate nomination papers is Friday, December 1, 2023, and the final day for filing nomination papers is 5:00 PM on Tuesday, January 2, 2024, in the City Clerk's office at City Hall, 1004 E 1st Street.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN, if a primary is necessary, the primary will be held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

Acceptable Photo ID will be required to vote at this election. If you do not have a photo ID, you may obtain a free ID for voting from the Division of Motor Vehicles.

Done in the City of Merrill, on November 13, 2023
Lori L. Anderson Malm, City Clerk
Published November 16, 2023

LEGAL NOTICES

Legals 7700

BY THE COURT
DATE SIGNED October 27, 2023
Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer
Probate Registrar
STATE OF WISCONSIN,
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
Russell B. Warye
Amended
Notice to Creditors
(Informal Administration)
Case No. 2023 IN 46
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE
1. An application for informal administration was filed.
2. The decedent, with date of birth 12/11/1942 and date of death 07/30/2023, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of WI, with a mailing address of W4385 Eagle Ridge Lane, Merrill, WI, 54452.
3. All interested persons waived notice.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is 02/16/2024.
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Room Probate Office.
Dan C. Kobitz, Attorney
2320 Parallel Lane
Silver Spring, MD 20904
Telephone: 301-960-5857
Bar Number: 1102710
Published November 2, 9 & 16, 2023
WNAXLP

Legals 7700

DATE SIGNED September 21, 2023
Electronically signed by Bonnie Wachsmuth, Court Commissioner
STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT
FAMILY COURT BRANCH
LINCOLN COUNTY
ORDER FOR APPEARANCE
Case No. 23-FA-35
FAM LY 40101

In re the marriage of
SARA ARIVEL FERMIN,
Petitioner,
-and-
JOSE LUIS FERMIN
Respondent.
IT IS ORDERED that pursuant to §767.125 Wisconsin Statutes, the above-named respondent, JOSE LUIS FERMIN, must appear in person or remotely via Zoom before the Lincoln County Family Court Commissioner, Bonnie Wachsmuth, as follows:
DATE December 21, 2023
TIME 3:30 p.m.
IN PERSON Lincoln County Courthouse, Branch 3, 1110 E Main Street, Merrill, WI
or
ZOOM Zoom ID 835 7080 6515 (no passcode needed)
Zoom Telephone only 1-312-626-6799 and to attend the divorce hearing scheduled in the above-captioned matter and to give evidence therein if required to do so by the Court.
IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR AS ORDERED THE COURT MAY ISSUE AN ORDER FOR YOUR ARREST, OR ENTER A DEFAULT JUDGEMENT OF DIVORCE.
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a copy of this order be served upon the respondent not less than 48 hours before said hearing.
Published 11/16/23, 11/23/23 & 11/30/23
WNAXLP

DATE SIGNED November 7, 2023
Electronically signed by Galen Bayne-Allison, Circuit Court Judge
STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
PAULA TUDOR
Order and Notice for Hearing on
Petition for Final Judgment
(Formal Administration)
Case No. 22-PR-15
A Petition for Final Judgment was filed.
THE COURT FINDS
The decedent, with date of birth May 7, 1959 and date of death December 21, 2021 was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of N936 Raspberry Lane, Merrill, WI 54452.
THE COURT ORDERS
1. The petition be heard at the Lincoln County Courthouse, 1110 E. Main St., Merrill, Wisconsin, Room Branch 1, before Hon. Galen Bayne-Allison, Court Official, on December 12, 2023 at 9:00a.m.
You do not need to appear unless you object. The petition may be granted if there is no objection.
2. Notice by publication is required. Publication of this notice is notice to any persons whose names or addresses are unknown.
The names or addresses of the following interested persons (if any) are not known or reasonably ascertainable: Name and address of possible child of the deceased Frederick Tudor, Jr. is unknown.
If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 715-536-0342 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.
Please check with person named below for exact time and date.
Atty. Miranda M. Lamb
1803 Stewart Ave., Wausau, WI 54401
Phone: 715-842-0888 Bar #: 1112872
Published 11/16/23, 11/23/23 & 11/30/23
WNAXLP

Notice is hereby given that the following application has been filed with the City Clerk, Merrill, WI:
Change of Agent on Class A Beer/Class A Liquor Combo License
Dana Wojciechowski, Agent
Krist Oil Company
dba Krist Food Mart
105 S Center Ave
Merrill, WI 54452
License Period: Current licensing period through June 30, 2024.
Lori Anderson-Malm
City Clerk
Published November 16, 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
Hailee Sanford, Agent
Nimrods, LLC
dba Nimrods
2501 W Main St
Merrill, WI 54452
License Period: 12/13/2023-06/30/2024
Lori Anderson-Malm
City Clerk
Published November 16, 2023 WNAXLP

Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week runs Nov. 11-18. Please consider a donation to help eradicate homelessness in our community. Visit GoFundMe.com to donate to "Wisconsin Newspapers Supporting Homelessness."

NOTICE OF SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION
WI Statute s. 10.01(2)(a) and s. 120.06(6)(b)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to qualified electors of the MERRILL AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT that a School Board Election will be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, to fill the following Board positions:

Three (3) MEMBERS AT LARGE
(three 3-year terms)

Terms of office for the following members-at-large expire on April 22, 2024:

- Chad Krueger
Kendra Osness
Brett Woller

An elector desiring to be a candidate for a position on the School Board of the MERRILL AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT must file a DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY and CAMPAIGN REGISTRATION STATEMENT at the MERRILL AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE, 1111 NORTH SALES STREET, MERRILL, WI 54452, between the hours of 8:00 A.M. AND 4:00 P.M. MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, PRIOR TO 5:00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2024.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that, if a primary is necessary, the primary will be held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024.

Dated this 16th day of November, 2023.

Kendra Osness
School Board Clerk

Published November 16, 2023

WNAXLP

TOWN OF SCOTT
MERRILL, WISCONSIN

NOTICE OF ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING

Notice is hereby given that on Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 6:00 pm at the Scott Town Hall, N563 Lake Road, Merrill, a Public Hearing on the Proposed 2024 Budget for the Town of Scott will be held.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS

Notice is further given that on Wednesday, November 29, 2023, immediately following the Public Hearing on the Proposed 2024 Budget, a special meeting of the electors called pursuant to Section 60.12(1)(c) of Wisconsin Statutes by the town board will be held to approve the 2023 town tax levy to be collected in 2024 pursuant to Section 60.10(1)(a) of Wisconsin Statutes.

Published November 16, 2023

WNAXLP

STEPPIN OUT

FREE Thanksgiving Dinner

Please join us at
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
W2604 County Road P, Merrill, WI
 Thanksgiving Day, November 23
 Serving 11 am - 1 pm
 Dine In, Take Out, or Delivery
 (For people without transportation)

Turkey • Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
 Vegetable • Stuffing • Dinner Roll • Pie

FOR DELIVERY CALL 715-432-4954,
 ON OR BEFORE WEDNESDAY, NOV. 22ND.

The Eagles Club
 1205 N Lake St. • Merrill, WI 54452
 Open to the Public • (715) 536-7471
 NO FOOD SERVED: Sat., Sun., Mon.-Only Special Events

DINNER SPECIALS NOV.
TUESDAY NIGHTS
 NOV. 21ST - CHICKEN CORDON BLEU
 OVER RICE PILAF
 NOV. 28TH - CHOP SUEY
 Dinner served: Tuesday 4:00-8:00 PM

FRIDAY NIGHTS
 NOV. 17TH - CATFISH
 NOV. 24TH - BLUEGILLS
 Dinner served: Friday 4:00-8:00 PM
 CLIP-N-SAVE

CARRYOUT AVAILABLE
 • MONDAY: Bar Open at 3pm
 • LUNCH AVAILABLE:
 TUES. & FRI. 11am-2pm
 WED. & THURS. 11am-3pm
 Specials • Fish Fries • Homemade Soup
 • DINNER MENU: TUES. 4-8pm
 & FRI. 4-8pm
 • SATURDAY: Bar Open at 3pm
 • SUNDAY: Bar Open From 11am-7pm
 Visit our Website! 584.localfoewi.com
 HAPPY HOUR: TUESDAY-THURSDAY • 3-6PM

Thursday, November 23, 2023 • 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM

MERGET'S MOUTHWATERING MAYHEM 3RD ANNUAL FREE COMMUNITY DINNER

Free will donation - All proceeds go to the Northwoods Veterans Post and the Food Pantry

ENTERTAINMENT
BRYCE TOMASCHESKY
 12PM-3PM
MATTEA JOY
 3PM-7PM

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
 801 Johnson St., Merrill • 715-536-5708
 NOW HIRING! P/T - KITCHEN
 WE SEL! FLAGS!

S&S BAR
 418 Grand Ave., Merrill

THIS WEEK'S DRINK SPECIAL:
J. BAVET
\$4 PINT MIXERS;
\$2 TUB MIXERS;
\$2 SHOTS

Open Daily 9 am - Close
 Low carry out prices on Booze, Beer & Ice
BARTENDING OPPORTUNITY!
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 • Dependable
 For more information or to apply please call or stop in!

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COSMO Theatre KIDS • \$5.00
 SENIORS • \$5.00
 MAIN ST. • MERRILL ADULTS • \$8.00

MOVIES AND SHOWTIMES THRU 11/21/2023
 Mondays All Seats \$5.00

TROLLS BAND TOGETHER
 "PG" (1HR 32MIN)
 FRIDAY: 7:00PM
 SATURDAY & SUNDAY: 1:00, 4:00 & 7:00PM
 MONDAY AND TUESDAY: 7:00PM ONLY

THE HUNGER GAMES: THE BALLAD OF SONGBIRDS & SNAKES
 "PG13" (2HR 37MIN)
 FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:00PM
 SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:00, 7:00 & 9:00PM
 SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:00 & 7:00PM
 MONDAY AND TUESDAY: 7:00PM ONLY

THE MARVELS
 "PG13" (1HR 45MIN)
 FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:00PM
 SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:15, 7:00 & 9:00PM
 SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:15 & 7:00PM
 MONDAY AND TUESDAY: 7:00PM ONLY

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Plautz's Pub LLC.
 310 E. 2nd St., Merrill
 715-536-4611

SERVING FOOD DAILY TILL 8PM

HOURS
MON. - FRI.
 Noon - Close
SAT. 11am - Close
SUN. 11am - Close

NOV. BOOZE OF THE MONTH
CAPTAIN MORGAN
 \$5.00 - 16 oz. Pint

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

THURSDAY NOV. 23RD
OPEN THANKSGIVING DAY
 Open 10am
GREENBAY VS DETROIT
 11:30am
BLOODY MARY BAR
 10am - 3pm

Area Events & Entertainment Community Calendar

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Nov. 16 - Chili Cookoff Fundraiser at Nicolet Bank | Nov. 18 - Hunter Widow Scavenger Hunt | Nov. 25 - Mrs. Claus at St. Vinnie's |
| Nov. 16 - Open Mic Night at Sawmill Brewing Co. | Nov. 22 - Trivia Night at Sawmill Brewing Co. | Nov. 27 - Origami folding demonstration at T.B. Scott Library |
| Nov. 18 - Opening Day: Rifle Deer Hunting Season | Nov. 23 - Open Mic Night at Sawmill Brewing Co. | For more information, go to: merrillchamber.org/events or contact the host of the event directly. |
| | Nov. 25 - Shop Small Shop Local | |

Wisconsin Civics Games Editorial Writing & Cartoon Contest now accepting entries

The WNA Foundation announced the third annual Editorial Writing & Cartoon Contest has now begun and is accepting entries now through 11:59 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 4, 2023.

The purpose of the contest is to increase civic education and engagement while also celebrating First Amendment rights.

Open to all Wisconsin middle and high school students, including home-schooled, virtual, parochial, and public school students, the contest awards cash prizes to first, second, and third place winners and an honorable mention honoree.

First-place winners in each contest receive \$500, second-place winners receive \$250, third-place



winners receive \$100, and honorable mention recipients receive \$50. All winning entries will also be published in various newspapers in Wisconsin,

Writing contest

- High school students are asked to write a "guest column" (500 words or less) about the First Amendment
- Middle school students are asked to write a "letter to the editor" (200 words or less) about the First Amendment

For more information and/or to enter the writing contest, go to: wisconsin-civics-games.com

Cartoon contest

• Students are asked to create and submit an editorial cartoon with a First Amendment theme

For more information and/or to enter the cartoon contest, go to: wisconsin-civics-games.com

Tips for students

- Focus on the importance of the First Amendment.
- Try to draw from your personal experiences.
- Incorporate current events and/or historical examples.

Contest winners will be announced in early January.

WIS 107 now open near Tomahawk in Lincoln County

WIS 107 near Tomahawk in Lincoln County is now open to traffic, as crews completed work on the bridge at Skanawan Creek Friday, Nov. 10. The detour has been removed.

Crews will complete finishing work but no traffic impacts are expected. For more information regarding traffic impacts, transportation news, and improvement project updates in Wisconsin's North Central Region, go to the region's 511 website: projects.511wi.gov/region/north-central/.

HOURS: Friday - Sunday 11-8

17 Down Town Gleason WI

SCOOPS

Ice Cream & Sandwich Shop

HUNTER'S SPECIAL
Breakfast Sandwich Basket
\$7.50

Open @ 5am Saturday November 18th
 Caffeinated Latte Shake
 Hot Coffee • Hot Apple Cider • Hot Cocoa • Soup & Sandwich Special
 Fresh Baked Goods

Hwy. K now open in Marathon County

Hwy. K in Marathon County, which had been closed most of the summer between the Marathon/Lincoln County line and Wausau, is now open. In addition to newly paved highway, the route now includes additional turning lanes, and there is a new roundabout in the town of Maine, along with sections with lower speed limits, so stay alert while traveling until it becomes second nature.

St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store
 1004 E. Main Street, Merrill
 Hours: Monday thru Saturday
 10 AM to 5 PM

Don't Miss This!
Friday, Nov. 24
Nifty Thrifty Sale
 50% off everything in the store!

SALE

Saturday, Nov. 25
Mrs. Claus
Visit with her incredible elves!
11 AM to 2 PM

Finish a craft and meet our special visitors for all children (and adults, too).
 Sponsored by Incrediblebank & SVDP

VISIT US ONLINE

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FACEBOOK:
www.facebook.com/merrill.fotonews

MERRILL Foto News

WINTER
 adventure

NOV 25

WIN A PAIR OF SKI-DOO SNOWMOBILES

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Thanksgiving Dinner

Thursday, Nov 24
9am-2pm
\$5 PLATE



WESTSIDE MARKET
DISCOUNT GROCERY • LIQUOR

TURKEY OR HAM, MASHED POTATOES, STUFFING, GRAVY, VEGGIE ROLL & GRANDMA'S FAMOUS APPLE CRISP!

EVERYDAY LOW PRICES NOT JUST SALE PRICES

GROCERY

Miracle Whip
Regular & Light
30 oz.
\$2.99



Premier Pantry
Macaroni & Cheese
7.25 oz.
2/\$1



Stove Top
Stuffing
6 oz. Single or Twin Pack
\$1.29-\$1.99



CHECK OUT OUR PRODUCE SECTION, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DRIVE ACROSS TOWN FOR A HEAD OF LETTUCE

GLUTEN FREE

Blue Bonnet
Plant Butter
4.4 oz. Sticks
\$1.49



Tyson Naturals
Breaded Chicken Breast Strips
16 oz.
\$4.69



HUNDREDS OF GF ITEMS - YOU HAVING AN ALLERGY DOESN'T NEED TO BREAK THE BANK

MEAT

Assorted Everyday Low Price Bacon
16 oz. pkg.
\$2.99



Wisconsin Maid
Beef Snack Pieces
28 oz.
\$8.99



Johnsonville
Original Sausage
12oz.
\$3.29



QUICK & EASY MEALS

Lunchables
Variety Packs
4.2 oz. ea. 6pk
3.2 oz. ea. 5pk
\$4.29-\$4.99



DAIRY

Local Farm Fresh Eggs
1 doz.
\$3.50



2% Milk
1 gallon
\$3.99



LIQUOR

Dr. McGillicuddy's
4 Flavors
Liter
\$20



LEROUX
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750ml
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Happy Thanksgiving!
Our office will be closed on Nov. 23rd and 24th

MERRILL FOTO NEWS
Student of the Week
This Week's Featured Student is **Lucy Freese**
Daughter of **Erika Riebe & Chris Freese**
Lucy is in 4th Grade at Washington Elementary School. She was nominated by Susan Palecek.

What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
My favorite subject is math, because I like to learn about multiplication and new math problems.

What is your favorite part of school? Why?
My favorite part of school is going to art because I like to do fun activities.

What would you like to do/become someday? Why?
When I grow up I would like to become a veterinarian because I am very interested in helping animals.

When it comes to excellence in the classroom, Lucy is the definition of a scholar. She pushes herself every day to meet her potential, while showing leadership in helping her classmates learn. The compassion and kindness she shows to everyone at Washington should be celebrated, along with her academic achievements! We are so proud of Lucy!
~ Susan Palecek

Student of the Week Sponsored by:
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Merrill Foto News

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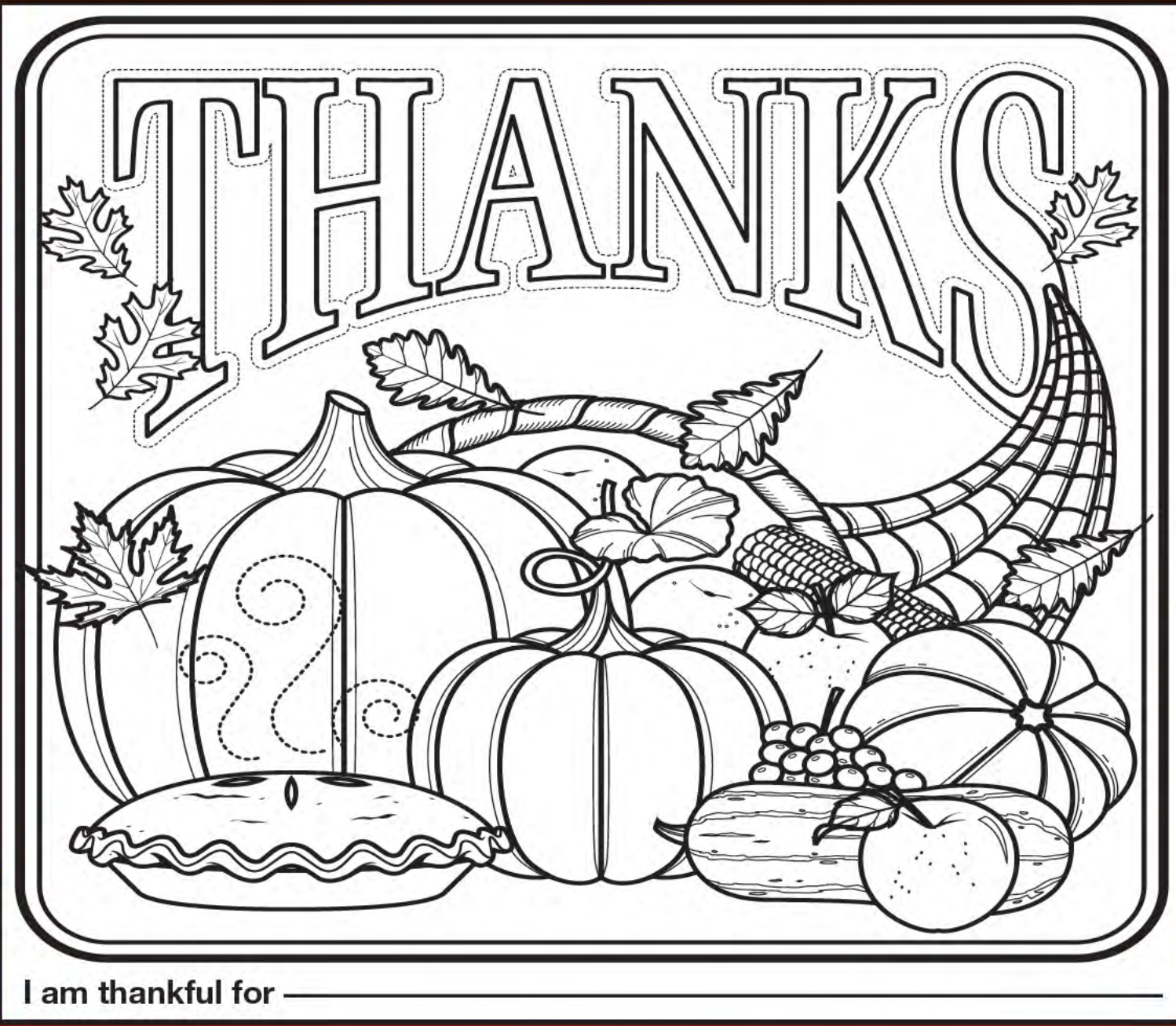
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Bluejay Girls Swim Team update from State

BY TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

The Merrill Bluejays Varsity Girls Swim Team traveled to the State Swimming and Diving Championship Competition last Friday, Nov. 10, 2023, at Waukesha South Natatorium in Waukesha.

The team of Addison Jirovec (Sophomore), Olivia Pajdash (Junior), Marissa Miles (Freshman), and Claire Jirovec (Sophomore) competed in the 200 Yard Medley Relay and placed 16th with a time of 1:57.95.

Olivia Pajdash was also there to compete in an individual event—the 500 Yard Freestyle. She came in 14th with a time of 5:35.28.

Rhinelander swept all three relays and won the Division 2 State title with 308 points. Whitefish

Bay was second with 221, followed by Edgewood with 208.

“While the Medley Relay placed 16th, just qualifying is a huge accomplishment,” said Merrill Varsity Head Swim Coach Kristie Winter. “They should be very proud. We have a very young talented team; gaining this experience with the Relay is just going to make them better next year. It really gives the Team a goal to work for.”

“Olivia really came out of her comfort zone and had a personal best swim, moving her up a spot from where she was seeded,” Winter said. “She was able to pull ahead of the Rhinelander swimmer who had beaten her by just .05 at Sectionals. A very exciting race for her.”

Prior to leaving for the competition, the Swim Team celebrated with a



Olivia Pajdash swims in the 500 yard freestyle event at the WIAA state swimming and diving championship.

Bob Mainhardt photo.



Marissa Miles swims the Butterfly leg of the 200 yard Medley Relay.

Bob Mainhardt photo.



Addison Jirovec swims the backstroke leg of the 200 Yard Medley Relay.

Bob Mainhardt photo.

More photos online
merrillfotonews.com

mini parade, complete with drumline, through the halls at Merrill High School. “We are so lucky to have great community support,” Winter said. “The girls started their day off with a parade through school with the drum line, the team parents decorated the bus, then they were escorted out of town by the Police and Fire Departments past both

Washington and Prairie River Middle School where students and teachers came out with signs to cheer them on. It builds so much excitement knowing everyone is supporting them.”



The Merrill Girls Swim Team and the drumline after their parade through the halls of Merrill High School before boarding the bus to head to the State competition.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Varsity Girls Swim Team.



Friday was a cold, with a few snowflakes coming down, but that couldn't dampen the spirits of the Merrill Varsity Girls Swim Team as they headed down to State or the Washington Elementary School kids who lined the streets to cheer the girls on. The bus was escorted through town by the Merrill Police Department and Merrill Fire Department.

Tina L. Scott photo.



Students at Washington Elementary School in Merrill head outdoors to cheer on the Merrill Varsity Girls Swim Team as they leave town.

Tina L. Scott photo.

2023 WINTER MERRILL HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCHEDULE

Girls Basketball (Varsity, JV & JV2)

Thurs. Nov. 16	Ashland (JV)	Away	5:45 pm
Thurs. Nov. 16	Ashland (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm

Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV & JV2)

Mon. Nov. 20	Marathon (Varsity & JV)	Away	5:30 pm
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Girls Wrestling (Varsity)

Practice Began Monday, November 13th.

Boys Wrestling (Varsity & JV)

Practice Began Monday, November 13th.

Ice Hockey (Varsity & JV)

Tues. Nov. 21	Waupaca (JV)	MARC	5:00 pm
Tues. Nov. 21	Waupaca (JV)	Marathon	5:00 pm
Tues. Nov. 21	Waupaca (Varsity)	MARC	7:00 pm
Tues. Nov. 21	Waupaca (Varsity)	Marathon	7:00 pm

The Sports Calendar of events is sponsored by:



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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Erik Mann, a Senior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. Erik is a three-year starter for the Merrill Varsity Football Team and played JV1 as a Freshman. He started playing football in sixth grade at middle school and advanced to become an award-winning high school player. Erik holds the all-time tackle record at MHS with 197 career tackles, was Varsity Captain all three years, named All Conference Defense in the Great Northern Conference three years in a row, named Defensive MVP this year and Sophomore year, received the Mike Hill Award the last two years, and was named Wisconsin Football Coaches Association Academic All Star this year. Last year Erik also joined the Merrill Varsity Track & Field Team and he runs in the 100 m., 200 m., and 100 m. and 200 m. relays.

At school, Erik is in National Honor Society and Raise Your Voice Club and helps with the Bluejay Beat school newspaper. His favorite classes are sociology and physics. He works part-time as a lifeguard at the Bierman Family Aquatic Center and the middle school pool. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with friends just talking about life, listening to music, and lifting weights.

The son of Jolene and Tony Mann of Merrill, Erik plans to attend UW-Milwaukee or UW-Madison to study psychology and wants to become a mental health therapist.



Erik Mann

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

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CHILDCARING.ORG

According to the WI Department of Children & Families - Preschool Development Grant Sandbox Data: 75% of zip codes in Lincoln County are considered child care deserts (areas with little or no access to quality childcare. There are only 15 regulated (certified or licensed) child care options with a capacity to serve 429 children in Lincoln County as of July 2023!

The Median Household Income in Lincoln County according to the 2020 census was \$59,152. The Median Income is \$56,645. A family with a child age 0-1 in a group child care setting will pay an average of \$9,392/year which is 2.4 times the affordable amount (16.6% of income is spent on child care). The Federal Government defines affordable care as no more than 7% of a family's yearly income should be spent on child care.

Data last updated: 2/7/2022

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/childcare/pdg/sandbox/data2>

The average Early Childhood Wage in Lincoln County in 2023 is:
Assistant Teachers \$12.00/hour
Teachers \$12.50/hour
Director \$20.00/hour

HOW CAN "I" HELP?

Consider volunteering!

Providers have shared that even just 1 day per week can result in:

- Healthier Meals by helping prepare fresh fruits & vegetables.
- Support Retention of Teachers/Assistant Teachers -
 - Teachers spend their days with the children.

Cleaning & preparing curriculum/activities happen after the day ends. Helping clean the classrooms allows teachers the time to regroup & focus on improving their teaching.
- Help with opening/closing times. The transition times of children coming & going is chaotic for teachers, caregivers, and the children. Having extra hands and eyes improves safety & communication. Respond to any future "call to actions"
- Dream Up! Is excited about current community conversations & anticipate action in the near future that will provide additional support to regulated providers. Stay informed & share these as they develop with others.
- Support school districts in their efforts in developing Early Childhood Education programs.

DID YOU KNOW?

76 Lincoln County Residents participated in a recent survey regarding childcare.

- 14 of those participants have multiple children at different locations for childcare.
- 39 participants are currently using a family member or friend for childcare.
- 26 participants left the workforce in the last 5 years because of childcare issues and 11 more had a significant other or another family member leave the workforce for a total 49% surveyed.
- 60% of the participants had challenges within the last 2 years accessing childcare.

**Most Importantly -
THANK A CHILDCARE PROVIDER TODAY!**